

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Expressions such as “the new millennium” and “a new beginning” sound exciting and promising, just as much as corks popping off champagne bottles in the final night of 1999. However, as the excitement dies down, Koreans need to shake the colorful confetti off their shoulders and get ready to return to the real world. Although Korea has emerged from its long economic struggle, it now has a more critical task at hand: meeting unforeseen challenges and achieving sustained growth.

This month’s *VIP Millennium Report: Challenges & Opportunities* is the first issue under the new name. Also, it is a special edition commemorating the start of a new era of challenges which can be opportunities in disguise for Korea. Articles of the **Current Issues** section aptly cover the tasks ahead.

Our first article deals with one of the remaining areas to be restructured, the financial sector. Introduction of global standards to the domestic financial industry changed the way companies finance themselves and solidified the groundwork for a sound financial system in Korea. The outcome of restructuring secondary financial institutions will decide whether or not the financial markets will be hit again and threaten economic stability.

Another important challenge is taking inter-Korean economic cooperation to the next level, which is treated in the second article. A silver lining was seen through the confrontational clouds last year, as private-sector endeavors

reaped substantial results, such as the removal of US economic sanctions on North Korea and the active Mt. Kumgang tour business. As economic cooperation is expected to increase this year, hopes are rising for further plans.

Of interest to the business community, the third article surveys five strategies which will play a critical role in management in the Digital Era. Globalization, network, speed and flexibility are the underlying concepts of the five strategies. By accepting measures of creative destruction, companies can stand a better chance of surviving and thriving in the 21st century.

Finally, our fourth article looks at the development path of human resources management in Korea and projects its future direction. As a critical part of corporate resources and a key factor of success in the new millennium, human resources will become a strategic lever for sustaining a company’s competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy. Balancing individual creativity and efficient teamwork will be a significant challenge for companies, as it will decide the fate of any organization.

It is humanly understandable to wish for a better life as the year changes, but Korea still faces many unsolved tasks that call for immediate attention. Not only merely undergoing Copernican changes but wisely and thoroughly preparing and responding to them will open up bigger windows of opportunity for Korea in this new millennium. **VIP**