

Your Excellency President Kirchner, Mrs. Kirchner and distinguished guests,

Thank you for the warm hospitality extended to my wife and me and the Korean delegation.

Buenos Aires is, indeed, beautiful. I am able to sense the brilliant history and high culture of Argentina.

Since last year when Your Excellency was inaugurated, the Argentine economy has been rapidly recovering, growing by more than 8 percent. I am aware that the reform policies Your Excellency has been pursuing, including the elimination of poverty and corruption and the relinquishing of past undesirable events, have reaped big dividends.

While leading the way in advancing regional cohesion in South American, Argentina has been broadening exchanges and cooperation with European countries. I applaud the outstanding leadership of Your Excellency and the potential of the Argentine citizens. Also, I congratulate Argentina for winning basketball and soccer matches at the Athens Olympics, which, I am certain, delighted Your Excellency.

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Northeast Asia today accounts for about 20 percent of the world economy, and the share has been rising. South America, too, is poised for an economic take-off on the strength of political stability.

Korea and Argentina are located at the center of the two regions now in the international limelight. If our two countries enhance the merits of the complementary economic structures, it would greatly benefit both.

Korea aspires to take cooperation with Argentina onto a new dimension. We should enhance the level of mutual cooperation basing it not on a one-time exchange chiefly involving trade but in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

In this sense, the summit today was very useful. I expect that exchanges and cooperation between our two countries in business, trade, resource development, science, technology and culture will be tangibly expanded. Korea will do all it can to support such an initiative.

About 15,000 Argentineans of Korean ancestry, who will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of their emigration to Argentina next year, will serve as a bridge for the development of relations between our two countries. I hope you will be able to take an increased interest in and give continuing support to those new Argentine citizens.

Distinguished guests,

Please join me in a toast to the good health and everlasting prosperity of Argentina, and eternal friendship between our two countries.

Geonbae! (salute!)

Thank you.