

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

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

Brazil ' s brisk export activities and business recovery have recently aroused the attention of the world. This country ' s trade surplus this year has surpassed US\$30 billion, and the gross domestic product is forecast to rise by 4 percent or more.

Brazil has been emerging as one of the BRICs that are expected to reshape the economic map in the 21st century. As Your Excellency mentioned, BRICs are no longer nations of secondary importance. They now constitute advanced nations with vast land and abundant resources.

The recent blastoff of a space rocket for the first time in South America certainly represents a reassuring feat showing the national power of Brazil.

Such progress has resulted from the various economic policies Your Excellency has been pushing with top priority since your inauguration. And I congratulate you for that achievement.

In particular, your initiative for the establishment of a UN special fund designed to eliminate starvation and poverty has resonated through more than 100 countries. Your Excellency has already shown a good model through the Fome Zero program and the reduction of debts for the poorest countries.

In addition, Your Excellency has been demonstrating outstanding leadership in international relations by leading the way for cohesion within the South American region and the organization of the G-20.

I applaud your conviction and philosophy and the potential of the Brazilian citizens.

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Geographically, Korea and Brazil are set far apart, but we share similar experiences in the process of political and economic development. The two countries achieved democratization by repelling military dictatorships and successfully tided over the economic crisis in late 1990s.

Korea seeks to find opportunities for fresh cooperation with Brazil now soaring high. We aspire for long-term, comprehensive cooperation not only in the economy but also in diverse other fields.

About 50,000 Koreans, the largest concentration in South America, are living here. Most major Korean companies are active here. These businesses, which Your Excellency has encouraged through personal visits, are both Korean as well as Brazilian. They will become a symbol of the common prosperity of our two countries.

I am very satisfied with the agreements in our summit today to help further develop relations between our two countries.

Brasilia, which I am visiting for the first time, is indeed beautiful, true to its fame as part of the world cultural heritage.

Please join me in a toast to the good health of His Excellency, the President, the First Lady, and everlasting friendship between our two countries.

Saude!

Thank you.