



# THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Han Seung-soo  
Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea**

**General Debate of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Mr. President and Mr. Secretary General,

I would like to extend my sincere congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your dedication to make the United Nations meet the global challenges in a more effective and timely manner. I assure you of the Republic of Korea's full support for your noble endeavors.

As I stand here, I recall those turbulent days seven years ago, when we stood shaken by the terrorist acts in the morning of September 11, 2001. Throughout my Presidency of the 56th Session of the General Assembly, all Member States were united in dealing with the grave challenges under the shadow of 9/11.

On September 12, 2001, this Assembly began its 56th Session by adopting a resolution strongly condemning the terrorist acts and calling for the international community's concerted effort to combat terrorism. With the close cooperation that followed, counter-terrorist capacity has been strengthened at all levels. Nevertheless, as we are witnessing in many parts of the world today, terrorism continues to threaten and cost the lives of innocent people. As the international community shares the concern over

such an intractable trend, it is time for us to renew our commitment to completely root out terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea was the first country to have the establishment of its government recognized by the UN through a General Assembly resolution back in 1948. And thanks to its continual support, the Republic of Korea was able to step into the 21st century as a full-fledged democracy and vibrant economy. It is my sincere hope that this special relationship will further develop and strengthen in the years to come.

Over the past six decades, the United Nations has strived for the common good of the international community, and has become ever more relevant to the well-being of the present and future generations of humanity. It is currently leading the global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and is demonstrating strong stewardship in addressing the global food and energy crises, as well as climate change.

Standing at the mid-point to the MDGs target year of 2015, we realize that in order to achieve what we pledged, all Member States will have to redouble their commitments to the MDGs. But political commitment alone is not enough. We need solid economic growth and a coherent strategy to translate our commitment into a reality.

While the rapid growth experiences of Korea and other countries have served as a useful reference for many developing countries, we should move beyond the conventional economic growth approach of "Grow First, Clean up Later." Rather, what we need is a green and pro-poor growth.

Climate change on which the future of humanity so critically depends is now looming larger than ever as a global challenge. Adverse impacts of climate change are threatening the very foundation of MDGs, inter alia, by affecting agriculture, upon which the livelihood of many depends in the developing world, and by increasing climate-related natural disasters, which are hitting hard on the most vulnerable Bottom Billion as in the case of Typhoon Nargis.

Conventional growth approach based on cheap fossil fuel is among the factors driving up the prices of oil and food. As such, we need a new climate-friendly strategy for energy and development if we are to attain the goals of the MDGs while addressing climate change.

I encourage all agencies of the United Nations to closely cooperate to develop a roadmap for a new “Low Carbon, Green Growth” path. In this regard, I would like to express my full support for the energetic leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon who has been working hard to place climate change as our top priority on the global agenda.

The Republic of Korea recently embraced a vision of “Low Carbon, Green Growth” paradigm. We strongly believe that this is and should be the new paradigm for growth and development of the world in the future. We support the global vision of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2050 and plan to announce next year our voluntary mid-term mitigation goal set for the year 2020. We will also launch the “East Asia Climate Partnership,” which will initiate programs in the amount of 200 million US dollars over the next 5 years to support other countries in making their economic growth compatible with climate change.

In 2002, I attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg as the then President of the UN General Assembly. Through that and other experiences, I firmly believe in the importance of high-level commitments to raising our efforts and political momentum in the issues of the environment and development. In this vein, I would like to emphasize that a new World Summit focusing on climate change and sustainable development needs be held in 2012, not least to ensure a strong takeoff for a Post-2012 Climate Regime.

Given that the past major three conferences were held in Europe, America, and Africa respectively, it could well be Asia’s turn to host the next Conference. Asia is the most populous region in the world undergoing vibrant economic transformation, which makes the sustainable development issue all the more relevant. As a country well placed to play a bridging role between developed and developing nations, the Republic of Korea hopes to make contribution by hosting this Conference.

Mr. President,

The global food crisis is another factor contributing to instability, by spreading the population affected by poverty and starvation. It is also threatening to reverse many of the gains we have achieved thus far in the development field. As the causes behind the present food crisis are complex and varied, our responses must be comprehensive as well as timely.

The Republic of Korea has provided humanitarian assistance to countries facing food crises. I am pleased to inform you that the Republic of Korea, in addition to its assistance to the DPRK, has decided

to offer 100 million US dollars over the next 3 years for emergency food aid and for assistance to strengthen the agricultural capacities of developing countries. With first-hand knowledge in agricultural development, Korea plans to assist in various areas, including farming infrastructure, technology, and policy-making.

Mr. President,

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Over the decades, the UN has played an indispensable role in setting international norms and principles to ensure “all human rights for all.” This year saw further progress with the implementation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the Human Rights Council (HRC), and with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities taking effect.

At the same time, we need to redouble efforts to stem serious human rights violations that still continue in certain regions. The Republic of Korea urges those human rights violators to urgently respond to the international community’s call for dialogue and cooperation, and to follow up with appropriate measures to enhance human rights.

In the area of UN reform, it is more crucial now than ever that the UN operate both efficiently, effectively and responsively. The Republic of Korea supports all these efforts and particularly the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General to make the Secretariat more accountable, efficient, and responsive.

As for the Security Council, in order to better fulfill its mandate of maintaining international peace and security, the Council needs to be reformed to ensure more representativeness, accountability, and efficiency. Moreover, considering the importance of the Security Council, every effort should be made to acquire general agreement across all Member States in steering the direction of the reform. It should not become an issue of division, but one that unites Member States.

Mr. President,

The new government of the Republic of Korea has posited “contributing to the international community as a trusted partner” as one of its pillars of foreign policy. To this end, we are strengthening our role in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Peacekeeping Operations (PKO).

Since 2000, our ODA has increased three times in volume, with assistance to Africa increasing three-fold in the last three years. We plan to triple our current ODA to reach over 3 billion US dollars by 2015. To better coordinate our development cooperation policy with the international community, the Republic of Korea plans to join the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2010. In UN Peacekeeping Operations, the Republic of Korea is also seeking ways to strengthen its participation. Currently, we have a 350-strong contingent dispatched to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and are considering a legislation to facilitate our PKO participation.

Mr. President,

The proliferation of WMDs and their delivery systems pose a grave threat to international peace and security. We must strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In this regard, it is crucial that the North Korean nuclear issue be expeditiously resolved. This issue has remained for many years as a threat to the security of Northeast Asia while seriously undermining the very foundations of the NPT regime.

The Republic of Korea is making every effort to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue within the framework of the Six-Party Talks, under which some progress has been made. However, Pyongyang's recent move to suspend the disablement measures and attempt to reverse the process is highly regrettable. We urge the DPRK to resume disablement measures immediately so that the positive momentum generated by the Six-Party Talks process can be maintained and the denuclearization process can move forward.

With a view to developing more mature inter-Korean relations in a pragmatic and productive way, the Republic of Korea pursues a policy of mutual benefits and common prosperity. As progress is made in the denuclearization, we stand ready to support economic development in the North.

We are also willing to discuss with Pyongyang on how to implement properly all past inter-Korean agreements, including the Basic Agreement of 1992. President Lee Myung-bak, in his speech at the National Assembly in July, proposed to fully restore inter-Korean dialogue and emphasized that we are ready to render our cooperation to alleviate the DPRK's food crisis. We look forward to the DPRK accepting the offer for dialogue, so that real progress can be made in inter-Korean relations.

Eventually, I believe we will see more peace and prosperity in Northeast Asia. The region is already a major powerhouse for economic growth in the world. With the peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue, countries in the region will be able to accelerate cooperation to make Northeast Asia more stable and future-oriented. Undoubtedly, this will in turn contribute greatly to the peace and prosperity of the world.

Currently, the international community is grappling with the grave financial turmoil which threatens to spread worldwide. It has even been feared that this turmoil could lead to a recession in the magnitude of the Great Depression of the 1930s. Without a doubt, the current instability in the financial market could have a devastating, domino-like, impact on the real economy in this globalized world. We have to be careful, however, not to rush into protectionist policies either for fear of uncertainty or for self-interest. If there were hard-learned lessons from the Depression of the 1930s, "the beggar-thy-neighbor policy", the policy of raising tariff to protect their own industry, exacerbated the world economy. Therefore, we strongly believe that any solutions should be based on even more consolidated cooperation of international community and the open market economy.

Mr. President,

Today, the expectations placed upon the United Nations by the international community are higher than ever. However, what the UN can achieve cannot be greater than the sum of all our individual achievements, unless there are synergy effects. Therefore, all of us, each and every Member State, should not only do our best in carrying out our responsibilities but also be willing to help and reach out to others. Only by doing so, this global body can live up to and even do better than the expectations of the international community. And to this end, the Republic of Korea will faithfully do its part.

Thank you.