



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Kim Sung-Hwan

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High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law

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Mr. President,

1. Let me first warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency for the 67th session of the General Assembly. Under your able guidance during this session, I am confident that our deliberations will yield important achievements on many key issues.
2. Ever since global leaders made a landmark commitment to the rule of law at the 2005 World Summit, we have witnessed an increase in the promotion of the rule of law at both national and international levels. In this respect, the Republic of Korea welcomes and embraces the efforts made by the UN to strengthen its role in ensuring the rule of law. Taking this opportunity, I would like to convey my deep appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his continuing efforts to this end.

Mr. President,

3. It is well known that there are divergent views and understandings about the concept of the rule of law, including formalistic and substantive definitions. Despite such diversity, however, we are convinced that the rule of law should be deeply rooted on some essential elements, such as justice, morality, territorial integrity and sovereignty. Without due consideration of these elements, the rule of law can be abused as a pretext for the strong to impose their will upon the weak, which we have all too often witnessed in the past among states.
4. We stress that the rule of law applies to all states equally. The respect for and promotion of the rule of law and justice should be the guiding principle for stable international relations. As such, we recognize the important contributions that the United Nations, including the International Court of Justice (ICJ), has made in promoting the rule of law. In particular, and in light of the critical role that the ICJ plays in this area, we are of the view that the Court should continue to adjust itself to the changing international environment in order to reflect the legal diversity of the international community.

Mr. President,

5. We have been a strong supporter of the full compliance and progressive development of international law. Korea has been serving in various international legal bodies such as the International Law Commission (ILC), International Criminal Court (ICC), and International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).
6. Furthermore, we are fully committed to our continued contributions to various rule-of-law initiatives for disseminating and promoting wider appreciation of the rule of law.

Mr. President,

7. Without a doubt, respect for law in the international sphere should also be reinforced and complemented by the commitment to the rule of law at the national level. Peace, democracy, good governance, and sustainable development would not be possible without due respect for the rule of law. The principle of legality, an independent judiciary, the respect for human rights, as well as the access to justice for all, are also at the very core of the rule of law at the national level.
8. As for my country, we were able to achieve mature democracy, economic development, and enhancement of human rights in less than half a century. This would not have been possible without our resolute commitment and strenuous efforts to foster and reinforce the principle of the rule of law.
9. The rule of law has served as a check against the abuse of power and the arbitrary application of laws. It has helped raise the awareness of democratic values and fundamental rights among people. For Korea, the rule of law has been instrumental in establishing an environment in which entrepreneurship could grow and flourish. Higher education and an efficient public sector have been also key contributing factors to the rule of law taking deep root within our society.

Mr. President,

10. Finally, I would like to stress that the very objectives of the rule of law can be only achieved through the active coordination and cooperation among all relevant actors, including states, international organizations, and civil society.
11. We will continue to support the efforts of the international community to enhance the rule of law at the national and international levels.

Thank you.