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by

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**of the Republic of Korea**

at the

**General Debate of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session**  
**of the General Assembly of the United Nations**

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by extending my sincere congratulations to you on assuming the Presidency of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. Well aware of your experience and diplomatic skills, I have every confidence that under your able leadership we will achieve great results during this important session, which marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, whose tireless work enabled the membership to successfully prepare for the High-Level Plenary Meeting last week. My highest tribute also goes to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his unqualified dedication to our world body.

Mr. President,

The leaders of the world gathered here last week, in the largest summit meeting of states in history, and demonstrated their collective political will to overcome the challenges of the present and build a future of peace and prosperity for all humankind. They reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They also underscored the vital role of the United Nations for these times, and gave guidance on steps to reform the Organization. The Outcome Document, adopted in the maximum spirit of cooperation and compromise, may not be everything for everyone, but it is the guideline for action that our leaders have given us. The task now is to implement it.

The work will require determined action on the part of all. Success will be guaranteed only when each and every one of us strives to look beyond the immediate horizon. We must recommit ourselves to realizing the ideal that inspired the founders of the Organization 60 years ago, that is, to build a peaceful and prosperous world in which all peoples live together in harmony, free from want and fear.

Mr. President,

Certainly, with 30,000 children dying of hunger and preventable diseases every day, the world today is far from that ideal. By all accounts, we have the means to lift the whole world out of poverty and under-development. We just need to effectively put them to good use. Thus, the concrete, action-oriented recommendations adopted by our leaders on partnership, financing, trade, debt relief and other aspects of development are greatly welcome. We must fully and speedily

implement them, so that by the year 2015 much of the world's impoverished are freed from hunger and poverty, the spread of HIV/AIDS is captured, primary education becomes universal for all children, gender equality takes firm root in all societies, and the global partnership to achieve these and other development goals is in full operation.

In particular, we welcome the timetables offered by many developed countries to reach the target of 0.7 percent of GNI for official development assistance (ODA) by 2015. The Republic of Korea is committed to doing its share. Despite the internal and external economic challenges that my country has faced since the financial crisis of 1997, we have continued to increase development assistance year after year, doubling our ODA between 2000 and 2004. We now plan to redouble it by 2009.

My government is also seeking other ways to build partnerships with the developing countries. Utilizing our resources and expertise in information and communication technology (ICT), we are working with ESCAP to build and host the Asia-Pacific Training Center for Information and Communication Technology (APTICT) with an initial outlay of \$10 million. The Center will contribute to reducing the digital divide and enabling the developing countries to make the most of the information and communication technologies for development.

Korea is also dedicated to good governance as an essential ingredient in development. Thus, we are working with the Secretariat to establish a UN Governance Center in Seoul, as a follow-up to the Sixth Global Forum on Reinventing Government, which my Government hosted earlier this year.

Health is another area requiring our collective action. In our globalized, connected world, infectious diseases can spread with terrifying speed with no regard for borders. They can become pandemics that threaten the development and security of affected countries and regions. Here, too, the world must act together. For its part, my government is contributing to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. We are also vigorously supporting the activities of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) in Seoul, which strives to develop and disseminate vaccines most needed in the world's poorest regions. And we have taken part in the launching of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, as announced by President Bush of the United States in his speech here last week.

Mr. President,

As the leaders noted, the threats to peace and security around the world today are increasing, interconnected and global in scale. They require our urgent, collective and more determined response. Terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and transnational crime are grave threats that can be most effectively addressed when countries act in concert under the UN banner.

The cruel and inhuman acts of terrorism targeting innocent lives, as witnessed in Iraq, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, are heinous crimes for which there cannot be any justification. The Republic of Korea is already a Party to all twelve international anti-terrorism conventions in force. Last week, I signed for my Government the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism as soon as it was opened for signature. We are strongly committed to preventing and eradicating international terrorism in all of its forms. We will continue to actively participate in the efforts to conclude the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism as expeditiously as possible.

The proliferation of WMDs is another pressing security concern. The prospect of WMDs falling into the hands of terrorists is even more alarming and real than ever before. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to non-proliferation of WMDs. Thus, we are dismayed that the Outcome Document of the High-Level Plenary is silent on this vital issue. We very much hope for an early opportunity to redress this omission. In the meantime, my Government will continue to press for the strengthening of the nuclear compliance and verification system. We call for the universal adoption of the IAEA's Additional Protocol, the disarmament and non-proliferation of biological and chemical weapons, and the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540.

In facing the threats of terrorism, or WMDs or any traditional sources, the Security Council must be made to act more quickly and efficiently to situations that arise when the elements of threat become reality. At the same time, the Security Council must exercise only with the utmost prudence its prerogative to sanction the use of force. In this regard, we should build upon the agreements reflected in the Outcome Document towards the establishment of principles for the use of force that would lead to strengthened relevance and efficiency of the Security Council and of the collective security system embodied in the UN as a whole.

Peace-keeping, Mr. President, has been an important part in this system. Indeed, the success of the peace-keeping missions in such places as Timor-Leste has been one of the proudest achievements of the UN in the recent years. However, there have been failures, as well as cases of the fragile peace being overtaken by the resumption of conflict. Shameful misconduct by some PKO personnel in certain missions has added to the sense of disappointment. Obviously, what is needed is a more structured and extensive mechanism to make the peace more durable and consolidate the grounds for post-conflict reconstruction. In this regard, my government welcomes the decision taken at the High-Level Plenary to establish a Peace-building Commission (PBC). We hope to play our part so that effective peace-building will become an important part of the UN's role for peace and security around the world. This is very much in line with our past and current participation in the efforts to restore peace in many challenged areas of the world, including in Iraq where we are helping the Iraqi people to build a democratic and prosperous country.

Mr. President,

I would like to take this opportunity to address the current situation regarding the North Korean nuclear issue.

After a 13 month hiatus, the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks commenced on July 26, broke off for a recess, and resumed last week.

During the talks, all participants have agreed on the goal and principles of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. They conducted serious and in-depth consultations to make substantive progress toward realizing that objective. For our part, the Republic of Korea has made an earnest effort to expedite the talks toward a resolution, including through the offer to supply 2 million KWe of electric power to the DPRK directly, addressing one of the most pressing problems faced by the DPRK.

As we are gathered here, the resumed fourth round is under way to adopt an agreement on the principles for the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue. Once adopted, the agreement will be a crucial step toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and launch discussions on an action plan towards a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue.

A strategic decision by the DPRK to dismantle all nuclear weapons and nuclear programs would be met with economic and energy assistance and security assurance. North Korea must return to

the NPT and comply with the full scope of IAEA safeguards so as to restore the trust of the international community. The doors would then open for its right to peaceful use of nuclear energy. We urge North Korea to take this road.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea is committed to promoting human rights as universal values that should be guaranteed to all. Based on our own experience of the past decades, we know that development and security are on shaky grounds without the full respect for the human rights of all. We thus welcome the reform initiatives to strengthen the UN's human rights system, and wholly support the creation of a Human Rights Council.

We would have preferred to see stronger language and greater detail about the composition, mandate and functions of the Council spelled out in the Outcome Document. Closely working with other delegations, we hope to promptly engage in active consultations so that the Council can be established and functioning as soon as possible.

The Republic of Korea is also committed to democracy, at home and abroad. We are an active participant in the Community of Democracies and have supported the Conference of New and Restored Democracies. We've pledged to contribute to the UN Democracy Fund, and we will remain a strong supporter for the continuing mission of the UN to nurture and strengthen democracies and human rights around the world.

Respect for human rights and the rule of law are indispensable for the preservation of peace and cooperation among nations. Mass killings, genocides and other grave infringements on human rights are threats to peace and stability, and must not be left to pass with impunity. The principle of the responsibility to protect, as discussed during the High-Level Plenary, underscores the responsibility of the international community to lend assistance to states in upholding their solemn obligations to protect their citizens. We support the continued deliberation by Member States to reach agreement on the responsibility to protect. This would certainly form the backbone of a preventive mechanism against gross violations of human rights.

Mr. President,

Earlier this month, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and the surrounding area in the United States, causing massive casualties and tremendous pain and suffering for the victims and their families. On behalf of the government and people of the Republic of Korea, I would like to extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to those affected.

Coming less than a year after the massive Tsunami that struck many countries of South Asia, Katrina once again mobilized the international community in bringing emergency relief to the victims. It also underscored the urgency of establishing effective mechanisms to cope with natural disasters around the world, including the importance of early warning systems. With these lessons in mind, natural disasters will be a primary issue for debate at the APEC summit meeting, which my country is hosting in Busan this November. Meanwhile, we reaffirm our support for the reform of the UN's humanitarian aid agencies to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in helping countries to recover from disaster and rebuild their capacities for sustainable development.

Mr. President,

We mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the United Nations with mixed feelings. On the one hand, there is much hope. It is the hope of the entire international community for the UN to prevail over the new challenges of the 21st century and assume a more central role in strengthening peace and security, promoting prosperity, and spreading democracy and human rights around the world. On the other hand, there is wide-spread disappointment. It has become painfully clear that the UN as it stands today is unfit to carry out the demands of these complex times. Between the hope and the disappointment, there is much uncertainty. But of one thing I am certain: all of us gathered here are united in the conviction that the hope must triumph over the disappointment; that we must rise to the occasion and make the UN a United Nations for the 21st century.

Indeed, our global body must be strengthened with far-reaching reforms that are in step with the dynamic challenges of a borderless and fluid world. Such reforms should be comprehensive and encompassing of all elements of the system, and realized in such a way as to give all members, large and small, a sense of ownership in the process and the outcome. Faithful to the guidance provided in the outcome of the High-Level Plenary and in synergistic cooperation with each other, all stake-holders - Member States, the Secretariat, funds and programs, specialized agencies and

other constituents of the system - must seize this opportunity for renewal and revitalization. Indeed, we must engage in a genuine exercise in multilateralism to strengthen our global body.

Reform of the Security Council must be pursued to enhance its accountability, transparency and efficiency. My delegation believes that increasing the number of non-permanent seats on the Council, without any addition of permanent seats, is the best way to foster broad-based consensus on this vital issue.

The Secretariat has long served the collective will and interests of the Member States of the UN. The contributions of those who have served in the UN system with dedication and professionalism should be highly praised. However, the credibility and integrity of the system have been damaged by recent revelations of mismanagement and corruption. The oil-for-food-program maladministration, as Mr. Volcker stated in delivering his fourth report to the Security Council, should not be seen as a lone case but as "symptomatic of deep-seated systemic issues... .. of an Organization designed for simpler times." Reform, as he further stated, is urgent. Without bold reforms to restore the trust and support of the global community, and enhancing the sense of efficacy and morale of staff, the system will not be able to live up to the growing expectations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Underscoring the vital importance of this issue, the High-Level Plenary has fully endorsed the management reform initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General. With active support and encouragement of Member States, these should quickly bear fruit for strengthened accountability and oversight, higher performance and ethical standards for staff, and greater authority and responsibility for the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer of the Organization.

Mr. President,

The challenges facing the United Nations today are daunting. Some may find them insurmountable. But we are a country that was born and has developed along with the UN during the past six decades, with the active assistance of the UN in the earlier decades. We have full confidence in the future of the Organization. Now a maturing democracy that upholds human rights, an emerging donor that seeks to do its share in helping others, and a staunch advocate of peace and effective multilateralism, the Republic of Korea is fully committed to bringing greater vitality and reliability to the United Nations.

In the High-Level Plenary, the leaders of the world gave us the guiding words to make the UN a more effective and relevant instrument for realizing the aspirations of the global community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We must not let those words remain just words. Let us proceed with vigour and dedication to put them into action.

Thank you.