

Address

by

**President Roh Moo-hyun
of the Republic of Korea**

**at the High-level Plenary Meeting
of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**September 14, 2005
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Messrs. President, Distinguished Heads of State and Government, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Six decades ago, in the very same year that farsighted leaders from around the world were preparing to establish the United Nations, the Republic of Korea was set free from the shackles of imperialist colonial rule. Since then the United Nations has been our trusted friend.

I'm privileged to stand at the podium of such a special friend on this auspicious occasion.

The United Nations has made immense achievements in promoting peace and universal values throughout the world. It is perhaps one of the greatest contrivances of the 20th century, and I pause to pay tribute to all those who have served its cause with dedication.

Messrs. President and fellow leaders,

We stand at a time of uncertainty as to how global order will unfold. But the path we must choose remains clear. The new world order of the 21st century should be defined by all nations, be they a great, small, or middle power, coexisting under shared interests to achieve collective prosperity.

This demands a redoubling of efforts to advance global projects that pursue freedom from want and discrimination, both of which lie at the heart of a number of conflicts and repressions.

Yet, there is another equally important dimension.

The world must completely divest itself of mindsets and vestiges reminiscent of imperialistic tendencies that appear to linger in various forms. Vigilance against a resurgence of major-power centrism in certain circles is also in order. The leading nations of contemporary international politics should be more forthcoming in their introspection of the past and future and also exercise greater self-restraint.

In addition, enhanced efforts need to be channeled to respecting neighboring countries, forging international consensus, and removing antagonism. It is when great powers work further to embed a higher cause of peace and common prosperity in global order that the tension between "power" and "higher cause" can be defused.

The promise of such endeavors can be found in the European Union. Europe has moved beyond an order dictated by the logic of power and a system marred by animosity and strife. It now seems to be defining its place in the world as a community of peace and coexistence, reconciliation and cooperation.

It is my hope that Northeast Asia will see the realization of relations akin to those we see in Europe. For this will open an entirely new chapter in the history of Northeast Asia, which in turn will contribute to global peace and prosperity.

Fellow leaders,

How we reshape the United Nations today will be a harbinger of the global order of tomorrow. We should accordingly aspire to a community that exists to serve our common interest and respects the views of member nations.

For instance, reform of the Security Council, a body that is emblematic of the leadership of the United Nations, should proceed in a manner that enhances its moral authority through democracy, accountability and efficiency. Let me stress that any reform plan we arrive at should serve to facilitate harmony among nations, rather than presage another variant of great power politics.

The enactment of such reform should assist the United Nations in overcoming the multiplicity of challenges besetting mankind and thus spearheading the realization of "larger freedom."

Messrs. President and fellow leaders,

As a nation that has been fully committed to living up to the values championed by the United Nations, the Republic of Korea is prepared to do its part in contributing to peace and prosperity throughout the world.

Korea is a nation that arose from the ashes of war to build the 11th largest economy and achieve significant democratic progress. It is an achievement which came about with the support of the international community.

Consequently, it is only right that we should reciprocate by sharing this experience with fellow nations. We will work to undertake the full range of our responsibilities and roles, from tackling poverty and hunger to promoting human rights and bridging the digital divide, among others.

The APEC Leaders' Meeting scheduled for this November in Busan, Korea, should offer a timely opportunity for us to showcase our commitment and capacity in this regard. Thank you.