



Healing the Wounds of Conflict through Tourism, Culture and Sport

*- Focused on South-North tourism exchanges to
Promote peace on the Korean Peninsula -*

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- * Chairman,
- * Distinguished speakers,
- * Ladies and Gentlemen.
- * It gives me a great honor and pleasure to be among your good selves today for attending this distinguished forum, which has been organized by the International Institute for Peace through Tourism.
- * The topic- Healing the Wounds of Conflict through Tourism-is timely and full of promise for the divided Korea in particular.
- * Unquestionably, cross-border tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the global socioeconomic landscapes.
- * What does the divided Korea mean to Korean people? What kind of role tourism should play in bringing about peace on the Korean peninsula for eventual reunification ?



- * Let me start with raising these fundamental questions and try to answer them in next 15 minutes or so.
- * As you are well aware of, the Korean Peninsula still remains as only and the last divided nation on earth after the World War 11, which ended in 1945
- * Despite decades of bitter division and escalating hostilities, however, the dream for reunification was never lost. Koreans still dream that one day, there will be a unified Korea that will emerge big on the global setting—to be transformed into an economic hub in Northeast Asia.
- * Korean Peninsula is now again the focus of worldwide attention and concern in connection with its nuclear weapons issue.
- * North Korea has agreed to scrap all its nuclear weapons and weapons-related programs and rejoin an international non-proliferation regime in exchange for political and economic benefits at the six-way talks reopened in Beijing on Sept.19 to pave the way for the realization of a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula in a verifiable way,
- * Needless to say, peace on the Korean Peninsula has tremendous impact on not only South and North Korea but also Northeast Asia.



- * That is why we are attaching a growing importance to peaceful solutions to North Korean nuclear issue and eventual reunification of divided Korea for the world peace as a whole.
- * In the wake of the historic 2000 summit and the adoption of the June 15th declaration, South and North Korea have already started their long journey toward a permanent peace settlement and unification.
- * Such an uplifting event came against the backdrop of the Sunshine Policies pushed by former South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung, although the accord remains an inevitably fragile one.
- * The Sunshine Policy is based on the belief that North Korea under the leadership of Kim Jong Il will not collapse or disintegrate, and the current economic crisis will not undermine the regime.
- * It is believed that military tensions can be lessened through bilateral and multilateral frameworks.
- * Former President Kim Dae-jung has gone down in history with his Sunshine Policy in engaging the North, a policy that has earned him the much-coveted Nobel Peace Prize in 2001.



- * The visits to the North by the late Chung Ju-yung, head of Hyundai Business Group, two times with a total of 1,000 head of cattle and visits by South Korean tourists to Mt. Geumkang in North Korea have been the most graphic fruits of “Sunshine” approach.
- * Like his predecessor, President Roh Moo-hyun envisions to achieve lasting peace in the peninsula by maintaining a policy to deal with North Korea diplomatically while improving bilateral economic cooperation.
- * My personal conviction is that inter-Korean people to people exchange programs through tourism should be further expanded with the full support of the members of the international community.
- * As a follow-up to the South-North Summit, two Koreas agreed to exchange travel trade missions as part of efforts to promote tourism industries during the 2nd Tourism Promotion Meeting held on July 19, 2000.
- * As a symbolic project representing South-North reconciliation, the two Koreas have agreed to go ahead with Mt.Baekdoo-Mt.Halla Tourism Project to expedite two-way exchange of tourists.
- * Mt.Baekdoo is the highest mountain in the North Korea whereas Mt.Halla on the southern island of Jeju-do is the highest in the South.
- * In August 2000, I made a week-long cross-border trip to North Korea along with 106 other South Korean delegates to take the first hand look at North Korea with focus on North Korean tourism resources.



- * In particular, my trip to Mt. Baekdoo, which is located in the northern part of the Korean peninsula bordering with China, served an important occasion for me to have a rosier vision of inter-Korean tourism exchange program

- * Perhaps as you may recollect, the Declaration for Tourism and Peace in Seoul was adopted at the 14th meeting of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in September 2001 when I was serving as president of Korea Association of Travel Agents (KATA). The delegates from 130 nations shared the ideas of peace on the Korean Peninsula being a basis of world peace promotion and activation of exchange through South-North tourism.

- * In this vein, I'd like to propose the WTO would continue to play a more important role in addressing the Korean problems through tourism.

- * Despite the current temporary lull in inter-Korean relations caused by the North Korean nuclear issue, the basis of the June 15th declaration has taken its stride in implementing tension reduction actions, economic exchanges and cooperation such as embarking in reconnecting the Seoul-Shinuijoo railway, the joint Imjin river flood prevention project, and exchange visits of war-separated families, to mention just a few.



- * I believe that Korean peninsula is now encountering a significant turning point in realizing peaceful unification, by which it tries to convert its path to a new phase of active peace from that of passive peace.
- * Efforts toward Korean unification must be spearheaded by the independent efforts of the Korean people, which will develop from the confidence-building measures taken by the two Korean governments.
- * South Korea's efforts to recover faith and trust with North Korea dated back to the 1970s when they signed a historic Joint Communiqué on July 4 1972, during the Park, Jung-hee regime
- * People to people exchange programs in the areas of sports, culture and tourism have since followed. In the 1980s, Red Cross Societies of two Koreas initiated family reunion program and more than one million dispersed Korean family members have so far reunited with their loved ones.
- * Little Angels, a South Korean children choir, had visited North Korean capital city of Pyongyang for performance, thus opening up a new chapter of bilateral cultural exchange. In return, North Korea dispatched its national symphony orchestra to visit Seoul for joint performance with their Korean counterparts.



- * In the sports area, South and North marched together in the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics, a symbolic event representing reconciliation of two Koreas. More recently, they exchanged soccer teams each other for friendly matches in Seoul and Pyongyang.
- * Cooperation between the two Koreas has been making significant progress in tourism area.
- * Mt. Geumgang tourism program now under way is a peace project that has opened the doors of inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation.
- * Mt. Geumgang tourism is serving as a testing ground for establishing social and cultural communities of the two Koreas.
- * A landmark record of one million visitors to Mt. Geumgang has been recorded in just six and half years since the launch of the tourism project by the sailing of the Geumgang cruise ship on November 18, 1998, run by Hyundai Asan Company.
- * Needless to say, it is a great national undertaking that paved the way for reconciliation and cooperation between South and North Korea



- * There is a saying that the pen is mightier than the sword. I'd like to replace the word "pen" with "tourism" to make it as " The tourism is mightier than the sword."
- * Since the inter-Korean summit in June 2000, ten rounds of reunions of separated families and relatives took place. Moreover, reunions of separated families are being held on a regular basis on national holidays and other occasions.
- * Increase of people to people exchange programs through tourism may be the most workable system at the present time through which bilateral cooperation can further be strengthened.
- * Against the backdrop of improving south-north relations in recent years, civic groups, non-governmental organization, and other private and governmental bodies including founder of CNN Ted Turner are proposing the creation of a peace park on the DMZ as a concrete step in achieving permanent peace on the peninsula.



- * Mr. Turner said in a press conference in Seoul recently: “I am very hopeful that we can have a peace park” within the DMZ, the uncontaminated belt dividing the two nations for the past 52 years.
- * The DMZ is an area of land encompassing 4 km-wide strip of land straddling the 152-mile DML. The July 27, 1953 Armistice Agreement established the DMZ along the parallel line between two opposing forces, and the truce ended the Korean War.
- * For over 50 years of division, the DMZ has become a sanctuary of various plants and animals species, which cannot be found anywhere else in the world due to environmental degradation. The DMZ can be converted into an International City of Culture and Tourism.
- * I sincerely hope that North Korea should realize that they have immense tourism market potentials in the North as well as DMZ areas that can be translated into billions of dollars.



- * If and when two Koreas join hands with members of international community in developing and utilizing tourism resources, North Korea will certainly be able to kill two rabbits with one stone, thus bringing about peace and economic prosperity to become a responsible member of global community.

- * This is a most up-date news that, just a few days before I care here,
a group of 300 South Koreans, the first batch of 4,700 South Koreans invited to North Korea, left for Pyongyang on Sept.26 for a two-day tour of historic remains and a gymnastic mass game in the North Korean capital. The remaining 4,400 people will fly via an inter-Korean temporary air route to the North Korean capital city of Pyangyang in 16 separate groups until Oct. 15.

- * This is a really surprising mega event that we, the South-North, have ever had in our history



- * Last but not the least, I'd like to stress once again that tourism will continue to play an important role in making peace in the Korean Peninsula in the years to come for eventual national reunification.
- * We, as travel trade businessmen, have an obligation.
- * Our global village needs thinkers, but it also needs doers and achievers. I do hope you will join the ongoing peace drive through tourism now well underway in Korea as doers and achievers.
- * Thank you very much for your attention.