

## KOREA CHAIR PLATFORM

# Her Excellency President Park Geun-hye: Statesmen's Forum Address at the Center for Strategic and International Studies

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A CSIS Statesmen's Forum Address by Her Excellency President Park Geun-hye as released by the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the United States.

President Hamre, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to meet you.

My thanks go out to the CSIS staff who worked so hard to organize this event.

Late last month, I was in New York to attend the UN General Assembly. A fortnight later, here I am back in Washington DC.

My trip between New York and Seoul and back to Washington is testament to the Korea-US alliance, which is being guided by the founding vision and ideals of the United Nations and which continues to evolve into an ever stronger and dynamic alliance.

In my keynote address at the 70th UN General Assembly, I spelled out Korea's commitment to contribute to international peace, security and shared prosperity. For Korea itself has been a beneficiary of the post-war order and a trusted partner of the United Nations.

The journey Korea embarked on in the seven decades since the war was a process of bringing to life the values and ideals of the United Nations and also a history of the Korea-US alliance that continues to evolve.

The Korea-US alliance was a steadfast buttress as Korea defended the values of democracy, the free market system and human rights on the Korean Peninsula, and developed into a vibrant economy from the ashes of war.

Our two countries have ventured together on this great journey spanning 70 years, and now we stand poised to make another leap forward. The journey ahead will be charted together by our two countries as staunch partners in the service of humanity.

Distinguished guests,

Countless opportunities and challenges will await us along our quest.

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As our wealth grows with economic interdependence,  
and as the frontiers of science and technology are gradually pioneered,  
mankind in this era of hyper-connection has enjoyed unprecedented levels of abundance.

But we know only too well that risks and challenges abound in our world.

As threats both old and new become blended,  
problems both regional and global co-exist,  
and the line between geo-political and geo-economic becomes blurred,  
these risks and challenges will only become more complex and multidimensional.

We now live in a world where no country can remain untouched from the events that occur  
across the globe, as new threats of climate change, infectious diseases, violent extremism and  
cyber attacks transpire across borders.

From Syria to Yemen, Ukraine and North Africa, many regions are ridden with strife. The result,  
sixty million refugees. The single largest humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II.

Northeast Asia is not an exception.

In my speech to a Joint Session of Congress two and a half years ago, I pointed to the ‘Asia  
Paradox’ - a paradox that continues unabated.

The phrase “return of geo-politics” no longer sounds out of place.  
Longstanding disputes and tensions are rearing their heads and the stage has expanded to include  
the seas, outer space and cyber space.

Over twenty years ago, Dr. Brzezinski warned in his book “The Grand Chessboard” that Asia, as  
a “potential political volcano,” could erupt.

Unless we carefully manage the situation, the economic dynamism of this region, which has lead  
world growth for decades, could be severely impaired.

One area where problems old and new are so intermeshed that finding a solution seems  
bewildering is none other than North Korea.

Even as I speak, North Korea’s nuclear program and efforts to advance its nuclear capabilities  
are underway. The Korean Peninsula stands at a crossroads due to the possibility of strategic  
provocations.

Distinguished guests,

Challenges and threats are arising on various planes - the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia and  
the global level. These form a complex vortex at the center of which lies the Korea-US alliance.

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Right here in Washington two years ago, President Obama and I laid out a vision on the way ahead for our alliance through the “Joint Declaration of the 60th Anniversary of the Korea-US Alliance.”

That was a vision of our alliance laying the groundwork for peace and unification on the Korea Peninsula, promoting peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia and moving towards a global partnership.

The Korea-US alliance has been evolving into a resilient and dynamic alliance by creatively adapting to the shifting environment, both foreign and domestic.

Now, our two countries are growing into partners as we display our joint leadership in issues of and beyond the regional scope.

Our alliance has grown through mutual trust and has inspired each other.

Now we will rise as an alliance leading the common good of humanity.

For the last two and half years, Korea and the United States have creatively resolved all of our sensitive pending issues.

We have reached an agreement on the condition-based transition of wartime operational control, wrapped up negotiations for cost-sharing of USFK and upgraded our combined defense posture.

The Korea-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, which was recently revised in 43 years, constitutes one of the three major institutional frameworks of our alliance, along with the Korea-US Mutual Defense Treaty and the KORUS FTA. The Nuclear Agreement will not only enable advanced and mutually beneficial nuclear cooperation, but also contribute to joint ventures into foreign markets and helps create jobs in both countries.

Korea is also a key partner of the United States in its re-balance to Asia policy.

Korea exhibits both characteristics of continental states and maritime states and is a geo-political and geo-economic strategic node in the region.

As a nation that has overcome the devastation of war and abject poverty to achieve both economic development and democratization, Korea has the will and capacity greater than any other to contribute to regional peace and cooperation.

Korea is building relations with fellow nations in the Northeast Asian region through not only bilateral but also mini-multilateral and multilateral cooperation.

In two weeks, we will host the Korea-Japan-China Trilateral Summit in Seoul after a three and a half year hiatus.

The upcoming Trilateral Summit will be an important occasion to pursue peace and stability in Northeast Asia as well as improve Korea-Japan relations.

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I hope this Trilateral Summit will provide an opportunity for Korea and Japan to clear away obstacles hindering closer bilateral ties and thus hold sincere discussions on the way forward towards a common future.

Furthermore, I believe we must make newly consolidated efforts among Korea, US and China in dealing with North Korean issues.

Such diverse forms of trilateral diplomacy are a new endeavor in Northeast Asia and these efforts will make valuable contributions to enhancing the bilateral and multilateral relations within the region.

The Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative(NAPCI), which I proposed in my 2013 address to a Joint Session of Congress, aims to accumulate a habit of cooperation and trust in Northeast Asia, the only region of the world that lacks mechanisms for multilateral cooperation.

So far, there has been notable progress. We are holding discussions on concrete measures for cooperation in many fields including nuclear safety, health security, climate change and disaster relief.

This initiative is compatible with U.S. efforts in advancing regional multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as the ARF and EAS. This will of course also contribute to resolving the aforementioned “Asia Paradox.”

Economic prosperity is also vital to building peace within the region.

Through the KORUS FTA, Korea and the United States have triggered trade liberalization throughout the region and laid the foundations for new economic progress.

In this context, Korea welcomes the TPP agreement reached last week.

Having already signed Trade Agreements with ten of the twelve TPP member countries, I believe Korea is a natural partner for the TPP as well.

Distinguished guests,

Korea and the United States are embarking on unprecedented partnerships in various fields of global health, development assistance, climate change and peace keeping operations.

We have joined forces in fighting Ebola in Africa and countering MERS in Korea. At the Second Global Health Security Initiative High-level Meeting held in Seoul last month, we reached an agreement to support developing countries with capacity building to counter infectious diseases.

As part of this joint effort, the Korean Government committed to provide a total of \$100 million to 13 developing countries.

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Korea and the United States are also working hand in hand to light the flame of hope in developing countries around the globe.

The KOICA-USAID MOU signed last year will be a stepping stone for countries like Ethiopia, Ghana, Vietnam and Cambodia as they pursue a brighter future.

Two weeks ago at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York, my government pledged \$200 million, over the next five years, to fund the “Better life for Girls” program, which will help improve the livelihood of girls in developing countries.

On the topic of climate change, Korea will play its part to make the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris a great success.

Korea has lead the founding of the Global Green Growth Institute(GGGI) and will faithfully implement our commitment of \$100 million to the Green Climate Fund(GCF), which will help developing countries cope with climate change.

Korea is an active participant in efforts to counter violent extremism and to alleviate the refugee issue.

Our government is currently assisting refugees from Syria and neighboring countries. As the first Asian nation to enact a refugee law, we have granted humanitarian status to over 600 Syrian refugees in Korea.

Korea is also participating in two Counter-ISIL Coalition Working Groups and has announced new commitments to provide engineering units and medical facilities for peace keeping operations in the Middle East and Northern Africa.

The G-20 Summit, the Nuclear Security Summit and the Global Health Security Agenda High-level Meeting are all global initiatives launched by the United States and carried on to the next level by Korea. This pattern of collaboration between Korea and the United States on global issues demonstrates that the Korea-US alliance is indeed evolving into a global alliance.

Distinguished Guests,

25 years ago in October 1990, Germany was reunified.

Yet, the division of Korea continues for seven decades and the Korean Peninsula remains the last vestige of the Cold War in this modern world.

Vietnam, Myanmar and now Cuba are all headed in the direction of reforms and open door policy. Iran has struck a nuclear agreement. Yet, North Korea clings to the path of isolation by continuing its military provocations and development of nuclear capabilities.

I believe the Korea-US alliance must exert our leadership in inducing North Korea to abandon its nuclear program, open up to the world and undertake internal reforms.



And in this process of dealing with North Korea, consistently adhering to the principles of our North Korea policy will be the most certain way to bring about a sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula.

At the same time, we will not give up our efforts for dialogue and cooperation. Nor will we turn our backs on humanitarian issues in North Korea because of political and military issues.

Around this time of year four years ago, I wrote an article in the prestigious “Foreign Affairs” outlining my thoughts on a “New Kind of Korea.”

And last year, in my speech at Dresden, Germany, I proposed three agendas as ways to establish peace and lay the foundations for unification : the agenda for humanity, the agenda for co-prosperity and the agenda for integration.

I sincerely hope the new Korea will be a place where freedom and dignity is guaranteed for all and all can realize their dreams.

The ultimate path to creating such a Korean Peninsula is none other than unification.

Unification will transform this divided Peninsula into a land of opportunity.

A unified Korea will be a generator of peace. No longer will nuclear weapons and long ranged missiles target our neighbors.

A unified Korea will be a stalwart guardian of freedom, democracy and human rights. These universal values of humanity will not only spread across the Korean Peninsula, but radiate from the Peninsula to the far corners of the Earth.

A unified Korea will be a promoter of prosperity. The diligent and creative peoples of both Koreas will come together to create new economic opportunities on the Korean Peninsula, in the region and beyond.

So far, the Korea-US alliance has written miraculous success stories in the southern half of the Peninsula. Now is the time to spread our history of creating miracles to the entire Peninsula.

The Korea-US alliance, which will be upgraded through unification, will continue to evolve into an alliance which stands for humanity.

Distinguished guests,

The world we live in is at a crucial crossroads.

Depending on how we respond, we can venture into the New Frontier that Mankind has but dreamt about, or we can fall into stagnation and decline.

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For the last 70 years, the Korea-US alliance has always stood on the right side of history and has overcome countless difficulties and challenges to achieve great accomplishments.

Our two countries will be trustworthy companions as Humanity ventures the road towards a future of hope to open the gates of peace.

I have the utmost confidence that you will all join us on this journey of hope.

Thank you.

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