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(The 9th Anniversary of the June 15 South-North Declaration) Special Lecture

## Be a Conscience in Action!

Former President Kim Dae-jung

Respected friends and colleagues,  
Thank you for joining us today.

When I think of the 6.15 and 10.4 declarations, I can't help being reminded of the late President Rho Moo-hyun. We were only two presidents who had experience of holding the inter-Korean summits in Pyongyang, which bears historic criticality.

Interestingly President Rho and I have a lot in common. He and I were born in the farmer's families. President Rho went to Busan Commercial High School, and I went to Mokpo Commercial High School (Laughter). President Rho was too poor to go to college, so was I (Laughter). Undaunted by poverty, he studied his way into a lawyer, while I worked my way into a successful businessman (Laughter). Since then, I had been enraged at the corrupt Lee Seung-man administration, while he had been angry with the Park Jung-hee dictatorship. That was why we turned to politics, leaving our own turf respectively.

In politics, we continued to fight against dictatorship. Along the course he and I developed a lot of similarities. We were in the same party, served the country as lawmakers together, and visited North Korea in turn. Thinking of a series of these moves, my thought went far even to suspect that he and I might be brothers in previous life (Laughter). At the news of his death, I felt that a half of my body collapsed. Just by having a glance at the past, no one would retort upon me for similarities he and I had shared. When I was in office, I appointed him as the Minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

Tonight, taking the opportunity of the event marking the 9th anniversary of the June 15 Inter-Korean Joint Declaration, I would like to say a few words for President Lee and North Korea.

President Lee has to know the sense of insecurity that Koreans are feeling as of now. Amid escalating tension, a company that has been doing business in Gaesung

in North Korea announced that it would withdraw from the Complex. North Korea lets out harsh rhetoric every day that Seoul's actions would be considered a declaration of war and faced with due consequences. Where do you find a country sustaining like this for over 60 years? I strongly urge President Lee that he should respect the two declarations that his predecessors signed on in order to find the way out of this deadlock.

The Guemgangsan tourism project, which Seoul unilaterally stopped, should be resumed. Seoul promised Pyongyang to build a dormitory for workers of the Gaesung Industrial Complex. Given the unfulfilled promises, I think that President Lee is obliged to fulfill our duties by abiding by the two official inter-Korean declarations, resuming the Guemgangsan tourism, and building the dormitory for Gaesung workers. Do you agree with me? (Applaud)

Next is for Chairman Kim Jung-il of North Korea. I was aware of some unsavory situations that North Korea had to cope with. In 1994, Pyongyang abandoned its nuclear program through the Geneva agreement. The US has promised to build a light water reactor and provide economic aids. But President Bush reneged on what President Clinton had accomplished thus far. It was where trust was broken down between the two.

And presidential candidate Obama pledged that if he was elected, he would meet with leaders of North Korea and Iran in person, and also said that his North Korean policy would be one pursued by the Clinton administration, rather than by the Bush administration. Listening to these statements, North Korea would have pinned high hopes on President Obama.

Actually President Obama held out hands to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, the Middle East, Russia, and even Cuba, but hardly mentioned a word about North Korea. North Korean would have felt insulted. They might think they would be deceived and sidelined again.

Nevertheless, North Korea's extreme provocations involving nuclear tests are by no means be justified. Chairman Kim should return to the Six-party talks sooner or later, and resolve the nuclear crisis through negotiations with the U.S., finally making the Korean peninsula nuclear-free. Denuclearization is a must. Recently I met with Chinese Vice-President Xi Jinping in Beijing for an hour, and several other leaders as well. I was assured that no one ever in Chinese leadership supported North Korea's going nuclear. I just knew that China considerably opposed North Korean nuclear armament. Looking at Chinese strong criticism against North Korea's nuclear tests and unanimous passage of a UN resolution denouncing North Korea, I could confirm my belief even confidently.

Even though North Korea feels deceived in an unjust way, building nuclear arsenal should not be an option. Where can the regime use nuclear weapons? Victims may include South Koreans. Why should Koreans, who have a proud history of being

unified for 1,300 years out of 5,000 years in existence, go to war to destroy each other? North Korea would be better off if it engages in dialogue with the U.S. and waits a little bit more until Washington crafts its North Korean policy. It is understandable that Pyongyang has every reason to be anxious, but it is also worthwhile to wait by trusting President Obama as he once pledged to follow what his liberal predecessor Clinton had done towards North Korea during his tenure.

When former US President Clinton visited Seoul recently, I had dinner with him. He expressed his regret of failing to carry through the Sunshine policy completely. We discussed a lot how to resolve the North Korean nuclear issues. President Clinton was absolutely against North Korean nuclear development, but said that when a deal was made, one had to care about how the other party would feel, and resort to a give-and-take approach. I've made several recommendations and he promised to deliver them to President Obama and Secretary Clinton.

I firmly believe that the U.S. should honor and keep its words to North Korea such as security assurance, economic restoration, and establishment of bilateral relationship with the U.S. and with Japan respectively. Actually North Korean nuclear issues were cleared off at the Geneva agreement in 1994, and again at the Six-party talks in 2005, which was captured in the 9.19 Joint Statement. That is, North Korea has already agreed to give up its nuclear ambition, while America agreed to open relations with the North, settle the peace regime on the Korean peninsula, and provide economic aids to the North. Therefore, Chairman Kim should engage in dialogues and exert patience along the course. Resorting to nuclear threats is an ill-placed idea, I would say.

In other words, what I have meant so far is to use win-win diplomacy. Diplomacy is successful when you are happy and your counterparty is also happy. North Korean went so far as to abandon its nuclear program and long-range missiles. So the U.S should have provided what it could give to the North in return. That means the U.S should have opened diplomatic ties, provided economic aides, and forged the peace treaty for the Korean peninsula. Everything has been agreed, but implementation was not pursued.

When President Obama was elected, I was as happy as I were elected. And when Hillary Clinton was named to be the State Secretary, I felt great as she is the wife of President Clinton, who I had shared vision. The Geneva agreement engineered denuclearization of the Korean peninsula through Pyongyang's commitment to abandon its nuclear development program, and outstanding issues regarding the North Korean nuclear development were agreed through the Six-party process. I also told President Clinton, "What's the matter? We have North Korean and American commitment. The Obama government is intrinsically different from the Bush administration. How did it come that they lose opportunities of assuring Pyongyang to wait for some time?"

I would like to reiterate my points for President Lee. Many say across the country that democracy is backpedaling under the Lee government. We can read what Koreans are feeling from the fact that more than 5 million people have paid their last respects to the late former President Rho Moo-hyun at altars set up across the nation. A spirit of uneasiness falls upon me, when I think a decade-old democracy fed by enormous sacrifice of a lot of Koreans for the previous 50 years may be faltering.

Democracy is the foundation of a country. How many did shed their blood for democracy? A lot of people lost their lives in the Gwangju uprising and the People's Revolutionary Party incidents. People's power overwhelmed the past three dictators of Lee Seung-man, Park Jung-hee, and Chun Doo-whan. Afterwards, power transition from the ruling to the opposition took place peacefully and gave birth to the People's Government, or the Kim Dae-jung government. Democracy continued as President Rho Moo-hyun was elected. Korean people should not forget that the people power brought down all dictators and restored democracy. (Applaud)

I can say with confidence based on my long career and experience as a politician that if President Lee and his government continue to take the same path as they have done, Korean people and the government would be caught up in an ugly and even miserable situation. Having said that, I sincerely wish that President Lee can make a big decision to turn the situation for the better.

On top of it, I would like to ask all of you with all my heart and soul. Let us be a conscience in action. A conscience that does not act is effectively on the side of evil. How many people did the dictator regimes kill? We have to do our part not to waste their sacrifice in vain and guard democracy that came hard to us. Everyone has conscience in their most recess. Even though you know that it is right to follow the voice coming out of your conscience, you don't follow if because you are afraid that it may lead to loss, damages, fear, and inconvenience. Because of such a collective negligence, righteous and courageous people become victimized, going through a lot of hardship for others. In the mean time, ones who ignored the voices of conscience enjoy the most benefits of democracy that rooted in sacrifices of the righteous and courageous. Is this situation fair?

Now we lost President Rho Moo-hyun. When he was struggling to cope with the undue hardship, if only one-tenth of 5 million mourners, or 500,000 people voiced out, "Stop! President Rho does not deserve the disgrace!" It is unjustifiable that prosecutors leak ungrounded suspicions to media, and give him unbearable stress, what would happen? If only 500,000 people took actions according to the voices of conscience, President Rho would not have left us in that sad way. How shameful and embarrassing the situation has become!

I ask you all that if you want to live in a country with freedom, please act according to your conscience. If you want to make a country peaceful and just, you must be a

conscience in action. An apathetic attitude is effectively on the side of evil, letting alone a submissive attitude to a dictator and a flattery attitude to buy a position with influence and power. The precondition for Korea to become a true democracy, enjoy fair economy, and build friendly and brotherly inter-Korean relationship is that we have to express ourselves and act through our conscience. When election comes, you have to vote for a good political party. When responding to opinion polls, you have to answer according to your conviction. If 470 million Koreans follow through conscience, advising each other, accommodating criticism with open mind, and encouraging one another for fairness and goodness, how can any dictatorship arise again and only a privileged small group of people enjoy most of benefits at the expense of majority's benefits?

Koreans are against North Korean nuclear tests and missile launch. There is no question about it. But the opposition should be raised within the framework of the six-party process and on the setting of dialogues with the U.S. The opposition should not be ill-guided towards any war. Even though it will take 100 years or 1,000 years before reunification, war shouldn't be an option.

Let us heed to voices of conscience inside us to keep democratic freedom, economy for ordinary people, and peace in inter-Korean relationship intact and act to build a country, where all of us feel at ease in living and find hope for the future.

Thank you.