



HAN SEUNG-SOO

Former Prime Minister of Republic of Korea

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be invited to speak to you at the initiating luncheon of the World Policy Conference today in this beautiful Marrakech. I would like to thank Dr. de Montbrial for his invitation and kind words of introduction.

Forty years of experience in the academia and government have taught me that luncheon speeches are the most difficult of all speeches to give, particularly at the conference of this kind when all the participants have worked very hard in the morning and therefore are tired and hungry, just waiting to enjoy the happiness of eating.

I know, at this moment, I cannot be the most popular person in this gathering. However, I must hasten to add that you must not blame me but Thierry de Montbrial. It was he who asked me to trouble you. Indeed, I agree to the saying that whoever invented the concept of the luncheon speech, he or she did not know much either about speeches or about luncheons.

Luncheons, especially luncheons like this one, should be about meeting new people, getting acquainted to and making friends and sharing each other's experiences and lives. Today, we are in the perfect place to do just that. In Morocco, a land of encounters, we are in the midst of the brilliant legacies of the historical encounters between the East and West.

Everywhere, we look in this beautiful city, we are constantly surprised and amazed by Morocco's rich and diverse culture woven through centuries-long exchanges between different civilizations.

A short stroll around Marrakech's bustling city square and delightful markets reminds us how important it is to celebrate and build upon each other's differences. Not a single shop is the same, yet they all constitute a thread in creating a unique fabric of harmony friendship and prosperity.



I believe that such a spirit of openness and tolerance is what our conference should be all about. Our discussions for the next two days will not only be of a high intellectual standard and excellence but should also be full of honesty and acceptance.

We may differ in our views, yet we will be united in the resolve to tackle the pertinent issues that need to be addressed for the sake of peace, security, prosperity and welfare of the humanity, now and in the future.

In this regard, I hope that we can draw lessons from the old world of explorers, storytellers, astronomers, thinkers and poets who had built the fascinating city of Marrakech that we know today.

Like the travelers and explorers of the old world, let us cultivate a taste of learning. Let us take a sincere interest in and show a real curiosity about *others*. When we discuss the future design of global governance, be it in the area of peace and war, climate change, finance or proliferation, let us remember that we have to tend to everyone's needs and concerns.

Like merchants and storytellers of the old world, we should be bold in our approach and enthusiastic about the stories that we have. Let us think about what contributions we can make. We may not have correct answers to all questions but that should not discourage us from putting forward the most challenging ideas and daring questions.

Like the astronomers who looked up to the sky and aimed at the stars, let us be ambitious. The agenda before us is challenging, but we will remember how we have overcome difficulties in the past through co-operation and friendship. We will stay confident and optimistic that we will eventually find the answer to all our questions sooner than our critics think.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have attended many international conferences of this kind in the past, the most prominent being the World Economic Forum in Davos. However, although the issues we discuss at these fora are imminent and relevant, the demarcation between the private and public interest was always obscured, blurred.

Therefore, I am particularly pleased to attend this World Policy Conference because it predominantly concentrates on the various problems of externalities that instantly and distinctly involved the role of government.

As a long time government official as well as a former professor of economics with particular emphasis on public economics, I regard the World Policy Conference unique in the world in that sense. The World Policy Conference is bound to succeed when it continues to differentiate itself from many other similar international fora.

I sincerely hope that this year's World Policy Conference and its annual successor will greatly contribute to the innovation and development of public governance, be it national, regional or global, for the sake of humanity.



Now going back to the earlier part of my speech, today's luncheon is about getting to know more about one another. Hence, my concluding words as a guest luncheon speaker today is a simple one: to remind you of this simple message, that we are all friends today. Please enjoy your lunch.

Thank you for your attention. Shukran alaa istimaikum!