

YUN BYUNG-SE

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea

President de Montbrial,

Former Prime Minister Kiviniemi

Your Royal Highness Turki Al Faisal

Former Deputy Prime Minister Manley,

Chairwoman Guigou,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Last weekend, I came back from London, after taking part in the first Korea-UK Ministerial Strategic Dialogue and the Conference on Afghanistan. On that occasion, I had the privilege of speaking before Chatham House on Northeast Asia and the world. In that speech, I likened the outbreak of multifarious problems and crises these years to the opening of Pandora's Box.

Indeed, there seems to be a growing number of analyses that echo this kind of observation. For one thing, Dr. Brzezinski said, in *Foreign Policy* magazine last July, quote "we're seeing the kind of world in which there is enormous turmoil and fragmentation and uncertainty – not a single central threat to everybody, but a lot of diversified threats to almost everybody" unquote.

This harsh reality manifested itself at a series of recent multilateral summits, starting from the UN meetings last September, the ASEM summit in October, to the APEC, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit and G-20 in November. During these meetings, there were hot debates on a wide range of issues, such as climate change, education, the Ebola outbreak, Ukraine, foreign terrorist fighters and ISIL, trade liberalization and financial cooperation, development cooperation, disaster relief, human rights and humanitarian assistance, as well as WMD issues like North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

It might be an irony that our age of enhanced interconnectivity would be an era of so many simultaneous challenges and crises. But at its heart, all this might be an aspect of the new global order taking shape. For us, however, there is a sense of déjà vu.

Twenty-five years ago in Europe, the fall of the Berlin Wall heralded the end of the Cold War and ushered in German unification and European integration, along with the transformation of the CSCE into the OSCE.

Coincidentally, on the other part of the globe, in the Asia-Pacific, countries like Korea and Australia launched a new regional integration mechanism called APEC, binding the vast regions of Northeast and Southeast Asia, Oceania and the western Pacific in a single regional economic grouping. Also at that time, Korea and ASEAN began their dialogue partnership, which will commemorate its 25th anniversary through a Special Summit meeting to be held in Busan this week. These momentous movements for integration and cooperation set the stage for a "Europe, whole and free" and the "Asia-Pacific Age."

The unfolding post-Cold War era was the time when Korea took advantage of the fast changing international security environment to achieve an important diplomatic breakthrough. Our policy of Nordpolitik successfully harnessed the winds of change in the communist bloc, and secured diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, eastern Europe and China, as well as seats at the UN for both South and North Korea.



The ensuing peace and stability, in our region and the world, helped achieve Korea's mature democracy and robust economy. If history is any lesson to us, the bewildering eruptions of complex issues are not just daunting challenges for Korea and the world, but could turn into opportunities, once we pull together our wisdom and insight.

In this regard, I am delighted to welcome the 7th World Policy Conference, the first ever in Korea, and indeed in Asia. This conference is reputed for its comprehensive perspective in addressing major regional and global issues. I am confident that it will be a source of inspiration for Korean diplomacy – especially as we envision a new kind of Korean peninsula, a new Northeast Asia and a new world in the face of geo-political and geo-economic challenges.

This morning, you already heard from my President and her Senior Secretary for Foreign Affairs about our Trustpolitik, as well as various aspects of our foreign and security policy, in the context of global challenges and regional shifts. On my part, I wish to complement their messages by focusing more on the nature of the challenges we face, their historical context and Korea's place in this interconnected world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the foundation of the UN. But for Koreans, it also means the 70th year of the division of the Korean peninsula, which already holds the record for the longest armistice in contemporary history. That forms the backdrop of the transformational challenges we are facing, and I would liken them to "triple waves" coming concurrently.

The first wave comes from the Korean peninsula itself.

No doubt, the most pressing and urgent issue is North Korea's nuclear weapons programs. Since Kim Jong Un entered the scene, North Korea amended its constitution to declare itself a "nuclear weapon state" and officially adopted the policy of developing nuclear weapons and the economy at the same time. Even at this very moment, Pyongyang is advancing its nuclear weapons capability through miniaturization and diversification, and is upgrading its delivery systems. This makes North Korea's nuclear capability much more dangerous than that of Iran.

But a more fundamental question is how to deal with North Korea especially under the young, new leader, and bring about a sustainable peace on the peninsula. Unless we understand this matrix, prescriptions for North Korea's nuclear weapons programs and other bizarre behavior may not go anywhere.

In this regard, North Korea's thin-skinned response to its human rights issue this year is truly noteworthy. Pyongyang's sensitivity to the resolution on North Korean Human Rights, recently adopted at the General Assembly Third Committee, was notches above that to the UN Security Council's resolutions against its three nuclear tests – and the reason is self-evident. North Korea has also publicly stated it will engage in a great war for unification in the coming years.

North Korea's internal contradictions, including human rights problems, are part of the Korean peninsula's hard reality. Such reality underscores the necessity of collaboration between the Korean government and the international community to bring about enduring peace and ultimate peaceful unification. Certainly, our priority is given to induce, or press, if necessary, North Korea to make a right strategic decision and return to the fold as a responsible member of the international community.

The winds of change, from Europe more than two decades ago, have been sweeping eastwards to Asia and reached the shores of Myanmar. Indeed, Myanmar provides an instructive lesson for North Korea – after seventeen years of ASEAN membership, Myanmar took up the presidency for the first time this year, and successfully hosted the ASEAN+3 and East Asia Summit, involving its former adversaries.

The second wave comes from Northeast Asia.



The region's turbulent currents are evident in the geopolitical flashpoints in the East China and South China Seas, and off the Korean peninsula. This part of the world also has longstanding problems, such as the North Korean nuclear issue, as well as territorial, historical tensions and nationalism. It is also witnessing the rise of newer ones, like maritime, space and cyberspace security. Furthermore, many bilateral relationships between regional countries are under strain.

Still, these developments are symptoms or manifestations only – at their heart is the newly emerging regional security landscape. This is being shaped by actors, big and small, and their sometimes conflicting dreams and visions: rising China; Japan pursuing a new post-war order; Russia looking towards East Asia; the U.S. rebalancing to Asia; and North Korea trying to survive turbulent waters. South Korea is positioned to manage challenges by using its status and influence. All of them form Northeast Asia's new landscape. The question is how to reconcile these different dreams in a way amenable to regional peace and prosperity.

The third wave is the set of challenges to Korea posed by the global problems I have mentioned.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, speaking about the Ebola outbreak recently, stressed that no one was immune from events happening at the opposite end of the world. And indeed, no one can stay above the fray, when global issues such as climate change, poverty and development cooperation, epidemics, terrorism and the proliferation of WMDs touch us all. This is all the more so for Korea, a key member of the G-20, and the three key organs of the UN, i.e., Security Council, Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Earlier today my President eloquently spelled out Korea's role in dealing with such issues. As Foreign Minister, I would reinforce that message in a wider context and in terms of this government's new diplomatic paradigm, i.e., "global happiness." More than any previous administration in Korea, it is driven by a commitment to globalism. This is why Korea is strengthening its global partnership with the U.S., with EU members including the UK and France, and with various groups of middle powers – like MIKTA, composed of Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey and Australia, the Visegrad Four and the Nordic Council.

Korea is active in a wide array of global issues. First of all, in the field of climate change, Korea is trying to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries in the run-up to next year's COP21 in Paris, through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), both headquartered in Korea.

In global health, Korea is dispatching a medical team to fight the Ebola outbreak and hosting the high level meeting of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) next year. Some of you from Europe may agree with me that sending a medical team to an Ebola-stricken region is arguably more complex than military operations. In the process, we are in effect opening new horizons in "health diplomacy."

And on development cooperation, we are contributing to the post-2015 development agenda by initiating and promoting the Busan Global Partnership, which is gaining wider acceptance as a new paradigm in this field.

Our firm commitment to international peace and prosperity stems from Korea's unique historical experience. During the course of the 20th century, we had to overcome three decades of foreign occupation, a fratricidal war and extreme poverty, all to achieve the "Miracle on the Han river." Throughout this, the help from the United Nations and the international community was crucial. Now, we think it is time for Korea to play a due role commensurate with its growing capability and to share our experience with those in need.

Ladies and gentlemen,

History is replete with ups and downs, progressions and retrogressions – but the long arc of history has progressed towards human dignity and freedom. In that context, the post-Cold War era is certainly better than the Cold War period, which was in turn more bearable than the age of Hot War. There is no denying the progress made in many parts of the world – in terms of the spread of democracy, economic prosperity, human security and international peace.



The task remaining before us is how to make the world safer and the benefits of prosperity accessible to many others still in the shadows. As Korea transformed challenges into opportunities for growth, it is willing to join the efforts to connect the separate dots and reinforce weak links.

In three weeks time, we will greet the new year. As I said before, for us Koreans, 2015 marks the 70th year of both the liberation and the division of the peninsula. This means that the true and ultimate liberation of Korea will remain unfulfilled unless we are one people again. As President Park made clear in her Dresden speech last March, a reunified Korea will be nuclear weapons-free; a beacon for human rights and democracy; at peace with neighbors; an engine of global economic growth; and a promoter of regional and global peace and prosperity.

So, I sincerely hope each and every one of you here today will be our companions, as we ride the triple waves and continue our journey towards a peaceful, reunified Korea. Thank you.