

UPF Estonia's One Korea Peace Game - Footballers Send Hope to Korea

Avo Martinson
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Tallinn, Estonia – On September 15, 2024, the Sõle Football Stadium in Tallinn hosted the fifth annual One Korea Peace Game, aimed at supporting the reunification of North and South Korea. The event was organized by UPF-Estonia to celebrate unity through sport.

Mr. Avo Martinson, president of UPF-Estonia, opened the event by welcoming the participants and highlighting the symbolic nature of the game, which took place on the Kopli Peninsula – a subtle nod to the divided Korean Peninsula. He emphasized the importance of the event in sending a message of peace and hope to the Korean people.



Special guests included **Mrs. Arina Han**, chair of the Estonian-Korean Cultural Association, who delivered heartfelt remarks. Mrs. Han expressed her firm belief that Korea will one day reunify and peace will come. She also reminded the audience of the significance of Chuseok, a major Korean harvest festival that fell on September 17, during which Koreans honor their ancestors and express gratitude for the year's harvest.

Mr. Martinson noted that sports have a unique power to unite people. He explained that this was the fifth time the One Korea Peace Game has taken place in Estonia, with the first being held in 2017. The event began in partnership with **Mr. Reigo Tõnsberg**, co-founder of the largest summer football tournament in the Baltics, the Pärnu Summer Cup.

The football match ended with a score of 15:14, though the real victory lay in the message of unity and

peace the game promoted. The stadium was adorned with a large "One Korea Peace Game" banner, colorful balloons, and two symbolic doves of peace, encapsulating the spirit of the event.



At the conclusion of the game, all players were awarded commemorative diplomas and peace medals. In a moving gesture, the participants signed a "Peace Ball," which will be sent as a gift to Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder of UPF.



Following the football match, a celebratory luncheon was held at the nearby Lyra House, hosted by the Korea-Estonia Cultural Society. Attendees enjoyed traditional Korean dishes, including kimchi, and witnessed a special performance by **Ms. Jevgenija**, who performed a drum dance in traditional Korean attire. She had recently returned from South Korea, where she won first place in a competition among 21 participants.

Mr. Martinson reflected that, just as there were people who believed in the independence of the Baltic States in 1991, today we believe in the possibility for dialogue and reunification in Korea. The dream of reopening the 38th parallel and bringing together families as brothers and sisters, parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren, remains a shared hope.