

A cause that is close to my heart, the dream of peace and unity in Korea

Donald Trump
September 11, 2021
7th Rally of Hope - Think Tank 2022



It is a great and profound honor to address this 7th Rally of Hope and to speak to you today about a cause that is very close to my heart, the dream of peace and unity on the Korean Peninsula.

I want to thank the Universal Peace Federation and in particular Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, a tremendous person, for her incredible work on behalf of peace all over the world. Her story of escaping from North Korea at five years old at the outset of the Korean War is an amazing story of in faith in almighty God.

I also want to thank her husband Rev. Moon, an incredible man, for founding The Washington Times, an organization for which I have tremendous respect and admiration. They have done an incredible job. And I want to congratulate Dr. Moon on the launch of the new global initiative, THINK TANK 2022, bringing together experts from around the world to focus on solving the conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

As all of you know, the United States has a pivotal role to play in forging lasting peace in Korea. One of my proudest accomplishments as president was to help create a new path toward a brighter future for all Koreans, North and South, a path by which the divisions and hardships of the past might one day be really healed to a level nobody thought might be possible before and the entire peninsula might achieve its true potential - which is incredible.

When I came into office, the situation facing the world was very bleak. For decades, past leaders had failed to address the growing threat of conflict in that part of the globe. Former President Obama even told me that the situation on the Korean Peninsula was one of his biggest concerns in the entire world. Looking back today, it is easy to forget how dangerous the situation was when I was elected. Missiles were flying, nuclear weapons were being tested and powerful threats were being issued every single day. As president, I knew that I could not simply sit by and wait for this problem to get worse. Every administration before me had failed, and that is why I was determined to pursue a different approach.

Under my leadership, the United States adopted a policy of unprecedented strength, doing more than any prior administration to ensure that America and its allies could always protect our citizens.

The United States took an unyielding stand militarily, diplomatically, and economically. We made it clear to all that we would never be threatened with nuclear weapons. And as many of you will remember, the rhetoric got very, very tough and nasty [and mean]. Yet at the same time, from the very beginning I always left the door open for engagement and dialogue. I knew that while any leader can wage war, it takes true courage to pursue a chance for peace. I believe that leaders should never be afraid to talk if there is an opportunity to create a better world for their people.

Central to the bold diplomacy my administration pursued were our close partnerships with our allies, South Korea, and Japan. President Moon and Prime Minister Abe both deserve enormous credit. They did a fantastic job.

Together over the four years we made more progress than anyone thought possible. We passed several unprecedented and unanimous resolutions through the United Nations Security Council. We brought our hostages back home. So importantly, and I'll say it again: we brought our hostages back home. And we worked with North Korea to bring back the remains of our fallen heroes to American soil. In 2018 I became the first American president to ever sit down with the leader of North Korea when I met Chairman Kim Jong Eun in Singapore. There we established a productive relationship and we agreed to a critical goal; and it was indeed a very critical goal, of complete denuclearization - the most important word you will ever hear.

In 2019 I became the first American president to set foot in North Korea when we met again at the DMZ. Although it became clear in our second summit in Hanoi that North Korea was not yet ready to make a deal, I remained full of hope for the future. To this day, Chairman Kim has kept the promise he made to me in Singapore that there would be no more long-range missile launches or nuclear weapon testing. North Korea has not conducted a major weapons test since 2017 and for the sake of the entire world, I hope that continues. But it will take leadership to make sure that it all works.

Over the past year and a half, a global pandemic has ravaged the planet. Sadly, the Korean Peninsula and many other places around the earth were hit very, very hard. The Corona virus has caused immense suffering to all of our people. As we emerge from this pandemic that has tragically claimed so many lives we pray that all sides can agree that now is not the time for more conflict but for cooperation. It is not the time for renewing hostilities; it is the time for replenishing hope. And it is not the time to be focused on building up our nuclear stockpiles but to be focused on building up our nations to make a better and more beautiful world. I truly believe that an extraordinary future awaits the people of North Korea, and I have faith that, if they pursue the path of denuclearization, they will make that future a magnificent reality. Until that blessed day comes, the indispensable force for peace on the Korean Peninsula remains a strong America. As we have recently seen in other parts of the world, weakness only invites more violence and chaos.

The true task for all of us who pray for peace on the Korean Peninsula is to ensure that all our nations are not only great in power and rich in wealth, but even more, we must be strong in spirit. Every nation must summon the will to protect its citizens and its allies and to leave a better future for our citizens. These are the forces and values that inspire change, that move countries and make history, and that ultimately lead to peace. As I have argued many times before, if we want peace, we must have patriots and we must honor the God-given rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all nations and people everywhere.

Over the past four years my administration proved that there is no limit to the progress that can be achieved when the patriotic and peace-loving nations of the world stand proud, confident and united on behalf of their people.

Four years ago, I had the great honor of visiting the city of Seoul and addressing the Korean National Assembly. And a great honor indeed it was. As I told the people of the South Korean Republic that day (and I will tell them again anytime they want to hear it), what they have achieved on the Peninsula is just amazing - in just a few decades should be an inspiration to the entire world, to the entire planet / the inspiration they have caused for the entire planet is unbelievable, and I congratulate you again and again. In less than one lifetime, they took a war-torn land and turned it into one of the great nations and great democracies of the world while standing as America's friend and ally. Their example reminds all of us who strive for peace and for a better future that we should never give up and never, ever lose hope. With faith in God and love for our fellow citizens, let us work together to achieve a brighter and more brilliant tomorrow.

Thank you and God bless you all.