

I would like to make it very clear to all of you today, to maintain peace in the Korean Peninsula and to maintain stability in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States forces in the Republic of Korea is necessary. The heightening of tension over the North Korean nuclear issue illustrates how potentially unstable the Korean Peninsula can be. We support the Kuala Lumpur accord reached between the United States and North Korea on the nuclear issue. Joint Korea-United States efforts to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem must be solidly maintained until all suspicions about North Korea's nuclear development have been removed. Accordingly, the Korean Government will exert its utmost efforts to ensure that the United States-North Korea agreed framework signed in Geneva is faithfully implemented.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, peace on the Korean Peninsula can only take root through dialog and cooperation between the South and the North, the two parties directly concerned. Without dialog, nothing can be accomplished. I am thus grateful that both the President and Congress have stressed the central importance of the South-North dialog.

We are exerting our utmost efforts to make this year a historic year, one which sees the opening of a new chapter in South-North relations, as we mark the 50th anniversary of Korea's joyous liberation, as well as its tragic national division. The Republic's unification policy aims to ultimately make Korea one nation and one state by gradually restoring a sense of national community through peaceful coexistence, reconciliation, and cooperation with the North. To that end, stability in North Korea is indispensable; therefore, we are pursuing a joint national development plan designed to promote the mutual prosperity of the South and the North. It is for this reason that the Republic is planning to shoulder the brunt of the costs of providing North Korea with the Korean-model light-water nuclear reactors and playing a central role in the overall project.

For the same reason, we are expanding South-North economic cooperation. Purely out of compassion for our Northern brethren, we are also providing rice to North Korea to help alleviate their difficult food situation. No matter how long and rough the road leading to the unification of the Korean Peninsula may be, we will continue to travel that road patiently but without rest. When the day comes that the Korean Peninsula finally becomes one nation again, genuine peace and prosperity will finally prevail in Northeast Asia.

This unified Korea, I believe, will make a major contribution to the progress of global civilization and the prosperity of all mankind.

Members of Congress, to foster the prosperity of the entire Asia-Pacific region, we must make sure that the ideals of free trade and liberalization

take root throughout the region. After World War II, the open markets of the Free World, under the leadership of the United States, were a critical factor in reducing poverty and defeating Communism.

Korea has indeed benefited greatly from free trade. I believe that all countries in the Asia-Pacific region should also benefit from free trade. It is precisely for this reason that, together with President Clinton, I have been devoting particular efforts to the development of the APEC forum. The Korean Government is also actively supporting multilateral cooperation under the new WTO system.

The United States is our Republic's biggest trading partner, while Korea has grown to be America's sixth largest market. Last year, bilateral trade exceeded U.S. \$40 billion, and it will soon reach the \$50 billion level. Korean-United States trade has generally been balanced, although recently Korea's trade deficit with the United States has risen rapidly.

Through our *seguehwa*, or globalization policy, the Korean Government has been actively promoting openness and autonomy in the economy and every other sector of society. We will continue to pursue our policy of liberalization in earnest and, by joining the OECD, we will raise our degree of openness to the level of the advanced countries. Among the developing countries, Korea has been liberalizing its markets at the fastest rate. As we continue to pursue autonomy and openness in the future, the Republic will become an even stronger partner of the United States in boosting the prosperity of the entire Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, and Members of Congress, a new world is unfolding before us in the 21st century. The importance of the role of the United States, however, has not diminished.

The Republic of Korea will expand its role and responsibilities in the international community. We plan to expand our assistance to developing countries drawing upon our past development experiences and also actively participating in international efforts to solve global problems.

The Korean people are filled with the hope that the cooperation between our two countries in preparation for the Asia-Pacific era of the 21st century will help turn the wheels of history swiftly forward. We are filled with determination to build a unified Korea and work with the American people as partners in peace and prosperity and thereby make a greater contribution to the world and to humanity.

This is the message from the Korean people I wish to deliver to you today. I am certain that you will recognize these sentiments, for they are the same as those which forged the American spirit and built such a great nation in the New World.

Let us march forward together shoulder to shoulder. Let us together open a

new century and a new world that will abound with limitless dreams, hopes and possibilities.

Many things have their limitations, but not the yearning of humanity for peace and prosperity. Like our friendship, it is boundless.

Thank you very much.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 11 o'clock and 44 minutes a.m., the President of the Republic of Korea, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The assistant to the Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The Ambassadors, Ministers, and *Chargés d'Affaires* of foreign governments.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 11 o'clock and 45 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess until 12:15 p.m.

□ 1215

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH) at 12:15 p.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minute on each side.

FACTS CONCERNING MEDICARE

(Mr. EHLERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, today, as for the past several months, Members will hear during these 1-minute speeches various screams of anguish about the Medicare system, particularly from the other side of the aisle.

Today I come here as a scientist, because I am interested in the facts. I