

Opening the Path for Genuine Dialogue

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Statement upon arrival in Beijing after visiting North Korea

Beijing Airport, Beijing, China



Photo date and location unknown

Mrs. Moon and I have just returned from visiting North Korea at the official invitation of the government of North Korea. This was for me an historic opportunity to return to North Korea for the first time in more than forty years.

No one can claim more justification than I for harboring feelings of ill will against North Korea. I received severe persecution from the current government of North Korea because of my position as a religious leader and my unswerving anti-communist principles. I was tortured harshly and then imprisoned for nearly three years in a labor camp. There I witnessed the deaths of many who had also been imprisoned without cause. The fact that I am alive today can only be described as a miracle and as the result of God's special blessing and protection.

I have just completed a visit to North Korea in my position as the founder of the Unification Church and in the spirit of true love. True love is love that loves even what cannot be loved. It is the love that Jesus spoke of when he instructed us to love our enemies.

As I set foot in Pyongyang, my heart was as clear as the autumn sky. I did not feel that I was entering the house of my enemy, rather that I was returning to my hometown, to visit the house of my brother. I carried with me to North Korea the principle by which I have always lived, that is, to forgive, love and unite.

It is widely known that during the four-decades-long Cold War between the Western and Communist blocs, I was among the world's strongest anti-communists. As founder of the International Federation for Victory over Communism, I devoted my life to the struggle against communism.

My ideology for victory over communism, however, was never intended to bring death to those who espouse communism. My desire has always been to bring life. The goal of my ideology has been to bring salvation to all humanity.

As communist regimes fell in country after country following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, I moved quickly to educate the people of those countries with a new value system. I devoted my full energies to giving life to those countries. Thousands of politicians, academicians and university students from the

Soviet Union and the newly democratized countries of Eastern and Central Europe visited the United States and Japan at my invitation. There I taught them the concepts of Godism and head-wing philosophy, which I believe will underpin real and lasting democracy. These people have returned to their countries, and many are dedicating themselves to revive their shattered homelands.

In order to ensure that the world does not miss the opportunity for peace in the post-Cold War era, I founded the Federation for World Peace. Through this organization, I am taking the lead in the effort for world peace.

During my visit to North Korea, I was reunited with members of my family. At the moment we met my heart was filled with joy, but also a sense of deep pain. The pain was for my numerous fellow citizens who are still separated from their loved ones across the 38th parallel and are denied the opportunity to meet their families. For those with loved ones who have already died, the pain of separation cannot be relieved for all eternity. For their sake, we must redouble our efforts to erase the tragedy of national division and family separation as quickly as possible. In my meeting with President Kim Il Sung, I requested that he work to bring about visits between members of families separated between North and South.

I believe that a resolution to the issue of communism and the accomplishment of world peace is not merely a matter of ideological confrontation and education. Economic assistance is also an important component in the effort to bring life to the people who have been ruled by communism. Thus, in China, for example, I am building the Panda Motors Industrial City with an investment of 250 million dollars.

This is also my outlook on North Korea. There is a difference, though, in that North Korea is not a foreign country to me. It is the country of my brothers and sisters and of my people. Blood is thicker than water. I love the twenty million citizens of North Korea as my own brothers and sisters. I love them intensely.

The unity of the homeland, a goal shared by all of our people, cannot be accomplished through political, economic or military means. None of these will succeed unless they are preceded by another element. That element is true love. Efforts to improve relations between the two sides in political, economic or military fields will lead to unity only if they are motivated by true love.

I have always believed that even the small act of sharing a spoonful of rice with my brother or sister represents a positive step that would someday lead to unity. I have confirmed this conviction through the trip I have just completed. It is in this spirit that I stated my willingness to establish a wider relationship of economic cooperation with North Korea and to participate actively in their economic development projects.

I entered Pyongyang this time as an apostle of peace. My firm conviction is that under no circumstances can we have another war on the Korean Peninsula. We cannot pit the people of Korea against each other. I find the recent discussion in the United States, both in and out of government circles, about air attacks against North Korean nuclear facilities to be extremely dangerous. An attack against North Korea would trigger an all-out war that would result in tragic consequences beyond imagining.

I ask the United States to be extremely careful about making threats against the right of a given people to maintain their existence. The nuclear issues involving North Korea can be resolved peacefully. This can be done if the issues are addressed in the context of a genuine dialogue conducted in the spirit of mutual respect. I traveled to Pyongyang to open the path for such dialogue, and I have returned from North Korea after opening wide that path.

It is my hope that North and South Korea will put aside their confrontational relationship. The time has come for us to come together in a spirit of reconciliation and love so that we may begin to resurrect the common heritage of our people. The time has come, as the Bible says, to beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. We must work quickly to prepare for the future of our unified country in the coming twenty-first century.