

Remarks for GAIC-MUN 2017 – Former diplomat, Sunghwan Kim

Good afternoon,

Dear young friends, our future diplomats.

I am pleased to be here at Gyeonggi Academy International Conference – Model United Nations 2017 and I wish to welcome all the participating students from home and abroad. This is my third attendance in this conference and I am pleased to note that the conference evolves in the most desirable direction year by year in that agenda items have become very specific and sophisticated and formation becomes more realistic. As you already saw the opening motion picture, I understand that you will be dealing with various issues under the concept of ‘Action for Humanity’. High School Committee will discuss the issues of anti-terrorism, human-trafficking, tax-evasion, development cooperation and refugees while Middle School Committee will touch upon the issues of gender equality, child labor, literacy gap, youth employment, mal-nutrition, protection of environment and labor rights, As you may know, most agenda items are related with the goals and targets of Sustainable Development Goals which were the main theme of last year’s conference. In this regard, I hope that you will discuss all these issues in the context of how to implement SDG goals and targets, which is one of the most important tasks of international community and all the member countries of the United Nations should implement until 2030.

Young Friends,

Since our last conference, international order has become unstable and

multilateralism, which has been the backbone of international cooperation and the basis of the foundation of UN system, has been drastically weakened. British people opted for the exit from the European Union and nationalistic movement has been strengthened in many countries around the world. In particular, President Trump's 'America First' policies are shaking the existing world order and free trade system which has been maintained by the US administrations themselves for the last seven decades since World War II.

Under this situation, I would like to draw your attention to several issues which, I believe, the leaders of our future generation like you should keep in mind and make efforts to resolve in the years to come.

The first one is how to upgrade the United Nations systems and let the UN continue to fulfill its vital role in the 21st century. As the UN already entered its 8th decade, it should continue to inspire humanity and be fit for the new age of sustainable development. Specifically, as Professor Jeffrey Sachs who is an ardent supporter of the UN system suggested, the UN needs to strengthen its expertise in areas such as ocean health, renewable energy systems, urban design, disease control, technological innovation, public-private partnership and peaceful cultural cooperation. In order for UN to achieve this goal, the UN needs more funding and member countries should contribute more. In relation with this, I believe that public awareness about the need for funding is very important and your leaders like you can play important roles in this area.

Whenever we talk about UN reform, main issue is always the governance of the UN, particularly the composition of UN Security Council. It is a consensus that the current composition does not reflect the global geopolitical realities. It

seems to me that the most compelling issue is that Asia-Pacific region is massively under-represented in the Security Council seats. The Asia and Pacific region roughly accounts for 55% of the world population and 45% of World GDP but has only 20% of the seats, three out of 15 permanent and rotating Seats. Under the current international political dynamics it is not easy to achieve this goal. However, I firmly believe that this would be done by the efforts of future leaders of Asia and Pacific.

The second one is how to adapt to the new trend of globalization. Many countries around the world including the US are talking about negative effects of globalization. But, I believe, globalization has done the world a lot of good. Research from the McKinsey Global Institute shows that, thanks to global flows of goods, services, Finance, data and people, world GDP is more than 10% higher than it would have been if economies remained closed. Even globalization has narrowed inequality among nations.

However, in recent years, there have been some signs of the slowdown of globalization. Since the global financial crisis in 2008, cross-border capital flows have plummeted and since 2010 GDP growth has outpaced that of trade while global trade grew twice as fast as global GDP from 1997 to 2007.

But it is not to say globalization is in retreat. Rather globalization is evolving into digital phenomenon. Just 15 years ago, cross-border digital flows were almost non-existent. Today they have a larger impact on global economy than traditional flows of traded goods.

The volume of cross-border data flows has soared 45-fold since 2005, and is

expected to grow another nine-fold over the next five years. I think you are already experiencing this new phenomenon. You can easily stream the new songs of world-famous singers on its release and use e-commerce platform Alibaba to buy Chinese goods. You can take online courses of Ivy League Universities where ever you are. This new form of digital globalization is more knowledge-intensive and requires broadband connections. It will reduce barriers to entry, strengthen competition and change the rules of doing business. I hope you, the future leaders of international community, will fully adapt yourselves to this new trend and lead the new digital globalization, taking care of the needs of the communities and individuals left behind by globalization.

Lastly, I would like to briefly touch upon the importance of regional cooperation, particularly cooperation among Korea, Japan and China. The population of the three countries accounts for approximately 25% of the world's population, and trade volume combined account for around 20% of the world total. The gross GDP of the region is ranked number 3, following the NAFTA and EU and the foreign exchange reserves make up half of the world total.

Despite the growing interdependence and economic cooperation among the three countries, political and diplomatic situation in Northeast Asia has always been intricate due to historical and territorial issues. During the last several years, the tides in the region have been more turbulent than ever. Some people have pessimistic view on the future relations among three countries. However, I strongly believe that we should make strenuous efforts to build and strengthen our relationships in a future-oriented way. I hope that someday students from Japan participate in this conference. I hope that someday students from three countries gather together and discuss how to achieve a level of cooperation as

developed as those of other regions and students participating in this conference would play a crucial role in realizing this vision.

Young Friends, There is a saying that only visionaries can change the world. I hope that through the discussions in this conference, you will nurture yourselves as the change-makers of the world.

I thank you for your attention..