



INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON ONE KOREA 2017:

SOLUTIONS TO THE KOREAN
PENINSULA CRISIS

NOVEMBER 14-15 • WASHINGTON, D.C.

ENGLISH

DONALD A. MANZULLO
PRESIDENT & CEO, KOREA ECONOMIC INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
“UNIFICATION—AN UNDIVIDED PENINSULA”

Unification – An Undivided Peninsula

**By Donald A. Manzullo, President and CEO Korea Economic Institute of America
(Member of US Congress 1993-2013)**

**International Forum on One Korea: Solutions to the Korean Peninsula Crisis
November 15, 2017 Washington, D.C.**

Unification vs. Reunification

Distinguished guests and participants, I thank you for this opportunity to share with you some thoughts about the Republic of Korea and the inexorable and inevitable goal of unification of the Peninsula. I say inexorable and inevitable to emphasize that unification is not an issue as to whether it will occur, but when it will occur and under what circumstances.

A country involuntarily severed by a WWII agreement among the victorious allied powers still remains a country involuntarily severed. The passing of time does not make the artificial division of the Korean peninsula any more natural or acceptable.

Korea remains a distinct and resilient nation. For hundreds of years, under ancient Korean dynasties, Korea focused on unity and largely achieved it. However, during the last century, Korea's history is one of colonization, civil war and military coups. Korea has learned the hard lessons of accommodation necessary for unification. At one time she had to choose between academic learning and global commerce. Today, that is no longer necessary. Difficult times make for durable souls, and Korea is no exception.

The word "unification" is interesting: the English dictionary says it is the *process* of being united or made into a whole. Reunification means "back to an original state, place or condition, from a prior severance." The Korean Ministry of Unification – not Reunification – recognizes this distinction. "Unification" means an on-going process involving all the people of the Korean Peninsula, implying the people of Korea have never been separated in spirit, though in body, and the process of unification is connecting the body with the spirit.

Thus the goal of unification is simple: to recognize that which already exists and to work toward the process of the completion of Korea's national identity.

That is why unification is inevitable. The spirit is crying for its body, and the body is crying for its spirit.

Unfortunately, many surveys among the young in the Republic of Korea demonstrate the lack of interest for unification.

This is why it is important to educate not only the people of the Republic of Korea on the inevitability of unification, but the world as a whole. When inevitability is assumed, the focus shifts from not if, but when and how.

You are not truly free if your brother is living in slavery.

You are not truly satisfied if your brother is hungry.

You are not fulfilled if your brother's life is counted as insignificant.

Your body can never rest if it is separated from your spirit.

Yet time in Korea unfortunately is working against unification. Time serves as another method to keep the body from full unity with the spirit.

That's why it is important to do what you are doing here today: South Koreans and the entire world must be reminded of the need for unification in Korea. And the United States of America has a great interest in unification, witnessed by the blood of nearly 37,000 US heroes shed on such remote and obscure places as Chosin Reservoir, Inchon, Pusan Perimeter, Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and Heartbreak Ridge.

President Moon's Vision of Unification

President Moon's "National Vision: A Nation of the People, A Republic of Korea of Justice" is based on reconciliation and cooperation and has five steps:

1. Realizing the "New Economic Map" Initiative and economic unification of the Korean Peninsula.

2. Signing Inter-Korean basic agreement and redefining inter-Korean relations.
3. Resolving humanitarian issues including North Korean human rights and separated families.
4. Improving inter-Korean relations through exchanges.
5. Spreading consensus on unification and initiating the National Unification Contract.

Advantages of Unification

Unification is nothing to be feared. The goal is to make unification a natural and consensual process: a soft landing, with gradual unification, supported by a world-wide interest. It is obviously much easier to resolve difficult issues over a planned and extended period of time. Rushed decisions, however, often make for undesired conclusions. Believing unification is inevitable makes the how a lot easier, and places the emphasis not on speculation of its occurrence but on the manner of implementing it.

Benefits of Unification

1. Freedom and disappearance of the abuse of human rights. A unified Korea will live in freedom. Period.
2. Mitigation of work force shortages, so workers from SE Asian countries would not have to be imported. Manufacturers and others could look to people living on the peninsula to fill these jobs.
3. Huge gains in the mining sectors because of North Korea's abundance of valuable minerals, including rare earth minerals. South Korea could utilize its technologies to mine and use these minerals. There is a world-wide shortage of rare earth minerals, which are associated with the highest level of technology. The revenues for these minerals could be in the billions of dollars.
4. A united Korea with a newly expanded domestic market and an increase in tourism. The DMZ would be gone; trade would get easier. A unified Korea could emerge as a consuming industrial powerhouse.

This will not be easy. It will be difficult.

But let me ask you a question: When have the South Koreans ever backed away from a challenge?

Did they back away from refusing to surrender their identity during the Japanese occupation?

Did they back away from the invasion from the North, fighting nearly to the end until the Americans and others came?

Did they back away from the outlandish dream of becoming a world power and leader in manufacturing, when they had few minerals and little history of manufacturing?

Did they back away from the ambitious statement that South Korea could build ships, when Chung Ju-Yung, with no shipbuilding experience, no shipyard, no money, convinced investors to order a ship from him? And when asked if Koreans had experience building ships, he reminded the investors that Admiral Yi Soon Shin built the turtle ship, the world's first iron clad ship, and sank the Japanese fleet, just a few years earlier – in 1597!

Did the South Koreans really think that their war-ravaged country, in rubble, at the end of the Korean conflict, with a handful of PhD's, a per capita income lower than those of Haiti, Ethiopia, Yemen and North Korea itself, could become a world leader, especially in light of statements such as that penned by John Caldwell, who in 1955 described Korea as "a land of misery and chaos, and a nation unable to help itself because it has no voice in any major decisions affecting its future"?

How did Korean students, in a little over five decades, rank number one in math among the most industrialized countries?

How did Korea become one of the largest exporters of machine tools in the world?

How did Korea become a world leader in manufacturing of semi conductors?

How did Korea become one of the largest shipbuilders?

How did Korea capture a significant portion of America's domestic auto market?

How did Korea become the world's 12th largest economy?

It's because Koreans have always met their vision, no matter how hard the task.

Examples of Other Countries

There are all kinds of theories and proposals to unification, but perhaps the real solution, the real vision, has yet to be discovered.

In 1987 Estonians started singing their national songs at an annual music festival, leading to the August 23, 1989, miracle of 700,000 Estonians, joining half a million Latvians, and a million Lithuanians, all joining hands, and *singing their way to freedom from Soviet control. Even the Communists joined in the singing.*

And in the same year, hundreds of thousands of Czechoslovakians stood in Wenceslaus Square – as I did three years ago – and shook their keys as a symbol of unlocking the door of oppression, and the Velvet Revolution occurred. It wasn't a military leader, or politician who emerged as the leader of free Czechoslovakia, but Vaclav Havel, a poet!

Republic of Korea's Founding Documents

Korea's documents witness the inevitable and inexorable unification.

The March 1, 1919 Declaration of Independence [from Japanese occupation], was signed by 33 national representatives, all of whom were leaders from various religious faiths. Some important assertions occur in the Declaration:

"We hereby declare Korea as an independent state and its people as free.

"If we are to wash off yesterday's rancor, if we are to shed today's agony, if we are to abolish tomorrow's menace, if we are to eagerly broaden our shrunken national conscience and state pride, if we are to achieve natural development of individual character, if we are to keep our poor children from inheriting anguish

and shame, if we are to bestow everlasting blessings on our descendants – then our first duty is to secure the independence of our nation. ...Korean independence will be an indispensable step toward the stability of East Asia as well as be a part of world peace and human happiness.

“A new spring has come, hastening the rebirth of every living thing. While we held our breath in the ice and snow, our pulse now stirs in the warm breeze and sunshine. The fortune of heaven and earth has returned to us and we ride the changing tide of the world. ...We hereby rise up! ...To begin is to succeed. We only need to march in the light!”

That rugged spirit of independence and unity of the Peninsula carried into The Constitution of the Republic of Korea. It recognizes the March 1st Declaration and pleads for unification: “Having assumed the mission of democratic reform and peaceful Unification of our homeland and having determined to consolidate National unity with justice, humanitarianism and brotherly love....

The territory of the Republic of Korea shall consist of the Korean peninsula and its adjacent islands. ... The Republic of Korea shall seek unification and shall formulate and carry out a policy of peaceful unification, based on the principles of freedom and democracy.”

Korean children sing their National Anthem frequently, stating the hope of unification. The third verse reads: “Autumn sky is void and vast, high and cloudless, the bright moon is our heart, undivided and true.” The refrain expresses how it will be done: “Three thousand Li of splendid rivers and mountains, filled with Roses of Sharon; Great Korean People, stay true to the Great Korean Way.”

The Great Korean Way is that Koreans don't know the meaning of the word “no.”

Former Korean Ambassador Ahn tells the story of talking to three students. He asked the question, “How is it that Korean students excel in academics?”

One student said, “Perhaps it's because we were taught that by our parents.”

A second student said, "Perhaps we have learned that the road to success depends on our excellence in studies."

A third student said, "Mr. Ambassador, perhaps it's simply because we are Koreans."

Korea.

One peninsula.

One people.

One country.

One destiny.