

## **Congratulatory Message from President Moon Jae-in for Virtual 2021 Seoul UN Peacekeeping Ministerial<sup>1</sup>**

(Unofficial Translation)

Distinguished foreign and defense ministers from around the world, representatives from member countries,

I welcome the opening of the Seoul UN Peacekeeping Ministerial.

I have been looking forward to meeting you in person in Seoul, but, regrettably, I am extending my greetings via this video message. Holding United Nations peacekeeping operations in respect, I am deeply grateful to all of you who have been working hard for peace.

Peace is what we all ardently aspire to. Over the past 70 years, those involved in UN peacekeeping activities have dedicated and sacrificed themselves in many parts of the world to fulfill the common goals of humanity stipulated in the United Nations Charter. One million people have participated in peacekeeping operations, and nearly 4,000 of them have lost their lives while carrying out their missions.

Our march toward peace has never stopped. We know that peace will not come easy. Nevertheless we believe that more and more of humanity will eventually come to stand with peace.

Today, I join the world in mourning the noble sacrifices of the fallen and etch in my heart their commitment to peace.

UN peacekeeping leaders,

The world is now facing new challenges.

Violent extremism, cyber threats, terrorist threats that employ new technologies are proliferating. COVID-19 is intensifying conflicts in disputed areas, jeopardizing the safety and lives of peacekeeping agents.

To ensure effective, safe peacekeeping operations, it is necessary for us to cooperate more closely than now, and we have to strengthen our technological and medical capabilities in the entire process – from supervising truces and maintaining public order to postwar recovery.

In 2018, we confirmed our consensus on technological and medical assistance through the A4P Declaration of Shared Commitments. I look forward to this meeting serving as an opportunity to combine concrete solutions with commitments to contribute.

With the aid of the United Nations, Korea rose up from the ravages of war and became the first developing country to emerge as an advanced nation. As of now, Korea has dispatched around

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m\\_5674/view.do?seq=320699](https://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_5674/view.do?seq=320699)

600 agents to UN peacekeeping operations and is fulfilling its role as one of the top 10 financial contributors.

Korea knows better than any other country the importance of UN peacekeeping operations for peace and reconstruction. We will provide support in a more active manner.

We will utilize Korea's ICT and digital capabilities to spearhead the building of smart camps. By linking the troops, equipment and facilities of peacekeeping missions into a single network for integrated management, we will be able to strengthen security and enhance the ability to carry out missions.

Additional medical personnel will be dispatched to peacekeeping missions where Korean troops are operating. We will join the efforts of other donor countries to train medical professionals and army engineers and assist with securing additional equipment.

Korea intends to secure a seat on the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member for the 2024-2025 term. The country gained valuable experience while advancing from an aid recipient to a donor nation. We look forward to contributing to activities that build peace and prevent conflict.

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Korea most desperately craves peace. The Korean people and Government have so far been working hard for denuclearization and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula by building upon unwavering support from the international community.

An end-of-war declaration is the first step toward peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. I hope that the international community will work together so that we can create a new order of reconciliation and cooperation and achieve peace on the Korean Peninsula and furthermore in Northeast Asia and the world through an end-of-war declaration.

I look forward to today's 2021 Seoul UN Peacekeeping Ministerial filling those in areas of conflict with hope.

Thank you.