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Gwangju Declaration of Nobel Peace Laureates

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In Gwangju, the birthplace of modern Korean democracy, we, the Nobel Peace laureates, have reaffirmed our historical responsibility and the hope of human kind to achieve democracy and peace on the Korean Peninsula and the whole world.

"The 2006 Gwangju Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates" was held to remember the May 18 Democratic Movement that spurred the democratization of Korea in 1980, and to uphold the spirit of the June 15 South-North Joint Declaration that opened up the way for peace on the Korean Peninsula in 2000. We have gathered in the spirit of the two global events that have occurred on the Korean Peninsula. We will search for, and promote, stable ways to bring lasting peace on the Peninsula and to spread democracy in East Asia. The Summit started from the universal insight discovered over the course of human history that democracy and human rights bring peace; and peace in turn strengthens democracy and human rights. This is not only the spirit of the Nobel Peace Prize but also the purpose of life and the course of action for the Nobel Peace laureates.

The shadows of the Cold War still linger on the Korean Peninsula and the tension and confrontation have become a huge threat to the peace and democracy of not only the Peninsula and East Asia but also the world as a whole. Meanwhile, there are still many places in Asia where democracy has not yet developed and human rights are being jeopardized. This shows us that trees of democracy and peace do not grow easily and that without endless efforts these trees will not grow and sometimes even wither. In this respect, the historical responsibility and common action of the Nobel Peace laureates are all the more crucial. Based upon our strong friendship and common philosophy, we will go to areas where democracy and peace are under threat, wherever that may be, and do our best to fulfill our role and responsibility.

Our practical actions aspire to affirm universal shared values such as compassion, love, justice, forgiveness and generosity.

Based on such goal and philosophy, we, the Nobel Peace laureates, pledge and propose the following:

Global Issues

1. All countries around the world must endlessly strive to further develop democracy and peace, and this must be pursued not by use of force or violence but through peaceful means such as non-violence, forgiveness and reconciliation.
2. There are still many areas not only in Asia but in all parts of the world where democracy and human rights are under oppression. International cooperation, and multilateralism based on the rule of law must be strengthened. Not only political human rights, but also the more basic social human rights such as the right to eat, to receive medical treatment, to be educated and to live in peace must be achieved.
3. Without rooting out poverty we cannot expect development in democracy and human rights, nor can we end terrorism and war. Along with humanitarian emergency aid, the international community needs long-term efforts to reduce poverty and bring sustainable economic development. We urge the G8 leaders meeting in St Petersburg on July 15th to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals for Africa and its peoples, especially through debt cancellation.
4. To ensure a sustainable future we call for:

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- a. Recognition and full implementation of women's rights and the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women's role in the peace process
 - b. Promotion of a culture of peace where security is defined to always focus on meeting human needs with substantial reductions in military spending thus freeing up enormous resources
 - c. Recognition in action not just rhetoric that without a healthy environment the human community cannot survive
 - d. Enhancing cooperation amongst people in addressing our collective needs through rendering the institution of war as obsolete as apartheid, slavery and colonization.
5. For the resolution to international disputes and for world peace, the active role of the United Nations must be respected. All countries should do their utmost to closely cooperate with the UN to resolve current global disputes and promote democracy through peaceful diplomatic measures.

Korean Issues

6. The May 18 Democratic Movement and the signing of the June 15 South-North Joint Declaration were historic events contributing to democracy and peace not only on the Korean Peninsula but in Asia and the whole world. We, the Nobel Peace laureates, will do our best to uphold the vision and philosophy of both events.
7. The Korean Peninsula remains the only place on earth where the darkest shadows of the Cold War still linger. We call for more active cooperation and efforts of the two Koreas, and also the concerned nations such as the United States, Japan, China and Russia, and international organizations such as the United Nations to pursue inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation and end the state of war on the Peninsula to bring lasting peace in the region. As a modest step to enhance such cooperation, we advocate conversion of the DMZ into a de-mined Peace Park, an environmental reserve for the benefit of all people.
8. The tension and confrontation surrounding the North Korean nuclear issue must be resolved. We urge all parties to resume the Six Party Talks in the spirit of mutual respect and equality. In order to advance this important process, we expect that the DPRK will completely abandon its nuclear weapons policy and accept international inspections. We also call for the US to end financial and economic sanctions on the DPRK and offer security guarantees. All parties should avoid any further obstacles to progress. All parties should fully implement the "Beijing Joint Statement" of September 19, 2005. The Six Parties should cooperate to ensure safe, peaceful energy security for the DPRK and implement economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and investment, bilaterally and multilaterally. We urge the United Nations and all nations involved to pursue inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation and end the state of war on the Peninsula to bring lasting peace in the region.
9. We propose that the six-party talks should not be a temporary meeting to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and bring lasting peace on the Peninsula but be developed into a permanent multilateral organization to promote peace and democracy on the Korean Peninsula.

Nuclear weapons

10. If we are to have stability we must have justice. This means the same rules apply to all. Where this principle is violated disaster is risked. In this regard we point to the failure of the nuclear weapons states to fulfill their bargain

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contained in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to negotiate the universal elimination of nuclear weapons. To pursue a nuclear-weapons-free Korean Peninsula or Middle East or South Asia, without credible commitment to universal nuclear disarmament is akin to a parent trying to persuade his teenagers not to smoke while puffing on a cigar. There are steps available to make progress in this area and they include:

- a. Completing a treaty with full verification mechanisms cutting off further production of highly enriched uranium or plutonium for weapons purposes.
- b. Universal ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, now ratified by 176 nations.
- c. Taking the arsenals of Russia and the US off of hair trigger, launch on warning high alert.
- d. Legally confirmed pledges by all states with nuclear weapons never to use them first.
- e. Making cuts in the US and Russia's arsenal irreversible and verifiable

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11. We, the Nobel Peace laureates, pledge to pursue joint efforts and strengthen cooperation for the development of democracy, peace and human rights on the Korean Peninsula and the world as a whole.

June 17, 2006

At the closing of the "2006 Gwangju Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates"