

## **A Heyday of Peace, Prosperity and Reunification Will Be Ushered In on the Korean Peninsula**

“Let us usher in a heyday of peace, prosperity and reunification of the Korean peninsula by thoroughly implementing the historic north-south declarations!”—this is the slogan which Kim Jong Un, Supreme Leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, advanced in his new year address for 2019.

Last year was a year which witnessed a dramatic change in the inter-Korean relations.

In a year three rounds of inter-Korean summit meetings and talks were held and the Panmunjom Declaration, the September Pyongyang Joint Declaration and the north-south agreement in the military field were adopted. Significant successes for common prosperity of the nation were achieved through the promotion of cooperative projects in various fields including railways, road, forestry and public health. While sportspersons of north and south displayed the wisdom and strength of the nation by jointly entering international competitions, artistes came and went to Pyongyang and Seoul to fire the enthusiasm for national reconciliation and reunification. The surprising changes which took place in inter-Korean relations convinced all the Korean nation and international community of the bright future of peace, prosperity and reunification of the Korean peninsula.

In his address Kim Jong Un said that he was very satisfied with the eye-opening achievements of the previous year which were unimaginable in the past and on the basis of it clarified the tasks for 2019 for making greater strides in their efforts to boost inter-Korean relations, achieve peace and prosperity and reunify the country.

Kim Jong Un said:

It is our steadfast will to eradicate military hostility between north and south and make the Korean peninsula a durable and lasting peace zone.

North and south, as they agreed, should take practical measures proactively to remove military hostility on the whole of the Korean peninsula, including the ground, airspace and sea, as a follow-up to its ending in the areas of confrontation.

Given that north and south committed themselves to advancing along the road of peace and prosperity, we maintain that the joint military exercises with foreign forces, which constitute the source of aggravating the situation on the Korean peninsula, should no longer be permitted and the introduction of war equipment including strategic assets from outside should completely be suspended.

It is also needed to actively promote multi-party negotiations for replacing the current ceasefire on the Korean peninsula with a peace mechanism in close contact with the signatories to the armistice agreement so as to lay a lasting and substantial peace-keeping foundation.

Inter-Korean cooperation and exchanges should be expanded and developed in an all-round way so that national reconciliation and unity can be consolidated and all the fellow countrymen can practically benefit from improved north-south relations.

For the present, we are willing to resume the Kaesong Industrial Park and Mt Kumgang tourism without any precondition and in return for nothing, in consideration of the hard conditions of businesspersons of the south side who had advanced into the Kaesong Industrial Park and the desire of southern compatriots who are eager to visit the nation's celebrated mountain.

North and south should not pass up the favourable atmosphere of today when all the nationals' interest in and aspiration for reunification are growing unprecedentedly, but actively try to find a peaceful reunification plan based on nationwide agreement and direct sincere efforts to this end.

The issue of the DPRK-US relationship is an important problem which must be tackled without fail to ensure the peace and security on the Korean peninsula and the rest of the world. It is because the US is directly responsible for the denuclearization on the Korean peninsula.

In the light of this, the historic, first-ever DPRK-US summit meeting and talks held in the previous year brought about a dramatic turn in the bilateral relationship which was the most hostile on the earth and made a great contribution to ensuring peace and security of the Korean peninsula and the region.

Kim Jong Un said in his address:

It is the invariable stand of our Party and the government of our Republic and my firm will to establish a new bilateral relationship that meets the demand of the new era as clarified in the June 12 DPRK-US Joint Statement, build a lasting and durable peace regime and advance towards complete denuclearization.

Accordingly, we declared at home and abroad that we would neither make and test nuclear weapons any longer nor use and proliferate them, and we have taken various practical measures.

If the US responds to our proactive, prior efforts with trustworthy measures and corresponding practical actions, bilateral relations will develop wonderfully at a fast pace through the process of taking more definite and epochal measures.

We have no intention to be obsessed with and keep up the unsavoury past relationship between the two countries, but are ready to fix it as early as possible and work to forge a new relationship in line with the aspirations of the two peoples and the requirements of the developing times.

I want to believe that our relations with the United States will bear good fruit this year, as inter-Korean relations have greeted a great turn, by the efforts of the two sides.

I am ready to meet the US president again anytime, and will make efforts to obtain without fail results which can be welcomed by the international community.

But if the United States does not keep the promise it made in the eyes of the world, and out of miscalculation of our people's patience, it attempts to unilaterally enforce something upon us and persists in imposing sanctions and pressure against our Republic, we may be compelled to find a new way for defending the sovereignty of the country and the supreme interests of the state and for achieving peace and stability of the Korean peninsula.

The international community hopes that an era of peace and prosperity will be ushered in and reunification achieved on the Korean peninsula as soon as possible.