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LET US MARCH TOWARDS THE FUTURE AS A POWERFUL COUNTRY UNDER THE UNFURLED FLAG OF THE KOREAN CHILDREN'S UNION

Letter to Those Attending the Ninth Congress of the Korean Children's Union

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The Korean Children's Union, recognized as the sole revolutionary children's organization in the world, is convening its congress for the ninth time. First of all, I extend warm congratulations to you who, as representatives of the Korean Children's Union with its dignified name, history and traditions, are attending this significant meeting amid the special concern and unqualified blessing of the people across the country.

My tenderest feelings go to all the other KCU members in the country who, with their minds turned to this congress venue, are filled with a great hope and renewed determination.

I offer thanks to the KCU's school instructors and its sub-branch teachers who, in tune with the aspirations of the Workers' Party of Korea, are leading and taking such great care of our KCU members, who will carry

forward our revolution. I also extend warm encouragement to the officials in the sector of youth and student edification and to the parents of the KCU members, who are unsparing in their efforts to train the sons and daughters of their country to be true people.

The centenary of the founding of the Saenal Children's Union at the dawn of the Korean revolution is approaching, and over 70 years have passed since the KCU was established on the untrodden path of building a new country. Yet there has been no change in the revolutionary nature and original features of the KCU as a Juche-oriented revolutionary children's organization.

There have been many children's organizations in the world which have inscribed their dignified histories under revolutionary slogans. But the KCU is the only one that is vigorously adding lustre to its glorious history and traditions still today while carrying forward its red bloodline.

No adversity has ever been able to disrupt the ranks of the young revolutionaries of Korea who, growing up in the embrace of the Workers' Party of Korea, are advancing only along the road indicated by it.

This is a source of pride for our Party, our state and our people as well as of honour for the KCU's members.

It seems like only yesterday when, at the Eighth Congress of the KCU, its members from across the country were relating the proud stories of their schools, swapping experiences of KCU life and vigorously renewing their resolves. But they are now Youth League members and you are standing in their place.

In our country all the children spend time in the KCU. But not all of them enjoy the good fortune and honour of attending the large gathering of KCU members held every few years.

Each of you delegates was approved by all your classmates and recommended by your KCU organizations because you are exemplary in your studies and organizational life.

It is something you will be proud of for the rest of your lives that, having been selected as exemplary members from among the millions of KCU members, you have decided on important issues affecting the development of your organization.

This gives me greater pleasure than anything else. I want you, laudable and energetic delegates, to be the envy of your peers and looked up to by the whole country.

Our people, who are delighted to be greeting the start of a new year amid the laughter and singing of the dear KCU members after successfully winding up this year's struggle which was beset with hardship at every step, offer you warm on convening this congress.

Nothing is more important for a revolutionary party than to build a dignified and powerful country where future generations will lead an honourable life for 50, nay 500 years, with no reason to grovel before anyone else.

Our people are stoutly defending the red flag of socialism, making the most powerful weapons in the world in the face of harsh trial; they are building a succession of power stations, factories, new streets and villages. They are doing this solely for the sake of bringing bright laughter and the happiest life to all the generations to come and bequeathing to them an eternally powerful country where their well-being is guaranteed.

Such a powerful socialist country is awaiting the KCU's members.

Our Party and people, by redoubling their efforts, will without fail build a country in which you will live a cheerful, valiant, rich and happy life, free from any worries.

The masters of this powerful and thriving country are none other than KCU members.

They should strive at all times to prepare themselves as pillars who can firmly defend this valuable powerful socialist country and shoulder its future dependably.

Their days in the KCU are the most precious days of their lives.

The first step he takes determines the whole course of a person's life.

For this reason, you can become outstanding people only when, during your time in the KCU, you cultivate beautiful dreams and hopes and lay the firm foundations of a correct world outlook.

On the day when, wearing a red neckerchief, a new member joins the ranks of the KCU, they begin their socio-political life and, along with knowledge, they start learning one by one things that are essential for their growth and cultivating the features of a genuine human being.

Dear delegates, your fathers and mothers are patriots who continue to support the country with their honest sweat and efforts and who, since their earliest days, have always maintained the pure intention of living up to the pledge they made in front of the KCU flag.

Holding high the slogan, "Let's always be ready for the socialist motherland!" KCU members should study hard and make unremitting efforts during this precious time which they will never see again, so as to become well-rounded, excellent successors to the revolution and pillars in the building of a powerful country.

The type of genuine KCU member needed by our Party is a young revolutionary and patriot whose greatest love is the socialist motherland that has fed and brought them up in its embrace and who, by cultivating their mind and abilities, demonstrates its prestige at the highest level.

Among our KCU members are many who are well aware that outside the embrace of their socialist motherland they could never bring their hopes, talents and happiness into full bloom. They are living faithfully, true to the intention of the Party that wants them always to dream of demonstrating their country's prestige and, through their studies, to acquire practical knowledge with which to make it even more brilliant.

With a mental approach that is mature for their age, they are preparing themselves as sons and daughters who are faithful to the Party by endeavouring to learn about their leader, the revolution and their motherland. They are, of their own accord, paying frequent visits to the revolutionary battlefields and historic sites so as to learn about the precious spirit of their forerunners. Their ennobling spiritual world clearly shows that the tradition of loyalty the first generation of our young revolutionaries created in the forests of Paektu is still being passed down.

In the future, too, they will continue to love the Party ardently, follow it to the end and fully prepare themselves as dependable successors and reserves for communism, who can carry forward the baton of the Korean revolution.

They must not forget even for a moment that the US imperialists and their stooges are looking for a chance to trample upon their dear homes and deprive them of their hopes.

Even at this moment, at the posts of national defence the soldiers of the People's Army are standing in direct confrontation, their guns levelled at the enemy.

KCU members should harbour a bitter hatred for the enemy of the revolution and, with a determination to resist him, stand in the vanguard in supporting the People's Army and donate towards supplying it with Sonyon tanks and artillery. If the enemy dares to invade the country, they should demonstrate the mettle of the three-million-strong Korean Children's

Union by fighting as bravely as the children's guards did during the Fatherland Liberation War.

A young revolutionary and patriot is judged by the top honours they earn at school.

Just as it is now, so it will be true in the future, too, that only when KCU members have a profound knowledge will they be able to work faithfully for the Party, perform great feats for the country and win the fight against the enemy.

They should remind themselves every minute of every day of the slogan "Let us learn for Korea!" and should study hard to obtain practical knowledge and qualifications.

They should all listen carefully to their teachers in class, try hard to gain even a little more knowledge, and achieve top honours by learning assiduously and devoting their time to learning. In this way, every school will produce famous young inventors and doctoral candidates.

They should, from their early days, foster a love of reading, enjoy using their imagination, be good writers, be adept at presenting their impressions, and be fully prepared to recite poetry, sing songs, participate in sports and play musical instruments.

The red neckerchiefs hanging at their chests represent the warm embrace of our Party for each of them. As for their KCU organizational life, it is a school of revolutionary edification, a crucible of revolutionary training, where they are guided step by step to grow up as true sons and daughters of the Party.

Cherishing the honour of being members of the KCU, which marks the beginning of their life's political integrity, they should regard it as a sacred duty and obligation to participate in an organizational life voluntarily and faithfully.

Through their organizational life in the KCU, they should learn about the Party's great intentions, become awakened to their class consciousness and equip themselves with the ideological and spiritual qualities of someone laudable, including devotion to their comrades and the collective, and the spirit of loving labour.

As long as they are members of the KCU, they should always bear in mind the oath they took when they were joining the organization, and be faithful to its Rules at all times and in all places.

They should value their organization as their most benevolent benefactor and precious companion, and should love it and get into the habit of faithfully observing its discipline and relying at all times on it.

If they have an aversion to their organization's guidance and control, and if they alienate themselves from their organization, it immediately means they have lost the right to membership of the KCU and have deviated from the straight course in life.

They should take an active part in an organizational life by carrying out their organizational assignments on time and offering creative opinions; they should train themselves in the course of accepting their organization's criticism gratefully and implementing its decisions.

Through this course of cultivation and training, they can become model members of the Youth League and, further, enjoy the honour of being a member of the Workers' Party of Korea who thinks and behaves solely according to the Party's intentions and devotes their wisdom and enthusiasm for the good of the motherland.

For KCU members, moral traits are no less important than academic performance.

Those who lack morality and have poor manners are lost and useless, however talented they may be.

KCU members should acquire the qualities of respecting their parents, teachers and seniors, loving their friends, volunteering to do difficult tasks and giving up good things for others.

They should make such moral traits as being polite in their speech, dressing neatly, willingly observing social order and public decency, and valuing and using with care the assets of the country and society, part of their everyday life.

Abilities and good traits are twin pillars of a personality, neither of which should ever be allowed to falter.

The Box Telling Beautiful Minds, which KCU members are using, is small. But I treasure their beautiful minds contained in it more than I would a thousand tons of gold.

The praiseworthy act of plunging into a rapid stream without hesitation to save drowning younger children, the kindness of giving one's pencils to others and helping those who are falling behind in school, the beautiful stories of carefully making medicine envelopes to help local pharmacies that are busy with anti-epidemic work, and all the other stories contained in these boxes are truly touching. Nothing is more precious than a pure mind that highlights the good deeds of others.

I want our KCU members to help and lead one another forward by cherishing ennobling moral traits.

They should volunteer to perform good deeds that contribute to the country's economic development and should become young information workers and young political activists who are a great source of encouragement for their parents in building a powerful socialist country.

I believe that all the KCU members will become true sons and daughters of their socialist country, who study hard, take an active part in an organizational life and have ennobling moral traits, and thereby prove

themselves worthy of the trust and affection of the Party and the expectations of their parents and teachers.

Among those attending the Ninth Congress of the KCU are many specially-invited officials of the Youth League and from sectors related to youth and student edification, as well as KCU school instructors and its sub-branch teachers.

The responsibilities and roles you perform in correctly leading every step of KCU members' growth will have a direct impact on the future of our Party and revolution, the future of our country.

No matter how successful we are in carrying out the revolution, any failure in edifying the youth and students will lead to the lineage of the revolution being severed and render worthless the valuable gains won at the cost of our blood and sweat.

You, the first teachers of the rising generations and their political guardians, are carrying on your shoulders the heavy burden of edifying the youth and students. This is something our Party has made a top priority policy and a key strategic task.

I highly appreciate your efforts in firmly defending the important revolutionary post assigned to you by the Party and making yourselves the foundation on which KCU members can develop soundly. Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to emphasize some issues related to bringing up our beloved KCU members with greater success.

In the course of their development, the present new generation are seeing and hearing many new things. This means that their thinking is different from that of their predecessors, with the extent of that difference depending on the age group.

The methods of edification for KCU members should be different, depending on whether they have just joined the organization or are about

to join the Youth League, whether they are at primary school or junior-middle school, and from one region to another.

The edification of youth and students is an important area of study.

However, there has been no exploration of the methodology for conducting their edification in a scientific way according to the law-governed nature of their cognitive development and their characteristics. Instead, the tendency to cling to outdated forms and methods persists. As a result, no genuine edification in its true sense is being provided.

We should overcome the tendency to conduct their edification merely for form's sake and in a haphazard and stereotypical manner, and should actively explore new methods suited to the level of our schoolchildren's consciousness, their psychological features and the actual conditions.

To this end, we should first set up research bases for the edification of students. We should do so substantially, in order to ensure that they prove their worth in reality, and should operate them effectively.

Our KCU members are young in age, but not in mind.

We should strictly guard against a cramming approach to the edification of KCU members, and use heuristic methods instead.

We should not attempt to cram anything into the heads of students, but help them develop the ability to tell right from wrong. We should allow them to present their opinions fully and support anything that is positive while encouraging them to sincerely repent of their mistakes. In the course of this, we can make various forms of edification acceptable to them.

Our principle is to begin with education in morality and collectivism, which students can easily understand even when they are at a low level in terms of their knowledge and consciousness, and then move on to education in loyalty, patriotism and class awareness.

When the attitude of valuing their friends and the collective, and sound moral traits, become part of their mental qualities in their childhood, they will develop the spirit of loyalty, patriotism and class awareness.

Now that the conditions and environment for education have improved thanks to the radical changes introduced in recent years, the application of modern means and information technology, including video presentations which appeal to children as they prefer video materials to audio ones, are likely to enhance the impact of edification.

Just as fertile soil produces good fruit, so KCU organizations should be strong if they are to train their members to be dependable people.

The key to the consolidation of KCU organizations is to improve the qualifications and the sense of responsibility of its school instructors, who design, plan and conduct its activities.

The Party regards KCU school instructors as high-level teachers and has high expectations of the role they play.

Working as a KCU school instructor is something young people ought to try.

They may experience many difficulties and a lot of mental suffering while doing this work, but they should aim to become standard-bearers who lead the sub-branch organizations and their members with a resolve to take responsibility for the KCU organizations at their school.

At home, the parents are their children's guardians, whereas at school, KCU school instructors are its students' guardians.

If all the KCU school instructors carry out their duties with a high sense of responsibility in fulfilling an important role, our Party can rest easy about the ideological and mental state of our students.

Strengthening its sub-branch organizations is a key feature in the consolidation of the KCU.

The KCU conducts its activities with its sub-branch organization as the base, and the decisions of KCU organization are also implemented with it as the main unit.

Sub-branch teachers, as their students' genuine mentors and parents, should show and teach them only what is correct. They should enhance the role of the sub-branch organizations' activists and ensure that the student groups work effectively.

If all sub-branch organizations compete for and win the title of Honoured Red-Flag Class, KCU members will be able to grow up as pillars of the country who are knowledgeable, morally sound and physically strong, and the sub-branch organizations and the KCU as a whole will be strengthened as a consequence.

If the KCU is to be strengthened, the Youth League needs to decisively improve its role.

The Party entrusts guidance over the KCU entirely to the Youth League.

But the Youth League is guilty of overlooking the KCU, with the result that some of its organizations are failing to play their proper role.

For the Youth League, giving guidance to KCU organizations is the work of training its own successors and stout ranks of young people of the future.

KCU work is part and parcel of Youth League work.

The Youth League should not confine its work to mechanically transmitting the Party's ideas and policies to the KCU's organizations and assigning and assessing the results of edification work, but should offer these organizations substantial guidance so as to help them produce development-oriented results.

It should improve the qualifications of KCU school instructors and provide them with good working conditions so that they can operate at full capacity. And it should organize the work of creating new standards and

models continuously by region and by school level and generalizing them, so that KCU organizations at schools can work independently, creatively and briskly.

In particular, at the present stage it should direct primary and concentrated attention to identifying the difficult problems in KCU work and taking steps to deal with them.

There are a number of problems requiring an immediate solution if KCU organizations are to operate well and if the KCU is to improve its work as demanded by the changing times and developing reality.

It can truly be strengthened as an organization only when the most difficult problems are solved, such as perfecting the system for guiding its organizations, building up the ranks of KCU school instructors and enhancing their sense of dignity, supplying publications and other educational materials to its organizations promptly and in sufficient quantities, and organizing plenty of socio-political activities, do-good-deeds movements, camping trips and visits.

The Central Committee of the Youth League should not be satisfied with maintaining the status quo and concentrating on such work as guiding extracurricular education, for which a well-knit system is already in place, but should organize its work in a bold and innovative fashion and solve problems by reporting, even to the Party Central Committee, everything that is beyond its power to solve.

The Working People's Organization Department of the Party Central Committee should step up Party guidance over the edification of youth and students to ensure that no gaps or deviations are revealed in KCU work, and every other department, including the Organizational Leadership Department, the Information and Publicity Department and the Science and Education Department, should pay close attention to KCU work with the awareness of being its masters and recognizing that it has a bearing on the future of the country.

The edification of youth and students can be more effective only when it is conducted in close combination with educational work.

There is a tendency among some officials in the education sector to confine themselves merely to passing on knowledge and to neglect the edification of students. This is not an attitude appropriate to a genuine educator who is nurturing the future of the country.

Education separated from edification is bound to produce wasted talents.

In the training of the new generation, there is no place either for education separated from edification or edification separated from education. The revolutionary talents required by our Party are, above all, those who are prepared politically, ideologically and morally.

Everybody engaged in educational work, whatever they may be doing and whatever they may be teaching at whatever post, should be faithful to their duty as an educator and regard the edification of students as their principal task.

It is important to discover a methodology for ensuring that edification permeates the whole of school life, from arriving at school, attending lessons and conducting extracurricular activities, to leaving school, and to apply it to suit the specific conditions by intensifying the three-way consultation involving head teacher, Party cell secretary and KCU school instructor and by promoting the coordination between the school's teaching administration and KCU organization.

The parents are irreplaceable in the edification of students.

Parents cannot be said to have ensured the continuity of the lineage simply because they gave birth to their children, or to have fully discharged the responsibility they have assumed before society and the next generation as parents simply because they are responsible and loyal at work.

Parents, however busy they may be, should direct a major effort to the edification of their family. By maintaining regular contact with educators, they should implant in their children an understanding of what they are living for and how they should live. In this way, they can make sure that the lineage of the revolution and the tradition of patriotism are firmly carried forward.

The whole country should take responsibility for the edification of students.

Party organizations and working people's organizations at factories, enterprises and farms should also attach importance to the edification of their employees' children, and should always show concern for it with a view to taking responsibility for them together with their parents. In particular, the Women's Union organizations should actively help mothers so that they can discharge their responsibility as their children's primary educator.

We should produce every school uniform and every school item with sincerity so that students cultivate the attitude of holding our things dear and preferring to use them. In creating and broadcasting media presentations, we should first take into consideration the effect it will have on children's spiritual growth. Nobody should turn a blind eye to children committing mistakes. Instead, we should patiently explain their shortcomings to them.

We should make it a Party and state trait to attach importance to the work of the KCU and ensure that its members are taken loving care of by the whole Party, country and society.

Our Party believes in the people as in heaven, and before them and above them stand our children.

It is not a cause of suffering to take on all the pain of the younger generation as they grow more stoutly and more energetically, but a source of happiness and honour.

The top policy priority for our Party and state is always focused on the younger generations. This is an invariable principle followed by the WPK and our state's eternal policy.

When we see KCU members looking bright and cheerful, we feel greater pride and dignity in waging the revolution, and when we hear them singing March of the Children's Union, we feel encouraged.

Our state is strong not just because it has nuclear weapons.

Our Korea is strong because successors and reserves such as KCU members are growing up staunchly and dependably, constantly adding freshness and vigour to the ranks of the revolutionaries.

Today you are wearing the red neckerchief of a KCU member, but tomorrow you will have the medal of hero or a medallion of doctor on your chest and will be celebrated as pillars of our powerful country. And by the time you become its active masters, our country will shine with glory as more beautiful and powerful in the world.

The eternal glory of our great state is summoning KCU members.

The energetic strides of the three million KCU members represent the valiant spirit of socialist Korea which is progressing step by step and winning one victory after another.

The future of our Korea is bright, as it will advance by dint of their greater ambitions and ideals, strong minds and wisdom.

Let us march courageously towards the future under the unfurled flag of the Korean Children's Union!