



Opening Address



PARK Jong Hyun

President
Journalists Association of Korea

Distinguished journalists from across the globe,
It is a great honor to welcome you to Korea. I am truly delighted to meet you all.
I am Park Jong Hyun, President of the Journalists Association of Korea.

During your time in Korea for this event, I hope you will take this opportunity to reaffirm the fundamental mission of journalism, the noble calling of journalists, and the solidarity that binds us together. The Journalists Association of Korea is committed to fostering meaningful dialogue and actively engaging with your insights, ensuring that this gathering is both profound and enriching for all.

The Journalists Association of Korea, founded on August 17, 1964, will commemorate its 61st anniversary this summer. Bringing together 209 media organizations spanning newspapers, broadcasting, telecommunications, and digital platforms, the association represents over 12,000 journalists. As the largest and most influential press organization in Korea, it stands as a pillar of the nation's media landscape.

Since its founding, the Journalists Association of Korea has recognized the significance of international exchange, alongside its commitment to addressing domestic issues, inter-Korean relations, and the core values of journalism. This shared understanding led us to incorporate 'strengthening ties with international journalists' into our charter as a key principle.

In 1966, just two years after its establishment, the association became a full member of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), actively engaging on a global scale. In 2001, marking its 37th anniversary, it made history as the first in Asia to host the IFJ's General Congress.

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Six years later, in 2007, it successfully convened the IFJ's Special Congress, further solidifying its role in the international journalism community.

This journey entrusted the Journalists Association of Korea with yet another mission to build upon its accumulated experience in hosting international conferences and to strengthen its cohesion with journalists worldwide. Building on these efforts, the association launched the World Journalists Conference in 2013. Since then, this annual gathering has remained a key platform for tackling global challenges and shaping the landscape of journalism.

From 2020 to 2022, when the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented difficulties to nations worldwide, the World Journalists Conference was held virtually instead of as an in-person gathering. Apart from these exceptional years, since 2013, the Journalists Association of Korea has annually invited distinguished journalists from around the world to engage in critical discussions on global challenges and to translate those insights into impactful action.

Many of our fellow journalists attending this year's event may already be familiar with past editions of the World Journalists Conference. Over the years, the conference has served as a platform for in-depth discussions on global issues, including key media-related topics such as 'Peace on the Korean Peninsula and in the World,' 'The Development and Future of Journalism,' and 'Preparations for the Post-COVID Era.' Participants have actively shared their perspectives, engaging in collective reflection on the future of our global society.

As in previous years, this year's event will be structured around two key themes. One theme, "Shaping the Future of Journalism in the AI Media Era: Copyright and Ethical Challenges," will focus on the evolving media landscape shaped by the rise of AI journalism. We anticipate in-depth discussions on how journalists should navigate these changes and respond to the challenges ahead.

The other theme, "The Role of Journalism in Confronting Climate Change and Environmental Shifts," will bring together journalists from around the world to explore the growing significance of environmental issues and seek collaborative solutions.



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We eagerly anticipate your thought-provoking ideas, incisive critiques, and substantive participation in the dialogue.

Distinguished participants,

Both issues addressed in this year's event are challenges that the international community and the press must grapple with in search of viable solutions.

As journalists, we may differ in nationality, gender, skin color, and ideology, yet we are bound by our unwavering reason and compassionate hearts. We remain steadfast in our pursuit of truth and stand in solidarity in the fight for freedom and peace. We are journalists who recognize and respect one another. I firmly believe that your passionate discussions will contribute to journalism's vital role in serving humanity.

Throughout this event, you will have the opportunity to visit key regions of Korea, including Seoul, Jeju, Incheon, Anseong in Gyeonggi Province, Siheung in Gyeonggi Province, and the DMZ, Demilitarized Zone. These visits will offer you firsthand experience of Korea's rich cultural heritage and distinctive local characteristics. While the Korean Peninsula remains divided, you will come to recognize that South Korea upholds one of the most robust security postures in the world.

I truly hope that this year's seven-day, six-night World Journalists Conference will provide a valuable and rewarding experience for all attendees. The knowledge gained through our dialogues and the impressions from visiting different regions will surely be exchanged among you. I hope that, with your valuable engagement, the key insights from this event, along with narratives about Korea, will be shared with readers and audiences worldwide.

I encourage you to take full advantage of this opportunity to engage in insightful conversations with fellow journalists from around the world during the event. Above all, I hope you have a healthy and vibrant experience during your stay. The Journalists Association of Korea will do its utmost to ensure your comfort and convenience for the duration of the conference.

Thank you.