

Opening Address



Although we may have different countries, genders and ideologies, we are journalists.

Fellow journalists from all over the world. It's a pleasure to meet you. And welcome from the bottom of your heart and soul.

I am Dong Hoon Kim, the president of the Journalists Association of Korea.

Established on 17 August, 1964 and celebrating its 56th anniversary this year, the Journalists Association of Korea is the nation's biggest association of journalists that has more than 10,000 journalists from 188 media companies as members.

First organized in 2013 by the Journalists Association of Korea with the aim of promoting world peace and contributing to the advancement of journalism, the World Journalists Conference is held for the eighth time this year.

For the last seven years, journalists from all over the world have been invited to World Journalists Conference (WJC) to provide them with opportunities to personally experience the reality of the divided Korean Peninsula, which is now the only separated nation on Earth. Thus, this reminds journalists of the importance of peace. Furthermore, I can proudly say that the conference is becoming one of the most significant events for journalists globally with each passing year as it expanded into a conference for mutual exchange and gave opportunities to discuss the future of journalism.

However, as COVID-19 continues to spread globally, we inevitably had to hold the event online this year. Therefore, we regret that we cannot show you the beautiful nature and culture of South Korea and the reality of the divided nation in person. Nevertheless it is equally a relief that we could prepare this event to contribute to the development of the journalism by sharing the situation in each country and mutually and healthily meeting in the online space.

Distinguished journalists,
Although we may have different genders, skin colors, and ideologies, we still share some commonalities. We, journalists, all work hard to make the truth known with a warm heart and cold rationality, ultimately for peace and freedom.

We are pleased to hold online World Journalists Conference 2020 with several distinguished journalists from all over the world to discuss the themes of fake news and COVID-19, which

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are global problems, as well as peace in the Korean Peninsula, as we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Korean War this year.

Although we are only meeting online, I hope that you would all exchange opinions and recommendations so that we may all fulfill our calling as journalists as the conference provides us with precious opportunities to discuss major global issues.

Once again, I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for your participation despite your busy schedules, and I hope that this conference would serve as a highly meaningful and beneficial event. Moreover, please make your unexchangeable experiences here widely known among fellow journalists and the people of your country as well.

I look forward to the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and inviting you all to South Korea to show our beautiful traditional culture and how Koreans, who love peace, live.

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Dong Hoon Kim
President
Journalists Association of Korea

Congratulatory Message



Congratulatory Remarks for the World Journalists Conference 2020

Greetings. Let me begin by extending my congratulations on convening the World Journalists Conference 2020, held online this year due to COVID-19.

Despite its relatively short history of 8 years, the World Journalists Conference has been hailed as a shining example of public diplomacy.

I would like to express my appreciation for the hard work of President Dong Hoon Kim and members of the Korea Journalist Association, who managed to put together this meaningful event in these difficult times.

This year's World Journalists Conference looks to the future of journalism through three subjects: fake news, COVID-19, and the 70th anniversary of the Korean War.

As you may well know, the world has been besieged by an epidemic unprecedented in our lifetime and subsequent economic recession. Meanwhile, we are grappling with "fake news" that spreads like wildfire.

I am well aware that in order to avoid inhibiting freedom of expression, regulations that address fake news need to be tailored with a high level of precision. This perspective has driven the Korean government's response to COVID-19 fake news. To the extent that such misinformation poses a serious social problem threatening the health and safety of citizens, the government is making the utmost effort in preventive measures to avert an "infodemic." According to a paper published in a prominent U.S. journal, misinformation about COVID-19 has led to approximately 800 deaths and 5,800 hospitalizations.

That "fake news" poses such a real threat to human lives should sound an alarm.

I believe this demonstrates how vital trustworthy information is. In this regard, allow me to extend my respect to all the journalists around the world joining in this worthwhile occasion.

Distinguished guests from the media and press around the world:

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War.

The two Koreas joined hands two decades ago for the June 15th South-North Joint

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Declaration, and again, two years ago, for the April 27th Panmunjom Declaration, but we have seen no further progress recently.

Nevertheless, our belief remains firm that permanent peace on the Korean peninsula is a noble goal and mission that South and North Korea must achieve.

In fact, the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare the reality that the two Koreas constitute not only a shared community of fates but a shared community of life in terms of public health.

I ask for your continued support of our resolute journey towards a 'Korean peninsula of life and peace.'

We now live in an era where digital technology enables everyone to produce news. However, the flood of information paradoxically throws into sharp relief the value of journalism.

I hope this year's event will serve as a venue of wisdom to reaffirm the importance of journalism and promote solidarity in preparation for the post-COVID-19 era.

Thank you.

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Prime Minister **Chung Sye-Kyun**