

Congratulatory Address



Boo-kyum Kim

Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea

The Great Transformation of Civilization, the Role of Journalism

Honorable journalists at home and abroad, Welcome to the World Journalists Conference. I'm Kim Boo-kyum, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of holding the 'World Journalists Conference' hosted by the Journalists Association of Korea. At this conference, journalists around the world get together and collect their ideas on the issues people are facing every year. For the past two years, under the COVID-19 crisis, we have played a critical role in protecting human life by sharing the quarantine system and experience of each nation. I would like to express my gratitude to president Kim Dong Hoon, from the Journalists Association of Korea, and the staff who have successfully led this conference and given an opportunity to hold this valuable meeting this year as well. In addition, my thanks go to EunRyung Chong, director of the SNUFactCheck Center, Sonny Kwon, CEO of PUBLISH, and Min-kyu Lee, a professor of Chung-Ang University who will give presentations at this conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has been over two years since the COVID-19 spread globally.

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Korea has tided over the crisis of Omicron and slowly recovered its daily life. Through the considerable cooperation of Korean citizens, Korea has passed the COVID-19 crisis with the highest vaccination rate and the lowest fatality rate in the world.

However, COVID-19 has a significantly negative impact on us. This disaster aggravates conflicts and inequality between nations and classes. In addition, people's distrust of journalism keeps growing due to fake news. Preposterous claims or provocative false descriptions about vaccines were excitedly reported to increase online hits, and induced confusion to make the public uneasy. This situation should never happen again. We all need to think about what is the right conduct for the future of our community, and what role should journalism play.

Now, the world faces the Great Transformation of Civilization. I think, first of all, journalism needs to stand up and light up the way to overcome all challenges that may come under the transformation. Thomas Friedman, a world-renowned journalist, said "The biggest challenge we may face will come from fake news through social media, and healthy communities where people connect, protect, and respect each other will lead to changes under the transformation." I hope all the journalists at this conference will make a way to create a 'healthy community'. We need your knowledge to be collected with the spirit of solidarity and cooperation. With that power, let's make a new history for journalism and humankind.

Once again, I would like to congratulate on holding the 10th World Journalists Conference, and I look forward to meeting all journalists around the world in beautiful spring of Korea next year.

Thank you.