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JOINT COMMUNIQUE BETWEEN  
PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD AND  
PRESIDENT PARK CHUNG HEE

At the invitation of President Park Chung Hee of the Republic of Korea, President Gerald R. Ford of the United States of America visited the Republic of Korea on November 22 and 23, 1974, to exchange views on the current international situation and to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern to the two nations.

During the visit the two Presidents held discussions on two occasions. Present at these meetings were Prime Minister Kim Chong Pil, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Foreign Minister Kim Dong Jo, Presidential Secretary General Kim Chung Yum, Ambassador Richard L. Sneider, Ambassador Hahn Pyong Choon and other high officials of both Governments. President Ford also visited American forces stationed in the Republic of Korea.

President Ford laid a wreath at the Memorial of the Unknown Soldiers. He also visited the grave of Madame Park Chung Hee and expressed his deepest personal condolences to President Park on her tragic and untimely death.

The two Presidents reaffirmed the strong bonds of friendship and cooperation between their two countries. They agreed to continue the close cooperation and regular consultation on security matters and other subjects of mutual interest which have characterized the relationship between the Republic of Korea and the United States.

The two Presidents took note of significant political and economic changes in the situation in Asia in recent years. They recognized that the allied countries in the area are growing stronger and more prosperous and are making increasing contributions to their security as well as to that of the region. President Ford explained that the United States, as a Pacific power, is vitally interested in Asia and the Pacific and will continue its best effort to ensure the peace and security of the region. President Park expressed his understanding and full support for United States policies directed toward these ends.

President Park described the efforts being made by the Republic of Korea to maintain a dialogue with North Korea, designed to reduce tensions and establish peace on the Korean Peninsula, and to lead eventually to the peaceful unification of Korea. President Park affirmed the intention of the Republic of Korea to continue to pursue the dialogue despite the failure of the North Korean authorities to respond with sincerity thus far. President Ford gave assurance that the United States will continue to support these efforts by the Republic of Korea and expressed the hope that the constructive initiatives by the Republic of Korea would meet with positive responses by all concerned.

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The two Presidents discussed the current United Nations General Assembly consideration of the Korean question. They agreed on the importance of favorable General Assembly action on the Draft Resolution introduced by the United States and other member countries. Both expressed the hope that the General Assembly would base its consideration of the Korean question on a recognition of the importance of the security arrangements which have preserved peace on the Korean Peninsula for more than two decades.

President Park explained in detail the situation on the Korean Peninsula, and described the threat to peace and stability of hostile acts by North Korea, exemplified most recently by the construction of an underground tunnel inside the southern sector of the Demilitarized Zone.

The two Presidents agreed that the Republic of Korea forces and American forces stationed in Korea must maintain a high degree of strength and readiness in order to deter aggression. President Ford reaffirmed the determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance to repel armed attack against the Republic of Korea in accordance with the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954 between the Republic of Korea and the United States. In this connection, President Ford assured President Park that the United States has no plan to reduce the present level of United States forces in Korea.

The two Presidents discussed the progress of the Modernization Program for the Republic of Korea armed forces and agreed that implementation of the program is of major importance to the security of the Republic of Korea and peace on the Korean Peninsula. President Ford took note of the increasing share of the defense burden which the Republic of Korea is able and willing to assume and affirmed the readiness of the United States to continue to render appropriate support to the further development of defense industries in the Republic of Korea.

President Ford expressed his admiration for the rapid and sustained economic progress of the Republic of Korea, accomplished in the face of various obstacles, including the lack of sufficient indigenous natural resources and continuing tensions in the area. President Park noted with appreciation the United States contribution to Korea's development in the economic, scientific and technological fields.

The two Presidents examined the impact of recent international economic developments. They agreed that the two countries should continue to foster close economic cooperation for their mutual benefit, and that they should guide their economic policies toward each other in the spirit of closer interdependence among all nations. They shared the view that coordination of their policies on new problems confronting the international community is necessary. Both Presidents expressed mutual satisfaction over the continuing growth of substantial bilateral economic relations which have been beneficial to both countries. They agreed that continued private foreign investment in Korea by the United States and other foreign countries is desirable. It was agreed that international efforts should focus on the reduction of trade distortions, establishment of a framework for ensuring stable food supplies, and realization of stable supplies of energy at reasonable prices.

President Park expressed his high expectations and respect for the efforts being made by President Ford to establish world peace and to restore world economic order.

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On behalf of the members of his Party and the American people, President Ford extended his deepest thanks to President Park and all the people of the Republic of Korea for the warmth of their reception and the many courtesies extended to him during the visit.

President Ford cordially invited President Park to visit the United States of America and President Park accepted the invitation with pleasure. The two Presidents agreed that the visit would take place at a time of mutual convenience.

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