

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be invited to speak to you today. I would like to thank the conference organizer for their kind invitation and Ambassador Tommy Koh for his kind introduction.

Singapore International Water Week has now become one of the most important global events on water which plays a critical role in achieving the Millenium Development Goals.

Today, the mankind is faced with two major global challenges, climate change and water. Indeed, we are living in a world where water, especially clean and safe water is rapidly becoming scarce. The effects of climate change, urban concentration and environmental pollution are adding stress to our global water resources.

Water security is such an important issue that it has become a major global agenda and the center of international political discussion. As a board member of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board and Founding Chair of the High-Level Expert Panel on Water and Disaster/UNSGAB, I have been heavily involved in the issue of water, on which, together with climate change, the future of humanity so critically depends.

However, today, I would like to speak on how we should change the traditional growth paradigm in order to meet the other global challenge, the climatic challenge.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The average global temperature which has risen by 1 °C over the past 10,000 years of which 0.74 °C rose since the industrial revolution would increase by 6.4 °C by the end of this century if no action were taken to mitigate the carbon emissions. Powerful hurricanes and cyclones such as Katrina, Nargis and Ike are clear reminders that global warming is changing our climate on an unprecedented scale and pace.

The global challenge we face today transcend boundaries and affect us all. Through the interconnectedness of the environmental life cycle, we have all become global stakeholders. Therefore, what we need today is to encourage proactive cooperation between nations and the people of the world.

In my capacity as the Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General on Climate Change, I traveled extensively, meeting world leaders and urging them to address climate change issues. In doing so, I emphasized the symbiotic relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability. At home and abroad, I witnessed a growing consensus to abandon the conventional economic approach of "Grow First, Clean Up Later".

It was against this backdrop that President Lee Myung-bak officially proclaimed "Low Carbon, Green Growth" as Korea's new national vision on August 15th, 2008. This vision aims to transform the current paradigm of quantity-oriented growth into a new paradigm of quality-oriented, low carbon green growth.

Through the new growth paradigm, we hope to catch two birds with one stone. It would create new engines of higher growth and at the same time, ensure climatic and environmental sustainability.

Korea introduced various measures to set the low carbon green growth into policy action. In order to successfully transform the green growth paradigm in Korea, Presidential Commission on Green Growth was established in February 2009 and the Five-Year Green Growth Plan was formulated and is being implemented. The Korean National Assembly passed the Framework Law on Low Carbon Green Growth which entered into force in April this year, the first of its kind in the world.

At the same time, Korean government announced in November last year that it would cut its carbon emissions by 30% from BAU scenario by 2020. The target set by the Korean government is the highest level of mitigation recommended by the IPCC for Non-Annex 1 countries in order to stabilize the global temperature rise to under 2 °C by the end of this century.

At the COP 15 in Copenhagen last December, President Lee promised to establish the Global Green Growth Institute in order to promote green growth worldwide and officially launched it during the second meeting of the East Asia Climate Forum in Seoul on June 16th.

The GGGI is an international non-profit institution created to support developing and emerging country governments in designing and implementing strategies and policies that promote green growth while

reducing carbon emissions, increasing environmental sustainability and strengthening climate resilience.

The challenge of climate change can only be addressed if all the creative forces of humanity are mobilized. If that happens, the only outcome can be good and welcome. This is a struggle against a common enemy, and we need to pursue it with fearlessness and determination, building on the foundation of what has been achieved in human civilization, of which responsibility and solidarity are core values.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before closing, I would like to underscore once again the importance of reaffirming our commitment to confronting the climate change crisis through a singular and unified policy framework.

It is said that the hallmark of wisdom is in knowing how to turn crisis into opportunity. The word, crisis in Chinese, 危機 contains two meanings; danger and opportunity. Now that we are faced with the crisis, that is, danger and opportunity, we must do our best to turning climate danger into change opportunity, the change for the better, the change for moving into a new paradigm of green growth throughout the world.

Thank you.

2010. 6. 29 Han Seung-soo