





Message from
Her Excellency
Park Geun-hye,
President of the
Republic of Korea

I am pleased to be able to send my warmest greetings to the people of the United Kingdom through FIRST Magazine.

It is very significant for me to make a State Visit to the United Kingdom during my inaugural year at the invitation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who is held in high esteem by the British people. My State Visit at this time is all the more meaningful because this year marks the 130th anniversary of the establishment of Korea-UK diplomatic relations.

This year also marks the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice. During the Korean War, the United Kingdom sent over 56,000 troops to fight, and their noble sacrifices and devotion made it possible to protect the freedom of the Republic of Korea. The people of Korea will never forget that it was this dedicated service that enabled the country to achieve the prosperity it enjoys today. During my visit to London, there will be a groundbreaking ceremony for a Korean War Veterans memorial, which will be an important occasion of thanks for their sacrifices.

Building on such a longstanding friendship and trust, our two countries have maintained very close, friendly ties in many sectors, including politics, the economy and culture.

Notably, there has recently been much growth in bilateral economic cooperation, which is well evidenced by a significant increase in investment by Korean businesses in the United Kingdom. I hope my visit this time will serve as a chance to share experiences on the creative economy and further strengthen economic collaboration that will bring mutual benefits to both countries.

As a reliable friend of Korea, the United Kingdom has so far exerted great efforts to bring peace and stability to the Korean

Peninsula, all the while providing consistent support for the Korean Government's policy on North Korea. In the same way, I believe the United Kingdom will stand behind my Administration's trust-building process on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asian Peace and Cooperation Initiative.

I hope the United Kingdom will continue to lead international efforts to persuade the North to abandon its nuclear weapons and step forward as a responsible member of the international community.

On top of this, I also hope that my State Visit will be an opportunity to expand the Republic of Korea's partnership with the United Kingdom in the work of advancing global peace and prosperity.

The Republic of Korea is the only country in the world to have gone from an official development assistance recipient to a donor. Today we are working to share with numerous developing countries our experience of having realised not only economic growth but also, on this very foundation, significant progress toward democracy. At the same time, we are also strengthening our role in addressing such global issues as climate change, human rights and non-proliferation.

If cooperation were to be further solidified between the United Kingdom, a permanent member of the UN Security Council and key G8 nation, and Korea, which is continuing to expand its role in the international community, this would allow for greater contributions on both sides to the resolution of global issues.

I sincerely hope that my meetings during this visit with Her Majesty The Queen, Prime Minister David Cameron, the distinguished members of Parliament and others will be fruitful in further elevating bilateral relations. **E**