

PyeongChang ‘Peace Olympics’: The Initiatives of the DPRK for Peace and Korean Reunification Over the Years

By [An Amateur Sport Website](#)

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Featured image: Monument to the Three Charters for National Reunification (or Reunification Arch), Pyongyang, DPRK

The PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics, which will go down in history as the “Peace Olympics”, has marked an important step forward in the Korean nation’s desire and striving for peace and for reunification of the Korean Peninsula. It has wrong-footed and nonplussed the US as a blow to their hostility to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and to keep it isolated with a divided Korean Peninsula.

The creation of a unified Korean sports delegation amongst other initiatives is significant; it has been 12 years since the two Koreas have marched together as one group in an Olympics with a flag displaying an undivided Korean peninsula. This is the first time the two countries have had a combined unified women’s team since 1991 when they had put together a single team for a table tennis championship in Chiba, Japan, and a youth soccer tournament. The unified table tennis team won the gold medal defeating China.

The stage was set a month before the games began, at the inter-Korean talks on January 9 to promote national reconciliation and reunification and solve all problems between themselves through bilateral dialogue and negotiations, and to dissipate mounting tensions due to U.S. threats to disrupt the Olympics with fire and fury. Representatives of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) took the decision to “proactively cooperate in ensuring that the 23rd Winter Olympics and Paralympics in the south side area will be successfully held, providing an occasion for enhancing the prestige of the [Korean] nation,” ultimately resulting in a large DPRK delegation being sent to the games and the two Koreas marching as one in the opening ceremony, among other initiatives.



Photo shows joint Korean delegation entering PyeongChang Olympic Stadium at the opening ceremony, February 9, 2018, ending the parade of nations. The Korean Unification Flag takes centre stage and flashes across the stadium seats with the name “Korea.”

Instead of respecting this initiative, the sports media has taken up the theme of Washington and NATO that the creation of a unified Korean sports delegation of the ROK and DPRK athletes constitutes a “charm offensive,” a short-lived “manipulation” and a onetime symbolic stunt of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The sincere aspirations of the Korean people to unite their divided nation made short shrift of the views repeated *ad nauseam* by the imperialist press.

The Korean people have been striving for reunification and peace in the face of the attempts of the US to bring about regime change in the DPRK, attempts which include sanctions to starve and create widespread hardship for the people, attempts in which Canada is also complicit.

The “Peace Olympics” have shown that these attempts, though vindictive and punitive, are a miscalculation, and that sanctions, blackmail and military might have been stymied once again by the people’s striving for social and national liberation.

The historical context merits attention and cannot be falsified or ignored.

At the end of the Russo-Japanese War, Korea was declared a protectorate of Japan in 1905. Then in 1910 Korea was formally annexed and forcibly occupied by Japan. The resistance to Japanese occupation came to take the form of guerrilla warfare under the leadership of Kim Il Sung, who founded the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland in 1936. This was the first national united front organisation of the Korean people. Central to its Ten-Point Programme was the overthrow of Japanese rule and the establishment of an army to fight for and defend Korean independence. This programme also laid out the nationalisation of industry and land reform, along with policies such as an eight-hour working day, equality of the sexes and free education. In this way, it connected together the aims of nation-building and social progress, with independence as their precondition.

The Korean people won their eventual victory over Japan’s colonial rule during the Second World War, and began to rebuild their nation anew, founding the Korean People’s Republic in August-September, 1945. However, with the onset of the Cold War as the Second World

War drew to an end, the US sought to ensure its sphere of influence extended into the Korean peninsula.

Bordering both China and the Soviet Union, Korea was envisaged by the US as a key strategic base. Korea became artificially divided in 1945 in the aftermath of the Second World War as a direct result of the Cold War Truman Doctrine of the “containment of communism”. The establishment of the Republic of Korea (ROK) on August 15, 1948, in the US-occupied south set the seal on this division. This was then followed by the establishment of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) by the patriotic forces under the leadership of Kim Il Sung in the north on September 9, 1948. Thus two states in one Korean nation came into being.

Division was further entrenched by the US aggression and provocation of civil war which led to the Korean War of 1950-53. On defeat, the US constructed a concrete wall along the 38th parallel in an attempt to make the division of Korea permanent.

Ever since their country was divided, reunification has been the goal of the Korean people. US-led disinformation has repeatedly asserted that the DPRK is the obstacle to peace and security on the Korean peninsula, continuing the Cold War refrain that the DPRK is the warmongering party, and instead suggesting that the only path to reunification is regime change in the north through the interference of the US.

In fact, from the time that Korea was divided against the will and aspirations of the Korean people, it was President Kim Il Sung who provided consistent, timely and decisive leadership, including advancing the three principles of national reunification (May 1972), the Five Point Policy for National Reunification (June 1973), the plan for founding a Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo (October 1980) and the 10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country (April 1993). The DPRK has been the initiator of the principles behind all initiatives for peace and reunification since 1945.

In May 1972, Kim Il Sung explained the three principles of national reunification at talks between the north and south of Korea held in Pyongyang:

“The three principles of realizing independent reunification without outside interference, achieving great national unity by transcending differences in ideas, ideals and systems, and reunifying the divided land by peaceful means without recourse to armed force, are the starting point of and the basis for the solution of our reunification question.”

These principles formed the basis of the historic North-South Joint Statement of July 4, 1972, which began:

“The parties have agreed upon the following principles for the reunification.

“First, the reunification must be achieved with no reliance on external forces or interference. It must be achieved internally.

“Second, the reunification must be achieved peacefully without the use of military forces against the other side.

“Third, both parties must promote national unity as a united people over any

differences of our ideological and political systems.”

Subsequently, the five-point policy for national reunification was put forth in June 1973: to remove military confrontation and lessen tension; to achieve multilateral collaboration and interchange; to convene a Great National Congress; to institute a north-south Federation named the Federal Republic of Koryo; and to enter the UN under that name.

The three principles of national reunification won support at the 28th session of the UN General Assembly in 1973, which adopted a resolution dissolving the US-instigated “UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea.”

In 1975, the 30th session of the UN General Assembly voted by an overwhelming majority to adopt the DPRK’s demand for the dissolution of the UN High Command, the withdrawal of all foreign troops from south Korea and the replacement of the armistice agreement with a peace treaty.

In line with the three principles for reunification, Kim Il Sung in October 1980 advanced the key proposal for the creation of a single confederal state incorporating the two social systems that exist in the north and south. This state, to be named the Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo, would be administered by a single government, yet would be based on respect for and recognition of the ideas and social systems present in each of the two regions of the country. Each side would have autonomy under and be equally represented in this united national government, with equal rights and duties. Furthermore, the new republic would not be a party to any political or military bloc, but would pursue a policy in accord with the interests of the entire Korean people. President Kim Il Sung stressed that the DFRK should be a neutral state that does not join any political and military alliance or bloc. Unlike other federal states, the DFRK would be formed with a homogeneous nation, based on different social systems but composed of one nation and two autonomous regional governments within the framework of a unified state.

Between March 1981 and March 1982, over 1.6 billion people in 105 countries took part in an international signature campaign in support of the proposal for founding a Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo.

Kim Il Sung further elaborated these principles and proposals in his 10-Point Programme for National Reunification at the Supreme People’s Assembly of the DPRK in April 6, 1993:

“1. A unified state, independent, peaceful and neutral, should be founded through the great unity of the whole nation.

“2. Unity should be based on patriotism and the spirit of national independence.

“3. Unity should be achieved on the principle of promoting co-existence, co-prosperity and common interests and subordinating everything to the cause of national reunification.

“4. All political disputes that foment division and confrontation between fellow countrymen should be ended and unity should be achieved.

“5. The fear of invasion from both south and north, and the ideas of prevailing over communism and communisation should be dispelled, and north and south should believe in each other and unite.

“6. The north and south should value democracy and join hands on the road to national reunification, without rejecting each other because of differences in ideals and principles.

“7. The north and south should protect the material and spiritual wealth of individuals and organisations and encourage their use for the promotion of great national unity.

“8. Understanding, trust and unity should be built up across the nation through contact, exchange visits and dialogue.

“9. The whole nation, north, south and overseas, should strengthen its solidarity for the sake of national reunification.

“10. Those who have contributed to the great unity of the nation and to the cause of national reunification should be honoured.”

More than 1.73 billion people in some 150 countries participated in the signature campaign for supporting the 10-Point Programme of the Great Unity of the Whole Nation for the Reunification of the Country between April and October 1994.

In the 1980s and the early 1990s, the DPRK also offered disarmament and peace initiatives to create conditions for holding tripartite talks involving the US and south Korea in which a peace pact between the DPRK and the US and a non-aggression treaty between the north and south would have been on the table, as well as the phased pull-out of US troops from south Korea in keeping with gradual military reduction by the north and south, and ending the unstable situation of neither peace nor ceasefire.

It was in August 1997, after Kim Il Sung’s death in 1994, that his successor as leader Kim Jong Il formulated the three principles of national reunification, the ten-point programme of the great unity of the whole nation and the proposal of establishing the Democratic Federal Republic of Koryo as the Three Charters for national reunification, systematising and integrating these issues.



On June 15, 2000, then President of the ROK Kim Dae Jung is welcomed to Pyongyang by then leader of the DPRK Kim Jong Il, for the historic summit produced the NorthSouth Joint Declaration.

These principles and proposals created the conditions for the signing of the historic June 15,

2000, North-South Joint Declaration between Kim Jong Il, as Chairman of the National Defence Commission of the DPRK, and President Kim Dae Jung of the ROK in Pyongyang. This event was of crucial importance in finding a way forward on the issue of reunification, achieving a national consensus in the conception of “By Our Nation Itself”.

The subsequent joint declaration on the development of the north-south relations, peace and prosperity issued at the north-south summit on October 4, 2007, was a practical programme for national unity being a comprehensive agreement building on the June 15 Joint Declaration and embodying the ideas of the Three Charters. The 2007 programme gave answers to practical and immediate issues arising in achieving the unity of the Korean nation, including the facilitation of the legal and institutional mechanism to develop north-south relations towards reunification, ending military hostility, easing tension and maintaining peace on the Korean peninsula, terminating the status of a cease-fire and instead establishing a durable peace regime, developing the national economy in a balanced way, economic co-operation for common prosperity, consolidating national culture, broadening humanitarian co-operation, securing the rights of the overseas compatriots and other goals.

In his 2015 New Year address, Kim Jong Un emphasized that the north and the south should refrain from seeking confrontation between their two systems, through absolutizing their respective ideologies and systems. They should resolve the reunification issue to their satisfaction through the common interests of the nation which transcend differences in ideology. In order to achieve national reunification in line with the desires and intentions of the nation, the Korean people have to reject foreign interference and firmly maintain the stand of “By Our Nation Itself”.

In his 2016 New Year address, Kim Jong Un underlined that national reunification is the most pressing and vital task facing the nation. He said that the Korean people should hold up the slogan “Let us frustrate the challenges by the anti-reunification forces within and without and usher in a new era of independent reunification!” and press on with the national reunification movement more vigorously. They should reject foreign intervention and resolve the issues of inter-Korean relations and national reunification independently in keeping with the aspirations and demands of the nation.

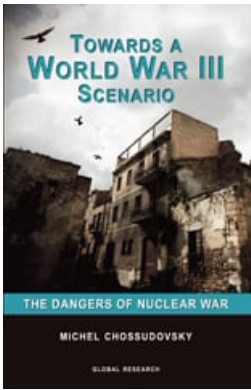
The Korean people’s own aim for peace and reunification, free from outside interference, has prevailed and set the tone and ensured that these Olympics will be known from now on as the “Peace Olympics.”

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Note

i “Koryo” was the name of a Korean kingdom that lasted from 918 to 1392, which was formed from the unification of separate earlier kingdoms, and came to cover the whole of the Korean peninsula. It is from Koryo that the name Korea derives.

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