

Eighth Congress of WPK Outlined Building Socialism – Progress from Needs of people

Juha Kieksi

Deputy Director-General of the ERSSJI Board,
Chairman, Society for Study of Juche Idea, Finland

The Eighth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea was a very significant event, demonstrating the unique role of Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism in building a socialist society and further strengthening the fundamental rights and equality of the Korean people.

Many external factors slow down the construction of socialism

As we know, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in a very difficult external situation. Many external factors reduce the construction of socialism. Such are e.g. imperialist-run trade blockade and sanctions, global COVID-19 pandemic and annually recurring natural disasters. These all are the result, more or less, of the strengthening of imperialism and globalization.

The origin of the trade blockade and UN sanctions is in imperialistic politics of the USA, that tries to prevent the DPRK to strengthen national defence and prevent to build socialism from own basis without fear of imperialists attack. American imperialists have not looked well at strengthening defence of the DPRK. This makes it impossible for the imperialists to subjugate all nations to implementers and markets of their own economic system in one way or another.

The sanctions prevent DPRK's trade with other countries. Sanctions are, in fact, a very powerful hostile act that directly has an influence well-being of the Korean people. Such act is against the spirit of the international law. It is an act against universal perception of human rights. Although the USA criticized the DPRK about human rights, the actual human rights violator in the USA - so in Korean peninsula than elsewhere in the world.

Another external factor is COVID-19 pandemic, which is also a consequence of globalization. Without the free movement of capital and people such a pandemic would not happen. In general, pandemics are intensifying because of imperialism.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has succeeded in fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic the best in the world. The closure of borders after the start of a pandemic was possible, because society was built 80 years based on self-reliance in the economy and politics.

In the West, the situation is worse. A pandemic has caused huge problems in societies. Unemployment has risen. Big capital has been supported by billions. And the pandemic shows no signs of abating, and vice versa. The poor become poorer and the rich become even richer. In capitalist countries, big business is able to take advantage of all crisis situations of society and to change the distribution of income each time less advantageous from the perspective of the ordinary people.

One significant factor is the Western interpretation of human rights and the related too strong protection of property. Protection of property always goes above the needs of the ordinary people. A capitalist society cannot close private companies and demand people to stay at home. In cases where the activities of companies are limited, the society should pay significant compensation to companies. Nor it cannot restrict the activities of the individual, even if it jeopardizes the well-being of the people. Western interpretation of human rights maintains the power of big capital and gives possibility to further strengthen of imperialism.

The third external problem is continuing natural catastrophes in the Korean Peninsula. The strengthening of these is also driven by the interests of big business. It has been scientifically proven that climate change is causing weather phenomena to intensify on the Korean Peninsula. Preventing climate change in the world has not progressed as it should do. Preventing climate change would require tackling the benefits of big capital and cutting big profits for the environment. There is no desire in the West to address this, and it is not possible. The big capital supervises very often political power and institutions. In this case, the opinion of the people does not matter much.

Analysis of the work of the Seventh Congress

The Eighth Congress of the WPK paid attention to these external factors, but also to internal factors that slowed the development of socialism. External challenges can be affected much less than the internal ones.

In August 2020, The Sixth Plenary Meeting of the Seventh Central Committee of the WPK decided to examine in detail the development of the party and society before

the Eighth Congress of the WPK. This scientific analysis produced important information of the current situation of society. General Secretary Kim Jong Un stated:

“The successes we have already achieved are priceless for us, and so are the bitter lessons that have been accumulated.

“All these are things that cannot be bartered even for gold, and constitute valuable assets for achieving fresh victories in the future.”

(Kim Jong Un: Opening speech of the Eighth Congress of the WPK)

In fact, it is important to identify both strengths and areas for development. Without the identification and recognition of areas for development, there can be no change in the right direction. General Secretary Kim Jong Un said:

“That our Party at this congress, unlike the previous congresses, reviewed and analyzed its work from a critical viewpoint, not seeing only its merits, is of no less significance than the successes it achieved during the period under review.”

(Kim Jong Un: Concluding speech of the Eighth Congress of the WPK)

Another strength of the Eighth Congress of the WPK was that there were more members, especially hardcore members of the party were represented than before. Indeed, General Secretary Kim Jong Un noted that the spirit of the Congress was unique compared to other meetings:

“There have been many important Party-wide political meetings including congress so far and the participants have shown immense enthusiasm every time as they received the policies and ideas of the Party Central Committee, but I see for the first time such an extraordinary zeal for participation as in the Eighth Party Congress, in which all the participants are so interested and immersed in the discussion of issues.”

(Kim Jong Un: Closing Speech of the Eighth Congress of the WPK)

This all makes possible the analytical and critical discussion of the strengths and challenges. And when this is done on the basis of a scientific understanding of society – based on Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism – there is no doubt that it will lead to the desirable progress in society. To progress that improves the well-being of the people.

Focus on Strengthening of Self-sufficiency

The congress outlined that during the next five-year plan, will invest to the development of the metal and chemical industry. Improving these industries is particularly worthwhile. The DPRK has rich natural resources which give good base of development. This strengthens the self-sufficiency of the country. Self-reliance reinforcement is important, because without the self-sufficiency pressure by imperialists

could overthrow the country. Globalization has led hundreds of countries to one-sided production and national economic system. This weakens the countries' ability to develop society based on their own needs. It also makes countries very sensitive to imperialist pressure.

The DPRK's long-term self-sufficiency is shown its strengths many times. The DPRK survived of the collapse of the socialist economic system in 1990s, as well as several natural disasters. This was possible precisely because of self-sufficiency.

The congress outlined the need to lay the foundations for the development of the local economy and the improvement of human living standards, regardless of whether people live in the countryside or in the city. Indeed, the next five-year plan outlined that a high level of public health and education should be available to all urban and rural populations.

Strengthening of Unity Is Essential

The unity of the party and the people is of paramount importance in the construction of a socialist society. Without the single-hearted unity of society that everything is based on improving the well-being of the people, it is not possible to build an equal society.

Kim Jong Un sums it up well:

“The ideals of ‘The people are God,’ single-hearted unity and self-reliance—herein lie the fundamental key to enhancing the leadership abilities of our Party, the fundamental method for it to strike its roots deeper among the masses and the fundamental and sole guarantee for us to survive and open up our way ahead.”

(Kim Jong Un: Concluding speech of Eighth Congress of the WPK)

Learning from the masses is, par excellence, a fundamental difference between the DPRK and bourgeois societies and the strength of the Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism. Only by going among the people can we get first-hand knowledge of what works well in the society and what is hoped for improvement. It cannot be the case that the people are only consulted in elections and that there is no interest at all between elections in how welfare is built. The Eighth Congress of the WPK comprehensively analysed the situation and turned the challenges into opportunities.

The meeting also outlined the need to further strengthen three revolutions, especially in rural areas: ideological, technological and cultural. The working class is the most progressive class with the best class-consciousness. It is important for the development of the entire society that the ideological consciousness of agricultural

workers is as high as the working class. This is an absolute prerequisite for the whole nation to achieve single-hearted unity.

As the General Secretary said, the main message of the Eighth Congress of the WPK is to increase the DPRK's own inner strength in order to achieve the final victory. The party congress showed that the spirit needed for this goal belongs to the members of the party and, with it, gradually to the entire people.

General Secretary Kim Jong Un said:

“In other words, it is the revolutionary will of the Workers' Party of Korea reaffirmed at this congress that our internal force must be readjusted and rearranged in a comprehensive way and, on the basis of this, we must make a frontal attack against all hardships to open up a road of new advance.”

(Kim Jong Un: Concluding speech of Eighth Congress of the WPK)

Conclusion

The Eighth Congress of the WPK made significant guidelines for increasing self-sufficiency, defence, and human well-being during next five years. The people will ensure the same services whether they live in cities or in the countryside. The most significant of all, however, was to promote the idea “The people are God”. This makes it concrete that the basis of all social progress of the society is the needs of the people. This is very meaningful, since the almost all other countries the social development of the society is based on the needs of big capitals. Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism is an ideology that secures the well-being of the Korean people and the socialist construction work in the DPRK. It also serves the valuable guideline for the people who are fighting for their independence all over the world.