

Opening Address at Ninth Congress of Workers' Party of Korea

February 19, 2026

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Dear delegates,

Today, we are opening the Ninth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), which will set up another new milestone in the sacred struggle for the development of our Party and socialist construction.

The past five years since the Eighth Congress of the WPK was a proud period when the whole Party and all the people brought about an epochal turn in implementing the socialist cause of our own style on the strength of solid unity.

Our socialist construction spanning long years has not been plain sailing, but never has there been such a period as this one, in which we achieved so great successes despite the severity of trials and difficulties.

When we convened the Eighth Party Congress, the subjective and objective conditions of our revolution were literally so harsh that we could hardly maintain our own existence.

The hostile forces grew more reckless in their schemes for harsh blockade and sanctions against us, and we were also confronted with successive natural calamities and the global public health crisis. This severely hindered the development of all our sectors, and it also seriously threatened the security of our state and the safety of our people.

Worse still, economic work in the country was being conducted in transitional and temporary ways just as it had been since several decades ago; all economic sectors were struggling to maintain the status quo without the orientation of their development.

Consequently, we were compelled to conclude the seventh term of the Party Central Committee as we fell fairly short of attaining the goals of the five-year strategy for national economic development that had been decided upon by the Seventh Party Congress.

However, everything has fundamentally changed today, five years from then.

The Eighth Party Congress critically reviewed and analyzed the unscientific nature of

the above goals that had been pursued during the seventh-term Party Central Committee, before resolutely scrapping all that had gone out of date. Given the then circumstances, it clarified the objectives of its work for the coming years and the direction for its development, and to this end put forward reasonable policies as regards the major theoretical and practical matters.

The plans for all the sectors were ambitious yet clear.

The work plans were drawn up and decided upon through strict scientific review and discussions, and they were based on the principle that we should achieve all that was within our power at the moment and do so without fail by making the seemingly impossible possible.

Even though they were facing difficult circumstances, the Party, the people and the army hardened their determination and made proactive efforts to this end; by successfully carrying out the Party's decisions in all realms such as politics, the economy, national defence, culture and diplomacy, they achieved notable, comprehensive and radical successes, and in the course of this, they substantially increased our country's internal forces.

In particular, the economic sector, which is the major front of socialist construction, fulfilled the five-year plan for national economic development in the main and made dynamic progress in reinforcing and readjusting the technical infrastructure and functions of the key industries. As a result, not a few sectors of our economy have freed themselves from the protracted obsolescence and stagnation, and instead built up their foundations and potentials to achieve significant growth under a plan.

And gigantic plans for transforming the capital city and the regions simultaneously and bringing about a substantial improvement in the people's living standards were pushed forward vigorously by the Party and the state; thus, the expected successes were achieved in these undertakings and a correct direction was confirmed for carrying them on more proactively.

In view of the external relations, too, the position of our state was firmly consolidated as an irreversible one, bringing about a great change in the global political landscape and in the influence on our state. This created favourable conditions and circumstances for giving a greater spur to our socialist construction.

Now all the people are witnessing every moment of the day the reality changing at a speed incomparable with that of the past, and have a clear understanding of and conviction about the road they should take and the prospect of the development of our state.

Five years ago we convened the Eighth Congress of the Party with the conviction,

will and determination to break through the worst difficulties facing the revolution by our own efforts and usher in a new era of advance and development without fail, but today we are here at its Ninth Congress, filled with optimism and confidence in the future.

This is indeed a great change and development, as well as a success we can be proud of at the present stage.

Moreover, the precious successes achieved and monumental structures created in the course of the efforts to greet this Congress with high political enthusiasm and labour achievements rounded off the struggle of the past five years, thereby making this a congress that signifies a success and promises a greater success, both in name and in reality.

All the successes achieved during the period under review are a great gain from the devoted struggle our Party members, working people and service personnel have waged supporting the Party's lines and policies unyieldingly with one mind in the face of all difficulties.

I extend my heartfelt and warmest thanks to all the Party members, working people, service personnel and citizens for having turned the eighth term of the Party Central Committee into a period of great upsurge in socialist construction and made contributions to greeting the Ninth Party Congress as a precious one of reviewing, as a glorious one, with a staunch and proactive pioneering spirit and indomitable fighting spirit.

I also pay ennobling tribute to the revolutionary comrades and martyrs who dedicated their valuable lives to the sacred cause of achieving the prosperity of the country and the happiness of the people during the period under review.

And my warm greetings go to Chongryon (General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) and other overseas compatriots' organizations and all the overseas compatriots that share will and mind for the prosperity and development of their socialist homeland.

Comrades,

This Congress will correctly review and analyze the work done during the period of the eighth term of the Party Central Committee, establish the lines and policies for developing our socialist construction onto a higher stage, and take organizational and institutional measures for readjusting and consolidating the Party's leadership ability.

Today, our Party is faced with heavy and urgent historic tasks of boosting economic construction and the people's standard of living and transforming all realms of state and social life as early as possible. This requires us to wage a more active and persistent struggle without allowing even a moment's standstill or stagnation.

In particular, the period of the new long-term plan is a crucial period when we should push forward full steam with the regional development policy in the new era, the rural

revolution programme and other intermediate- and long-range plans we adopted and have launched to realize the centuries-old desire of the people.

In contrast, not a few serious shortcomings and negative elements, such as deep-rooted defeatism, irresponsibility, conservatism, formalism and immaturity in leadership ability, are latent at present in the work of the Party and government organs and officials, and this constitutes an artificial obstacle to the work of our Party and state which aspire to rapid development in all fields.

Therefore, we should not only take pride in the successes we achieved during the period under review but also review shortcomings from a critical and developmental point of view, work out the struggle plan for the next stage in an elaborate and scientific way and strengthen the leadership forces capable of leading the implementation of the plan.

Therefore, in preparing the Ninth Party Congress, the Party Central Committee focused on correctly drawing experience and lessons from the successes and shortcomings during the period under review and taking appropriate measures accordingly.

In order to make substantial preparations for the Party Congress, the Party Central Committee organized a non-permanent preparatory committee for the Congress, set up necessary panels and dispatched fact-finding groups according to directions and sectors to get them to gain a full understanding of the five-year work of the relevant sectors and units and to make a correct analysis of problems and their root cause.

And on the basis of their activities it assessed how the members of the eighth-term Party central leadership played their role and whether they correctly guided the development of their sectors and units.

Each field and each sector carried out the work of scientifically setting the goals and working out the plans for development to be achieved in the period of the new long-term plan and presenting them to the preparatory committee, and the departments of the Party Central Committee also presented innovative and detailed suggestions on the future plans and measures for carrying them out.

And there was an in-depth study of the issues arising in further enhancing the leadership functions of the Party in line with the requirements of the five-point Party-building line in the new era, including the issues related to the revision of Party Rules and the reorganization of the leadership forces of the Party.

In the run-up to the Party Congress, Party organizations at all levels reviewed the work of their leadership bodies by focusing on correctly drawing experience and lessons, and the election of delegates to the Party Congress and the nomination of observers were also completed.

Accordingly, the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee carried out a rigorous final examination of the qualifications of the delegates to the Party Congress who had been elected at provincial Party conferences.

The result of the examination appraised that all the comrades elected as delegates are fully qualified as they are core elements of our Party who have so far achieved marked results in improving the work of their sectors and units and who are capable of playing a significant role in the struggle to implement the decisions of the Ninth Party Congress in the future.

Participating in this Congress are 5,000 delegates in total—224 members of the eighth-term Party central leadership and 4,776 delegates elected by all Party organizations.

Among them are 1,902 delegates of Party and political workers, 747 delegates of state administrative and economic officials, 474 delegates of service personnel, 32 delegates of officials of working people's organizations, 321 delegates of officials in the sectors of science, education, public health, sports, culture and art and the mass media, and 1,524 delegates of officials and hard-core Party members involved in field labour.

Of them 413 are women.

The Congress is also attended by 2,000 observers nominated by Party organizations at all levels, including officials from the departments of the Party Central Committee.

Dear delegates,

We are now at this significant venue with the high honour and heavy mission of being delegates to the Party Congress, entrusted by all the Party members in reflection of their organizational will.

So great are the concern and expectations of all the Party members and other people across the country for the Ninth Party Congress, which will mark another watershed in our Party's sacred struggle to realize the rights, interests and long-cherished desires of the people. And all of us have shouldered a heavy mission of making sincere, active and responsible efforts to ensure that the Congress does its work satisfactorily.

Solemnly pledging, on behalf of all the participants in this Congress, the ninth of its kind in the glorious history of the WPK, that the Congress will be absolutely faithful to the great Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism,

And fully convinced that the Congress will be a significant, historic occasion vigorously guiding the victorious advance of the revolutionary cause of Juche thanks to the high political consciousness and enthusiasm of all the delegates, I declare the Ninth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea open.