

**Speech by FM Osman Saleh
at 2024 South Korea-Africa Summit**



H.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs Cho Tae-yul

Honorable Foreign Ministers,

Esteemed Dignitaries,

Good afternoon,

At the outset, I would like to extend my utmost appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Korea for their warm welcome, hospitality and for hosting this important summit. As we gather for this crucial Foreign Minister's meeting ahead of the Korea-Africa summit, I would like to emphasize the significance of our discussions.

The relationship between Korea and Africa dates back to the 1950's. However, for decades, Korea and Africa have walked distinct paths, yet we share a common thread: the unwavering pursuit of progress. The 2024 Korea-Africa Summit presents an opportunity to bridge the gap between our continents.

It is evident that our continent- often referred to as the cradle of civilization- continues to grapple with political fragility, economic underdevelopment, and global marginalization. The enduring impact of colonialism and the oppressive global order that followed have exploited Africa's resources unabated, impeding the region's political and economic progress.

Africa, owning 60% of the world's natural resources, today, stands at a crucial juncture. It is imperative that we fully utilize this potential to ensure the prosperity and well-being of our people. The time has come for Africa to leverage its rich resources for the benefit of its people.

Excellencies,

Recognizing the existing global inequalities and challenges, Eritrea follows a development model that aligns with its unique national values and requirements. Since achieving independence, the country has actively embraced a self-reliance policy, focusing on mobilizing domestic resources and enhancing national capacities as the fundamental elements of its development approach fostered by Education and human resource development.

Even in the face of ongoing threats and hostilities orchestrated by external forces seeking to assert their interests and control over nations, Eritrea persists in charting its own path based on the rule of law.



Despite these external pressures, Eritrea's location offers unique opportunities. The country's important maritime trade location has the potential to serve as gateways to vital trade routes connecting continents and the resilience of our people, coupled with our untapped business potential, positions us as a beacon of opportunity. The country's position along the Red Sea is not merely geographical; it is strategic.

The development of the fisheries sector in Eritrea offers substantial potential to improve food security, diversify the national economy, and alleviating poverty, especially in coastal communities. With the right investment in modern technology, and eco-friendly practices, Eritrea's fisheries could significantly contribute to the nation's development.

Given the opportunities that lie ahead, then, we believe this summit will be a stepping stone towards mapping out engagement strategies through harnessing the Republic of Korea's expertise in revitalizing our infrastructure, transportation networks, construction and engineering, together with a dynamic exchange of knowledge that will significantly boost the capabilities of our workforce with the latest skills and techniques.

Excellencies,

Amidst the rapidly shifting global economic landscape, Eritrea's abundant resources have never been more pertinent. Our mineral wealth, encompassing hydrocarbons, rare metals, and precious minerals, is teeming with untapped potential.

In addition, the pandemic has brought to the forefront the indispensable role of robust healthcare systems. With an eye towards the future, we look forward to exploring joint ventures in medical research, and healthcare infrastructure.

Furthermore, this collaboration, extending into environmental initiatives like renewable energy and conservation, promises a future that is not only greener but also more sustainable.

In general, by leveraging Korea's technological expertise, we can augment our productivity, diversify our economy, and promote innovation to achieve long-term growth and development.

Excellencies,

While we deliberate on the significance of this summit and the potential beneficial impacts it could generate for both our regions and our people, it would be remiss

of me if I don't seize this occasion to raise my voice in support of a fundamental right: the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

Today, we are witnessing the plight of the Palestinian people unfold in real time. The indiscriminate killings of women, children, and innocent civilians in Palestine are a grave violation of human rights and international law. The loss of innocent lives is a tragedy that cannot be justified under any circumstances. The arbitrary attacks by Israel on Palestine are unequivocally unjust, inhumane, and must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. We cannot stand silent in the face of injustice!

The Palestinian people's aspiration for independence is a legitimate pursuit that aligns with the values of autonomy and freedom. Supporting Palestine's right to choose its path is not only an acknowledgment of these universal principles but also a step towards lasting peace and stability in the region.

Excellencies,

The ongoing war in Gaza serves as a stark reminder of the pressing need for peace and justice in our world. The world order we once knew – dominated by a single superpower – is undergoing a seismic shift. The shift towards multi-polarity represents a significant evolution in the global political landscape.

This change underscores the need for countries to collaborate and engage in constructive dialogue, while simultaneously respecting each other's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and domestic policies.

Excellencies,

At the end of the Korea-Africa summit, as we reflect on the fruitful discussions and outcomes, the importance of Follow-up Mechanisms, Mutual High-Level Visits, Bilateral Exchanges, promotion of Trade and Investment will be vital to ensure a successful and sustainable partnership between Korea and our region.

As we navigate this new era, allow me to once again say, let us remember the importance of cooperation, mutual respect, and shared prosperity. Let us embrace

the diversity of our multipolar world and work together to create a more peaceful, just, and sustainable global order.

Finally, I extend my best wishes and may our deliberations during this Korea-Africa summit yield fruitful outcomes.

I, Thank, You.

On **Jun 3, 2024**