



**Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Address to the Graduates
Republic of Korea, Naval Academy
Admiral Cecil D. Haney
22 February 2013
As Prepared for Delivery**

Thank you Vice Admiral Hwang for that introduction and your leadership as superintendent here at the academy.

Midshipmen, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, AHN-NYONG HAH-SAY-YO! Hello and good morning.

Over the last six decades of the armistice, the people of Korea and America have been close friends. We value our alliance.

It is an honor for me to address each of you this morning, especially the graduating Midshipmen. Congratulations to each of you and your families! This is your big day and the start of a great adventure. After four years of education and training, it is time for you to step out and lead and perhaps never again have to hike up MAHNG-HAE-BONG, but then you might really miss that experience.

When I graduated in 1978, I remember how excited I was to get started. I can only imagine your excitement. It is time to take the lessons you have learned from the past and work on solutions for the future.

Your predecessors and senior officers, SUN-BAE, have done a remarkable job building a formidable Korean navy and marine corps. They have maintained security. That security has enabled the prosperity your nation is enjoying. Just as our United States Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus, recently said to your shipmates aboard ROKS *Incheon*, we are proud to call you our ally.

Today, your economy is among the strongest in the world. People in the United States are watching your Korean dramas, even my wife Bonny. Everywhere I go, people are dancing Gangnam Style.

Soon you will be commissioned as officers in the navy and marine corps. Your country will count on your leadership to ensure South Korea's security. Today we live in an uncertain world where the lives and livelihoods of so many can be threatened in an instant. This is obvious to you as you look north. Considering North Korea's nuclear ambitions, as demonstrated by their underground nuclear tests and long range attempted missile flights, we can agree that there is cause for concern.

In my previous travels to Korea, I visited the Demilitarized Zone-DMZ. Just last October, I visited the Cheonan memorial. I am always humbled by these experiences. As I stood beneath

Cheonan, I felt the loss of 46 of your shipmates, killed by an unprovoked attack by a North Korean submarine.

Considering the uncertainty in this world, one of the most important things I want you to remember from this speech is to anticipate surprise and if you are surprised, stay calm, think through your options and act wisely.

As South Korea prospers today, many other nations in Asia are also prospering. These nations look to the sea for the resources they need to fuel their economies and for the safe transportation of imports and exports. In order to maintain security at sea, the naval forces of the region are more relevant today than ever before. Thank you for choosing this challenging profession; a noble path that will require your honor, courage and commitment.

Nations are interconnected and interdependent on each other for their mutual security and prosperity. Naval forces in the region are training and operating together more often, and your navy is helping lead this effort. Last July, the Republic of Korea's navy sent two destroyers and a submarine to participate in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise near Hawaii. The Republic of Korea's navy demonstrated the importance of the multi-national approaches to maritime security with 21 other nations. It was fantastic for me to again have the opportunity to visit your destroyer, *Yulgok Yi-I*, during that exercise.

Consider also the recent achievements of Combined Task Force-151 under the leadership of two Republic of Korea navy admirals. We cannot forget the tremendous success in January 2011 when the destroyer *Choi Young* (DDH-981) and your Navy SEALs re-captured the hijacked M/V *Samho Jewelry* from pirates. They rescued over 20 crew members that day. Working together we can do more than working apart.

I value our navies' ability to work together. One of my top priorities is to strengthen relations with our allies, partners and friends. This is my third visit to Korea as the Commander of the United States Pacific Fleet and it is always a pleasure to see your leadership and discuss maritime security as I will with Admiral Choi later today. I will also visit the Daewoo shipyard in Okpo; site of Admiral Yi Sun-shin's first naval battle.

Yesterday, I was in Seoul and visited the Korean War Memorial. I was able to see a turtle ship first hand, impressive! The first iron clad vessel, centuries earlier than those of the United States Navy; an impressive innovation for any time, let alone the 16th century. No wonder when I visited General Kwon, deputy commander of the Combined Forces Command, he wanted me to tell you that the Republic of Korea is a maritime nation surrounded by the sea. He also told me that each of you knew exactly how many islands are part of South Korea - 3,153. I was impressed at just how much this army general knew about the maritime domain.

In July we will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the armistice; a reminder that we have worked together for a very long time. Admiral Gary Roughead, our previous CNO, once said "Although forces can be surged, trust and cooperation cannot be surged." The mutual trust and cooperation we have built, every day, matters. As the United States rebalances to the Asia-Pacific, I know I can count on the Korean navy to continue our strong relationship. I look

forward to our continued work together as we sail into the future in this vibrant and dynamic region of the world

As I come to the end, let me offer you some thoughts: Never stop learning. Your education does not stop just because you have graduated. Strive for excellence in everything that you do and you can succeed. You will make mistakes as you strive for excellence, I sure did. Learn from them and become an even better military and professional officer. Build WOO JONG, strong friendship, with those serving within your navy. Also, build strong friendships with those who serve in the other navies. There is value in every relationship you build. You never know when you will be working closely together on a mission vital to your nation.

Once again, congratulations to each of the graduates on your impressive accomplishments. I know you are more than ready for the challenges you will face. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

KATCH-EE GAHP-SHI-DA, We go together!

KAM-SAH-HAHM-NEEDA, Thank You.

CHILL MOON IT-SOOM-KNEE-KA, Do you have any questions?