

Message from Nelson Mandela, First President of a democratic South Africa and founder of the Peace Parks Foundation:



Message from Dr Nelson Mandela to the International Conference on peace and sustainability regarding Korea's Demilitarized Zone. To be delivered on behalf of Dr Mandela by Mr Ted Turner of the Turner Foundation.

When I contemplated how to continue my dialogue and involvement endeavouring to bring the peoples of the two Koreas closer together, I thought of the similarities of my own country's history and that of the Koreas over the past five to six decades. Charles Dickens, in "A Tale of Two Cities" sums it up:

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
It was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
It was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
It was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
We have everything before us, we had nothing before us"*

It is the positive in these contradictions and the reality of what we are experiencing in South Africa since 1994 that makes me write to you again with a simple message: One can live for a long time without water, but one can never live without hope. The Demilitarized Zone may be the stark symbol of division of the Korean Peninsula but it serves to me also as the symbol of hope to closer relations and even re-unification.

To have the area declared and jointly managed as a peace park and protect its unique biodiversity will **only** be a bonus. The real benefits are much more than this. Let me again refer to the experience in my part of the world.

When we established a peace park between South Africa and Mozambique, the popular press hailed the advantages given to the saving and security of thousands of elephant. Much less has been written of the job opportunities created to the poorest of the poor living in that region. To defend prosperity and stability one must attack poverty. Poverty is the world's worst pollutant. If we do not attend to this pollutant, our efforts in all spheres will come to nothing. That is the basic philosophy behind the Peace Parks Foundation.

Both ex-president Chissano and his successor Pres Armando Guebuza of Mozambique confirmed recently that the formation of that peace park in their area allows for benefits to their citizens way beyond the mere protection of nature. I have reason to believe that this will also be the case in your area too. Such a step in your region will have the added advantage of enlarging the horizon of human hope and advance the prospects of peace and social justice in the rest of the world.



I truly believe that there is only one greater accomplishment than to think that “one has changed the world for the better” and that is for others to think so too. I am willing to convey personally to the Heads of State of the two Koreas that they have it in their hands to change the world for the better. A peace park can be the first step in this direction. I know of no political movement, no philosophy, no ideology, which does not agree with the peace parks concept as we see it going into fruition today. It is a concept that can be embraced by all.

To all of you at this conference, but also all of those following the outcome of the endeavours: Let us show the necessary compassion to each other and particularly to the leaders who must make the decisions. Compassion is the only passion which is not self centred. May you find the energy, the decency and love for one another to show such compassion.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mandela".

Nelson Mandela
Founder and Patron
Peace Parks Foundation

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Ted Turner, *Turner Enterprises, founder of CNN and of the Turner Foundation, which promotes the preservation of the world's natural habitat and builds constituencies for preservation*: It's an honor and a privilege to be invited by the DMZ Forum to work with them on Korean environmental problems, especially the preservation of the DMZ as a Peace Park that will inspire all of Asia and the rest of the world. It is unique, important and interesting and will be one of the greatest eco-tourism sites in the world.

We are in an interesting place—a vibrant democratic capitalistic state up against a Communist state. Both states are inhabited by the same people. Families are divided. People I met in North Korea emphasized re-unification. Before we can make a Peace Park in the DMZ, there must be a peace treaty. Both people want it to happen and hope their leaders will move forward to end the war and de-militarize.

A Peace Park in the DMZ will take an international effort. It will cost about \$1 billion to extract the mines. But then, children playing in the DMZ would inspire the world. Since Korea has 5 times the population density of the U.S., there will be pressure to develop the DMZ. That should be resisted.

Costa Rica has the highest percentage of land in parks—and no military. They have no army—they put their money into preserving the environment, while their neighboring countries are in poverty.

I've been asked to work on this cause—a Peace Park in the DMZ, a world class facility Koreans will be proud of. People all over the world are pulling for this project. I'm honored to be one of them.

From a Press Conference, August 17: I had a marvelous visit to North Korea, 2 ½ days, and four days in south Korea. I've seen the DMZ from both sides, and it's beautiful from both sides. A Peace Park needs peace; the world would welcome that. I'm hopeful the whole package can be put together in the next couple of years to the benefit of both Koreas and the world. Nelson Mandela is getting on in years; I want him to live to see it.

In North Korea, I met at great length with three officials and briefly with the lead delegate to the six-party talks. He is, of course, preoccupied with those talks, but he listened carefully and promised to give it consideration when the talks come to a resolution. The three officials expressed a desire to improve relations with South Korea.

To achieve a DMZ Peace Park, North and South Korea need to establish a joint commission to study the issues with the help of international experts. Planning is needed and details studied. This should happen soon.

Eco-tourism would be enormously profitable. It is a unique environmental treasure. People all over the world would want to see it. They would spend a lot of money. I didn't talk to the military in North Korea, except one young soldier who thought the Peace Park was a good idea, but the leaders were looking forward to successful six-party talks and a nuclear-free peninsula.