

Remarks by Consul General Woong-nam Kim on the Occasion of Opening Ceremony of Korean War Memorial

(Moore Park, Sydney, Sunday, 26th July 2009)

The Honourable Graham West MP, Minister for Juvenile Justice,
Minister for Volunteering, Minister for Youth and Minister Assisting
the Premier on Veterans' Affairs,

The Honourable Kim, Yang, Minister for Patriots and Veterans Affairs
of the Republic Of Korea,

Mr. Harry Spicer, Representative of the Korean War Veterans
Association of Australia,

Mr. Paik Nak-yoon, President of the Korean War Memorial Promotion
Association,

Mr. John Haines, President of the Returned Services League of
Australia,

Australian and Korean Veterans of the Korean War,

Korean Community Leaders,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great privilege to join you in this opening ceremony of the Korean War Memorial at Moore Park. I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to The Honourable Graham West, Minister for Juvenile Justice, Minister for Volunteering, Minister for Youth and Minister Assisting the Premier on Veterans' Affairs, and the Honourable Kim Yang, the Korean Minister for Patriots and Veterans Affairs, for gracing this meaningful event

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation to Mr. Paik Nak-yoon, the President of the Korean War Memorial Promotion Association who made great contribution to promote the construction of the Korean War Memorial. I also wish to thank the Korean War veterans and their families who attended this ceremony today.

The unveiling of the Korean War memorial this time is very timely event on the eve of the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. The Korean War Memorial commemorates the comradeship of

Australian and Korean soldiers, who fought together and gave their lives in the war. The memorial will honour friendships forged during the war and remember the war with dignity.

The opening of this War Memorial is so meaningful in that it will contribute to a shared aspiration for peace and stability on the Korean peninsula by reminding us of why the Korean War should never be repeated. This Memorial will also provide us a valuable opportunity to salute and praise the valiant efforts of Australian and Korean soldiers for whom future generations can gather to pay their respects.

During the Korean War, 17,000 Australian soldiers, sailors and airmen fought in defence of Korea, with 340 soldiers paying the ultimate price with their lives. 137 out of the 340 soldiers who came from New South Wales are well remembered by the 137 flowers in the flower garden, representing one flower for each New South Welshman lost and paying tribute to their bravery and sacrifice.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the contributors to the War Memorial. My sincere thanks first goes to the Government of New South Wales, the Commonwealth Government of Australia, the Korean community of New South Wales and local veterans groups. Without their support and fundraising efforts, this project would not have been successfully completed.

I am assured that the Korean War Memorial represents the symbol of the close ties that exist between our two countries and will contribute to strengthening further the friendship and cooperation between Korea and New South Wales, honouring the sacrifices made in the War and promoting ever-lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. Thank you.