

Address by
His Excellency Choi Kyu Hah,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea,
At the Closing Ceremony
Of XXIV International Youth Skill Olympics

September 14, 1978
Busan, Korea

President Manuel Valentin Gamazo of the International Youth Skill Olympics,

Contestants and officers of all delegations,

Observers from various countries, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It gives me a great pleasure to have this opportunity to address the closing ceremony of the Twenty-fourth International Youth Skill Olympics.

First, I wish to join you in celebrating the successful completion of this significant event — a great success ascribable to the enthusiastic participation and efforts on the part of the contestants and officers of the member nations.

I express my heartfelt congratulations to you medal-winners. You have earned the honors for the meritorious records you have registered by fully demonstrating the skills you have acquired through hard training.

Since the first competition was held in 1950, the Youth Skill Olympics has expanded year after year both in the scope of participation and the number of fields of competition, while contributing greatly to the promotion of craftsmanship of youths as well as to industrial development.

A number of both advanced industrial nations and developing countries have taken part in these events, exchanging up-to-date knowhow and information on technical training of youths, and cementing mutual friendship. In this way, the participants have contributed to the common endeavors towards peace and prosperity of the world.

As is well known, mankind has today come to enjoy a high living standard and material affluence of a magnitude unimagined of in the past, thanks to expedited industrialization and development of material civilization made possible by the progress of science and technology.

The universal trend today is that the more a country is advanced in the area of science and technology, the more is its industry developed leading to stronger national capability and better lives of its people. Therefore, every nation concentrates all its available energy upon the development of science and technology.

Every country also indulges in the advancement of technology and training of technical manpower to meet the ever expanding demand for knowhow.

In all countries, youthful craftsmen contribute to the development of the countries and societies they belong to as well as to the advancement of human civilization and welfare more directly than those engaged in other sectors.

The Republic of Korea has achieved a remarkable national development through concerted efforts of the government and people despite innumerable adverse conditions such as the devastation during the Korean War in the early 1950s, a limited land for a large population, and insufficient natural resources.

In the course of the development, our youthful craftsmen have incessantly refined their skills and worked hard with sweat on the forefront of the industry, and have thereby helped sustain economic construction.

At the same time, a large number of our skilled workers have gone abroad, playing a positive role in international technical and economic cooperation as well as in the promotion of friendship.

I have mentioned the situation of my country briefly before you, national delegates, because I wanted to emphasize how important the role of youthful craftsmen is in the enhancing of people's lives and nations' development.

As I personally witnessed on a tour of the contest sites the other day the impressive craftsmanship you displayed; your serious attitude in the competitions; and the scenes of friendly exchanges and amity among you, I became convinced that boundless hope lies ahead of your nations and mankind.

In view of the significance and contribution of the International Youth Skill Olympics, I wish to suggest those nations who have sent observers to this event and other non-member countries join this international organization.

The young skilled workers of Korea who have learned and gained much from the International Youth Skill Olympics, and the government and people

of the Republic of Korea, well aware of such gains, have spared no support for the success of this event. I would be pleased if you officers and contestants from abroad have had joyous days during your stay here.

I hope that you national delegates will kindly carry back home the true story of the Korean people working hard for a bright and prosperous tomorrow, and the warm friendship of the Korean people towards the peoples of your countries.

Before concluding, I would like to extend my appreciation to Chairman Nak Sun Lee of the Korean Committee of the International Youth Skill Olympics, and other officers concerned for their part in preparing and bringing a success to this big event. I wish the International Youth Skill Olympics a boundless development, and you participants and your families a continued happiness.

Thank you.