

The 13th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC)

Welcome Address

Mr. Chairman,/ representatives of countries in the Northeast Asian region,/ ladies and gentlemen,/

I would like to start by saying/ that it is a great honor and a pleasure/ for Seoul City to be hosting/ the 13th Northeast Asian Conference on Environmental Cooperation (NEAC) in 2004,/ and I would like to extend a warm welcome/ and express my appreciation/ to the representatives of Northeast Asian countries and participants/ who have visited Seoul to attend the conference./

Today,/ the globe has come to share a great number of policies and experiences/ regarding environmental issues,/ and all nations around the world are working/ toward developing a stronger sense of identity/ as members of a common environmental community/ by building a solid human resource network./ I believe/ this realization that humankind is a single community/ is a great evolution.

In this regard,/ I hope the 13th NEAC conference/ will provide an opportunity/ to introduce the developments and new ventures/ in environmental policy achieved by participating nations/ and to share policy experiences,/ thereby enhancing mutual understanding and improving relevant policies. /

Seoul City is exerting great efforts/ to protect and preserve the environment./ Such efforts are evident/ in the numerous environment-related projects/ undertaken by the city,/ including the restoration of Cheonggyecheon,/ an inner city stream,/ the forest building project in the Ttukseom area,/ and the city's activities/ to create more green space in the city for citizens./ We are also trying to control the use of passenger cars,/ encouraging the use of public transportation/ - especially buses -/ and doing all we can/ to reduce the use of fossil fuels. /

Seoul City is attempting to deal with environmental problems/ prevalent not only around the globe,/ but also specifically in the Northeast Asian region,/ such as the dust storm phenomenon,/ by taking bolder and more aggressive approaches and action/ in the future./ The studies to be discussed during this meeting/ will provide an excellent opportunity/ for an exchange of information/ among participating nations./ I would also like to kindly ask all participants/ with abundant experience and extensive knowledge/ to provide Seoul with abundant advice and suggestions/ so that the city of Seoul can become/ an environmentally friendly city/ on a global level./

Once again,/ I offer my warmest welcome/ and express my appreciation to all of you/ and hope/ that your stay in Seoul will be a pleasant one.

Jin, Ik Chul

Director-General of Environment Bureau

Seoul Metropolitan Government