

THE KOREAN ASSEMBLY FOR REUNION  
OF TEN MILLION SEPARATED FAMILIES  
(KARTS)

Suite 301, Jin Bldg.  
377-143, Shindang-dong, Choong-ku  
SEOUL, KOREA

Office of the Chairman



사단법인

일천만이산가족재회추진위원회

서울특별시 중구 신당동 377-143  
진빌딩 301호  
전화 : 232-5050 · 6811, 235-1411

90-9623-5-2

090175

August 22, 1990

H.E. Patricio Aylwin  
President  
Office of the President  
Santiago  
Chile

Production

Your Excellency Aylwin:

On behalf of the Korean Assembly for Reunion of 10 Million Separated Families(KARTS), I am writing this letter to Your Excellency calling your attention to the tragic division of the Korean peninsula. It was forcibly made by the super-power nations, i.e. the victor nations after the World War II, the purpose of which was originally the disarming of the surrendered Japanese Armed Forces.

I visited Europe last month in order to see the crumbled Berlin Wall, the symbol of the divided humanity caused by ideological conflicts. It was moving to look around the borderline that existed until November 1989. There I saw people from East and West Germany visiting families and friends, shopping together and drinking and talking together, as if they have never been divided into two countries. While the politicians in Bonn and East Berlin are busy working over the touchy issue of unification, the people were running their routine life peacefully and cooperatively. I have wanted to see and learn how the people manage their social, economic, and monetary system after they were separated for over thirty years.

I was curious because I was one of the refugees from North Korea. Also, I have not, as Chairman of the KARTS, spared every effort for the reunion of the separated families in the past, but in vain. To my surprise, there was not much fuss along the borderline. Everybody was calm and happy. People from the East did shopping in the West mindful of every penny. It was quite contrary to my expectation. I was reminded of a journalist's comment after the crumbling of the Berlin Wall: "The revolution came from the people; it is they who will bring our nation together." Tears welled in my eyes: I was touched and envious of the German people; at the same time I felt ashamed of myself thinking of my country's tragic division that remains rock-hard.

It has been 45 years now ever since the tragic 38th parallel line divided the peninsula between the North and South. Today the peninsula is still divided near the 38th

August 22, 1990  
Page - 2 -

parallel. Totalitarianism is fast becoming extinct everywhere else in the world.

Those who love freedom in the North fled before and after the Korean War, abandoning their homes and properties, in their twenties turned into the sixties; those in their thirties into the seventies; and many of those who fled in an advanced stage have already passed away, leaving their will to be buried on the top of the mountains facing their hometown in the North. To our grief, ever since we left home, we have no way of knowing our loved ones' whereabouts in the North, let alone visiting relatives crossing the borderline. This is not a mere case of humanitarian concern but a most grave breach of human rights.

As you know, the family in Korean tradition is nearly a sacred institution, the cradle of all other human institutions, and it is our custom to hold a memorial service for our deceased families on their sacrificial day. With no line of communication linking the two hostile zones, we have no knowledge about whether our parents and brothers and sisters are still alive or not; hence the sufferings of Korean separated families are inordinately tragic.

We feel very regret about what we cannot see in Korea the sign of desirable changes at this age of new world order in which the mood of detente prevail over the globe. Besides the unification of the two Germanys, the relationship between China and Taiwan is improving as we are informed that the Taiwan government lifted the so called 3-no policy, no contact, no compromise, and no dialogue. Therefore, the Korean peninsula is only the place where no sign of reconciliation burgeons out. Our opinions on world problems are diversified, but the one issue that unites all generations in Korea is the longing for reunification. We look enviously toward East and West Germany.

Your Excellency, how can we sit together for the discussion of exchanging correspondences and allowing free visits? By this time, we have been trying our best to the possible and peaceful solution of this Korean aporia in vain. Thus, with the help of you, we sincerely wish to solve this problem. All we can expect for the refugee problem is to muster moral forces and win the public opinion of people, the opinions of the world celebrities in particular.

I greatly admire your acumen and wide experience in the world arena. With your perspicacious insight and wisdom, together with the practical knowledge about global matters, I believe and hope that you can play a decisive

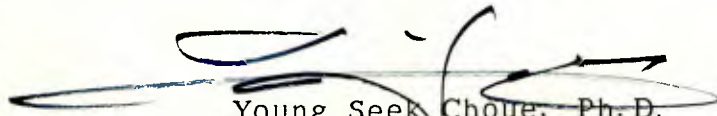
August 22, 1990  
Page - 3 -

role in removing the barrier on the peninsula. I humbly request Your Excellency, on behalf of KARTS, to help us, the separated families to be allowed: 1) to freely communicate with each other directly to inquire about the family's survival, 2) to make free visits for the reunion of separated families.

As you know well, presently Korea is the only country in the world that this kind of humanitarian problem was not yet solved. And Koreans are not of the two peoples. We are of the same brethren. Ideology makes us divide in the North and South. How can this kind of situation is possible in this era of crumbling down of ideological walls.

Again, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude for your noble concern for world peace. With our ten million separated families' earnest wishes for your worthwhile endeavors for the humanitarian cause for the Korean people, I look forward to having your good suggestions and cooperations from you soon with prayful mind.

Cordially yours,



Young Seek Choue, Ph.D.  
Chairman of the KARTS

YSC: spp