

Korea a partner in Lanka's progress and development - President Kumaratunge



President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge in her address at the Banquet held in her honour said that the Korean people had not only developed their own country but had inspired others and assisted others in their development. "Both your private sector and your government have become partners in Sri Lanka's progress and development", she said.

The following is the text of her speech:

"It is indeed a privilege and pleasure for me to visit the Republic of Korea. I had looked forward to this for a long time. Relations with your country have been most important to us. This is why I am making this visit which is only my third visit outside the region.

"Mr President, I wish to thank you most sincerely for the kind words and sentiments expressed. Your country has earned the admiration of the world. We have watched

with a measure of amazement how the courageous Korean people have rebuilt their country from the ashes of war. It has indeed been an inspiring effort for all of us. As an Asian country, we share in your triumph and we are proud of the fact that today you stand shoulder to shoulder with Japan and the developed countries of the world.

“The Korean people have not only developed their own country but have inspired others and assisted others in their development. Both your private sector and your government have become partners

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in Sri Lanka’s progress and development. The Republic of Korea has the largest number of investors in Sri Lanka and the largest expatriate population in my country comes from the Republic of Korea. The relationship with the Republic of Korea is important and valuable one which we nurture and safeguard most carefully. My visit to your country can only serve towards safeguarding and strengthening our relations.

“I wish to take this opportunity to thank you and your government once again for the assistance which you have given my country. Our talks today and my other engagements will no doubt serve to take this relationship forward to building closer links not only between our government but also between our private sectors and our two peoples. I look forward to it. May I invite the distinguished guests present here today to join me in a toast to the good health and success of the President and the prosperity of the people of the Republic of Korea.”

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