
Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Jang Hee Lee



Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you to Cheongju, Chungcheongbuk-do, the heart of the Republic of Korea. As the Chairman of the Loving Center for Disaster Victims, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the esteemed participants of the 18th ICCEM.

In commemoration of the first anniversary of the tragic Gungpyeong Underpass Disaster that occurred last July, we have convened this forum to enhance disaster safety awareness and gather diverse perspectives on safety management. In the era of climate crisis, we are persistently exposed to risks such as global warming, tsunamis, heavy rains, and large-scale fires, facing an unavoidable situation of disaster crises.

Even as we speak, natural disasters like earthquakes, fires, and heavy rains are occurring somewhere in the world. Given that disasters are inevitable, there is no absolute answer to the level of prevention and response required or the strategies to minimize their impact. The responsibility in managing disasters during this era of uncertainty is complex and cannot be easily defined. This gathering provides an opportunity to reflect on disaster management.

In our contemporary era, our approach must involve significant efforts to create a global community free from environmental problems and disasters. We must diligently implement practical initiatives such as the Demand Initiative, Incentive Initiative, and Voluntary Initiative.

With the escalation of the climate crisis, various disasters are occurring more frequently, inevitably leading to an increase in disaster victims. It is imperative that we pay greater attention to the daily lives of disaster victims, ensuring their human dignity, alongside discussions on disaster prevention and management. Continuous support is essential to help them return to normalcy and become healthy, contributing citizens.

As I often state, my fervent hope is for a society devoid of disaster victims, a future where our Loving Center for Disaster Victims becomes unnecessary. Is such a day possible? Let us hold firm in the belief that it will undoubtedly come. I am confident that with our collective efforts, we can achieve such a society.

I sincerely hope that the 18th ICCEM will foster extensive discussions on disaster safety and inspire deep consideration and commitment to supporting disaster victims.

Thank you.

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Jang Hee Lee