

"Korea was fortunate to have Sweden, the most advanced nation in democracy and welfare, as a friend during the war", South Korea's president Lee Myung-bak writes on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the conflict.



- [South Korea completed free-trade talk in Sweden](#)
- [Ericsson to invest \\$1.5 billion in South Korea](#)

Just 60 years ago in the predawn hours of June 25, 1950, Communist North Korea invaded the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south prompting the Korean War. Freedom in the Republic and the entire world was put to a historic test. The Korean War was the first large-scale military confrontation that pitted the democratic bloc against the communist bloc after the end of the Second World War. The United Nations responded by dispatching combat units comprised of troops from 16 member countries and medical support groups from five countries. They served alongside South Korean soldiers to defend the freedom of “a country they never knew and a people they never met.”

On the 60th anniversary of the Korean War, I would like to look back at the special relations between the Republic of Korea and the Kingdom of Sweden and talk about the prospects for bilateral cooperation in the future.

Korea was fortunate to have Sweden, the most advanced nation in democracy and welfare, as a friend during the war. Sweden dispatched to Korea a mobile field hospital with a staff of 160 medical personnel. Even after the war ended, Swedish medical professionals provided services until April 1957, longer than any other country. Had it not been for the sacrifices and devoted services of the Swedish people, Korea would not have become what it is today.

The Korean War left the country in complete ruins. But the medical personnel from Sweden helped us lay the foundation for freedom. We have always remembered their noble sacrifices; we did our best to keep the pledge of never letting their sacrifices be in vain. Koreans are proud of the achievements made by the Republic over the years, and we also hope that the people of

Korea's President: 'Thank you, people of Sweden'

Written by Johan Nylander

Wednesday, 23 June 2010 14:37 - Last Updated Wednesday, 23 June 2010 19:42

Sweden feel equally proud.

On March 26, the North torpedoed one of the South's navy corvettes, the Cheonan. The active cooperation and support of the Kingdom of Sweden in the course of responding to the North's provocation again reminded both our countries of the importance of bilateral ties. The goal of the ROK's North Korea policies is not to confront the North but to persuade Pyongyang to alter its wrong course of action. Our ultimate objective is to bring about peace and stability on the Peninsula as well as achieve coprosperity and peaceful reunification of the Korean nation. The Korean Peninsula has been synonymous with confrontation and division for too long. It is imperative to transform it into a catalyst for regional and international peace.

Once again, I offer my heartfelt gratitude for the selfless friendship the Kingdom of Sweden showed us 60 years ago. The Korean people will never forget the valiant medical personnel who courageously supported the fight for freedom in the Republic.

Lee Myung-bak

President of the Republic of Korea