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**Keynote address by President Yoon Suk Yeol
at the New York Digital Vision Forum**

September 21, 2023

Yesterday, I delivered my keynote speech at the UN General Assembly. Today, I am here to talk about the future of humanity. It is more meaningful than my speech at the UN General Assembly that I am here with scientists who will shape the future of humanity.

Fellow digital citizens,

It is wonderful to be back at New York University, at the forefront of digital innovation, and in New York, the city of freedom and hope and the center of the global economy, once again following my last year's visit.

Earlier at the entrance, I met President Linda Mills who told me it was exactly a year ago that I visited New York University.

I'd like to recognize Dr. Linda Mills, President of New York University; Honorable Maria Torres-Springer, Deputy Mayor of New York City; Honorable Sethuraman Panchanathan, Director of the National Science Foundation (NSF); and distinguished guests,

It gives me great pleasure to be with you today.

The emergence of generative AI, exemplified by the release of ChatGPT, has brought more convenience to people's lives and increased industrial productivity. On the other hand, it has also raised global concerns about the trustworthiness and safety of AI.

There are growing concerns that the digital divide may serve to undermine human dignity and that the proliferation of disinformation may threaten democracy and freedom. These very real risks posed by deepening digitalization require immediate attention.

Digital technologies know no borders; they offer connectivity and immediacy. This is why it is crucial to establish a universal and internationally accepted digital order.

Exactly one year ago, at this very place, I emphasized the need for a new digital order in the era of deepening digitalization through the New York Initiative.

Since then, I have engaged in discussions about a new digital order with intellectuals, scientists, entrepreneurs and young leaders across the world, at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Harvard University in April and Sorbonne University in June, among other venues.

Soon, the Republic of Korea will unveil a Digital Bill of Rights that encapsulates all of these discussions as well as the experience and vision of Korea, a leader in digital innovation.

This Digital Bill of Rights will serve as the international community's compass to navigate the era of deepening digitalization by setting out five guiding principles for the building of a brighter digital future.

The future society we aim to build with the Digital Bill of Rights is one that recognizes digital access as a universal human right to ensure that everyone enjoys the benefits of digital technology to the fullest.

To achieve this, we must first make sure that AI and other digital technologies are not used to restrict, but rather to expand, the freedom of humanity.

All AI systems and digital technologies must be developed and used with respect for the freedom and dignity of humanity as uncompromising core values.

We must find appropriate ways to help those who are struggling to adapt to the digital world to ensure that everyone, including socially vulnerable groups, can lead lives of dignity.

One person's self-expression through digital means should be exercised responsibly in ways that respect the rights of others.

We must ensure that digital technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data do not become instruments of discrimination and prejudice.

Second, everyone should be given equal opportunities to compete and innovate, and the benefits of digital technology should be evenly distributed, within and across societies, so that AI and other digital technologies can contribute to enhancing the well-being of humanity.

The rights to and responsibilities for digital assets must be clearly defined in terms of development and compensation, and data and output transactions based on free contracts must be guaranteed.

The value of digital data and information must be assessed in a fair manner, and a system must be put in place so the efforts and money invested are justly compensated.

Fair access and equal opportunities regarding digital data and information must be ensured as they are public goods.

To this end, sufficient digital literacy is needed, and measures to resolve the digital skills gap must be sought.

Third, AI and digital technologies should not pose threats to the safety of individuals and society at large.

To safeguard the international community from potential risks associated with the development and use of digital technology, pertinent information must be shared and disclosed promptly.

A regulatory system that takes appropriate measures should be built and operated.

If we fail to counter the spread of disinformation fueled by the malicious misuse of AI and digital technologies, it could threaten liberal democracy, put market economies based on liberal democracy at risk and jeopardize our future and the lives of future generations.

Fourth, we should continue our pursuit of digital innovation that drives sustainable prosperity for humanity.

We should be staunch advocates for digital innovation based on freedom and creativity and provide a variety of support, including the nurturing of talent, R&D investment and the building of infrastructure.

Ineffective regulations that stifle innovation must be actively removed to allow new digital technologies and services to continually spring up.

Lastly, the international community must work together in solidarity to make sure that AI and digital technologies contribute to promoting global peace and shared prosperity for all.

It is crucial that the international community cooperate closely to establish a universal and internationally accepted set of digital norms and promote their adoption and use.

As advanced digital technology increasingly permeates every corner of our lives across different cultures and industries, it is all the more important to contribute to the global effort to support the “Digital South,” countries with low digital access and digital adoption. With such joint efforts, we will be able to reduce the digital divide and ensure that each country has fair digital access.

Fellow digital citizens,

The points that I have just raised are from the Digital Bill of Rights. I call on my fellow digital citizens to join our endeavors to realize a digital society where everyone can enjoy the benefits of AI and digital innovation, in a fair and just manner.

The Republic of Korea will play its part in establishing global digital norms – including the establishment of an international organization, as I suggested in Paris this June – and will strive for digital innovation in collaboration with the world to maximize the freedom and welfare of humanity.

At the ASEAN-Republic of Korea Summit held on September 6, I announced a US\$30-million “Digital Innovation Flagship Project” to ensure fair digital access and enhanced welfare for ASEAN countries.

The Republic of Korea is committed to ensuring that the digital transformation leaves no country behind and that all nations can enjoy the benefits of digital technology together.

Today, in partnership with New York University, we are signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand our AI research and business collaborations.

AI and digital technologies not only generate added value on their own but also serve as foundational technologies that create customized value and quality jobs when combined with other technologies and industries.

The MOU signed today will provide a robust foundation for bolstering our solidarity with New York University.

In the years to come, I hope we further expand areas of cooperation and encourage researchers and businesses from both countries to pursue innovation in full force and reach out globally.

Thank you.

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