

Man's and Peoples' Independence and Socialism in Juche Idea

—Legacy of Kim Il Sung—

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First of all I would like to congratulate the International Institute of Juche Idea, namely the Director General Prof. Ramón Jiménez López and the Secretary General Dr. Ogami Ken-ichi, for organizing this Seminar on the occasion of the 110th birth anniversary of President Kim Il Sung. And with them I also congratulate all those who contributed with their participation to the success of the Seminar.

In the speeches that preceded me I listened to very interesting statements which highlighted the important role of President Kim Il Sung in the history of Korean people and in the international movement for socialism, as well as the importance of the Juche idea, by him elaborated, to this day in the various situations of contemporary world.

President Kim Il Sung was undoubtedly an outstanding leader, whose commitment and activity for independence of his country and for socialism are well known by all of us, and whose memory and teachings are very much alive not only in Korean people but in the world progressive peoples. He was indeed an eminent thinker as well, authoring a new theoretical system for independence of peoples and for building of a socialist society. All references made to the Juche idea in the speeches by representatives from different regions testify the permanent validity and correctness of this theory, whose essential features are also widely known by followers that study its principles since much time.

So I would like today focus my speech on some particular aspects, starting from a question someone might ask, leaving for instance in Europe, or in a Western country, or anywhere history and culture, social and economic system that induce the habit to talk about the individual and about human rights, often however confusing it with the law of the strongest and consumerism of the market: why should I be interested in a theory elaborated since many decades ago in a far country in Asia?

The answer is simply because this theory clarified essential dynamics that have their validity in the different situations, precisely taking man as the starting point and placing him at the center of everything. In the Juche idea man is the master of everything and decides everything, meaning that, by his consciousness and will, he is able to interact with nature and modify existing situations and relations.

In this sense the Juche idea can be seen as a new humanism, exalting man and his potential and making him the primary recipient of all care in a spirit of mutual collaboration. This should be the main concern of any philosophical and social theory caring for human being; and therefore this should encounter a particular interest in Western culture as well, where since ancient age man was the subject in a privileged position, starting from Greco-Roman era, and then in the Renaissance period, culminating in Italian humanism, before capitalism and market took over.

As man is a social being who lives in a community, full expansion of his capacities can only be achieved in the community within he lives, coordinating with the capacities of the other members in order to reach common objectives that can benefit each of them. Obviously this exaltation of man has nothing to do with unbridled individualism and the law of the jungle, where the stronger animal subdues and devours the weaker one.

The Juche idea indeed advocates the elimination of oppression, exploitation, injustice and aims to establish relationships of fairness, equality and solidarity, in order to achieve the true freedom and independence of the individuals in the freedom and independence of the community to which they belong. This because individuals only can be free and independent if their community is free and independent.

It can be said that the Juche idea is fundamentally an idea of independence and so of sovereignty and socialism, relying on the popular masses. This theory, as we know, elaborated by President Kim Il Sung on the basis of practice, over decades of concrete experiences of fighting and governance, made it possible victoriously to lead Korean people first to free themselves from the yoke of colonial domination and then to safeguard its independence from attacks of imperialism up to build a powerful self-defensive State, while developing an advanced socialist society.

As President Kim Il Sung stressed, opposite of those often divided in factions preaching the support or concessions by foreign powers, “experience shows that in

order to lead the revolution to victory, one must go among the masses of people and organize them, and solve all problems arising in the course of the revolution independently on one's responsibility in accord with the actual conditions, instead of relying on others". And further: "The masters of the revolutionary struggle are the masses of the people, and only when they are organized and mobilized they can win the revolutionary struggle".

In the path of the Korean revolution, he opposed in this way factionalism and flunkeyism, growing the revolutionary party from the bottom, and at same time eliminating dogmatism and formalism and finally establishing Juche in ideological work.

The Juche idea shows new and original features, overcoming limitations of preceding theories based on determinism or over-emphasis on material and economic factors. Stating that man is the master of everything, the Juche idea surpasses Marxism-Leninism, showing a new viewpoint and attitude to the world, on the basis of man's position and role as master of the world. Focusing on man and taking a man-centered attitude make the Juche idea a new theory approaching the world from the viewpoint of interests of man.

While Marxism-Leninism was elaborated for a given historical period and studied the conditions for making revolution and taking the power, the Juche idea is a general and timeless theory that, defining the essence of man as a being with independence, creativity and consciousness, teaches also how to continue the revolution and keep the power realizing the needs of the popular masses through a continuous ideological work.

It was thanks to this approach that, after the liberation from colonialism in 1945 and from imperialistic attacks in 1953, President Kim Il Sung led the reconstruction of a new People's Korea as a phoenix on the ashes and ruins of devastation caused by ravaging imperialism, with the amazing speed of winged horse Chollima. Everyone visiting Pyongyang and the DPRK sees, where a barbaric war had before razed everything to the ground, magnificent achievements of buildings and monuments in well-kept green spaces and sees an orderly, hard-working, motivated and self-confident society.

Applying the Juche idea, President Kim Il Sung established an advanced socialist system centered on popular masses and made sure that socialism in DPRK give to the people the most important benefits. Free medical care was introduced in People's Korea since 1947 for industrial workers and then in 1953 universal free health care was ensured for everybody; in 1974 taxation was abolished and prices reduced; education is completely free and housing also is virtually free; there is not unemployment, neither homelessness, no beggar.

Through a constant effort to improve popular masses' living standards and declaring "the people are my God", President Kim Il Sung ensured that people were put first in everything; and by this way likewise ensured that people were the first defenders of the established social system, equipped with the socialist Juche ideology.

That explains how, after the collapse of Eastern European countries due to the insufficiency of their revisionist regimes, DPRK went on advancing along the road of the Juche idea and socialism, defending social achievements and independence.

Causes of the collapse of those countries were scientifically analyzed in the light of the Juche idea by Leader Kim Jong Il, who demonstrated the necessity and superiority of socialism and continued along the same road upholding revolutionary principles of the Juche Idea and the Songun idea elaborated by President Kim Il Sung. Declaring "Do not expect any change from me" and "We shall build a prosperous and mighty country under the Juche flag", Leader Kim Jong Il called the Korean people and the world peoples to defend and advance the socialism cause.

Presently the activity engaged by President Kim Il Sung and then continued by Leader Kim Jong Il is carried on under the leadership of Marshall Kim Jong Un, who has developed the social living standard and at same time built a mighty self-defensive State, despite severe and unjust sanctions, military pressure and provocations from imperialism.

As Marshall Kim Jong Un said, "The permanent strategy of our revolution and its final victory lie in going straight along the road of independence, the road of Songun, the road of socialism".

The Juche idea, elaborated by President Kim Il Sung, developed by Leader Kim Jong Il, and presently carried on by Marshall Kim Jong Un, remains the road ensuring, with independence and socialism, the liberation from imperialist oppression

and domination, the overcoming of capitalist exploitation and the building of a new society, establishing relations of social justice, mutual solidarity and prospering development for all of its members.