KIM JONG UN

LET US WRITE A GREAT NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT OF KOREANS IN JAPAN BY CARRYING FORWARD THE PATRIOTIC SPIRIT OF THE FOUNDER GENERATION

Letter to Officials of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan and Other Compatriots in Japan on the Occasion of the Association's 70th Founding Anniversary

May 25, 2025

Foreign Languages Publishing House DPR Korea 2025 WORKING PEOPLE OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM JONG UN

LET US WRITE A GREAT NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT OF KOREANS IN JAPAN BY CARRYING FORWARD THE PATRIOTIC SPIRIT OF THE FOUNDER GENERATION

Letter to Officials of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan and Other Compatriots in Japan on the Occasion of the Association's 70th Founding Anniversary May 25, 2025

Foreign Languages Publishing House
DPR Korea
2025

Esteemed officials of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon),

Dear compatriots living in Japan,

Chongryon, having travelled a patriotic road bearing the honourable appellation and dignity of being a prototype of overseas compatriots' organizations in the world, is greeting the 70th anniversary of its founding.

Over the many decades since the day when it was founded, Chongryon has left an indelible imprint on history by sharing its destiny with the motherland while flying high the national flag of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and demonstrating the spirit and mettle of indomitable Korea in the heart of a capitalist country.

In the swirling vortex of history, Chongryon and the Koreans resident in Japan have stoutly followed the road of the national patriotic movement from one century into the next and from one generation into the next, linking their destiny to that of their dear homeland. Their merits shine brightly in the history of the Juche-oriented movement of overseas compatriots.

On the significant occasion of the anniversary of

Chongryon's founding, I pay ennobling tribute to Comrades Han Tok Su, Ri Jin Gyu, So Man Sul, Ri Kye Baek, Ri Sim Chol, Yun Tok Gon, Kim Un Sun, Pak Jong Hyon, Ro Jae Ho and other first-generation Chongryon officials, as well as other Korean activists in Japan, both known and unknown, who founded the proud entity that is Chongryon by standing in the vanguard of the effort to open up the thorny path of the Juche-oriented movement of Koreans in Japan under the leadership of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung.

I offer my warm congratulations and encouragement also to Chairman Ho Jong Man, First Vice-Chairman Pak Ku Ho and other officials who, as witnesses to Chongryon's historical development, have worked with devotion in the vanguard of its patriotic struggle, and to all the officials of its grass-roots organizations who, living most closely with our compatriots, have formed ties of kinship with them and are taking sincere care of them by maintaining the spirit of the preceding generations.

My heartfelt thanks go to Chongryon's educationalists and all the other compatriots who, without any selfish motive and without seeking any reward, are working earnestly to develop national

education under difficult circumstances in a foreign land.

In addition, I extend my best wishes to the students at Korea University and our delightful schoolchildren in Japan who are applying themselves to their studies in pursuit of their cherished mission and desire to add lustre to Chongryon's honour and history.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I express my deep thanks to the Japanese people and sponsors of conscience for the active support and sincere help they have rendered to Chongryon' righteous activities.

I am pleased that, in celebration of this day when Chongryon's history is occupying the limelight, I can, on behalf of the government of our Republic and the people in the homeland, extend congratulations to all our compatriots in Japan and look back with deep emotion on the proud path taken by Chongryon.

It is truly a miracle that, over the past seven decades, following the same path as that trodden by their beloved homeland, our compatriots in Japan have overcome the vicissitudes of history in a foreign land where national discrimination and inequality are rampant.

Being scarcely believable, this is something of a surprise to the world. It has been possible because our compatriots in Japan have such a patriotic body as Chongryon.

Since the word *diaspora* was coined, there have existed overseas compatriots' organizations of all hues on this planet. However, there has never been a body like Chongryon with such great ideas and traditions, solid organizational structure, masses of patriotic compatriots, and well-regulated system of national education.

The founding of Chongryon, by bringing about a significant change in the life of our compatriots in Japan, was a historic event. It signalled that, having suffered a miserable fate as the people of a weak colonized country, they had finally settled down in the embrace of their genuine homeland.

With the founding of Chongryon, they had a powerful organization which, on behalf of their homeland, defended their dignity, rights and interests in a foreign land, and they were also granted the high honour of being members of the Republic's first Juche-oriented overseas compatriots' organization.

More precious than anything is the fact that the original ideals and spirit cherished by the founder generation at the dawn of the historic founding of Chongryon are being faithfully carried forward by the

later generations without the slightest vacillation.

The compatriots of the first generation who, led by the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung, blazed a trail for the movement of Koreans in Japan, have all gone now, and only a few of the second generation who, led by the great General Kim Jong Il, defended Chongryon against all the odds, remain alive.

The members of the third generation have become grandparents. They were born in the heyday of Chongryon and added glory to their youth by working with enthusiasm in a foreign land for the sake of their homeland that was overcoming the hardships of the 1990s.

Though many things may change with the passage of time, there is something that must never be allowed to grow weak or be lost; it is the original ideals and spirit that were held aloft in the initial days of Chongryon's founding, and which must be carried forward unswervingly.

Even though time passes, those original ideals and the exploits performed by the forerunners must never be forgotten and their patriotic spirit and mettle must be steadfastly promoted.

The greatest of the exploits achieved by the founder generation of Chongryon is that they created the traditions of loyalty, unity and love for their country and nation in a foreign land.

In retrospect, there are probably no overseas compatriots who have been as fervent as ours in Japan in their desire for human dignity and a powerful nation.

The current generation could scarcely imagine without the help of television or books the misery the poor Koreans suffered during the years of national distress, the misery endured by the first and second generations of Korean residents in Japan who were taken to a foreign land and subjected to slavery—a fate they regarded as inescapable, when they were even confronted with death for no reason, simply because they had been deprived of their own country.

It was in this situation that they put absolute trust in the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung and followed him. They regarded him as a peerless patriot and saviour of the nation, as he had liberated the country through an arduous 20-year-long struggle after declaring death-defying resistance against the Japanese imperialists.

As they maintained such absolute trust in the father of the nation, the first generation of Chongryon courageously crossed the raging East Sea on board small boats to celebrate the founding of the DPRK;

they did not hesitate to risk their lives to hoist our sacred national flag; and they readily chose to visit Pyongyang to get advice when the movement of Koreans in Japan was at the crossroads of rise and fall.

Under the care of the great leaders, the founder generation of Chongryon, by creating the traditions of unity and patriotism, laid the foundations for a harmonious and powerful Korean community and ushered in a brilliant heyday of Chongryon.

There are vivid reminders for people in the homeland of the image of Chongryon: the compatriots from Japan who set foot on the benevolent homeland with tears of excitement on their faces and the national flag in their hands; structures named after the patriotic Korean businesspeople in Japan; and streams of Korean Youth League in Japan members who carried red letters of loyalty to the homeland.

It is thanks to the founder generation who bequeathed to their descendants such precious traditions as their spiritual heritage that Chongryon has been able to firmly maintain its intrinsic and original features for so long even in the face of every manner of tempests.

The founder generation of Chongryon waged a courageous struggle to defend the dignity, rights and

interests of the Koreans even in the whirlwind of national chauvinism charged with hatred and prejudice against other nations.

Because their dignity, rights and interests directly meant the national pride that would be the last thing for them to concede, the preceding generations never ceased their struggle to defend their rights and interests, and handed over bitter lessons and precious traditions as their heritage.

The laudable patriotic deeds performed by the preceding generations, to the admiration of all the people around the world, are recorded in the history of the movement of Koreans in Japan. Typical of them are the April 24 struggle for education, the hoisting of our national flag at Sendai, the grand mass gymnastics performance staged for the first time in the history of overseas compatriots' movements, in which a huge national flag of the DPRK was flown, and even the creation of an opera. All this made the unyielding and indomitable spirit of the Korean people better known to the whole world.

The proud appearance of the sturdy and robust Chongryon and its organizations, ranging from the central to the lowest-level ones, its mass organizations of different strata, affiliates, bodies and bases for national education, is a fine indicator of how indomitable Koreans are.

The Korean compatriots are continuing their struggle to instil the spirit of the Korean nation into the minds of their children, and refusing to accept assimilation and naturalization.

An outstanding achievement by the founder generation of Chongryon is that they created a model of history and tradition of national education.

The history of the movement of Koreans in Japan is that of national education, and the security of the succession of the patriotic cause of Chongryon would be inconceivable separated from the spirit of boundless devotion displayed by its founder generation for national education.

Because, even in the rough storms of the times, they cherished the dream of having their children go to school, the Koreans in Japan began building schools after the liberation of their homeland, even before they started building their organizations.

The sound of school bells ringing heard in different parts of Japan instilled the Korean soul and spirit once again into the minds of the compatriots. As the sound of patriotism, it aroused their national consciousness.

Historic witness to Chongryon's national education

is found in the substantial entities of the Korean schools as well as their students who are growing up happily and admirably as dignified Koreans in a foreign land, and also in the legendary tales written by those who love the younger generations and have devoted themselves to the future good.

Whenever I am told about Chongryon officials and other compatriots who, without vacillating in the face of difficulties and trials, are pushing ahead dauntlessly with their patriotic undertakings in capitalist Japan while building up its organizational foundations to make them rock solid, I am proud of Chongryon and, at the same time, feel my heart swelling with respect for the founder generation of Chongryon who never yielded as they cleared a path untrodden by the overseas citizens of any other country.

The brilliant history of Chongryon will continue forever, since the traditions established by the founder generation, not in a peaceful environment or under affluent conditions, but in the face of the worst-ever difficulties, serve as invaluable paving stones on the patriotic road to be followed by the coming generations.

Carrying forward traditions means inheriting the spirit and creating a more wonderful history.

The patriotic traditions bequeathed by the founder generation of Chongryon are not merely recorded in history books; they permeate the spirit of their descendants who have assumed the mission of carrying them forward, and are also mirrored in the appearance of the community of compatriots they are building up.

Steadily stepping up the education in the history and traditions of the movement of Koreans in Japan and prioritizing the training of the younger generations and making strenuous efforts to this end—these are all aimed at providing a sure guarantee for carrying forward the ideas and spirit of Chongryon.

Our Party and state, just as they have done throughout the past decades, attach importance to Chongryon and are working to defend it and consolidate its position, maintaining doing so as an invariable strategic task and a consistent principle.

On the occasion of the Eighth Party Congress, reflecting the will of the millions of our Party members, we ensured that the items dealing with the defence of our overseas compatriots' national rights and interests are stipulated in the Rules of the Workers' Party of Korea. Also, for the first time in the legislative history of the Republic, a law on

championing the rights and interests of overseas compatriots was promulgated. This is a manifestation of the unshakable will of our Party and government to remain faithful to their mission as eternal guardians of the Koreans in Japan and of our other overseas compatriots.

In the future, too, we will do everything in our power to defend Chongryon's legitimate rights as an overseas compatriots' organization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and bring greater dignity and glory to the Koreans in Japan.

As an authoritative overseas compatriots' organization of our Republic, Chongryon's proud history spans seven decades. However, it should not rest content with the strenuous efforts it has made so far, nor mark time. Filled with redoubled courage and stamina, it should ensure that the glorious history of patriotism continues for a hundred, nay a thousand, years.

With the coming decade until its 80th founding anniversary set as a new struggle period, it should achieve substantial progress in developing itself into a body that puts our compatriots first and serves them faithfully.

Chongryon, while steadily advancing step by step

in the new struggle period, should defend the rights and interests of the compatriots, bring up the new generation well and zealously preserve the national identity of the compatriots' community.

Defending their rights and interests, bringing up the new generation and preserving their national identity are the three major undertakings it should consistently hold fast to.

Having set itself the task as a top priority of defending the national rights and interests of the compatriots, it should wage a bold struggle and achieve successful results without fail.

Since the country's liberation, the Koreans in Japan have waged a struggle without letup to defend their democratic national rights and interests. Yet they still face infringements on their core interests, such as the rights to be educated, conduct business and travel freely to their homeland.

The persisting, heartbreaking situation is that our compatriots cannot travel freely to their homeland, and another tragedy is that, although they fulfil their obligation to pay taxes like Japanese citizens do, their sons and daughters are excluded from applying for such educational benefits as "free high schooling" and the "programme for free education and

upbringing of children."

We cannot allow their life and future to continue being threatened in this vicious cycle of discrimination

With its congresses as the launch pads, Chongryon should expand its struggle stage by stage to defend the rights and interests of the compatriots, thus providing them with substantial and more stable and improved rights to existence and development.

The first and foremost right and interest it should defend and expand is the right to national education.

In view of the need to raise the quality of education and provide our compatriots' sons and daughters with a stable educational environment, this right constitutes the supreme right and interest Chongryon must never concede.

It should continue to expand and develop its struggle for defending national education, as this encapsulates the common interests of all families of compatriots, and take steps to lighten parents' burden of school fees for their children, so that there are no clouds in their young hearts.

It should recover all the rights it has been robbed of or which have been infringed on, including that to national education. And it must resolve without fail any issue, if it is related to the dignity and life of the compatriots, however unimportant, by waging an all-out compatriots' struggle.

It should not make the slightest concession, but resolutely oppose such infringements as unwarranted intervention, restriction and national discrimination imposed on the activities of Korean businesspeople in Japan, and steadily push forward with its efforts to promote the interests of the compatriots' businesses.

Chongryon, as the forerunners conducted an unflinching struggle to open and safeguard a sea route to its members' homeland, should organize and wage bold joint action and a joint struggle involving all the compatriots so as to make sure that the piercing whistle accompanying travel to and from their homeland sounds again across the East Sea.

It should work to defend its legitimate and just national rights, and by doing so rally more compatriots into the organization and deepen the friendship and amity with the Japanese people. In this way it will provide on its own initiative a favourable environment for its activities.

It should firmly guarantee a rosy future of the movement of Koreans in Japan by bringing up the younger generations, who will carry forward the baton of its patriotic cause, to be lively, cheerful and upright.

However fine its history and traditions may be, if a generation is not prepared to inherit them, an organization will inevitably wither away, as will its legacy.

The homeland attaches as much importance to the Conference of Mothers and the Congress of the Korean Children's Union as it does to the Party Congress. This reflects the importance it attaches to bringing up the younger generations as reliable successors to the revolution and thus laying a solid foundation for their bright future.

Early in January, I met members of the art troupe of Korean schoolchildren in Japan who took part in the New Year performance. I did so because I wanted them to be true successors to the patriotic cause in leading the rising generations of Chongryon, and to emphasize once again the importance of training the new generation in this year that will constitute a watershed in the history of Chongryon.

Chongryon should focus a huge effort on national education so as to bring up its next generation to be patriotic, excellent, sound and responsible.

In national education, it is important to enlist more compatriots' children in the regular education network of Korean schools, and help them learn our language, both written and spoken, as well as our national culture so that they cultivate their patriotism and grow up soundly amid the concern of the compatriots' community.

In recent years, owing to the decreasing number of children caused by the falling birth rate in Japan, the lack of funds and the like, a number of Korean schools have been experiencing difficulties. Chongryon should acquaint itself in detail with the conditions of our schools and, by listening to the compatriots' opinions, adopt appropriate and timely measures.

To turn every Korean school into an ideal learning space for our compatriots' children and an excellent environment for training people—this is an important goal to be attained by national education.

Key to this is strengthening the foundations of education at Korea University.

Next year the university will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its establishment.

Chongryon should readjust and reform the system of education on a rational basis as required by the reality of the movement of Koreans in Japan and the global trend of educational development, and bring about an eye-opening change in the efforts to create

student-centred conditions for teaching, studying and living. By doing so, it can develop Korea University into a prestigious university which every Korean student in Japan aspires to attend.

Korean schools at all levels should pay close concern not only to education work but also to the edification of their students.

The edification of students aimed at their sound development is more important than imparting knowledge to them. Therefore, their school life and activities in the children's union organization and in the Korean Youth League in Japan should be organized in such a way as to provide them with active and positive opportunities for stimulating and fostering love for their country and nation.

Chongryon's organizations and our compatriots should put their heart and soul into training the new generations, regarding this as their principal task and part of their responsibility.

Each year when we provide all the schoolchildren here with new uniforms and schoolbags, and whenever we renovate schools in different parts of the country, we are reminded of the lovely faces of the cute Korean schoolchildren in Japan.

All the organizations of Chongryon and the

community of our compatriots, as teachers, parents and sponsors, should take good care of these schoolchildren, who represent the future of the patriotic cause, and do their utmost to ensure that they grow up to be at all times dignified and courageous.

Maternal care is fundamental to building a rosy future for the organizations of Chongryon and the community of our compatriots.

I hope that, as befitting stout and upright mothers of Korea, our women in Japan overcome the manifold difficulties and work hard for the rejuvenation of national education, and thereby translate their children's beautiful dreams into reality and open up a bright future for them.

We are planning to invite Korean mothers and students in Japan to the upcoming Conference of Mothers and Congress of the Korean Children's Union, so that they can swap precious experience with the mothers and students here and discuss their plans for creating a rosy future for Chongryon.

For the community of our compatriots, national identity is the common denominator in consolidating their harmony, unity and kinship and encouraging them to turn out in the patriotic cause.

Chongryon should ensure that all the compatriots,

by carrying forward the excellent baton of preserving the Korean national identity, conduct a national cultural movement, so that all the places where they live are pulsating with the soul of our nation.

This movement's overriding focus should be on giving the new generations a better understanding of the time-honoured history and brilliant culture of the Korean nation and its ennobling manners and customs, and on encouraging them to glorify them.

Chongryon should enlist those compatriots who treasure our fine national traits in a new association for the dissemination of national culture and other non-permanent organizations. By doing so, it can expand the dissemination and propagation of our national traditions in a comprehensive manner and protect itself from the national assimilation and reform that are a hindrance to preserving its national identity, while strengthening the roots of the community of our compatriots.

Art and literature organizations, by conducting creative and artistic activities, can lead the community of compatriots to preserve their national identity.

The Kumgangsan Opera Troupe and regional song and dance troupes, true to the intentions of the artistes of the preceding generations, should conduct creative and artistic activities that inspire national sentiments in their fellow compatriots and rouse them in the patriotic movement. By doing so, they can ensure that all the places where our compatriots live are alive with our national sentiments.

Along with the activities of these art troupes, various literary and artistic groups and different types of cultural and artistic festivals should be promoted. This will usher in a new era when the art and culture of Chongryon flourish further.

Mass-based cultural and sporting activities are a major factor in consolidating the unity among compatriots, and they should be encouraged in order to inject vigour and vitality into the struggle to preserve the national identity.

Chongryon should organize traditional sports games and various other sporting activities aimed at strengthening the unity among compatriots. It should also work effectively to train excellent Korean sportspeople in Japan who can become members of the Republic's national teams and demonstrate the spirit of our nation and have our national flag hoisted in international competitions.

The new struggle period of Chongryon requires corresponding redoubled courage and a firm resolve.

The masses of the compatriots are responsible for writing a great new chapter in the history of the movement of Koreans in Japan by carrying forward the ideals and spirit of the founder generation.

As the banner guiding Chongryon in its work, the compatriots-first principle highlights the need for its officials to work with devotion for the sake of our compatriots, yet it also implies that the compatriots themselves should be responsible for Chongryon's work.

The Koreans in Japan are the foundation of Chongryon and a source of inexhaustible patriotic might.

All the compatriots, mindful of the fact that not only Chongryon's officials but they themselves are responsible for its work, should play the role of master in promoting the movement of Koreans in Japan.

Success in the new struggle period for strengthening Chongryon depends entirely on the role of its officials.

Chongryon's officials experience more difficulties than anybody else in the Korean community, and this inevitably brings to mind the phrase, *hard-fought battle*.

One step backward, and they can still preserve their

own wellbeing, but true to the pledge they made to the homeland and organization, they are devoting themselves for the sake of their compatriots whether they are appreciated or not, and even though they are sometimes misunderstood by the people closest to them. These patriots of patriots are our Chongryon officials.

Cherishing the expectations and trust of the homeland and their organization, Chongryon officials should invariably follow the road of devotion to the compatriots, comparing themselves with the preceding generations who fought courageously without abandoning their faith and principles on the patriotic road.

The founder generation were infinitely honest with their compatriots and regarded resolving the difficulties they faced as their natural mission and pride. They gave their all for the latter's rights, interests and safety; they were their faithful and devoted servants.

Chongryon officials should embrace the compatriots of all descriptions and demonstrate their sincerity to them with the same ennobling moral traits, warm humanity and motherly love befitting officials of a Juche-oriented overseas compatriots' organization

as were possessed by the founder generation.

They should guard strictly against the slightest affectation or formalistic element in their interaction with the compatriots, and become skilled professionals with a novel and seasoned work method and style, and wide-ranging practical abilities and activities.

I would like to repeat my request to all Chongryon officials.

I hope that you will regard your noble title of Chongryon official as the greatest honour bestowed on you and become genuine servants and blood relations of the compatriots, who give your all for them and make tireless efforts for their wellbeing.

I would also like to make a request to the family members of the Chongryon officials, to whom we are always grateful.

For our Chongryon officials who are working with devotion for the unity and interests of the Korean community, at the cost of minding their family affairs, the warm support of their dear families is a great encouragement.

I ask you family members sincerely to take good care of their health on my behalf and share their intentions and feelings, so that the words "It fares well with a harmonious family" in the Korean community sound in your families first.

The Chongryon organization should constantly educate and lead all its officials and other compatriots to become true Koreans who are possessed of the spirit of patriotism and the Korean-nation-first principle.

At a time when the strategic position of our Republic is rising radically and our people feel greater pride in their nation than ever before, it should push forward effectively and proactively with education in patriotism in combination with education in the Korean-nation-first principle.

It should arrange regular visits to their homeland so that the compatriots, including the rising generations, can witness the development of their homeland with their own eyes. In this way it can turn the visits into an essential process in their mental cultivation and growth for training themselves to become perfect patriots.

The country we are building and defending is a powerful one, in which not only the people in the homeland but also the Koreans resident in Japan and all other overseas Korean compatriots can live in comfort, harmony and good health, enjoying indisputable self-respect.

Having always attached primary importance to the peaceful life of the overseas Koreans, the government of our Republic will protect and defend all the Korean people on the strength of the sure guarantee of the defence of our national sovereignty and absolute might, and it will perform its responsibility to this end.

Anyone who is worried about their homeland and compatriots' community and cares for them even a little, in the knowledge that they are Koreans by origin, we will embrace, defend and take care of as members of our great nation, irrespective of their nationality, and ensure that they share with us the prestige and honour of their powerful country.

Mindful at all times of the fact that their powerful homeland, the DPRK, is invariably standing behind them, Chongryon officials and other Koreans resident in Japan should pursue their life and future proudly and imposingly with their heads held high, and support their motherland and Chongryon organization with a pure mind.

Chongryon should pay special attention to ensuring that all its officials, our compatriots and the rising generations love and defend to the last the community of compatriots, the Chongryon organization and Korean schools, the cradles of their life.

In particular, it should step up the education of the newly-emerging generation and train them as fully-fledged masters of the movement of Koreans in Japan in the new era. In this way, it can help them take a proactive part in defending the rights and interests of the Korean community and strengthening the Chongryon organization with a deep attachment to them.

This year the Korean Youth League in Japan and the Association of Korean Young Persons of Commerce in Japan are marking significant anniversaries. These organizations should encourage the young compatriots to give play to their surging might and wisdom as befits a patriotic vanguard and young motive force, and thus create a new model of love for the homeland and nation.

Considerable challenges and difficulties will inevitably appear on the road ahead of Chongryon, but thanks to the great ideas on the movement of Koreans in Japan, the powerful homeland and the patriotic masses of compatriots, the future of Chongryon its founder generation pictured in their minds will be realized.

No force can check Chongryon's vigorous advance towards a rosy future sharing its destiny with the motherland, and its sacred journey will shine brilliantly along with the high prestige of our Republic.

Let our motherland and Chongryon strive to build a powerful Chongryon, the former always mindful of the latter and the latter always thinking of the former.

I wish all the dear Koreans resident in Japan happiness and prosperity.

KIM JONG UN

LET US WRITE A GREAT NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT OF KOREANS IN JAPAN BY CARRYING FORWARD THE PATRIOTIC SPIRIT OF THE FOUNDER GENERATION

Published by Foreign Languages Publishing House DPR Korea

Issued in September 2025

No. 2581184

