# NEWS RELEASE

**Rotary brings the world to Korea**

*Most multi-cultural, non-profit gathering in Korea will bring KRW 292.5 billion*

**GOYANG CITY, Korea (11 May 2016)** – From Belize to Zimbabwe, Rotary’s 107th annual international convention 28 May – 1 June 2016 is expected to attract more than 50,000 Rotary club members from over 160 countries – making it the most multi-cultural (non-profit) gathering in Korea.

As of 2 May, the top countries where most attendees will travel from include Japan (7,000), the United States (2,500), Taiwan (2,300), the Philippines (1,100), India (730), Bangladesh (540), Nepal (390), Australia (370), and Canada (280). More than 23,698 Korean Rotary members will attend.

The Korea Tourism Organization estimates that the Rotary convention will bring KRW 292.5 (₩292,492,284,583) to the local economy and create 1,800 jobs. In connection with the Rotary convention, the restaurant, hotel and lodging, service, wholesale and retail sectors are expected to add nearly 1,200 new jobs. Often described as a “mini-United Nations” because of its global scope and cultural diversity, the Rotary convention will transform KINTEX into a kaleidoscope of energy, color and excitement where Rotary members will exchange ideas for how to improve lives and bring positive, lasting change to communities around the world.

At KINTEX, Rotary members will engage in a full agenda of workshops and hear from world class speakers, including:

* [PSY](http://www.ygfamily.com/artist/About.asp?LANGDIV=E), K-POP superstar
* [Ranil Wickremesingne](http://www.pmoffice.gov.lk/biography.php?p_type=PM), Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
* [Gary Knell](http://press.nationalgeographic.com/biographies/gary-e-knell/), President and CEO, National Geographic Society
* [Dananjaya Hettiarachichi](http://iseesomethinginyou.com/about/), Toastmasters International World Champion of Public Speaking
* [Dr. Rebecca Martin, PhD](http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/leadership/martin.htm), Director of the Center for Global Health at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the effort to end polio worldwide.

Organized by [Rotary International](http://www.rotary.org/) in conjunction with the [Seoul Host Organization Committee](http://www.riconvention2016.org/2015new/en/introduction/outline.php) comprised of local Rotary members, and with significant support from the Central Government as well as local governments, the convention will provide registrants with ample opportunities to savor Korea’s myriad attractions, including an expansive number of parks, museums, shopping centers, restaurants, and the now-famous Gangnam district. Most popular tourist attractions to be visited by the Rotary convention participants include DMZ, World Heritage Palace, and Gangnam Fashion Street.

“With up to 50,000 Rotary members from over 160 countries expected to register for the 2016 Rotary international convention, Korea can expect to witness the impact of a global village gathered under the banner of service to humanity with a vision for a peaceful world,” said Sangkoo Yun, Host Organizing Committee chair.

In Seoul, Rotary members in their traditional cultural attire – from Indian Saris to West African Kente – will walk in solidarity for world peace. The **Rotary** **3K Walk for Peace** will start at **8:30 a.m. on 28 May at City Hall Plaza** with entertainment and remarks at City Hall Plaza, then proceed along the main thoroughfare toGwanghwamun Square – where the **Rotary Way Photo Exhibit** will provide a visual representation of Rotary’s humanitaran work in Korea and around the world. Following the 3K walk, the photo exhibit will be moved to Co-Ex East Plaza until 1 June.

Meanwhile, in light of the Rotary International Convention, Chang Soo Jung, Korea Tourism Organization’s CEO, stated that, “The government administration considers tourism and the MICE industry (MICE: Meeting, Incentive, Convention, Exhibition) as one of its major projects and is pushing to develop this high-value convergence type of tourism.” He further emphasized that, “Through this event, KTO will exert its best to showcase Korea’s beauty and charm to Rotarians from all over the world.”

Seoul is home to the first Rotary club established in Korea, chartered in 1927. Today, Korea is the fourth largest Rotary club country with 1,625 clubs and 64,149 members who support an array of local and international service initiatives, including; health programs for infants and toddlers with critical illness and chronic conditions, a multilingual library for children to help bridge local cultures, and environmental projects to help reduce the adverse health effects of Yellow Wind dust storms.

Rotary clubs in Korea also continue to support the organization’s top philanthropic goal of eradicating polio. Since 1985, Rotary has contributed more than KRW 1.4 trillion (US$1.5 billion) and countless volunteer hours, with Korean Rotary clubs donating more than KRW 146 million (US$ 14.6 million) to polio eradication. In addition to contributing funds, Korean Rotary members have traveled at their own expense to immunize children against polio in India.

**About Rotary**

[Rotary](http://www.rotary.org/) brings together a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to tackling the world’s most pressing humanitarian challenges. Rotary connects 1.2 million members of more than 35,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas. Their work improves lives at both the local and international levels, from helping families in need in their own communities to working toward a polio-free world. To access broadcast quality video footage and still photos go to: [The Newsmarket](http://rotary.thenewsmarket.com/).

**Contacts**:

Howard Chang (US): +1 847-866-3408, [howard.chang@rotary.org](mailto:howard.chang@rotary.org)

Katie In (Korea): 82 2 2022 8271, [katie.in@edelman.com](mailto:Katie.in@edelman.com)

Kate Yun(Korea):82 2 2022 8271, [kate.yun@edelman.com](mailto:kate.yun@edelman.com)

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