

**Official Event
Opening Ceremony**

**The 13th World Human Rights Cities Forum
Congratulatory Remarks**

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I am Lee Jeong-seon, Gwangju Metropolitan City Superintendent of Education. I would like to congratulate the opening of the 13th World Human Rights Cities Forum held under the theme of 'Human Rights Cities Responding to Poverty and Inequalities'.

I would like to convey my appreciation to Kang Ki-jung, mayor of Gwangju, officials of UN Human Rights, UNESCO, and the National Human Rights Commission of Korea for putting efforts to organize this forum. I also thank you all presenters, panelists, and participants coming to Gwangju, a city of human rights, from all around the world.

Even after the Covid-19 pandemic, humanity has been suffering from varied types of poverty and deprivation due to climate crisis and wars depending on nation and region.

In particular, poverty has led to economic inequalities and discrimination and exclusion has led to political inequalities. If we fail to wisely overcome these crises, humanity would not be able to move toward a sustainable development. I believe that social, economic, and cultural inequalities have protracted because of a lack of collective efforts of humanity. Only when cooperation and power of action get together to wield their energy, a small change would begin. The city of Gwangju is a human rights city that upholds the spirits of the 5.18 Democratization Movement in our heart and realizes the value of human rights in our daily life. Gwangju's sensitivity to human rights has been built on the spirits of the 5.18 Democratization Movement and would further grow through school education.

Gwangju's education has not given up one single child and will raise our children as decent global democratic citizens with warm hearts full of human rights sensitivity who could solidify and act together with the world.

Congratulations on the opening of the 13th World Human Rights Cities Forum once again. I hope we could explore an opportunity to solidify to cope with poverty and inequalities facing the human rights.

Thank you very much.

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Lee Jeong-seon, Gwangju Metropolitan City Superintendent of Education