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## **140th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations Between Korea and Italy, Commencing Mutual Cultural Exchanges**

**On Feb 26, Minister YU attended the opening ceremony of the “Italy–Korea’s 140th: a long-standing friendship” Photo Exhibition**

**“This photo exhibition marks the vibrant start of the 2024–2025 Italy–Korea Year of Mutual Cultural Exchange,” says Minister YU, “I hope the visitors will envision a future where the two countries will walk together”**

On the afternoon of February 26 (Mon), Minister YU In Chon of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MCST) welcomed domestic and international guests at the opening ceremony of the “Italy–Korea’s 140th Anniversary Photo Exhibition: All Roads Lead to History, Italy and Korea” held at the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History. He met with the Italian Ambassador to Korea, Emilia Gatto, among others, pledging to foster cultural exchanges between Italy and Korea.

In his welcoming address, Minister YU remarked, “The song *Hand in Hand*, composed by Italy’s Giorgio Moroder and performed by Korean band Koreana, is still regarded as one of the greatest Olympic theme songs in history. This exhibition captures such historic moments between our two nations. Following a summit last year, we declared the “2024–2025 Italy–Korea Year of Mutual Cultural Exchange Year.” This exhibition marks a vigorous start to that journey. I hope it inspires visitors to envision the shared future path of our countries.”

Ambassador Gatto responded, “This exhibition, while reflecting on our past, showcases precious photographs and documents that serve as a solid and authentic foundation for the past and the future of our bilateral relations. I hope it highlights the similarities between our two countries, which, despite geographical distances, share common values and goals.”

The opening ceremony was attended by significant figures, including HONG Young Pyo, Chairman of the Italy–Korea Parliamentary Friendship Association; HONG Seok In, Public Diplomacy Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Michela Linda Magri, Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Korea; LIM Hyung Joo, a chair professor at the Civica Scuola delle Arti; popular Italian

TV personality Alberto Mondi; and Marcello Abbondanza, coach of the Heungkuk Life Women's Volleyball Team and a native of Italy.

The commemorative photo exhibition, cohosted by the MCST, the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History, the Italian Embassy in Korea, Yonhap News Agency, ANSA News Agency, and the Italian Cultural Institute in Korea, will be open from February 27 (Tue) to March 31 (Sun). It will showcase hundreds of photos of the exchange relations between the two countries since signing of the 1884 Italy–Korea Treaty of Amity and Commerce, including first-time public displays of photos and videos related to the activities of the Italian 68th Red Cross Hospital during the Korean War.

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