

## Congratulatory Speech

by Myung Gon Kim, Minister of Culture and Tourism of Korea

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am so glad to be here with you. As Mr. Yun-Cheol Kim, president of the organizing committee of Extraordinary Congress of IATC, introduced me just a minute ago, I used to be an actor, playwright, director in my youth. It was through a theatre journal called *Theatre Review*, which was launched when I was a college student, that I began to read Mr. Bentley's writings. His books like *What Is Theatre?* and *The Life of Drama* were considered as must-read textbooks for the then theatre students. They have influenced me greatly, too, and became the guiding light for my life in theatre. I thank him for his passion for theatre with which he has inspired significant changes and renovations in world theatre. It is my great honor to present this Thalia Prize to him in person. I am deeply touched, just standing in front of him.

The relationship between critics and practitioners is not necessarily tense, nor hostile. I believe that criticism can contribute to creating new artistic waves and stimulate practitioners' creativity. Thanks to Mr. Bentley's life-long efforts and his enormous influence, we have achieved many developments in theatre studies and in making good theatre. Once again I congratulate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Associations of Theatre Critics. As Minister of Culture, I feel highly honored to meet this many influential theatre people, domestic and international. Let me close my speech with one more congratulation to Mr. Bentley's reception of the first Thalia Prize, and to his health and artistic passion as well. Thank you.