

International Theatre Institute ITI

World Organization for the Performing Arts



Messages collected from ITI General Secretariat

1- Jessica Kahwa - President, ITI Worldwide

With profound sadness, I have just read the news of the passing of Honorable Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of the International Theatre Institute.

On behalf of ITI Worldwide, I extend our heartfelt condolences to the ITI Korea Centre, his family, and the entire theatre fraternity in Korea and across the world.

Honorable Kim Jeong-ok's legacy stands as a defining chapter in the history of both Korean theatre and the International Theatre Institute. Through his visionary leadership, unwavering dedication, and artistic courage, he strengthened the standing of the ITI Korea Centre within the global ITI family and created enduring bridges of collaboration that continue to inspire our work today (Uganda like many other countries has been a beneficiary). His stewardship not only elevated international cultural exchange but also established visible and lasting in-routes for ITI in Korea, ensuring that Korean theatre holds a respected and vibrant place within the worldwide theatre community.

As a herald of modern theatre in Korea, he masterfully nurtured dialogue between tradition and contemporary practice, allowing Korean aesthetics to speak confidently to global audiences. His contributions helped shape generations of theatre practitioners and reinforced the spirit of artistic solidarity that defines ITI.

As an organization, we remain deeply grateful for his immense contribution, leadership, and lifelong service to theatre and to ITI Worldwide. May his remarkable work continue to guide and inspire future generations, and may his legacy live on in Korea and throughout the global ITI family.

With deepest respect and sympathy,

Warm regards,
Jessica Atwooki Kaahwa PhD
President, ITI Worldwide



2- Ramendu Majumdar - Honorary President, ITI

Final Curtain Call

My heart breaks at the passing of our dear friend and mentor, Mr. Kim Jeong-Ok, Honorary President of ITI. It was my great honour to work alongside him in the Executive Council when we both served as Vice Presidents. During his presidency, I had the privilege of serving in different roles and learning closely from him.

Mr. Kim was a visionary artist, and a towering figure in the cultural life of South Korea. But beyond his achievements, it was his warmth and humility that touched people deeply. I was fortunate to receive his affection and guidance. He would often share thoughtful insights, sometimes even lessons about the voting patterns in our organisations, with a gentle smile. And every time we met, he would bring a small gift, a simple but heartfelt gesture of love. I fondly remember visiting his home in Seoul and the remarkable Face Museum he created from his lifelong collection in Gwangju, where he spent his later years. His passion for art was alive in every corner.

During many ITI events, he was accompanied by his gracious wife and daughter. I especially cherish our joyful moments together at the 70th anniversary celebration in Haikou, China, in 2018. Those memories now feel even more precious.

When ITI faced a severe financial crisis during his presidency, he quietly stepped forward and gave a substantial personal loan to keep the Secretariat running. We repaid it over time, but his generosity and act of responsibility remains unforgettable. He also had a deep love for nurturing young theatre-makers.

ITI has lost one of its stalwarts, who lifted the organisation to new heights. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Mrs. Kim, his family, and the theatre community of South Korea.

Mr. Kim, you have taken your final exit from the world stage. Yet your spirit, kindness, and light will remain with us who were lucky enough to know you.

Ramendu Majumdar
Honorary President, ITI



Honorary Presidents Mr. Kim and Ramendu Majumdar having fun time during the 70th Anniversary celebrations, Haikou, China (2018)

3- Abdus Selim - President, ITI Bangladesh

It's sad news indeed! Our heartfelt condolences. May he rest in peace.

Abdus Selim
President, ITI Bangladesh.

4- Gad Kaynar Kissinger - President - Israeli Centre of the ITI

The Israeli Centre of the ITI expresses its deepest condolences on the passing of the eminent Mr Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of the International Theatre Institute (ITI).

Gad Kaynar Kissinger
President - Israeli Centre of the ITI

5- Taeko Nagai

My condolences, He spoke Japanese, well. And He was kind enough to help me. I am so sorry,

Taeko Nagai from JAPAN



6- Shorouq Saeed - President, Yemen Centre of the ITI

We are saddened to receive the news of the passing of Mr. Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of the International Theatre Institute. May his soul rest in peace. We kindly ask you to convey our condolences to his esteemed family and loved ones.

Our deepest condolences.

Shorouq Saeed
President, Yemen Centre of the International Theatre Institute

7- Latefa Ahrrare - President, Morocco Centre of the ITI

I offer you my sincere condolences, as well as those of our ITI Morocco center.

My deepest sympathies go out to you, the members of ITI Korea, and the family of our dear departed.

I apologize for the delay in my message; I am traveling daily these days.

Latefa Ahrrare



8- Jeff Fagundes – President, ITI Brazil Centre

I am writing to express my deepest condolences to the ITI Korea Centre and to the family of Mr. Kim Jeong-ok.

Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in responding, as our office was closed for the Carnival break. Mr. Kim's lifelong dedication to the arts and his remarkable leadership as Honorary President of ITI have left an indelible legacy that will continue to inspire the global theatre community.

We join you in mourning this great loss and in celebrating his extraordinary life and artistry.

With deepest sympathy and respect,

Jeff Fagundes
President – ITI Brazil Centre
Executive Council Member



9- lloyd Nyikadzino

I am deeply saddened to receive the heartbreaking news of the passing of Mr. Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of ITI.

At this moment of great loss, we join you Yveyi in mourning and extend our most heartfelt condolences to the ITI Korea Centre, to his family and loved ones, and to the wider Korean theatre community. We share in your sorrow and stand together in remembrance of an extraordinary life devoted to the arts and to global understanding.

With deepest sympathy and respect,

10- Christos Georgiou – Secretary of ITI Board - President, ITI Cyprus

Thank you for sharing this sad news. I am deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Mr Kim Jeong-Ok. As the first Asian to serve as President of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), reappointed three times and later named Honorary President, and as author of the WTD Message in 1997, his contributions to ITI and to the development of modern Korean theatre have left an enduring legacy. His vision, dedication, and artistry will continue to inspire theatre practitioners around the world.

Please extend my heartfelt condolences to his family, colleagues, and all those who were touched by his work. He will be remembered with great respect and admiration.

With deepest sympathy

11- ITI GHANA Centre

I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Honorable Kim Jeong-ok. Please accept my heartfelt condolences during this difficult time.

His remarkable legacy in Korean theatre and within ITI will forever remain a source of inspiration to us all. My thoughts are with you, the ITI Korea Centre, and his family as you mourn this great loss.

With sympathy and solidarity

12- Ursula Werdenberg - Secretary General of the International Playwright's Forum IPF of ITI

I had the chance to meet Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of ITI, in person in Seoul in 2008. He showed me his "Museum of Face," his private collection. We walked silently beside each other, connected by our shared passion for the fusion of performing arts and visual arts.

At the end of our tour of the museum, he gave me two books from his museum as a gift.

They are still on my bookshelf. When I received the news of his death, I immersed myself in his books once again.

"Throughout of my career, I have been interested in humans and these faces reflect all the emotions of human beings. These statues might be the works of unknown artists, but their simplicity only makes them more attractive."

Kim Jeong-ok, "Faces and Soul of Korean", 2004

He will stay in my mind and my heart.

In still memory

Ursula Werdenberg

Dramaturg, Author

Secretary General of the International Playwright's Forum IPF (ITI/UNESCO)

Board Member of ITI Switzerland

13- Pascal WANOU - President, ITI BENIN

It is with great regret that we learned the sad news of the passing of our elder, President Kim Jeong-ok. I personally had the privilege of working alongside this great theatre figure for many years and was able to appreciate his availability, his open-mindedness, and his spirit of collaboration.

On behalf of the Benin Centre and in my own name, I extend my sincere condolences to President Kim Jeong-ok's family, his theatre family, and to the entire ITI community.

Pascal WANOU

President

14- Dramatic Arts Center of Iran - Ali A. Tarkhan

That was sad News.

I express my greatest condolences.

May he rest in peace.

Please send my condolences to his family.

Thank you

Ali

15- Theater Federatioun

To the family of Mr. Kim Jeong-ok

On behalf of the Theater Federation, we extend our deepest condolences on the passing of Mr. Kim Jeong-ok, Honorary President of the International Theatre Institute.

We honour his visionary leadership and his outstanding contribution to the global theatre community.

Sascha Dahm, President

Pablo Chimienti, Director

16- UAE ITI Centre

The UAE ITI Centre in Fujairah received the news of Mr Kim Jeong-ok's passing with profound sadness and reflection.

Beyond his distinguished titles and years of service, Mr Kim represented a generation of cultural leaders who believed deeply in the power of theatre to unite people across borders. His vision helped shape ITI into a truly global platform where dialogue, creativity, and mutual respect could flourish. Such leadership leaves an imprint that extends far beyond a presidency, it becomes part of the organisation's identity.

On behalf of the UAE ITI Centre, we express our sincere condolences to his family, to our colleagues at the ITI Korea Centre, and to the wider Korean theatre community. We stand in solidarity with you in honoring a life devoted to art, collaboration, and human connection.

May his legacy continue to inspire international cultural exchange and strengthen the spirit of unity that defines ITI.

With deepest sympathy and respect,

UAE ITI Centre

United Arab Emirates

17- Zona TeatraITI Centro VENEZUELA

We are deeply saddened by this news, and all our thoughts are with his family.

Kind regards,

Nuevo Centre ITI Venezuela