

# Incheon Metropolitan City

## About Incheon Metropolitan City

Incheon is a metropolitan city located in the northwest of South Korea. It is the largest coastal city in the metropolitan area and has developed manufacturing and logistics industries centered around Incheon Port International Passenger Terminal and Incheon International Airport. Incheon is a major industrial city with advanced future industries such as bio, IT, robotics, tourism, aviation, and semiconductors.

As the first port opened during the modern era, Incheon was the gateway through which Western culture was introduced to Korea during the late Joseon Dynasty. The city is home to many of Korea's firsts, including jajangmyeon (black bean noodles), soccer, baseball, railroads, and hotels.

Incheon was elevated to a directly governed city (metropolitan city) in 1981. As of May 2024, it has an administrative structure of 2 counties, 8 districts, 1 town, 19 townships, and 136 neighborhoods. The total area of the city is 1,067.1 square kilometers, and the population is 3,009,783.

## vision, mission, goals&objectives

### Vision

- Incheon as a city of world peace in Northeast Asia, beyond the Korean Peninsula

### Mission

- Striving for international peace and security while promoting peace and harmony on the Korean Peninsula

### Goals & Objectives

- To promote freedom, peace, and prosperity, spreading the message of peace domestically and internationally to contribute to the establishment of peace in Northeast Asia and the world
- To embrace diverse cultures as an open port city, working towards becoming a city of peace that respects diversity
- To strive for coexistence and peace as a border region with North Korea

## **Introduce for Incheon City to establish the International City of Peace**

Incheon is striving to become a global city of peace, extending its efforts beyond the Korean Peninsula. In 1950, the Korean War broke out, and the Incheon Landing Operation (Operation Chromite) was launched in Incheon. This operation turned the tide of the war, defending freedom and peace on the Korean Peninsula, but it also brought about the horrors of war. The city of Incheon is making efforts to remember the pain of the war and the sacrifices and dedication of the veterans, fostering peace. Additionally, given its proximity to North Korea, Incheon is engaging in various cooperation efforts to promote coexistence in the border areas. The city is also working towards domestic and international cooperation, such as hosting the Overseas Koreans Agency.

### **Incheon Landing Operation Commemoration Week Events**

As a cornerstone for expanding Incheon into a platform for international solidarity for peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, the city hosted the 73rd anniversary of the Incheon Landing Operation from September 14-19, 2023, for six days. Previously held as a single-day event, the commemoration was expanded into a week-long series of events on a national scale. Various activities were conducted to reflect on the significance of the Incheon Landing Operation.

### **73rd Anniversary of the Incheon Landing Operation Commemorative Ceremony and Reenactment Event**

To honor the veterans and promote peace and harmony, a commemorative ceremony is held annually. On September 15, 2023, the event was expanded, and for the first time, the ceremony was conducted on a vessel traveling along the Incheon waterway. In his commemorative address, Incheon Mayor Yoo Jeong-bok stated that Incheon, with its legacy of the Incheon Landing Operation, will advance as a global city of peace. Following the ceremony, the Republic of Korea Navy and Marine Corps, with the support and cooperation of foreign vessels, including those from the United States, reenacted the Palmi-do Joint Landing Operation. Additionally, a luncheon was held to express gratitude to the veterans.



### Memorial Service and Floral Tribute Ceremony

On September 15, 2023, to commemorate the Incheon Landing Operation, a memorial service for the fallen soldiers of the Navy Intelligence Unit was held at the Navy Intelligence Unit Memorial Tower in Wolmi Park, Incheon. Additionally, the Mayor of Incheon, members of the Incheon City Council, the Navy, and the Marine Corps laid wreaths at the "Wolmido Civilian Victims Memorial" to honor the civilians who lost their lives in the bombings during the Incheon Landing Operation. This marked the first year the military participated in the floral tribute.



### International Peace Conference

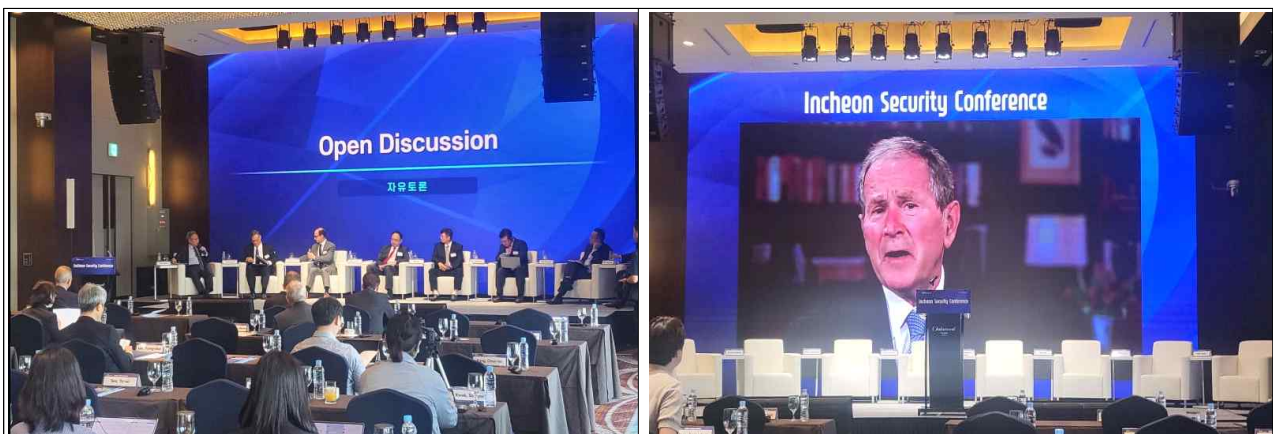
On September 8, 2023, the International Peace Conference themed with "The Incheon Landing Operation and the Future of Global Incheon" was held to commemorate the Incheon Landing Operation. Over 500 distinguished scholars and military personnel from around the world attended the conference to reflect on the significance and value of the operation. In his keynote address, Andrew Harrison, Deputy Commander of the United Nations Command, highlighted that Incheon, like Normandy, was a pivotal moment in history. He emphasized the importance of passing down the stories of the brave soldiers

who sacrificed their lives for the future, peace, and security of South Korea to future generations.



### **Incheon Security Conference**

On September 18, 2023, the Incheon Security Conference took place. This event commemorated the Incheon Landing Operation and addressed the rapidly changing global security landscape, particularly in light of the war in Ukraine. With the presence of leaders in the security sector, the conference featured video remarks from former U.S. President George W. Bush and a keynote address by former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, promoting Incheon as a city of freedom and peace. Starting in 2024, the International Peace Conference will be integrated into the annual "International Peace and Security Conference."



### **Cultural Festival for Displaced Residents from North Korea**

To mark the anniversary of the Incheon Landing Operation, a cultural festival for displaced residents from North Korea was held on September 16-17, 2023. The event aimed to comfort the displaced residents, promote and preserve their culture, and foster unity. Approximately 900 people, including displaced North Koreans from Incheon and across the

country, participated, providing an opportunity for future generations to experience and understand the culture of North Korean residents.



### **Patriotic Street Parade**

On September 15, 2023, a historical reenactment walk was held along the main attack route of the landing forces, based on historical evidence. Veterans, military bands, parade vehicles, and military equipment marched along the main attack route, with many citizens participating in the commemorative event.



### **INCHINA Forum**

Since 2016, the city of Incheon has been hosting the INCHINA Forum, in collaboration with various sectors, including government, academia, and the private sector. The forum aims to share Incheon's experiences and wisdom as a leading city for exchange and business with China. It serves as a comprehensive platform for Sino-Korean exchange and cooperation, contributing to the development of future-oriented relations between the two countries.



**The Fifty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank** From May 2 to May 5, 2023, the ADB Annual Meeting was held in Songdo, Incheon. This prestigious international conference, which brings together the top economic leaders from across Asia, gathers around 5,000 participants, including representatives from the 68 member countries of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and various international financial organizations. The theme for this year's meeting was "Rebounding Asia: Recovery, Reconnection, and Reform." Incheon Mayor Yoo Jeong-bok stated, "Through the successful hosting of the Annual Meeting, we will do our utmost to help ADB's shared values in Asia flourish. Incheon hopes to collaborate and prosper with ADB, which has been striving for economic development of developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region for decades as an international development bank."



### **Incheon Landing Operation**

On September 15, 1950, under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, United Nations forces and the Republic of Korea Army launched an amphibious operation in Incheon, which was occupied by the North Korean People's Army. In the early stages of the Korean War, U.S. forces faced successive defeats and were pushed back to the Gyeongsang Province. However, this operation, which seized the central region of the Korean Peninsula, turned the tide of the war and achieved a significant victory.

The operation faced numerous challenges. The narrow single-channel approach to Incheon port made it difficult for large ships to enter, and there was a significant risk of sea mines laid by the enemy causing substantial damage. The tidal range in the area was about 10 meters, creating natural obstacles alongside the logistical difficulties of transporting troops, ammunition, and supplies. Despite these challenges, the operation succeeded.

Before the Operation, the South Korean Navy landed on Yeongheung Island to secure the waterway leading to Incheon port. They gathered intelligence on North Korean troop movements in Wolmido and Incheon, which was crucial for the operation. After analyzing the intelligence, the allied forces moved to the Incheon area on D-4 (September 11) to begin the main landing operation.

Before moving to Incheon, air strikes on Wolmido and Incheon began on D-11 (September 4). From D-2 (September 13), the allied fleet commenced naval bombardments on North Korean defensive positions in Wolmido and Incheon. On the night of the operation day, September 15, the allies successfully recaptured Palmi-do Island and lit its lighthouse.

On September 15, under the command of General Douglas MacArthur, a combined force of over 75,000 troops, including the U.S. 1st Marine Division, the U.S. 7th Infantry Division, the Republic of Korea Marine Regiment, and the Republic of Korea 17th Infantry Regiment, along with 261 naval vessels from eight countries (South Korea, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, and France), began the landing operation. The operation started with the landing at Green Beach in Wolmido during the first high tide at 6:33 AM, followed by sequential landings at Red Beach (North Seong Port) and Blue Beach (Nakseom in Yonghyeon-dong) during the second high tide at 5:33 PM.

By September 16 (D+1), the allied forces secured the beachhead and controlled the western part of the Gyeongin Highway. On September 17 (D+2), they recaptured Bupyeong and secured Gimpo Airfield, advancing along the Gyeongin Highway. After the South Korean Marines raised the national flag at the Central Government Building on September 27, they conducted mop-up operations, and by September 28, 13 days after the operation began, Seoul was recaptured. The Incheon Landing Operation thus concluded as a historic operation that reversed the tide of the Korean War.

In 1984, the Incheon Landing Operation Memorial Hall was built to commemorate and preserve the Operation Incheon. It is a war history memorial hall that can remember the spirit of veterans who sacrificed to protect liberal democracy, strengthen ties with veterans, and inspire patriotism.



### **Palmi-do Lighthouse**

Palmi-do Lighthouse, the first lighthouse in Korea to illuminate the sea route and signal the start of the Incheon Landing Operation, was lit at midnight on September 15 to guide the 261 allied ships carrying 75,000 troops.



### **Bupyeong Camp Market**

Bupyeong Camp Market is an area where, despite being part of Korean territory, South Korea's sovereignty was not exercised for over 80 years. During the Japanese colonial period, it was used as a training ground for the Japanese military, and after 1939, it became a Japanese ordnance factory. After Korea's liberation in 1945, it was used as a U.S. military supply base. Following the outbreak of the Korean War, the North Korean forces occupied Ascom City, but it was recaptured by South Korean and U.S. forces as a



result of the Incheon Landing Operation. Starting in 1996, a civilian movement began demanding its return from the United States. The return was decided under the 2002 U.S.-South Korea Land Partnership Plan, and in 2019, sections A and B of Camp Market were returned, with the final section D returned in December 2023. The land is currently undergoing purification and will be developed into a park open to the public.



### **Ganghwa Peace Observatory**

The Ganghwa Peace Observatory is the closest point in South Korea from which one can observe the daily lives of North Korean residents with the naked eye. Built as a cultural tourism space to restore national homogeneity and lay the foundation for peaceful reunification, it is located in the northern area of the Civilian Control Line, with one underground floor and four above-ground floors. It opened on September 5, 2008.



Approximately 2.3 kilometers of the coastline in front of the observatory flows the Yesong River. To the left, you can see the expansive Yonbaek Plain in Yonan and Paechon counties of North Korea's Hwanghae Province. To the right is Kaepung County, where you can observe the daily lives of North Korean residents, propaganda villages, the Kaesong

transmission tower, and Mt. Songak. This location provides a unique opportunity to closely experience North Korea's cultural and ecological environment, which is difficult to see from other regions.

### **Wolmido and Wolmi Peace Trees**

Wolmido, the landing site of Operation Chromite, features the Landing Operation Victory Monument, the Incheon Landing Operation Landing Point (Red Beach) Monument, and MacArthur Road. Nearby is Wolmi Park, where the "Wolmi Peace Trees" commemorate the Incheon Landing Operation from the park entrance to the summit. Incheon City has identified and preserved seven trees from six species that survived the bombardment during the operation, designating them as "Wolmi Peace Trees." Each of the seven trees has been named to signify different themes: the Tree of Healing (Ginkgo), the Tree of Remembrance (Ginkgo), the Tree of Peace's Mother (Zelkova), the Tree of Eternal Friendship (Oak), the Tree of Resilience (Cherry), the Tree of Fragrance (Japanese Umbrella Pine), and the General's Tree (Pine).



### **Five West Sea Islands**

The five islands near the Northern Limit Line (NLL) in the northernmost part of the West Sea of South Korea are Baengnyeongdo, Daecheongdo, Socheongdo, Yeonpyeongdo, and Udo. Due to their unique geographical location near the border with North Korea, these islands suffer from military threats from the North.

South Korea and Incheon are working towards sustainable peace and security in this region. The Five West Sea Islands Special Guard Unit of the Korea Coast Guard operates here, and the Marine Corps is stationed on these military conflict islands. Yeonpyeongdo, in particular, was the site of the first and second Battle of Yeonpyeong and the Yeonpyeong Island bombardment. Memorials such as the "Yeonpyeong Island Civilian Victims Memorial," the "Yeonpyeong Island Bombardment Memorial Tower," and "Peace

Park" honor the sacrifices of soldiers and civilians. During the Korean War, many refugees from the North passed through Yeonpyeongdo to reach the South, so many residents of Yeonpyeongdo have ancestral ties to Hwanghae Province. By 2026, a total of 20.8 kilometers of the "NLL Peace and Ecology Island Trail" will be completed around Baengnyeong-myeon (Baengnyeongdo) and nearby Bukdo-myeon.

