

**A Joint Statement on the Peace of the Korean Peninsula
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Presbyterian Church of Korea**

God shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ~ Isaiah 2:4

Representatives of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (PC(USA)), including the moderators of each denomination, the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA), the General Secretary of the PCK, and leading staff members in ecumenical relations and mission of each denomination, met on April 17-19, 2013, at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, in Louisville, Kentucky to consult on our shared mission in the name of Jesus Christ. For more than 129 years, Presbyterians in Korea and the United States have worked in a costly fellowship to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to seek human rights, democratization, and peaceful reunification for all the Korean people.

This consultation took place at a time of escalating tensions among South Korea, North Korea, and the United States. The current crisis concerns us deeply and points to larger, unresolved issues, including the division of the Korean Peninsula after Korea's liberation from Japan, the unended Korean War, the separation of families, and the presence of nuclear weapons on the peninsula. In response to Christ, we issue this joint statement that calls for steps that may lead nations and peoples in the way of justice-peace for life.

In the short term, we call

- The governments of the United States, South Korea, and North Korea to enter immediately into dialogue to ease the current tensions on the Korean Peninsula by ending inflammatory rhetoric, confrontational policies, and provocative military exercises.
- The governments of the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and Japan to support such dialogue.
- The governments of the United States and South Korea to resume humanitarian aid to North Korea and to work with the government of North Korea and the international community to ensure that the aid reaches the people of North Korea who are in need.
- The United Nations to appoint a special representative to work for a peaceful solution to the situation on the Korean Peninsula.
- The United Nations Security Council to lift sanctions on North Korea, recognizing that sanctions interfere with humanitarian efforts by churches and other aid agencies.

For the long-term, we call

- The governments of the United States, South Korea, and North Korea to
 - pursue the security and wellbeing of all the people of the Korean Peninsula rather than simply the security of nation states;
 - enter into negotiations toward a peaceful resolution of the situation on the Korean Peninsula that will include the replacement of the armistice with an interstate agreement establishing a just and lasting peace that moves toward reunification; and
 - work with the international community to establish a nuclear-free zone and limit the arms trade on the Korean Peninsula, and to support economic development in North Korea.

- The governments of the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and Japan to support such initiatives and efforts.

Recognizing the key role of people of faith, we call

- The PCK and the PC(USA) to
 - Pray for peace on the Korean Peninsula and to engage in a season of prayer and reflection from June 25 (the date the Korean War began in 1950) through August 15 (the date Korea was liberated from Japanese occupation in 1945).
 - For the people of the PCK, this season of prayer will be a time to remember the suffering of separated families on the Korean Peninsula; and to acknowledge that, since the partition of the peninsula, the Christian commitment to reconciliation has been compromised by the trauma of a fratricidal war; discipleship compromised by bitterness; and faithfulness compromised by fear and hostility.
 - For the people of the PC(USA), this season of prayer will be a time to reflect critically on how the division of the Korean Peninsula, the unended Korean War, and the separation of families has harmed the Korean people and on what the historical roles of the United States have been in relation to the Korean Peninsula; and to call the United States government to implement a policy of peaceful engagement in relation to Korea.
 - For the people of both churches, this will be a time to deepen their commitment to work for healing, reconciliation, and peaceful unification that creates a culture of peace in Korea and all of North East Asia.
 - Create a joint working group on justice-peace for life in North East Asia, participating in the North East Asia Ecumenical Forum on Justice-Peace for Life.
 - Collaborate with the broader ecumenical community to mobilize women’s gifts for building peace on the Korean Peninsula and North East Asia.
 - Participate in the work of the 10th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches for healing, reconciliation and peaceful reunification.
 - Work with ecumenical bodies, people of other faiths, and people of good will for healing, reconciliation, and peaceful reunification in Korea.
 - Support people-to-people interactions between the United States, South Korea, and North Korea in religious, cultural, artistic, academic, athletic, and other fields.
- The PC(USA) to participate in a proposed ecumenical delegation from the United States that would visit both South Korea and North Korea.

We ask the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC(USA) and the General Secretary of the PCK to communicate this statement to their respective denominations, to appropriate government officials in their respective countries, North Korea, the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and Japan, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the members of the United Nations Security Council, and to the ecumenical community.

We affirm our commitment to walk in humility, with open minds, prepared to change our ways fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation as we follow the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ~ Matthew 5:9