

On the Eve of the Recommencement of the Six Party Talks

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, (2, 14 Ephesians)

The National Council of Churches in Korea (NCC-Korea), The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCC-USA) and the National Christian Council in Japan (NCC-Japan) who have continued in earnest prayer for peace on the Korean peninsula and the wider region of Northeast Asia welcome and express our pleasure at the prospect of the Six Party talks that had been suspended for the past thirteen months recommencing later this month.

The NCCK, NCCC-USA and the NCCJ have worked together over the past twenty years to establish peace on the Korean peninsula and the wider region of Northeast Asia, and especially have strived to assist in the re-unification of the Korean Peninsula. However, despite our best efforts, the circumstances surrounding the Korean peninsula have continued to be unstable, and the experience of two times nuclear crises has re-affirmed the fact that our united prayers and efforts continue to be necessary.

The NCCK, NCCC-USA and NCCJ recognize that the present "North Korean Nuclear Issue" is related to the energy issues that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) faces for its very survival, as well as the issue of the security of its regime. Fortunately, the positive attitude of the government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) with regard to providing electricity to the DPRK has provided a constructive element to the resolution of the present situation. At the same time we affirm the need for the United States of America and Japan, as well as other neighboring countries to become more pro-actively involved in reconstructing the industrial basis of the DPRK which has suffered from repetitive natural disasters and the chronic lack of agricultural production and energy shortages. This matter, we believe, is a humanitarian issue that is directly related to the survival of the people of the DPRK.

The NCCK, NCCC-USA and the NCCJ also call upon the government of the United States to adopt a more positive attitude to the issue of guaranteeing the DPRK's sovereignty and security and call upon the U.S. government to take active measures to exchange the current Armistice with a Peace Agreement so that the insecurity of the present state of division may be addressed fundamentally. We also encourage the ROK government initiate more positive legal and structural measures, such as a Non-aggression Treaty, that would contribute to the peaceful co-existence of the DPRK and ROK. In addition, we urge the Japanese government to step beyond issues that limit the development of normalized relations with the DPRK and positively work to address the historical matters between the DPRK and Japan. At the same time, the DPRK must work to fully resolve the misgivings of many countries throughout the world regarding their nuclear program and return to

the original statement which confirms the de-nuclearization of the Korean peninsula, thereby allowing for co-existence with its neighbors.

The NCCK, NCCC-USA and NCCJ fully desire that the Six Party Talks soon to be resumed will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and conciliation where each party learns of and from the different cultures and structures of the other; where negotiations are conducted with the wider interests of Northeast Asia; and, indeed, where the concern for the rebuilding of world peace supersedes simple national interests.

Acting in the firm conviction that the prayers and efforts of the NCCK, NCCC-USA and NCCJ toward peace on the Korean peninsula and the wider region of Northeast Asia will bear much fruit during the upcoming talks we re-commit ourselves to continue in our efforts to ensure that our respective governments work for peace. We believe that our efforts will bear the precious fruit of peace for Northeast Asia and the world and in this belief express our common desire through this Statement.

21 July, 2005

The National Council of Churches in Korea, Gen.Sec Paik Do-woong

The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Gen.Sec Bob Edgar

The National Christian Council in Japan, Gen.Sec Toshimasa Yamamoto