

## **A Letter to President George W. Bush on Peace in East Asia**

Date 2006. 7. 3

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Church leaders and representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) and member churches in Asia, Europe and North America held an International Ecumenical Consultation on Peace in East Asia, in Seoul, Korea on May 2-4, 2006.

We explored ways to work together to build peace in the East Asia region where the cold war continues. Through presentations and discussions, we strongly affirmed that "peacemaking is not part of our mission, it is our mission in our day."

We acknowledged that one of the keys to establishing peace in North-East Asia is the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula. However, we also identified further obstacles to peace and stability in North-East Asia: the power struggle between Japan and China; the Taiwan issue; the tension between Japan and North Korea; and [the tension] between the U.S.A. and North Korea. Particularly, we held the common belief that the USA strategic flexibility policy as applied to North-East Asia endangers the region more than it contributes to its security.

It is in this context that the participants of the Consultation proposed that the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) write a letter to you with regard to the following three issues:

First, we oppose any possible pre-emptive attack by the USA against North Korea and Iran. Any attempt to achieve peace and security through violent destruction will only result in further violence. As Christians we believe that true peace can be achieved only through justice, reconciliation and nonviolence. Therefore, we urge you to resolve the current crisis through peaceful means inspired by the spirit of justice, reconciliation and nonviolence.

Second, we urge you to lift the sanctions against North Korea. It is generally understood that the sanctions against North Korea since 1950 have been enforced

by the USA in its own political interest. Experts indicate that the sanctions against North Korea have been one of the significant causes of the increasing suffering of the North Korean people. If the USA is really serious in its wish to relieve the suffering of the North Korean people, the US government must immediately lift the sanctions against North Korea.

Third, we urge you to initiate a diplomatic process to replace the armistice of 1953 with a peace agreement. Even though the cold war has ended elsewhere, the legacy of the cold war, the armistice of 1953, still dominates the geo-political situation of the Korean peninsula and the world. This has been an obstacle to the peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula. Achieving peaceful reunification is also one of the keys to establishing peace in North-East Asia. Therefore, we urge you to consolidate all efforts to replace the armistice of 1953 with a peace agreement.

As an ecumenical church community we continue to pray and act together to achieve peace in the world. In our prayers and actions, we uphold the strong affirmation that dialogue and cooperation, rather than war and oppression, is the best way to achieve peace.

Dear Mr. President, we pray that you and your country will be a critical peace-maker in the world so that all people may live in peace and harmony without threat of war.

On behalf of Christians praying for peace,

Bishop Park Kyung-Jo  
President  
The National Council of Churches in Korea

Participating churches in the International Ecumenical Consultation on Peace in East Asia, May 2-4, 2006, Seoul, Korea:

Church of South India  
Korean Christian Church in Japan  
United Church of Christ in Japan  
Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea  
United Church of Christ in the Philippines  
Presbyterian Church in Taiwan  
National Council of Churches in the Philippines  
National Council of Churches in Korea  
Hong Kong Christian Council  
National Christian Council in Japan  
Japan Christian Academy  
United Reformed Church  
Berliner Missionswerk  
Deutsche Ostasienmission (DOAM)

Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau  
Evangelisches Missionswerk in Sudwestdeutschland (EMS)  
Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (EKD)  
Korea Research Communication Centre, Germany  
mission 21 evangelische missionswerk basel  
Common Global Ministries, United Church of Christ, USA/Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)  
The United Church of Canada  
National Council of the Churches of Christ, USA  
Christian Conference of Asia  
World Council of Churches  
World Alliance of Reformed Churches  
World Student Christian Federation, Asia-Pacific Region