A Concept Paper for
2020 Global Jubilee Peace Campaign for Korean Peninsula:
Declaring a People’s Korea Peace Treaty

1. Background

The year 2020 marks the 70 years’ anniversary of the Korean War. With the three-year-long Korean War from 1950 to 1953, more than six million people were killed and wounded, and the entire country was completely destroyed. Furthermore, over seven million people were separated from their families and many of them have since died without the chance to reunite with their family members. Since the Korean War the division became an unavoidable reality, and more than 70 years of division have caused confrontation and antagonism between the two Koreas, bringing unbearable han to the
minjung (grass-root people) in the two Koreas. Even after 70 years since the Korean War, the two Koreas are still under the status of the armistice living with the fear of another war. Therefore, it is the most significant mission for all Koreans to end the war and open a new era of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

The National Council of Churches in Korea has been exerting its strength on behalf of peace and reconciliation for the Korean Peninsula along with the ecumenical community and peace-loving forces in the world. In this journey towards peace and reconciliation, we the NCCK have affirmed that the very first step towards peace and reconciliation is to end the Korean War and establish a permanent peace regime by turning the current armistice into a peace treaty.

Therefore, since the 2013 WCC Busan Assembly we have consolidated all our efforts to replace the present armistice with a peace treaty. In 2013 we initiated a signature campaign that calls for the signing of a peace treaty. From 2013 to 2015 we collected 14,000 signatures and submitted them to President Park Geun-hye on July in 2015. With the submission of the campaign signatures to President Park in 2015, we decided to extend the signature campaign to the global level to mobilize support from the global community. On July 18-29, 2016, 22 NCCK delegates traveled the US from LA to Washington, DC and on July 27, the day of the Korean armistice agreement 63 years before, the NCCK delegation together with NCCCUSA delivered the campaign signatures to President Barack Obama calling for a peace treaty to replace the armistice. Prior to the US campaign trip, the NCCK Executive Committee approved a draft of a Korea Peace Treaty proposed by the Reconciliation and Reunification Committee.

The second term of the campaign was conducted on June 25 to July 7, 2017 in Europe with 24 participants, visiting churches and meeting political leaders in England, Scotland, Germany and Switzerland. The third campaign, with 30 participants, was conducted in 2018 in Japan and Korea, addressing “The issue of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution” and its close connection with peace-building in Korea. Last year 2019, for the 4th campaign trip 27 campaigners travelled from Russia to Constantinople and to Greece to deepen solidarity with the Orthodox Church and raise awareness among them regarding the urgency of a Korea peace treaty.
Breaking a decade-long deadlock between the two Koreas, two leaders from North and South Korea met on April 27, 2018 in Panmunjom and announced the Panmunjom Declaration (hereafter: Declaration). Korean people together with the whole world celebrated and affirmed the Declaration as it paves a new way to peace, prosperity, and reunification of the divided Korean people. The most significant point of the Declaration is that the two Koreas will work together on ending the Korean War and begin a new era of peace and sharing commitments in ending divisions and confrontation. One of the key elements in realizing a Korea peace treaty is to normalize the diplomatic relations between the US and DPRK through the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, as we are experiencing right now, the way to a Korea peace treaty is full of challenges and difficulties. As a US presidential election will occur in the fall of 2020 and campaigns will be in full swing soon, we see our window for overcoming the obstacle of US foreign policy closing soon. In spite of all difficulties, we strongly believe that a Korea peace treaty will be concluded soon and a new era will open on the Korean Peninsula.

For the last four years the NCCK has conducted these campaigns for a Korea peace treaty with its global ecumenical partners. In 2020, as we reach the 5th year of the campaign and commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War, we want to consolidate all our efforts to end the ongoing Korean War and realize a Korea peace treaty. It is in this context that we declare a “People’s Korea Peace Treaty” and urge the international society to support our campaign to realize peace, prosperity and reunification on the Korean Peninsula.

2. Objective

* To end the Korean War and realize a Korea peace treaty
* To appeal for the urgent need of a Korea peace treaty by declaring a “People’s Korea Peace Treaty”
* To heal the wounds of the war and open a new era of peace, prosperity and reunification
* To articulate a new vision for a peaceful Korea together with ecumenical partners and civil society
* To foster people’s participation in peacemaking at every level of life
* To articulate a new vision and hope for peacemaking on the global level

3. Date: July 15-17, 2020

4. Venue: Seoul Women’s Plaza (Address: #18, Yeouidaebang-ro 54-Gil(Daebang-dong), Dongjak-gu, Seoul, 156-808 Korea)/ Web-site: http://www.seoulwomen.or.kr/eng/index.jsp

5. Participants: About 250 people from the civil society NGOs, religious organizations and a few other individuals who have been partners in our peace movement.