

Report on 2019 Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace (PJP) in the Korean Peninsula

1. Background

The two leaders from the North and South Korean governments met on April 27, 2018 in Panmunjom and announced the Panmunjom Declaration. The Korean people, together with the whole world, celebrate and affirm the Panmunjom Declaration as it paves a new way to peace, prosperity, and unification of the divided nation. 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. But we are all aware that it will be a long journey to achieve justice, peace, healing and reconciliation as for a long period the division system has controlled people's minds and life style as well as the governance and policy of the two Koreas.

Young Korean men must complete two years of military service. During the military service, they are exposed to distorted information about North Korea and forced to learn antagonism and hatred against North Korea. Furthermore, for the last 10 years two conservative governments did not provide the youth with proper opportunities for peace education which would enable them to understand the truth of the division system, reconciliation and reunification. Therefore it is natural for them to negatively respond to such issues like peace, reconciliation and reunification: North Korea is still an enemy or an object of fear to them. A survey conducted in 2016 by Seoul National University's center for International Studies exactly shows the reality of the youth: "only 7% in their 20s (or 14% in their 30s) acknowledge the necessity of reunification."

For a long time reunification has been justified by "nationalism," but it no longer appeals to the youth. Reunification is a secondary issue to them as the survey shows. Today the youth in South Korea call themselves the "N-generation." It is a coined word referring to a generation that gave up such important things on their life-journey like love, marriage, childbirth, owning a home, career, hobbies, human relationships and eventually hope. The reality they face in their everyday life is a "hell." Therefore, it would be "pouring oil on the fire" if they consider having to bear a huge reunification in the future.

The 10th General Assembly of the WCC in Busan declared the "Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace" (PJP) to be the most important follow-up work leading up to the 2021 GA meeting. The PJP aims to be a spiritual movement that inspires the Christian community to participate in "a transformative journey that God invites us to in anticipation of the final purpose for the world that the Triune God brings about." With the spirit of the PJP, the NCCK aims to transform the chronic division system into a permanent peace system for reunification. Especially, as more than

70 years' of division has created hatred and fear among young people and made them indifferent to the issue of reunification, it is very urgent for the Korean Church to provide various opportunities through which they can raise their awareness of peace and reunification in Korea.

2. Objective

To learn about "peace, healing and reconciliation of Korea" and its connectedness to the global peace issues

To be attentive to the wounds of the victims of the Korean War and the division system

To develop a "peace sensitivity" and search for ways to enhance global ecumenical solidarity among the youth

To develop youth leadership for peace-building in Korea and the world

To share ecumenical fellowship among the youth and learn about peace issues in the different parts of the world

3. Participants:

Foreign Participants: 50/ Korean Participants: 30/ Staff: 12- **Total: 92**

4. Preparation Stage

- August-September, 2018: Completion of project concept & preliminary budget
- September-October: Composition of a preparation team
- November-December: Initial research and study session of the preparation team
- December-March, 2019: Recruiting participants
- February-March: Confirmation of the logistics
- May-June: Orientation and study session for the Korean participants
- June-July: Preparation team meetings
- August 6-12: Actual implementation of the project

5. Overview on the Actual PJP: August 6 to 12, 2019

August 6: Arrival to Korea, Opening Worship (foreign participants), and Orientation.

August 7-8: Registration of the Korean participants/ visit to Gwang-Ju. Gwangju Mangwol-dong 5.18 Memorial Cemetery: Gwangju is the place where people stood up against the military dictatorship in May, 1980. People in Gwangju peacefully demanded democracy, but the military regime brutally suppressed their movement, killing hundreds of the innocent people including youth and students. The military government announced that the mob were instigated by North Korea, and thus condemned them as communist rebels. The Gwangju Massacre is a good example of how the military dictators used "national security" and the "division system" to maintain their unjust power.

August 9: Visit to Nogun-ri: Nogun-ri is a place where more than 300 refugees were killed by the machine guns of the US army during the Korean War in 1950. The US claimed that they were not merely innocent refugees, but the North Korean enemy had infiltrated them. In 2001 President Bill Clinton issued a statement of regret, but they have never made an official apology so far. In the evening, there were lectures about Christianity and the Massacre. The lectures stressed that the cross in Christianity represents "sacrifice", and that Christians need to learn how to coexist with others by showing self-sacrifice, and yielding, not by excluding and negating others for their own prosperity. It was also reiterated that the South Korean Christians must repent of their anti-communist faith and strive to embrace a peaceful faith that walks in harmony with North Korea.

August 10: Visit to DMZ, Imjingak, Paju: Imjingak is a park located on the banks of the Imjin River in the city of Paju. The park was built to console those from both sides who are unable to return to their hometowns, friends and families because of the division of Korea. Imjingak is where the "Bridge of Freedom" lies. The bridge does actually cross the Imjin river which divides north and South. It is a former railroad bridge which was used by repatriated POWs/soldiers returning from the North. As a finale of the Pilgrimage, the participants have crossed into the DMZ as a symbolic action of reconciliation and peace. We walked for 2 km along the DMZ and had lunch together with the local people living in the DMZ area and experiencing the division in their everyday life.

In the evening, there was a lecture about "Japanese military sexual slavery and imperialism." The lecturer spelled out that the healing and reconciliation must begin with repentance, but that Japan has never made a sincere apology for the grave war crimes. It was pointed out that the lack of true repentance is a root-cause of the present Korea-Japan conflict. The lecture concluded by stating that "re-membering" is a powerful tool for transformation as it unites the victims of the past and the people who live today to avoid repeating the painful past.

August 11: The participants took part in the "2019 Sunday of Prayer for Peaceful Reunification of

the Korean Peninsula” at Seoul Gospel Church. Every August 15, we have celebrated that day as Liberation Day in Korea, the day that signifies Korea’s liberation from Japanese colonization. The theme of the worship was, “seek peace, and pursue it.” (Psalm 34:14) In the worship participants sincerely prayed that the global church and civil society work together to create an environment which will establish a permanent peace system on the Korean peninsula by concluding a Korea peace treaty.

August 12: A workshop about “Young Christian Peacemakers”: The participants looked for each specific action and practice related to world peace which they could put into practice. And we thought about peace as a daily life as a young Christian. All participants agreed to make peace in their own circumstances and surroundings where they have seen conflict and injustice.

The 6 days’ PJP was concluded with a closing worship prepared by the participants.

6. Financial Report

Income (Korean Won)

Registration fee of the Korean participants	7,500,000
NCKK	2,500,000
5.18 Foundation	2,000,000
Nogunri Peace Foundation	450,000
Global Ministry	5,559,526
Niwano Peace Foundation	5,675,000
United Church of Canada	4,230,558
United Methodist Church-GBGM	4,400,000
Evangelical Mission in Solidarity	7,503,890
Church of Scotland	4,000,000
Council for World Mission	5,000,000
WCC	6,100,000
Total	54,918,974 (USD 45,938)

Expenditure

Preparation Cost	2,500,000
Accommodation	14,900,000
Meals/Snacks	18,200,000

Airfare	1,200,000
Transportation	4,500,000
Souvenir	2,450,000
Interpretation/Translation	1,000,000
Meeting	700,000
Workbook	1,600,000
Entrance fee(DMZ Eco tour)	1,320,000
Insurance	1,210,000
Evaluation	1,800,000
Admin. cost (phone, photo copy...)	2,150,000
Total	53,530,000 (USD 44,776)
Balance	1,388,974 (USD 1,162)