



21 August 2015

## Prayers for peace on the Korean peninsula

*"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*

We are concerned as rhetoric in the on-going conflict between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea has been accompanied by military action.

Marking the 70th anniversary of the peninsula's liberation earlier this year, both governments announced they would work for a new era of reconciliation and reunification. Instead we see spiraling militarization and armed conflict.

Responding to these alarming events the Reconciliation and Reunification Committee of the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) has held an emergency meeting. They are calling on "both Koreas to resolve the present crisis with peaceful means."

As an immediate step in that process, they are asking the South Korean government to stop their propaganda broadcasts to the North, as "the North already expressed their willingness to peaceful approach as long as the South stops the broadcast."

The broadcasts were re-started in retaliation for a landmine explosion that injured two South Korean soldiers on patrol. This has led to artillery fire, an escalation in rhetoric and a heightened level of military readiness.

The Korean peninsula has been divided by a Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) since the agreement of an armistice in 1953, which ended the Korean War without a peace treaty.

As we call for prayers for this situation, we wish to raise up a part of the "2015 Easter North-South Joint Prayer" from the NCCCK:

Before we fault others,  
Help us purify ourselves, as we are filled with hate, anger and violence  
Grant us the inner courage to reflect back on our true past  
Face the hidden truth  
And reunite with those who suffered unrighteous death

Give our weak selves the Holy Spirit  
Let us not give up on our pursuit for forgiveness, reconciliation and unification  
Amidst the despairs of death, you have shown us great hope through resurrection  
Bring the new life of resurrection to this dying land

Please join us in praying:

- for the leadership of both governments, that they may have the wisdom to seek a peaceful reconciliation on both this current crisis and in the future
- for those who are in and around the DMZ, providing protection and safety to them
- for our sisters and brothers on the Korean peninsula as they work for peace, reconciliation and reunification

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