

A Letter to the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse Stated Meeting, November 14, 2023

A Peace Agreement for Korea

By **unanimous action of the 225th General Assembly**, PC(USA) endorsed the **Korea Peace Appeal (KPA)** signature campaign and asked presbyteries and sessions to do so as well. This action was in direct response to the Overture submitted by the Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse. The **KPA signature campaign** sought to influence world leaders to establish a peace agreement in the Korean Peninsula to replace the armistice signed by the United States, North Korea, and China in 1953.

Thank you to everyone who helped gather and submit signatures for the KPA! Sadly, the number of signatures collected globally was underwhelming. However, over 200,000 were delivered to the United Nations Secretary-General's office and the offices of various ambassadors to the UN from the four nations that play an important role in the conflict on the Korean Peninsula: the U.S., South Korea, North Korea, and China.

Mission co-worker Rev. Kurt Esslinger reported that he and a KPA delegation, including representatives from the National Council of Churches in Korea, gathered around the UN meetings in NYC and participated in a peace rally and march in NYC, a workshop, and meetings with several permanent missions to the U.S. including South Korea, Sweden, and Switzerland. They also met with the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. They had one Korean American community conversation in NYC and one in DC that involved KorAm cultural centers that have not been involved in peace for a long time. The delegation also met with US representatives in DC.

Kurt reports that overall the visits and conversations were good, even if the general outlook of the situation is negative at the moment. Though the terms of the armistice included an agreement by the signatories to negotiate a peace treaty in 1953, those negotiations were never successful. The Korean Peninsula has remained in a war-readiness posture ever since, "a state of paused war that could reignite at any moment."

What can you do to help?

Contact your congressional representative to support H.R. 1369: "Peace on the Korean Peninsula Act." The overture we submitted, and which was approved at the 225th GA, also directs us to "draw [our representatives] attention to the bills currently before Congress which address Korea Peace, and to advocate with [our] representatives to actively pursue a peace process on the Korean Peninsula." May it be so!

Thank you.

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