



3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 300

Toronto, Ontario

416-231-5931 1-800-268-3781

F: 416-231-3103

April 15, 2013

United Church Statement on the Crisis in the Korean Peninsula

The United Church of Canada is gravely concerned about the escalation of tension in the Korean Peninsula. We fear for the safety of the people in North and South Korea, and the whole of Northeast Asia, should a war erupt.

We are concerned by the ongoing joint military exercises of the United States and the Republic of South Korea and the mounting threats of military actions from the Governments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States, and South Korea. We fear that these provocative actions are increasing the danger of armed confrontation in the region.

The current crisis in the Korean Peninsula points to the unresolved issues in the region, including the failure to obtain a peace treaty to end the state of war, and the international sanctions against North Korea. The resolution of these issues requires re-engagement of all parties in finding lasting solutions to the problems in the Korean Peninsula.

We call on the Government of Canada to help in promoting an atmosphere conducive to renewed negotiations among the states involved in the conflict by

- renewing its engagement in confidence-building measures and contact with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- urging the Governments of the United States and of North and South Korea to return to the negotiating table

In solidarity with partners in South and North Korea, we urge the Governments of the DPRK, South Korea, and the United States to reduce the tension by

- exercising extreme restraint in their actions and rhetoric in order to avoid heightening the tension, and
- stopping the joint military exercises of the United States and the Republic of Korea.

We encourage United Church members to remember the people of North and South Korea in their prayers. Consider using the Korean Common Prayer for Peace and Unification from the World Council of Churches (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/other-ecumenical-bodies/korean-common-prayer-for-peace-and-unification>). We ask God to comfort and keep them safe as they face the terror of the mounting crisis. We pray for the enlightenment of the leaders of all countries involved so that they may seek the way to peace, rather than destruction.

"God of Life, lead us to justice and peace."

Michael Blair
Executive Minister
Church in Mission
The United Church of Canada

