



## NCC 日本キリスト教協議会

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## NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL IN JAPAN

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### **Statement from the National Christian Council in Japan Regarding the Recent Summit Meetings at Panmunjom and Singapore**

He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2.4

#### **【 USA-DPRK Summit Meeting as the Result of Citizens' Will 】**

We, the National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ), who seek peace in Northeast Asia, highly value the summit meeting held between the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in Singapore on June 12, 2018. We sincerely hope this will be a firm step toward the total denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

This historic meeting was preceded by another important encounter between the leaders of North and South Korea at Panmunjom on April 27th, which was itself related to the participation of athletes from the DPRK in the Pyeongchang Olympics in February. This peaceful overture to the DPRK is clearly based on the Moon Jae In government's "Sunshine Policy" toward the DPRK, inherited from the Kim Dae Joong presidency, which seeks diplomatic dialogue, rather than pressure, toward North Korea. We must also not forget that the Moon government was a product of the "Candlelight Revolution," which brought more than one million citizens of South Korea together over four months from October 2016. Citizens urging for peace, not war, was what eventually enabled the meetings to take place between the leaders of North and South Korea, and then of North Korea and the USA.

#### **【 Christians and Tumults of the Korean Peninsula 】**

After achieving liberation from 36-years of colonial occupation under Imperial Japan, Korea was divided into North and South Korea in 1948 under the US-Soviet Cold War regime, but then the Korean War broke out in 1950 and lasted for three years. After signing the armistice in 1953, both countries experienced the dictatorship, under socialist government in the North, and under military government in the South. During the 1970s and 80s, the National Council of Churches in Korea was a leading force in the democratization movement in South Korea, and the National Christian Council in Japan prayed and supported the movement throughout that period. In 1988, one year after the *June 29 Declaration* of 1987, the NCCJ issued the *Declaration for Peace & Reunification on the Korean Peninsula*. This year, NCCJ celebrates the 30th



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anniversary of the declaration.

### **【 Toward Mission for Peace and Reconciliation 】**

As we've witnessed missile launches and nuclear tests by the DPRK last year, and a series of sharp exchanges between the DPRK and the USA that lasted until just before the summit meeting, the realization of the DPRK-USA summit meeting literally came out of blue. Throughout this process, the Moon government consistently pursued peaceful diplomatic dialogues with the DPRK. This was commensurate with the path of "Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula by Proclaiming the Gospel of Peace and Reconciliation" promoted by the NCCJ, the World Council of Churches, and the World Communion of Reformed Churches. We must understand that the meetings at Panmunjom and Singapore were not the goal, but merely a starting point for the denuclearization of Northeast Asia or resolution of the Japanese abductee issue. We sincerely hope this will be an irreversible trend, and that we can walk together with Christians all over the world with prayer.

### **【 As Christians in Japan 】**

We, the NCCJ, recognize that these peaceful diplomatic dialogues happening in the Korean Peninsula are an embodiment of the very spirit of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. We should calmly and clearly recognize this historic trend in the world, and act boldly for peace and reconciliation. In the face of trends that go against peaceful dialogue and diplomacy, or developments that are anachronistic, we must not be indifferent or silent. Rather, as Christians, we should raise our voices to proclaim the "preciousness of peace" in and out of this country. That is exactly the prophetic role of the "watchman" stated in the Bible (Ezekiel 3.17) on which we firmly stand, and the path that is sought for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, who called out; "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5.9).

Following our Lord of Peace, we sincerely hope to work together with all denominations, churches, and Christian organizations to engage in our mission and calling for peace.

21 June 2018

### **The National Christian Council in Japan**

Rev. Makoto Watanabe, Moderator

Rev. Dr. Kim Sungjae, General Secretary