

Paper 13

Korea Peace Appeal

Mission Committee

Basic information

Contact name and email address	Sarah Lane Cawte, Convenor of URC Mission Committee slanecawte@gmail.com
Action required	Decision.
Draft resolution(s)	<p>a) General Assembly affirms its support for a lasting peace settlement to end the Korean War and instructs the General Secretary and Moderator to sign the Korea Peace Appeal on its behalf.</p> <p>b) General Assembly commends the Korea Peace Appeal and urges Synods, local churches, and individuals to sign the Korea Peace Appeal in solidarity with ecumenical partners in Korea.</p>

Summary of content

Subject and aim(s)	Garnering support for the Korea Peace Appeal, seeking a Peace Treaty to formally end the Korean War.
Main points	The Korean War ended in June 1953 with the signing of an Armistice, but a formal end has never been declared. Deep divisions remain between North and South Korea, compounded by the influence of external forces. The Korea Peace Appeal is a worldwide effort to secure 100 million signatures by June 2023 – the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice – in support of a formal Peace Treaty as a step to bringing lasting peace to the Korean peninsula. Members of the URC are encouraged to sign.
Previous relevant documents	
Consultation has taken place with...	National Christian Council in Korea (NCCK); ecumenical partners in Korea; Church of Scotland; Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI).

Summary of impact

Financial	None.
External (eg ecumenical)	The Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) is a close partner of the URC: the Revd Bo-Hyun Kim, former Special Category Minister serving the URC in Bristol, recently became the PCK General Secretary, reinforcing already close relationships.

	<p>A PCK lay-missioner and several Korean ministers are currently serving with us. The URC also has links with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).</p> <p>The URC has long participated in global ecumenical conversations involving the NCKK, World Council of Churches and CTBI, concerned with bridging relationships in Korea and the quest for peace.</p>
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1. The background

- 1.1 70 years ago, the Korean War was raging, ending in June 1953 with an Armistice. Nearly five million people died, more than half – about 10% of Korea's pre-war population – were civilians. Among the military casualties were 1,114 British soldiers.
- 1.2 The war entrenched the division of the Korean peninsula that separated up to 10 million families on either side of the 38th Parallel. The Republic of Korea entered 34 years of military rule, while the Kim dynasty in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) devised the Juche political doctrine that has led to isolation, widespread poverty, and human rights abuses, while at the same time enduring the harshest sanctions regime in the world. Meanwhile, South Korea pays \$1 billion annually for hosting 28,500 United States military personnel.

2. The proposal

- 2.1 At a webinar in January hosted by National Christian Council in Korea (NCKK) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), churches in Britain were urged to support the Korea Peace Appeal¹ to bring about a Peace Treaty to formally end the Korean War, end sanctions against DPRK, and promote links between North and South Korea and sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula. NCKK is one of more than 370 civil society groups that include each of the country's seven faith communities campaigning to end the Korean War by collecting 100 million signatures by June 2023, the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice Agreement.
- 2.2 The Korea Peace Appeal – and the URC's engagement with and support for this campaign – is of great significance to our global partnerships. By passing the resolutions proposed, it will demonstrate our solidarity with these valued and long-standing partners.

¹ <https://en.endthekoreanwar.net>