

Statement on the January 6 North Korean Nuclear Test (so-called Hydrogen Bomb Test)

God's Peace cannot be achieved through force

Since the proclamation of the "Declaration of the Churches of Korea on National Unification and Peace" in 1988, the NCKC has continuously made clear its principle of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the whole world. But amidst rising military tension due to North Korea's nuclear test on January 6, we claim the following with deep concern.

1. Peace cannot be built through nuclear weapons and an arms race.

We have clearly observed through historical experiences, especially the Korean War, that peace and unification in the Korean peninsula cannot be achieved through force. The North has several times proposed that they would cease nuclear testing in exchange for the suspension of the Korea-US joint military drills, but the proposals have been ignored. The US is reacting quickly to this test as they have just flown over the Korean peninsula one of their high-tech strategic weapons: the B-52 Stratofortress, capable of delivering nuclear bombs. They are also considering deploying more weapons such as nuclear submarines and the F-22 stealth fighters scheduled to arrive next month. Accordingly, Japan has convened an immediate National Security Council and is struggling to stipulate a strong military response. A few members of the ruling party in South Korea are proposing the "nuclear armament of South Korea".

The NCKC urges North and South Korea to faithfully implement the 1992 "Joint Declaration of South and North Korea on the Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula", and also asks the US and other states with nuclear arms to complete global denuclearization.

The NCKC further asks South Korea and the US government to stop the joint military drills on the Korean peninsula.

Moreover, we urge that South and North Korea along with the US and China immediately convene a "peace treaty" negotiation to establish a peace system in the Korean peninsula.

2. North and South Korea as well as surrounding countries including the US must stop actions of provocation and begin dialogue.

In August last year the South and the North were almost led to the brink of war by the land-mine explosion and the anti-North loudspeaker broadcasts that followed. But through the dialogue of four consecutive days, the two governments escaped the crisis and opened a new chapter of exchange and cooperation. Provoked by the nuclear test, on January 9 the South reactivated the loudspeaker broadcasts and the North also began broadcasts. Military tension has risen again in the Korean peninsula. Words of provocation and antagonistic rhetoric are the prelude to violence

and war.

The NCKK urges both governments to immediately halt the loudspeaker broadcasts and begin dialogue without any conditions as they did last August.

Furthermore we urge the surrounding countries including the US to not lead the crisis into catastrophe with the increased arms race and sanctions. Rather they should cooperate together to peacefully resolve the crisis.

3. Sanctions against the North must be lifted and exchanges must be extensively promoted.

Ever since the 1950s, the sanctions against the North have only stimulated further conflict. Sanctions through isolationist policies have only threatened the North Korean people's right to live, and they have been a great obstacle to the exchange and cooperation between the North and the South. Civil exchange is the seed for peace and reconciliation as well as a must for national reunification.

The NCKK urges the South, the US, and the international community to lift the sanctions against the North including the 5.24 Measure and the UN sanctions, and demands that these parties provide more opportunities in which civil exchanges are guaranteed and promoted to the fullest.

The NCKK, together with all the churches and peace-loving people, continues to pray and act in order to realize peace in the world as we are determined to participate together in the "Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace" proclaimed in the 10th General Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

January 11, 2016

**Reunification Committee
National Council of Churches in Korea**