



Message from the Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, 2018 in Seoul, South Korea.

*He will judge between many peoples
and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.
They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.
Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.*
—Micah 4:3

The Executive Committee of the World Communion of Reformed Churches¹, met in Seoul, South Korea, along with ecumenical partners, under the theme: “From Life, For Life: Transforming, Reconciling, and Renewing between the 10th and 16th of May 2018. During the Executive Committee meeting, we experienced the hospitality of our Korean member churches and were enriched by their wonderful and rich spirituality.

We met in Korea at a momentous time in history when attempts towards peace, reconciliation and reunification loomed large on the horizon. Our two member churches, the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK) and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK), along with the National Council of Churches in Korea and the Korean Christian Federation in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea have made sacrificial efforts for peace in the peninsula for which we now see much hope. The 1945 division of the Korean nation represented a compromise between the USA and the Soviet Union for short term tactical expediency rather than long term strategic vision for those suffering under Japanese occupation.

However, the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula (of 27 April 2018) opened the possibility of a peace treaty replacing the presently existing armistice, demilitarization of the DMZ, denuclearization and steps towards peaceful coexistence and reunification in the Korean peninsula. From the perspective of God’s saving work in the world it clear that the division of the Korean peninsula is not the end of the history for the Korean people. The experience of the Korean peninsula shows us that war, violence and militarization can be overcome and that vested interests that sow the seeds of conflict will not win.

The journey for peace in the Korean context is an inspiration. While we met we took notice of what was happening in the wider world. We invite the Communion to prayer and advocacy for these situations particularly for a successful summit meeting between North Korea and the USA.

¹ *The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC), called to communion and committed to justice, is comprised of 100 million Christians from 233 Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting and Waldensian churches in 109 countries.*

As an ecumenical body of Christians, we extend our deepest condolences to the congregations affected by the multiple bomb blasts in Surabaya in Indonesia, including Diponegoro Indonesian Christian Church of WCRC member church *Gereja Kristen Indonesia* (GKI). It is with great concern we heard of the loss of life in Palestine following the relocation of the United States Embassy to Jerusalem. We look forward to a global engagement, that will deal with this painful reality and to work towards just peace. We pray for communities around the world that are living with violence, fear, and hopelessness. Specifically, we think of Cameroon, Kenya, Syria, Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia. Our prayers are with all God's children who are suffering.

We commit to pray and act in concrete solidarity for all who are affected by war and injustice, so that hatred is abandoned, and so that polarization and violence do not grow. We understand that it is a long road to justice and that the paths of peace are not easy to tread, but we as the Executive Committee of the WCRC call on all our member churches to live in obedience to a God of life and commit to the transformation of the world for the fullness of life for all. We commit to move From Life, For Life: Transforming, Reconciling and Renewing.

16 May 2018