Citizens’ Dialogue on Peace

- 2011 Report on the Korean NGOs’ Peace Activities -

Civil Peace Forum
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The relationship between the South and North was at its worst in 2010, along with peace on the Korean peninsula. The relationship between South and North Korea is closely related to peace on the Korean peninsula. The relationship is affected by mutual agreements between the two sides, agreements which states that “the relationship refers to the unique but provisional relationship to pursue the reunification process rather than a relationship between the two countries”. Therefore, the South’s peace movement always takes reunification into account.

There are approaches to reunification which most Koreans agree with: Reunification has to be gradual and carried out step by step. It is a functional approach, which leads to political and military integration through social, economic, and cultural rapprochement, which will lead to a peaceful reunification. This is the reason for civil movements to engage in the relationship between the South and the North. Both will learn to coexist through dialogue and social, economic and cultural sharing. The civil movement has also been playing a role in humanitarian aid, social development in the North, and social and cultural exchanges. Such activities, including religious exchanges, support for infants, pest control, and language exchanges are described in this book. In addition, there are activities to prevent human rights violations and the promotion of human rights, which are structural approaches towards the implementation of universal human rights. In short, humanitarian movements play an important role for people in the North, as human rights cannot be improved without peace.
Another topic of this book is the arms control movement. The build up of military power is by far no optimal solution to restore peace, since it is difficult to assess threats and there is always a looming potential for an arms race between nations. Therefore, the national defense policy of the government should focus on conflict prevention, seek ways to implement arms control and disarmament and ensure multilateral, cooperative national security.

After the Fukushima nuclear accident, the Korean peace movement has strengthened its focus on nuclear policy, pointing out the risks of nuclear power generation and the ever increasing conflicts and debates about the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It is becoming clearer that “a world without nuclear energy” is the fundamental solution to this complex issue. Both the environmental and peace movements are being reshaped by the Fukushima incident.

The Korean Peninsula, which is home to both South and North Korea, is in the international spotlight, and global solidarity is an essential factor in the peace movement. The Six Party Talks, dealing with the North’s denuclearization, have been created to provide a multilateral communication platform for participating countries. How does the civil society respond? The “Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference” is one of the answers, the “Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)”, focusing on Northeast Asia, is another important movement. There is always an alternative to promote peace through non governmental organizations.
The authors of this book are experienced activists in the peace and environmental movements, as well as committee members of Civil Peace Forum. Civil Peace Forum communicates and seeks solutions through the peace movement network. We sincerely hope that the Korean Civil Movement’s efforts for peace will be acknowledged and that this recognition will become the foundation for broader support and solidarity through this book.

For the last, we genuinely appreciate the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung’s great sponsor for the publication of this booklet and our activities in 2011.

December 25, 2011

Representatives of Civil Peace Forum
Hyun Back Chung, Keum Ok Kim, Boo Won Nam,
Seung Hwan Lee, and Yong Sun Lee
Non governmental Interchange between the South and North: Paving the Way to Renewed Peace

September 21, 2011 Leaders of the 7 main religious groups - Protestantism, Buddhism, Won Buddhism, Catholicism, Cheondoism, Korean indigenous religion, and Sungkyunkwan (Confucianism) - visited Pyeongyang. The visit made national headlines, as it was the first time a group of religious leaders visited North Korea with the permission of the Lee Myung-bak administration. People who witnessed the group visit the North let out a sigh of relief. There was even some anticipation that the South North relations, which were often tense, “would be stabilized now.” Since many Koreans are followers of the one or other religion, they respect universal religious teachings of mercy, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation. The Korean government also respects this sentiment of the people. Therefore, the words and actions of these religious representatives exert great influence on Korean society. In that sense, to see these leading figures visiting Pyeongyang and clearly expressing the need to reconcile and cooperate with North Korean leaders was very comforting to the people.

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Leaders of 7 major religious groups visiting the Mansudae Memorial in Pyeongyang and meeting with Kim Yeongnam, Chairman of the Supreme People’s Assembly.

The visit to Pyeongyang by religious leaders increased pressure to improve South North Relations in a timely manner.

The noticeable worsening of South North relations in 2010 came as a big shock to the entire Korean society. That year, 46 young sailors lost their lives in the sinking of the Korean Navy Vessel “Cheonan”, which led to rising military tensions between the South and North. As the Lee Myung-bak administration announced the results of an investigation into the Cheonan sinking, it rather hastily put the blame on North Korea and vowed punitive measures. It was made clear that the military would respond much more severely (to provocations), and exchanges and trade between the two countries were halted. This was called the “Special Action of May 24”. Furthermore, a South Korea US Joint Military Exercise was carried out to apply military pressure, which provoked North Korea into directly firing artillery rounds at the South Korean territory of Yeonpyeong Island. In this incident, 3 more civilians lost their lives. While North Korea had infiltrated South Korea with armed soldiers in the past, the North Korean Army directly
targeting South Korean soil with artillery was unprecedented since the armistice agreement in 1953. That was how badly relations between South and North Korea had deteriorated in 2010.

The confrontation between South and North Korea, as if war was about to break out, was calmed by the US and China asking for restraint in January 2011. The US and China expressed their concerns about rising tensions on the Korean peninsula and called for peace and stabilization in the US-China Joint Statement released on January 20, 2011. Furthermore, the US and China pointed out that an essential step to progress in South North relations will require constructive talks to find peace and stabilization on the peninsula.

The mediation of the US and China led to South North denuclearization talks. South and North Korea held the first round of talks in Bali, Indonesia on July 22, 2011 and continued their dialogue with a second round of talks in Beijing, China on September 21. Although both sides were unable to conclude any specific agreement during these meetings, they were able to explore each other’s intentions and reaffirmed the need to talk.

The resumption of talks on South and North Korean relations even influenced South Korea’s policy towards the North. This became evident in the replacement of Unification Minister Hyun In-taek, who opted for a hard line stance in dealing with the North all along. The newly appointed Minister Ryu U-ik has been voicing a policy of “Maintaining a basis for dialogue and fostering flexibility towards the North”. The visit to the North by religious leaders served as a catalyst to improve South and North Korean relations in this sequence of events.
No government can act against the will of the people

What can non-governmental interchange contribute to South and North Korean relations? Due to the ill-fated relationship caused by the war between South and North Korea, there was no room for the private sector to intervene, at least during the Cold War era. At that time, South-North relations were a taboo area for the nation. North Korea was always a threat to the outside world. So North Korean agendas were only dealt with from the aspect of national security in Korean society.

After the former Soviet Union disintegrated and the collapse of North Korea’s economy became obvious, South-North relations started to change. Just in time, the success of democratization and industrialization in Korea accelerated such change. Roh Tae-woo, with his conservative government, first attempted to engage socialist states such as Russia and China. This was called the “northward policy” since 1988. In the process, South-North Korean relations also became part of the network of exchanges and cooperation. In 1991, the Inter-Korean Basic Agreement specifying non-aggression, exchanges and cooperation was adopted. During this period, the private sector jumped onto the bandwagon of inter-Korean trade. As food became scarce and many people starved to death due to the economic failure of the North, a movement of support for North Korea arose from religious circles and civil society. The people joined in this movement, and in the process North Korea was recognized both as a ‘threatening force’ and a ‘fellow people we must help.’

Following the spirit of the times, the Kim Dae-jung administration drew up a policy towards North Korea called “Engagement Policy”. The GGaeseong Industrial Complex was constructed and tours to Mt. Geumgang started, railroad tracks and roads to the North were opened. The Military Demarcation Line was opened along the eastern and western coast. Following
this path, exchanges between people of all social standings began to blossom. Not only businessmen, religious people and athletes, but also farmers, writers, teachers, broadcasters, and scholars engaged in mutual exchanges. The Korean peninsula was relatively stable at that time.

Later on, South North relations were at their worst during the Lee Myung-bak administration. However, the security monopoly and confrontational South and North Korean government relations cannot stand above the will of the people. After the sinking of the “Cheonan” in 2010, the government and ruling party asked for the people’s support of a hard-line policy towards the North in local elections on June 2. However, the South Korean people opted for a stabilization of South and North Korean relations. In the local elections on June 2, the government and ruling party was crushing defeated.

**Humanitarian aid for the North and socio-cultural exchange pave the way for the government to resume dialogue**

One aspect which has not faded despite worsening South North relations is the humanitarian spirit. On May 23, 2011, religious groups and civil societies set out on a campaign for humanitarian aid to North Korea. The National Council of Churches in Korea sent aid to the North, without government approval, under the belief of ‘helping those who starve is the calling of religious believers’. This unilateral measure forced the government to change its policy. The government approved to supply the North with flour, which is less likely to be diverted to the military, under the precondition that distribution will be monitored. Based on this decision, various non-government organizations raised over 3 million USD and sent 6,300 tons of flour to North Korea.

One organization which went ahead with exchanges between South and
North Korea along the path paved by religious and humanitarian aid groups was the “Georemal Grand Dictionary South North Joint Compilation Committee”. The goal of this committee is to compile a catalogue of linguistic similarities and differences in the dialects of South and North Korea, ultimately creating a comprehensive dictionary of the Korean language. Both South and North Korean linguists participated in this project. After meetings were prevented since the hosting of the North South Joint Conference in December 2009, they finally resumed on November 18, 2011. At the meeting in Gaeseong, participants from both countries laid out plans to review the manuscript for a comprehensive dictionary before publication. If this dictionary compilation project proceeds smoothly, it will be a valuable resource for language usage in both countries, which developed in different directions over the 60 years of division. Moreover, it will contribute to the restoration of the rich vocabulary of the Korean language.
Currently, the government is under pressure from the people to restart exchanges between the South and North, the most pressing issue being the reunion of separated families. Blocking the reunion of separated families is equivalent to blocking humanitarianism. At this moment, there are 128,000 applications pending requesting a chance to meet separated family members, 37.2% of which already passed away. With 43.6% of surviving family members being over 80, another 10 applicants are passing away each day. Even though reunion meetings are an urgent matter, and there are countless suggestions and petitions urging the government to hold reunions for separated families, the administration seems to be lackluster in pushing for a solution.

Today, we live in an era of governance. But not everything can be resolved by the power of government alone. The trend towards informatization and globalization is creating new social groups. Governments have to recognize these groups and adjust governance. The same applies to South and North Korean relations. Non-governmental interchange between South and North Korea is clearly a part of governance for reconciliation and peace for the Korean Peninsula.
Proposal for a “Citizens’ Movement for the Improvement of North Korean Human Rights Issues”

Chung, Hyun Back*

Human rights are universal rights, which cannot be compared to any other values. The improvement of the human rights situation in North Korea is an important issue which cannot be delayed any longer. The problem is finding the most effective way to improve the human rights of North Koreans. One way is for the Korean government and the international community to openly criticize the North Korean regime and actively intervene in the human rights issue. However, such means could be politically abused, despite the superiority of the justification behind them. Furthermore, it is worthy to take note that such interference did not actually improve the human rights situation in Korea, but rather led to unintended results, such as even tighter totalitarian control.

The government’s or international community’s criticism of the human rights situation in North Korea may be abused by politics.

Paradoxically, the majority of groups criticizing the North Korean human rights situation and applying pressure on the government from within South Korea are power elites who oppressed or violated human rights during

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South Korea’s authoritarian rule in the past. In many cases, they used human rights issues to hinder implementation of South Korea’s policy of engagement aiming for reconciliation and cooperation between South and North, rather than being sincerely concerned about human rights in North Korea. If the Korean government openly criticizes the North Korean human rights situation, it will only play into the hand of ultra conservative forces to achieve their political goals, and jeopardize the justification for supporting and cooperating with North Korea based on a policy of engagement towards the North. As a result, this will not only worsen the human rights situation of North Koreans, but also reinforce the hostile attitude of North Korea.

**It is fundamental to change the way North Korea ‘thinks’, rather than ineffectively criticizing the human rights situation**

Some people might argue that since the international community’s criticism of and intervention in the human rights situation in South Korea during the nation’s military dictatorship contributed to the democratization of the country, we need to take the same approach towards North Korea. However, this might lead to “anticommunist commercialism”, which intentionally dismisses another reality North Korea is facing. Though small in numbers, there was a strong civil society and civic awareness in South Korea under military dictatorship, and diplomatic relations were diverse. Because of this, the international community’s criticism of the Korean government violating human rights yielded a considerable effect. Even the former Soviet Union, with its inflexible system of government, had established diplomatic relations to the West, such as the US, and was therefore able to engage in human rights diplomacy.

However, North Korea is being controlled by a general, declaring that “the supreme leader and the people are one body” to a society so tightly controlled that Western style individualism or civic awareness are absent,
which is unprecedented in the world. In addition, North Korea does not even maintain proper diplomatic relations to the West. Therefore, it is difficult to achieve the same improvements with human rights diplomacy used on past military dictatorships in South Korea. It is rather more likely, in light of historic experiences of Northeast Asia, which advocate national sovereignty over individual circumstances, that half-baked human rights diplomacy will actually strengthen North Korea’s authoritarian system.

In order to provide a more fundamental remedy than just stimulation to improve human rights in North Korea, we must lead North Korea to apply changes to the North Korean system, national interest, identity, and values. To achieve this, we must not make them shy away from opening up by continuous criticism or threats, but make North Korea change its “way of thinking” through dialogue and mutual exchanges. To fundamentally solve the North Korean human rights issue, South Korea and the international community must embrace the North and allow the country to improve human rights at its own pace, while civic groups should take on a “quiet approach”.

The effects of a “microscopic approach” to the North Korean human rights issue should not be disregarded.

A “microscopic approach” to the North Korean human rights situation refers to gathering information on individual violations of human rights North Koreans suffer from and taking measures to improve this particular situation. In practical terms, this could be pointing out individual human rights violations, criticizing human rights violators, and applying direct pressure to the North Korean government. In this process, engagement and criticism by the international community must come into play. In such cases, it will be more appropriate to hold the North Korean government responsible for only the violation itself, rather than correlating human rights violations with the North’s political system. This approach can reduce human rights violations
against North Koreans and make the North Korean government pay attention to the concerns and criticism of the international community. But it will only be a short term, conservative therapy. Moreover, if there are too many “microscopic” approaches, North Korea might regard them as political pressure, which may stir up conflict with the international community.

The “microscopic approach” must be accompanied by a “macroscopic approach” to the North Korean human rights issue

If a microscopic approach focuses on stopping individual human rights violation, the macroscopic approach should be targeted at the overall prevention of human rights violations and promotion of human rights, as an attempt to improve fundamental factors of human rights. It must include reform and opening up, sustainable development, improvement of South and North relations, and establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula. We must especially be aware that human rights cannot be improved where there is no peace.

Both the North and South Korean governments must take more serious and practical steps to improve human rights in North Korea.

As much as the primary responsibility for worsening human rights conditions in North Korean lies with the North Korean authorities, the North Korean government must come up with a forward looking policy for improving human rights. In the same way, the South Korean government must urge North Korea to accept human rights programs by international organizations and dialogue on human rights on an international level, including dialogue with South Korea. Furthermore, to improve economic human rights, we must immediately resume humanitarian aid to North Korea. If it is necessary to link the human rights issue with material support, such a path must be followed through quiet diplomacy. Moreover, Korean civic
movement groups will urge the South and North Korean governments to actively contribute to improving the human rights issue.

**Proactive intervention by the international community and efforts to persuade North Korea are of vital importance**

The way the US, who is the only superpower of the post-cold war era, defined North Korea as a ‘bully nation’ and enacted the ‘North Korean Human Rights Act’ for political purposes, encouraged the international community to form prejudice against North Korea, which led to increasing pressure and a policy of containment against the North. This is making it more difficult to solve human rights issues in North Korea. In addition, the UN Human Rights Resolution also creates the impression to be biased against North Korea and China out of political expediency. Now we have to look for ways to engage in multilateral, mutual talks on human rights through collaboration with more neutral organizations like the EU or UN, and accept human rights improvement programs, in the same way we look at technological cooperation or consulting services, by international human rights organizations. Already the very interest and efforts by the international community can help to improve human rights in North Korea in a practical way. Therefore, a broader interest and sincere efforts by the international community on improving North Korean human rights are required.
Various Challenges of Korea Peace Movement for Arms Reduction

Park, Jung Eun*

As Yeonpyeong Island artillery shelling between South and North Korea broke out following the Cheonan ship sinking incident last year, 2011 started off while the conflict between the South and North was tense. The government’s strong stance, pouring out comments that they are willing to go to war rather than come up with countermeasures for the safety of residents or crisis management, exacerbated the sense of crisis. Applying pressure by deploying overwhelming military forces for retaliation took precedence over the restoration of crisis management system or the stable management of the situation. The wrong diagnosis on the worsening situation led to wrong decision making. Although the basis of the outbreak of the Yeonpyeong Island artillery shelling incident were problems such as the hostility and distrust between the South and North and the disposal of agreement between the South and North related to the NLL, it was not that important to the government and military authorities. Instead, they took this crisis as an opportunity to raise arms as if this was due to South Korea’s lack of arms. They resumed military exercise and hastened the introduction of the latest

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weapon while fortifying the western islands.

The arms buildup of the international community also continued. According to SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), the war expenditure of the entire world in 2010 was 1.63 trillion dollars, which was nearly about a 50% increase since 2000. An enormous amount of money that is enough to achieve the UN MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) the international community promised for fighting poverty and support of developments all over the world five times was spent on purchasing weapons and preparing for war. The South Korean national defense budget doubled over the past 10 years, and in the case of weapon imports, it has recorded 2nd along with China which is carrying out militarization based on its immense economic power following India. The national defense budget equivalent to last year’s 32 trillion won were financial resources prepared by sacrificing the budget on education, environment, human rights along with various welfare projects which were only a small fraction compared to this.

Would there have been no military collision between the South and North if we had poured more national defense budget or if we had more weapons? If we had fortified the 5 western islands and Yeonpyeong Island, would the residents be safer or would there be no recurrence of military conflict between the South and North? Would promoting arms projects in the billions or trillions of won instead of ultimately putting off the safety of our people and the improved quality of living bring us safety and peace? These are questions the Korean peace movement posed in the face of the arms buildup and arms race which is intensifying on the Korean peninsula while it is a global phenomenon. The answer is a resounding ‘No.’

2011 was a year when voices for peaceful disarmament grew more desperate. The Korean peace movement engaged in disarmament campaigns and national defense monitoring activities more diverse than any other year.
The Korean peace movement did not simply pay attention to the military discord between the South and North and South Korea’s national budget issue but raised an issue on the social rights and peaceful right to live that was sacrificed or treated as subordinate in the process of the vicious cycle of security dilemma, and the arms race which could be said to be a phenomenon on the Korean peninsula, Northeast Asia, and the entire world. This is obvious from the fact that the global economic crisis and the deterioration of the quality of people’s living is everywhere, and voices are growing louder for the universal welfare of the people demanding the basic standard of living such as jobs, education, medical care, and security for the aged. Another important reason that we should turn our attention to the national defense budget as a means of securing essential welfare finance is the fact that the enormous military expenditure of not only Korea but every country further accelerates the arms race rather than guaranteeing the peace and safety of the people, and raises military conflict and tension even more.

**Global Day of Action on Military Spending**

Through the international workshop for arms reduction of the Asia Pacific region hosted by the People’s Solidarity last year, the peace activists in this area had adopted a resolution to engage in multiple simultaneous peace movements all over the world for urging disarmament. The date was set to April 12, the point in time when SIPRI announces the statistics on global war expenditures. Peace movements of 35 countries including the US, Switzerland, Indonesia, Ireland, and Korea participated in the Global Day of Action on Military Spending attempted for the first time, and proceeded with over 100 peace actions for urging arms reduction. In Korea, not only the People’s Solidarity but also 35 groups including groups preparing the Peace Disarmament Expo held a press conference with the assemblymen for announcing the National Assembly Civil Society joint declaration titled, ‘Our tax for welfare instead of weapons,’ and have hosted exhibitions at
Hongik University and the National Assembly or received signatures.

33 national assemblymen who has participated in this campaign took photos while holding the pickets that stated the national defense spending must be reduced and be used for half price college tuition, free school meals, creating quality jobs, day care expenses and providing working class residence, and education on human rights. The People’s Solidarity also gave out nameplates saying ‘Assemblyman acting for peace’ to 33 of these national assemblymen. In the street campaign held in commemoration of the Global Day of Action on Military Spending had also arranged a corner for listening to opinions on reducing the national defense expenditure which is 87.7 billion won per day, and opinions on where it should be used if it needs to be cut. In addition, we have also produced and displayed panels that easily explained how an excessive national defense budget is appropriated and unreasonable weapons projects not only on the streets but also at the National Assembly Member’s Office.

Furthermore, the Korean Peace Movement distributed online newsletters and made them into articles which introduced the current status of worldwide arms issues so as to attract the press as well as the people’s interest in the astonishing amount of military expenses. Its contents exposed the shocking reality of the worldwide arms buildup and how its double faced mechanism worked. Among these, it included the uncomfortable truth that the permanent member nations of the UN Security Council had the world’s highest level of military spending and took up 80% of the overall conventional arms export, and that they are acquiring more profits from selling arms than aiding developing nations. Moreover, it revealed the reality that a military industry academia conglomerate coexists due to the enormous budget support by the US Department of Defense, and in case of the Middle East where there is winds of democratic revolution, the long standing military aid by the US
to the dictatorship is becoming weapons for the authorities to oppress the people and aimed at protesters.

2nd Peace Disarmament Expo [Let’s Talk Peace Now]

In October, following last year, peace groups held the Peace Disarmament Expo, ‘Let’s Talk Peace Now’ for two days around the time ADEX 2011 (Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition 2011) was hosted. The reason it was held around the time of ADEX was because of the critical consciousness that the Aerospace & Defense Exhibition carried out with the budget of millions of won promoted the trade, production, and development of various weapons, and encouraged the arms race. Peace Movement held the Peace Disarmament Expo as a project for having people take notice of the tragedy caused by the killing power of weapons, not its performance, and to bring about people’s understanding and sympathy for urging investments on people’s ‘safety’ and peace rather than fostering the arms industry or expanding armaments.

In this year’s exhibition, not only peace groups but also 17 groups including human rights and environmental groups as well as 33 assemblymen participated and expanded its outward appearance than last year’s exhibition. We have exhibited over 100 different types of panels describing the dangers of Weapons of Mass Destruction such as cluster bombs and nuclear weapons, comparison of national defense budget and welfare budget, problems of various weapons projects, problems of nuclear power plants and radiation, and the issue of constructing a naval base on Gangjeong in Jeju Island. A lot of citizens participated in the event and we have attracted more attention than last year. Besides the exhibition, we have also held screening of movies, and hosted plays and cultural festivals. Materials made into panels and introduced in the ‘Evil Weapons, Bad Weapons, Expensive Weapons Exhibition’ and ‘Citizen’s Proposal Exhibition for Peace and Disarmament of
the Korean Peninsula’ are currently made into a sourcebook and distributed online and offline.

**Annual Conference for International Workshop on Disarmament of the Asia Pacific Region**

The international workshop on Disarmament of the Asia Pacific Region which was held last year with the title, ‘Means of control against security authority’ was hosted again this year in November. This international workshop is where peace activists and researchers in Korea as well as the Asia Pacific region reinterpreted what really ‘threatened’ the safety of the people according to the perspective of the people and priority, and was held with the purpose of urging the denuclearization of Northeast Asia and disarmament within the area. Even this year, since the ‘threat’ interpretation centered around the military security of countries in the region did not properly consider or disregard ‘threats’ such as reduced budget due to economic crisis, worsening livelihood of the public or Fukushima nuclear disasters, participants agreed that there is an urgent need for democratization of threat interpretation while a new cold war of Northeast Asia is fixated. Foreign participants have held strategic conference with Korean activists and meetings with assemblymen apart from the international workshop, and visited Jeju Island and held an international conference taking the theme of ‘The Construction of Jeju naval base and Peace in East Asia.’ At the strategic conference, next year’s hosting of the Global Day of Action on Military Spending and the action against the Nuclear Security Summit scheduled for March of next year was dealt as major agendas.

**Campaign for Urging the Halting of the Korea US Joint Military Exercise**

While the Yeonpyeong Island shelling incident broke out during the
naval military exercise, the military tensions on the Korean peninsula rose again due to the ‘Key Resolve’ Korea – US joint military exercise which was conducted from February 28 to March 10. The tensions rose because ‘Key Resolve’ Korea – US joint military exercise is aiming to prepare for a sudden change in North Korea, and is a military exercise just as aggressive and provocative. Especially, as the intervention of a US aircraft carrier and strengthening of an exercise for eliminating the North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction, and the forward deployment of reserve forces was known, the size and nature of the Korea – US military exercise attracted significant attention. Due to this, over 20 civic and peace groups as well as progressive parties held a press conference for urging the halting of the Korea – US military exercise, and have carried out peaceful actions such as picketing and flashmob around the Gwanghwamun area during the military exercise. These peace movements criticized that the Korean and US government conducted a provocative military exercise saying they were concerned about the ‘provocation of North Korea’ and have made it even more difficult to solve the problem through conversation. Taking the fact that the halting of the ‘Team Spirit’ exercise by South Korea and the US worked as the background behind the Inter – Korean Basic Agreement and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the movement urged the government of both countries to halt the Key Resolve exercise and set out on solving problems through conversation and negotiations.

**Activities monitoring national defense policies such as the Korean Defense Reform 307, Korea – Japan military cooperation, and weapon exports, etc.,**

The current administration had announced ‘the Korean Defense Reform 307’ containing 73 reform projects this year saying it will compensate ‘the Military Reform Plan 2020’ of the previous administration. In light of the fact that the government has stressed the efficiency of national defense, the
Korean Defense Reform 307 is very disappointing. There was a lack of reform on the force structure centered around the bulky ground forces, and the aggressiveness of the military program was further strengthened. The questions raised included cutting the number of generals by 60 compared to the reduction in force eventually increased the number of generals, and the readjustment of the term of military service to be shortened to 18 months to 21 months, and above all, strengthening the retaliatory power of the military to focus on strengthening the first-strike capability against the North. While the People’s Solidarity announced its position on the defense reform like this, we had participated in the public hearing at the National Assembly and have actively expressed our opinion. In addition, the People’s Solidarity have presented its strong criticism through written opinions and public statements against the government and military authority’s goal to become the world’s 7th largest exporter of arms by 2020 by fostering the current national defense industry suffering from chronic over-investments as a national strategic industry. Recently, the government and military authorities have stirred up a great controversy by saying they will purchase arms worth nearly 14 trillion won in just 2012 alone. Hurrying with an unprecedented mega arms contract at the end of the presidential term is neither reasonable nor realistic, and will end up only fattening the shrinking US national defense industry and weapons lobbyist with the precious tax of our people.

Another concern is that there are discussions on a military cooperation between Korea and Japan to establish a triangular military alliance between Korea, US, and Japan. As both governments decided to carry out the mutual logistics support agreement at the Korea Japan defense ministers’ conference, 12 civic social groups including the People’s Solidarity, Citizens’ Coalition for Economic Justice, Lawyers for Democratic Society, YMCA Korea, and the National Federation immediately announced a joint statement. They pointed out that the triangular military alliance between Korea, US, and
Japan established through the Korea-Japan military alliance will fixate the New Cold War of Northeast Asia, and neutralize article 9 of the Japanese constitution, and justify the overseas activities of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces. They have demanded the withdrawal of the Korea-Japan military agreement and the plan to promote cooperation that will become the biggest obstacle for switching over to a peace regime of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia.

Urging of efforts to switch over to a Peace Regime of the Korean Peninsula, solving of NLL conflict and establishment of peace in the Yellow Sea

Marking the 1 year anniversary of the Yeonpyeong Island shelling incident, the first ground battle since signing the armistice, the voice of the peace movement have risen for urging efforts to establish peace in the Yellow Sea. It is because solving the conflict in the Yellow Sea is an important yardstick for measuring peace on the Korean Peninsula. Peace movement groups also held debates for the cause of NLL conflict and preparing alternatives or peace actions for urging the execution of the October 4 declaration agreement. The People’s Solidarity published an issue report titled ‘NLL issues and alternatives. The Yellow Sea from the explosive warehouse of the Korean peninsula to peaceful ecological waters,’ and explored the background, issues, and alternatives to the conflict surrounding the NLL, a miniaturized version of the division as well as the product of the Cold War. The People’s Solidarity urged South and North Korea to restore a crisis management system including the prompt reactivation of a hotline to prevent the recurrence of a conflict on the West Sea, and set out on talks and negotiations based on existing agreements and discussions such as designation of a joint fishery zone or installation of special peace and cooperation zone in the West Sea or the designation of an international ecological waters for peace.
Furthermore, the People’s Solidarity announced “The Draft for the Peace Regime on the Korean Peninsula proposed by the People” under the awareness that it is urgent to switch over to a peace regime of the Korean Peninsula in order to break away from the chains of the Cold War system such as arms race, reproduction of arms conflict, and delay of democratization. Here, the People’s Solidarity is emphasizing that fact that the safety and improvement of the quality of living of every member of the Korean peninsula must be top priority by systematizing a sustainable peace on the Peninsula, and the most important stakeholder as well as the driving force behind switching over to a peace regime should be the people. Moreover, the People’s Solidarity viewed that we cannot reach a peace regime with superiority in power, and presented that a leading and proactive measures for safety and peace, and measures for prevention of disputes is the only way to achieve it. Apart from the People’s Solidarity, a new version of an engagement policy and a new agreement between South and North Korea is being prepared by research groups and peace groups, and some circles are carrying out a movement for signing a peace treaty.

**Monitoring of the Policy on sending Korean troops overseas**

They say the overseas dispatch of Korean troops is to perform humanitarian projects on the outside, but most of them are responding to the US’s request for sending troops overseas according to their strategic military interest or to show off the military power under the name of ‘national prestige.’ The overseas dispatch of troops we should especially take note of is UAE arc troops sent in return for winning a contract for a nuclear power plant, Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Team(PRT), Oshino security unit, and Somalia Cheonghae Unit.

At the end of last year, the Grand National Party rushed to pass the motion for sending troops to the UAE while skipping the procedures of
discussing the constitutional violation and justification of the overseas dispatch of troops. However, the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement, Energy Justice Actions, and People’s Solidarity held a press conference for denouncing the problems such as not only the fact ROK special forces were dispatched as a condition of signing an agreement for placing an order for a nuclear power plant but also the face that we have to provide 10 billion dollars’ worth of financial support while bearing negative spread, and a guarantee to operate it for 60 years which is unprecedented in the world, and urged an investigation in relation to the government through interviews on assemblymen.

Entering the current administration, the Korea-US alliance is getting stronger with regard to Korea’s cooperation in international developments. After the MOU was signed for ‘Korea-US cooperation in development’ on June 2010, the dispatching of Afghanistan Provincial Reconstruction Team(PRT) was carried out. PRT which was planned as a US policy for long term occupation of Afghanistan aims to ‘conduct humanitarian reconstruction projects,’ but is a representative example of militarizing aid. For example, 85.4 billion won out of 108.2 billion won for the budget to aid Afghanistan by KOICA was set aside for the construction of PRT base. Since aid activities through PRT are due to short term political and military interest, they are not sustainable and are also giving birth to problems of being high cost and having low efficiency. The People’s Solidarity announced the fact the the Korean Afghanistan PRT were attacked 15 times this year alone, and was unable to start the construction of the base as well as many reconstruction projects, and the problem of militarizing aid at debates, lectures, and the workshop at the Global Civil Society Forum of the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan, and also proposed the withdrawal of PRT as a policy issue at the regular session of the National Assembly.
For a Peaceful Disarmament Movement in 2012

When thinking about the presidential elections in 2012, this is something more important and urgent than national defense budget cuts. And that is changing the concept of national security in the direction of making people’s safety the highest priority. Principles and philosophies are also important. We need to prioritize the protection of life and the environment, the fight against poverty and the improvement of the quality of living rather than arms buildup and arms race which is like pouring water into a bottomless pit. In addition, we need to take prevention of conflict, control of military spending, and multilateral cooperation in national security from national defense diplomatic policies as the major direction of policies. Although the national defense budget needs to be cut significantly, it can be reduced to some extent just by conducting strict feasibility tests and efficient budget execution.

The current global economic crisis is leading to reduced government expenditure in every country, and is also having an impact on the national defense budget. Perhaps it can be a good opportunity to break the national defense spending which has sharply increased since the war on terror. However, it is highly likely that the US will shift the burden of their reduced national defense spending onto allied nations. Next year, it seems the controversial issues will include Korea’s contract on purchasing 14 trillion won worth of weapons, sharing of national defense spending, and the cost for relocating US bases.

The barrier the peaceful disarmament movement must overcome is still very high and solid. One thing for sure is that there is still a long way to go and much to be done. In the upcoming year, the Peaceful Disarmament Movement will constantly attempt various projects to expand its base and attract the participation and sympathy of the people.
The Korean Anti Nuclear Movement after Fukushima

Kim, Hye Jeong*

The nuclear power plants which exploded at Fukushima, Japan last March are still emitting fume and have been boiling with radiation for the past 9 months. In the face of an immense radiation disaster that broke out at a Japanese nuclear power plant, which used to boast the world’s best safety record, many countries are either decommissioning their nuclear power generation facilities or at least reviewing their nuclear power policies. Following Germany, Sweden and Italy, Belgium also recently announced that it will dispose of nuclear power. The Philippines and Venezuela revealed plans to give up nuclear power generation, and even though this may only be seen as a declaration of intent, even China is reconsidering construction of new nuclear power plants. Japan stopped 43 nuclear reactors out of a total of 54 after the accident. However, the Korean government, rather than reviewing the nation’s nuclear power policies, said it will take the Fukushima crisis as an opportunity to take the next leap and set the goal to become ‘the world’s top 3 nuclear power nation.’ The president pointed out his plans of

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increasing the number of nuclear power plants at his UN General Assembly speech, and declared that the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit 2012 will be a prime platform for selling Korean-made nuclear power plants. Although the global nuclear power industry’s dream of a ‘nuclear power renaissance’ is coming to an end due to the Fukushima nuclear accident, the Lee Myung-bak administration’s blind faith is not wavering. The package of policies promoting nuclear power generation, like the selection of new nuclear power plant sites on the east coast, construction of additional new nuclear power plants, reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel and construction of a fast breeder reactor, and extension of the life span of old nuclear power plants are continuing unimpeded. While the policy for expanding nuclear power generation has been ongoing up to the present, the forces of the anti-nuclear movement have also been engaging in various activities. Since the late 80s, we have blocked the selection of nuclear waste sites and new nuclear power plant sites throughout the country, and have achieved much success. We have gone through a period of stagnation for the past several years, and have resumed vigorous activities again since the Fukushima disaster. Public opinion on post-nuclear power generation is rising, and changes are taking place which will lead to anti-nuclear protests by various groups, such as religious groups, academia and legal circles. The growth of the anti-nuclear movement since Fukushima will be a decisive factor in whether Korea will become the vassal of nuclear power or enter the era of switching to new energy sources. Accordingly, this article will look back on the history and limitations of the Korean anti-nuclear movement, examine the trend of anti-nuclear movements since Fukushima, and challenges to civil society in the future.

**History and Limitations of the Anti-nuclear Movement**

Although Gori nuclear power plant had been put into operation for the first time at Yangsan, Gyeongnam Province (today part of Busan City)
already in 1978, Korea was a place where an anti nuclear movement was non existent until the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986. The place where the problems of nuclear power generation were raised for the first time in Korea was Yeonggwang, in Jeonnam Province. The beginning of the movement dates back to 1987, when residents near the power plant started a movement to claim for compensation for damages to fish stocks, due to the discharge of hot waste water from the nuclear power plant. A full scale anti nuclear movement took shape as the “Korean Anti Pollution Movement Association” (formerly “Korean Federation for Environmental Movement”) was founded under the banner of “eradicating pollution and achieving nuclear free peace’ in 1988. The Korean Anti Pollution Movement Association started off with countermeasures to damages of radiation exposure to nuclear power plant workers and illegal dumping of nuclear waste materials, and organized the “National Anti nuclear Power Plant Movement Headquarters” and “Headquarters for a Campaign to collect 1 Million Signatures against the Construction of Nuclear Power Plants 11 & 12”. The anti nuclear movement in its early days started to protest aggressively against the government’s secret administration, bypassing the concerns of local residents. There was also a campaign against a candidate for nuclear waste site, which began in Yeongdeok, Gyeongbuk Province in March 1989 and another on Anmyeon Island, Chungnam Province in November 1990, which was so powerful that it became known as “The Resistance Movement of Anmyeon Island”. In 1989, the government designated 3 locations in Yeongdeok, Yeongil, and Uljin on the eastern coast of Gyeongbuk Province as potential nuclear waste sites and started secret evaluations, without informing local residents. But the projects were cancelled due to strong protests by local residents in Yeongdeok, which was the most likely site. The following year, when the government tried to deceive local residents in Anmyeon Island, Chungnam Province by designating the nuclear waste storage site as a “Science Research Complex”, the residents’ strong protest, more intense than
at Yeongdeok, prevented the plans. Since then, movements against a candidate for nuclear waste site were fiercely carried out at Goseong, Gangwon Province (July 1991), at 6 candidates for nuclear waste site in Goseong and Yangyang in Gangwon Province, Uljin and Yeongil in Gyeongbuk Province, Janghung in Jeonnam Province (December 1991), on Guleop Island (December 1994), and Uido and Buan in Jeonbuk Province (July 2003), which all resulted in blocking the designation of proposed candidates. While this was taking place, in 1991 the government announced 9 locations all over the country (6 locations in Jeonnam Province, Samcheok (Gangwon Province) and Uljin in Gyeongbuk Province as sites for new nuclear power plants. However, local residents of these areas simultaneously staged campaigns against the plans, and the government officially decided to cancel these locations for construction of new nuclear power plants in December 1998. After going through a series of campaigns against candidates for nuclear waste site throughout the country, the government and nuclear power industry started changing their strategy to designate proposed candidates. As they frequently faced opposition by local residents, they set residents’ consent as the most important standard for designating a proposed site. The most important aspect for designating Guleop Island as a nuclear waste storage site in December 1994 was residents’ consent and the neutralization of movements against it. There were only a total of 9 households on Guleop Island at that time and they were able to receive 100% consent from local residents. Also, because the island was 80km away from Incheon, it was expected that it would be difficult for environmental organizations to engage in protest campaigns. When the government failed to designate Guleop Island as a proposed site for a nuclear waste storage due to the opposition of residents of Deokjeok Island, the main island, and environmental organizations, it changed respective laws to require only consent by local governments to attract nuclear waste site, designating Uido off the coast of Buan as a nuclear waste storage. After the government had
failed once again, Prime Minister Lee Hae-chan of the participatory government enacted the “inhabitants’ voting act” and “Special Act on Support for Areas Housing Low and Intermediate Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities” in 2005. The government started to “trade” locations for nuclear waste storage sites against financial support, attracting competition between local residents and promising support funds for local communities under the promise that disposal facilities will not be used for high-level nuclear waste. Local government heads from 4 districts (Gyeongju, Yeongdeok, Pohang, and Gunsan) applied for the chance to house nuclear waste storage sites, and with this serving as legal grounds, put the agenda to residents’ vote. As a result of voting competition between areas (and an economic inducement of “300 billion KRW + alpha” (USD 272 million +), relocation of the Korea Water Resources Development Corporation and the location of Gyeongju had the highest approval rating and was selected as the site for a nuclear waste disposal facility.

The selection of the Gyeongju nuclear waste storage site became a big turning point for the Korean anti-nuclear movement. It was because the selection was carried out with the approval of local residents formally even though fraudulent election practices, such as vote buying, counting invalid votes and votes by deceased residents were discovered. It was the first case where a nuclear waste facility, which used to be blocked by the solidarity of local residents and environmental organizations, was approved by the people. Once the doors were opened wide to “nuclear facility promoters”, it didn’t end there. After the selection of Gyeongju nuclear waste site, the Korean nuclear power industry began enjoying a “nuclear power renaissance” like a runaway horse. The government, who had started to expand existing nuclear power plant sites because it was overpowered by the movement against new nuclear power plant sites, started selecting new candidate sites in 2010. It appeared as if the government had fun fanning competition through
regionalism, selecting two candidate sites each from Jeolla and Gyeongsang Province at the time of selecting the Gyeongju nuclear waste facility, it selected 4 locations at Samcheok and Yeongdeok on the East Coast, and Goheung and Haenam in Jeonnam Province as candidate sites for new nuclear power plants, again counting on the historic competition between these regions. Right after the local government head applied for housing the new nuclear power plant, Honam area, which had been successful in blocking candidate sites for new nuclear power plants in 6 areas of Jeonnam Province and preventing the selection of the Buan nuclear waste facility, cancelled the application due to opposition by the local council and administration. However, on the East Coast, even Uljin joined in, increasing candidate sites for new nuclear power plants to three locations. These three areas are the very same places, where residents defeated plans to select the area as candidate sites for new nuclear power plants or nuclear waste storages with campaigns against the plan as fierce as in no other area. However, after the selection of Gyeongju nuclear waste storages, even the forces of the anti-nuclear movement lost their influence in these areas, and the benefits of government support gained the upper hand. While regions were competing over regional support funds, the essential aspect of safety was lost, and only the number of competing locations and the amount of support funding has grown. Despite the fact that negative sentiment has grown among residents at the new site after the Fukushima accident, their activities are still weak. The process of selecting the Gyeongju nuclear waste storage presented wings to the nuclear power industry and challenges to the anti-nuclear movement. The big turning point in the Korean anti-nuclear movement was before and after the designation of the Gyeongju nuclear waste site in 2005. Now we are in the era of “before and after Fukushima”.

The nuclear power industry's expansion strategy

The Korean nuclear power industry and the government colluded in
offering financial support and regional promotion to the people in order to persuade residents, as they experienced a fierce anti-nuclear movement in the early 1990s. They created the Korea Nuclear Energy Foundation in 1992, and have engaged in extensive promotion projects to polish the image of nuclear energy. In addition, they designated nuclear waste storages while offering ever higher support funds for regional development. Eventually, these strategies brought about successful results as they entered the mid-2000s. Even plans for selecting nuclear waste storages by promoting economic incentive effects were successful, and the policy for expanding nuclear power plants was executed according to plan. The general public’s perception of nuclear power plants became much more positive. For the past 20 years, the Korean Nuclear Energy Foundation receives 10 billion KRW (USD 9 million) annually from the power industry, which is equivalent to 3.7% of electricity charges paid by the people. The promotion of nuclear power includes revisions of elementary, middle, and high school textbooks, overseas inspections of journalists and opinion leaders, TV dramas or science programs. Moreover, through advertisements in various media, the Korean Nuclear Energy Foundation and KHNP have been taming the media, so that negative images about nuclear power plants would not be reported. Their goal is to shield people from the true nature of nuclear power plants. In addition, they create an image of environmental movements as organizations which are opposing everything without offering viable alternatives. The extensive PR activities of nuclear power plants through money and power were a big success. As people developed a positive perception of nuclear power generation and an atmosphere was created where even local residents welcome nuclear facilities after the selection of Gyeongju as a nuclear waste storage, the nuclear power industry was able to unfold their policy for expanding nuclear power generation without any setbacks.
Trends and changes in the anti-nuclear movement since Fukushima

When the government and the nuclear power industry were completely absorbed in their nuclear power renaissance, the Fukushima accident reminded the world of the catastrophic dangers of nuclear energy. Since the accident, changes set in even on the East Coast, where there was competition between candidate sites for a new nuclear power plant. Even before the Fukushima disaster, priests and local social groups set up “The Commission for Scrapping the Samcheok Nuclear Power Plant” and have engaged in activities against attracting the nuclear power plant. These activities lead to the support and participation of many residents after going through the Fukushima accident. Moreover, the new nuclear power plant was magnified as a political issue even in local by-elections for Gangwon Province Governor in April, after the Fukushima accident. According to a survey on attracting nuclear power plant sites conducted by researcher “The Plan” on March 29, 57.6% of Samcheok residents were against it, with 36.1% being in favor. In neighboring areas along the East Sea, 65% were opposed, while 25.9% were in favor. Although there would have been an impact from Fukushima, over 96% of public opinion polls in favor of the nuclear power plant were in fact revealed to be not true.

Before the Fukushima accident, there was not much of an organized opposition movement in Yeongdeok and Uljin. In case of Yeongdeok, it was a place where local residents firmly expressed their opinion and acted to oppose nuclear power, a place where being a candidate site for any nuclear facility could not even be discussed prior to 2005. However, when the government designated the four areas of Yeongdeok, Gyeongju, Pohang, and Gunsan as candidate sites for a nuclear waste storage and the areas started to compete against each other, forces against the nuclear waste facility weakened rapidly. As the scrapped plans were put back on the table, despite an endless protest campaign, even local residents did not set out to oppose it.
After Fukushima however, even Yeongdeok organized ‘The Commission for Scrapping the Yeongdeok Nuclear Power Plant’ and has been engaging in protests against it.

At Uljin, 6 nuclear reactors are in service and currently 2 reactors are under construction. According to government plans, 10 nuclear reactors are schedule to be built on the existing nuclear power plant site. The location for a new nuclear power plant site requested by the local government this time was not too far from the existing site. Uljin area was also a place where there were vigorous activities, including a movement against nuclear waste facilities. As a result of these activities, it was in this area in which the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Energy promised local residents that “… if you agree to the plan for building 10 nuclear reactors, we will not build any more nuclear facilities in the future.” Overturning the results of the opposition movement, this time, the local government has set out to welcome the project. In light of this, anti nuclear activities, such as weekly candlelight rallies centering around ‘people creating a society safe from nuclear energy’ are being carried out. Even here, as a result of a survey conducted by Uljin Newspaper on May 30 confirmed, it appeared that public opinion against attracting a new nuclear power plant accounted for up to 62.3%.

Gyeongsangbuk Provincial Governor Kim Gwan yong announced his plan to attract an “Eastern Coast Nuclear Energy Cluster” when marking his first year in office last June. The plan includes the creation of a nuclear complex by attracting all industries related to nuclear energy, such as spent fuel reprocessing, a fast breeder reactor, and a System integrated Modular Advanced Reactor in the eastern coast region. Just when nuclear power was proven to be most dangerous in the Fukushima accident, he is trying to attract a high level nuclear waste reprocessing plant, a facility even more
dangerous than nuclear power plants, and a fast breeder reactor which uses plutonium as fuel. The areas where these nuclear facilities are to be built are either in Uljin, Gyeongju or Yeongdeok. Nuclear power plants will either be built in these locations or another candidate area within Gyeongbuk Province. Although the governor announced his plans for such a nuclear cluster after the Fukushima accident, there is still only weak resistance at the local level. However, civil environmental organizations and the regional task force “Eastern Coast Post nuclear Solidarity”, as well as the Archdiocese of Daegu are starting activities for blocking the Eastern Coast Nuclear Cluster.

Besides the promotion of new nuclear power plant sites and a nuclear cluster, construction of new nuclear power plants is ongoing. The government is conducting evaluations on environmental effects for construction of Shin Gori 5 and 6 (Gori nuclear reactor 9 and 10), and nearby residents are supporting the construction of additional nuclear power plants because of regional support funds as a result from building two more nuclear reactors. The regional economy of the area is already dependent on the nuclear industry, residents of the area near the nuclear power plant are intoxicated with a drug called ‘support fund,’ and since they depend on the momentarily booming economy during construction of the plant, they do not pay any attention to the future. When construction of the additional plants is nearing the end, they will just cry out for the construction of more plants. The area where Shin Gori reactor no. 5 and 6 are going to be built is Seosaeng myeon, Ulju County, Ulsan. In case local residents agree, the nuclear power plant can be built. However, while Seosaeng myeon residents within a 5km radius of the site (and subject to support funds) are supporting it, Ulsan citizens and political circles are strongly opposed. In Ulsan, leading social figures have been holding “one person protests” against the construction of nuclear power plants for almost 70 times.
After the Fukushima accident, civil society activities have been unfolding in a diverse manner compared to weak regional movements. The Korean Federation for Environmental Movements, which has been engaging in the anti-nuclear movement since the 1980s, has created the “Emergency Response Commission for Japanese Nuclear Accidents”, and founded joint response organizations in metropolitan cities including Seoul, Busan, and Ulsan. Civil society organizations, including the “Joint Action for a Nuclear-fee Society” in Seoul, “Anti-nuclear Busan Commission for Response” in Busan and others are participating in various activities such as mass anti-nuclear rallies, relay protests, public lectures, and domestic and overseas debates. Post-nuclear lectures are pouring out all over the country. Even political groups joined in and 34 members of the National Assembly signed a resolution for the decommissioning of Gori nuclear reactor no. 1, and members of the National Assembly and four city, county and district councils adopted a resolution for the decommissioning of Gori nuclear reactor no. 1. Even Ulsan City Council, Ulju County Council, and Buk District Council of Ulsan City adopted a resolution for the decommissioning of Gori nuclear reactor no. 1, opposing the life extension of Wolseong nuclear reactor no. 1, and reconsidering the construction of new nuclear power plants. Last November, a organization of “post-nuclear professors” was launched and the establishment of similar groups among legal professionals and doctors is under way. A green party is also about to be founded, pledging to support the post-nuclear movement. Even the Roman Catholic Church is preparing a post-nuclear Catholic solidarity group, with a organization of “Christians against Nuclear Power Plants” being currently active in this religious group. An Internet café set up by a group of parents with the goal of protecting their children from radiation called “Child Save” is measuring radioactive contamination in everyday life and investigating radioactive food poisoning.
Challenges to and Roles of Civil Society

Anti-nuclear movements prior to the Fukushima disaster consisted of environmental groups and local residents, which was the reason why nuclear power policy could not be changed, despite strong protests. Even after the Fukushima accident, organized activities of local residents did not regain their prowess. On the other hand, various social groups in our society are forming anti-nuclear movements. Although the Korean government is dashing towards being among the top 3 superpowers in nuclear energy generation, it is also a fact that public opinion to abandon nuclear power is as high as 68%. Fukushima has opened people’s eyes to the real dangers of nuclear power. European countries, including Germany and its civil society, have been preparing for a post-nuclear society since the Chernobyl disaster. Fukushima is now reminding us to change. The only power which can confront the government and nuclear energy industry pushing ahead with their inducement of massive “support funds” is the participation and action of the civil society. Just as the popularization of the anti-nuclear movement was the driving force behind Germany’s decision to dispose of nuclear power plants, the Korean anti-nuclear movement must also promote extensive participation by the civil society. We must organize a post-nuclear power plant movement which is created and carried by the people, while presenting viable alternatives to switch to different energy sources. The post-nuclear movement was brought to life by various social organizations, such as religious groups, academic groups, legal groups, and Internet cafes. The Fukushima disaster is a trigger of hope. Post Fukushima is the real beginning of the Korean anti-nuclear movement, revitalized once again based on civil society.
Anti Nuclear Enlargement policy Rally marking the 32nd year since Three Mile Island Nuclear Accident, in front of Myungdong Catholic Church, March 2011

Buan citizens, participating in the Anti Nuclear Waste Site Rally in 2003
Green Peace and Korean Federation for Environmental Movement activists and citizens are demonstrating against the life extension of Wolseong Nuclear Reactor, June 2011.

The members of the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement are demonstrating in order to shutdown Gori nuclear reactor no. 1 in front of the Plant, July 2011.
Press Release against the construction of 5th and 6th Gori nuclear power plants, September 2011
1. Introduction

As the starvation of North Koreans continues due to extreme food shortages since 1996, humanitarian aid to North Korea by South Korean NGOs has been playing a steady role as a national reconciliation movement, a humanitarian movement regardless of the ups and downs of South North relations. Especially aid to the North by South Korean NGOs has been gradually diversifying and addressing specific needs, apart from a focus on initial emergency measures or one time support of aid projects in agriculture & stockbreeding, medical health care, aid for the most vulnerable, such as infants, and reforestation. The reason South Korean NGOs can concentrate on mid and long term aid development projects is because they are based on large scale food aid by the South Korean government. Humanitarian aid to North Korea through a division of roles and cooperation between NGOs and the government are a big asset in forming trust between South and North Korea and establishing a peaceful atmosphere on the peninsula.

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In 2008, the Lee Myung-bak Administration was launched, and food aid by the Korean government came to a halt. Ever since North Korea launched a long range missile and began a series of nuclear tests in April 2009, the relations between the South and North worsened dramatically, and humanitarian aid activities by private groups were significantly limited. The government started to strictly control even the gathering of humanitarian aid. After the sinking of the Navy Vessel “Cheonan” in March 2010 and North Korean’s artillery shelling of Yeonpyeong Island in November of the same year, private humanitarian aid activities were at the edge of being completely shut down. The Lee Myung-bak Administration approved some material support for aiding infants from May 2011, just 5 months after the Yeonpyeong Island incident, and allowed flour donations, which can classified as food, since the end of July. But our aid is still limited to infants, and the Administration is still disallowing aid projects funded by the central or local governments, as well as general food aid, agricultural development materials, materials related to reforestation, and healthcare and medical equipment for North Korea’s general population.

2. Current Aid Status and Problems created for North Korea by the Lee Myung-bak Administration

The Lee Myung-bak Administration’s aid for North Korea dropped by 20% over 3 years after the previous Roh Moo-hyun Administration, and was reduced sharply to around 5% in 2011. While the annual average amount of aid to the North by the Roh Moo-hyun Administration for 5 years was 160.5 billion KRW (USD 145 million), the annual average for the Lee Myung-bak Administration is only 7.8312 billion KRW (USD 7.1 million) for 4 years (2008 ~ Sept. 2011). Even private aid to the North dwindled to about 50% compared to the past. The amount of private aid to North Korea dropped significantly from 72.5 billion KRW (USD 66 million) in 2008 to 37.7 billion KRW (USD 34 million) in 2009, 20 billion KRW
(USD 18 million) in 2010, and 8.4 billion KRW (USD 7.6 million) as of the end of September 2011.

<Chart> Current Status of Aid to North Korea by the Korean Government and NGOs

As of end of September 2011 Unit: 100 Mil. Won

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(Source) Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea

The biggest problem of the Lee Myung-bak Administration’s humanitarian aid policy for North Korea is the absence of humanitarian principles. The current government’s policy ‘to unconditionally carry out humanitarian aid to North Korea from the aspect of humanitarianism and brotherly love, regardless of the political / military situation,’ is in actuality characterized by strongly linking humanitarian aid to South-North relations and prioritizing methodological issues such as transparency in distribution and suitability of aid amounts, humanitarian aid degenerated into a means of inflicting pressure on North Korea. The UN mandate (no.1874) adopted after the 2nd nuclear test by North Korea on May 25, 2009 excludes ’aid to North Korea for humanitarian and development purposes’ from the list of sanctions. However, the Lee Myung-bak Administration completely halted not only
aid by the government, but also all aid to North Korea by private organizations for a certain period of time.

The second problem is the exclusion of the private sector in the process of establishing an aid policy for North Korea and the government’s unilateral approach. Humanitarian aid in South North relations is the area where private activities were the most vigorous, playing an important role in keeping dialogue going and acting as a safety valve for South North relations up to now. Against this background, private and public collaboration between the government and NGOs had also been growing. However, throughout the Lee Myung-bak Administration, there was only the government’s one-sided yardstick applied to the direction and principles of aid to North Korea. Because the government disregards the role and autonomy of the private sector, private organizations’ activities, which had been continuing and growing for 10 years, has been greatly daunted. Especially right after the administration was formed, it became a matter of great concern that the government defined and regulated projects for development and aid carried out by NGOs in various areas in cooperation with North Korea by introducing the condition that those projects qualified as ‘purely humanitarian aid’, as if there were also ‘impure aid projects’.

The third issue is that the government is ignoring international organizations’ requests for aid to North Korea. North Korea has requested aid for flood damages or food aid to the World Food Program (WFP), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the International Red Cross (IFRC) for the past several years, and the UN received these requests and is pleading with the international community to aid North Korea. However, the current government is openly requesting the international community to postpone their aid to North Korea while raising questions on the UN’s evaluation of North Korea’s food supplies. If there is a problem with the
UN’s evaluation of food supplies in North Korea, it would be a fair move for the Korean government as a UN member, to clearly address the issue and request additional investigations. Recently, the Korean government disclosed the fact that it has contributed 694 million USD to the WHO, but this is not a project supported by the current administration. It only consented to disburse the remainder of the unexecuted amount, as the current administration requested to postpone support for the fund, which was pledged to the WHO by the previous government. The current administration has still not resumed aid to this international organization.

Finally, it is very regrettable that the Korean government lost an important opportunity to improve South and North relations by missing out on aid for flood damages to the North in 2011. As floods following strong rainfalls caused extensive damage in North Korea in June and July of this year, the Korean government delivered their intent to provide 5 billion KRW (USD 4.5 million) worth of materials for aiding flood damage to the North on August 3, and in response, North Korea asked for “materials and equipment, such as food and cement, needed for flood damage relief” on August 4. However, the Korean government decided that it would not be appropriate to send rice, flour, and cement, which can be diverted for military purposes, and instead notified the North that it will provide nourishing food and cookies for infants. As North Korea did not respond to the offer, no flood damage aid was delivered. Refusing to provide materials and equipment, such as food and cement, requested by the North and unilaterally deciding to send only items selected by the (South) Korean government is complete ignorance of the ‘request and consent of the disaster-stricken country’. Even if construction materials and equipment are out of question, it would follow common sense to provide aid in the form of other goods requested by North Korea.
3. Current Status of South Korean NGOs’ Aid to North Korea in 2011

The movement of urging the resumption of NGOs’ aid to North Korea, first initiated by religious groups, was completely shut down after the bombardment of Yeonpyeong Island on November 23, 2010. On April 12, 2011, 658 members of 5 major religious groups (Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist, Won Buddhist, Cheondogyo) announced a plea during a press conference: “We, religious believers and citizens of this country, have sufficient understanding of the position of the Korean government. But as saving lives is more precious than anything else in the world and is an obvious duty according to the conscience of mankind, we urge the government from a humanitarian perspective, to support fellow North Koreans, at the brink of starving to death, with food”. On May 23, one day before the one year anniversary of the Korean government’s announcing the ‘May 24 Measures’ in 2010 (declaring to stop all exchanges and cooperation projects between South and North Korea, as well as aid to the North except
Children at Sariwon City Nursery, who received flour aid by South Korean NGOs
Pyeonganbuk province, Anju in Pyeongannam province, Nampo in

religious groups in favor of helping North Korea, started the ‘Emergency Flour Aid Campaign to North Korea.’

After a rocky start, due to the Korean government’s policy of banning food aid, this emergency campaign won over public sentiment and brought about the approval by the government. On July 26, just two months after starting the campaign, the organizers were able to aid the North with 300 tons of flour. Since then, there were 11 more aid shipments to the North. Support with a total of 2,500 tons of flour was concentrated on the Sariwon area of Hwanghaebuk province. Over 30 groups providing aid to North Korea jointly participated in this campaign, sponsored by the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation of South Korea (KCRC), which is seen as a pioneering model of solidarity and cooperation between NGOs. Since August, when the campaign started to develop momentum, religious groups and other NGOs also set out to provide flour aid. Over 3,800 tons of flour was sent to North Korea, such as to Sinuiju, Jeongju, Anju and Hyangsan in
NGO representatives sending materials for prevention of malaria to Hwanghaenamdo, and Sariwon and Gaeseong in Hwanghaebuk province. In total, 6,300 tons of flour aid worth 3.4 billion KRW (USD 3.1 million) was delivered. Even now, while each organization is continuing to send flour aid in small amounts, flour aid is expected to constitute the main part of North Korean aid activities by South Korean NGOs for the time being.

In the meantime, mid and long term development aid projects which have been carried out by private organizations in their respective, specialized areas for the past 10 years, are still on hold, and despite various efforts to resume these projects, the situation remains very uncertain.

The only ongoing project apart from infant aid projects by NGOs, is the “South and North Korean Project for joint Prevention of Malaria”. This project was jointly initiated and carried out by the Korean Sharing Movement (KSM), Gyeonggi Province and Incheon City. It is the only project which was not subject to the ‘May 24 Measures’ and funding by local governments is still ongoing. However, because this project targets the extermination of malaria in a South Korean area adjacent to North Korea, support continues for reason of joint prevention of a contagious disease, rather than an aid project for North Koreans only. So far, about 1.2 billion KRW (USD 1.1
million) of local government funds were used for the joint malaria prevention project.

4. There is an urgent need for change in the South Korean government’s humanitarian policy for aid to North Korea.

Currently, the government is only waiting for North Korea to change. However, while not taking a proactive approach and not making any effort to restart the frozen dialogue between South and North Korean authorities, just waiting for the North to change its attitude to resolve the political / military conflict is simply irresponsible. Therefore, I will carefully offer my own policy suggestion.

First, there is a need to provide an opportunity for improving South and North Korean relations through the resumption and normalization of various private exchange & cooperation projects, along with humanitarian aid, and also a need for the next administration to carry out a practical policy, which provides at least a minimal base for implementation of this new North Korea policy. For this, we must first abandon the “May 24th Measures”, which are a stumbling block for improving relations, and normalize private organization’s activities for aiding North Korea. If the government allows private organizations material support under their unimpeded and responsible judgment, it will greatly contribute to South and North Korean relations, keeping the doors open for dialogue and showing the Korean government’s willingness to talk.

Secondly, government level aid to the North must be resumed. The current administration made a grave mistake by starting ‘an argument on unconditional giving’ for government level humanitarian aid, by trying to differentiate itself from the past administration, and especially by strongly
tying humanitarian aid issues to political issues. This administration cannot be absolved of the criticism to have caused the strain in South North relations. Humanitarian aid to the North played a significant role in developing South North relations and changing the attitude of North Korea, as it would be more faithful to the principle of humanitarianism. This was the lesson learned from the humanitarian aid policy of the past administration. Currently, the greatest challenge between South and North Korea is building trust, and to do this, there is a need to show sincerity to each other. It is time for the Lee Myungbak administration to realize that government level humanitarian aid is a very important means to building trust.

Thirdly, emergency relief for the most vulnerable and development aid projects should be well balanced. A systematic and orderly aid to vulnerable areas and social groups in North Korea is very important. Therefore, to provide practical aid, target areas must be expanded to include disadvantaged areas, rather than locations near Pyeongyang, and farming villages instead of cities. We have to seriously consult with and persuade North Korean authorities to embrace such a model. However, emergency relief aid focusing on vulnerable recipients should not be the main effort to solve problems, but only a stopgap measure. The direction of humanitarian aid is to not provide emergency relief over extended periods of time, but to switch to development aid once noticeable results are achieved. A policy which prioritizes only projects for aiding vulnerable groups of society and halts support for mid and long term development aid projects or even excludes them from the scope of humanitarian aid, exhibits a complete lack of understanding on private humanitarian aid projects.

Lastly, the Korea government must resume its support for international organizations. To properly respond to the humanitarian crisis in North Korea
and solve poverty issues there, the engagement of international organizations in North Korea is vital. Through this, the Korean government and international community can share the burden of reconstructing North Korea. Furthermore, even for the Korean government just to show initiative in international development and cooperation with North Korea for the future, the government should get deeply involved in international aid projects for North Korea. Our government must actively participate not only in aiding infants through the WHO or UNICEF, but also in the food aid project of the WFP.

5. Closing Remarks

Humanitarian aid to North Korea is essential to save the lives of North Koreans and key to establishing peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula, bringing us one step closer to the reunification of our nation. One of the important goals of Korean civil society is to create opportunities for thawing frozen South–North relations through aid to the North, and creating an environment were peace can blossom again. The Korean government must not block humanitarian aid to North Korea by the private sector and the international community, and the Korean civil society movement must concentrate on establishing peace through new solidarity and cooperation.
December 14, 2012 marked the 1,000th “Wednesday Demonstration.” Every Wednesday, ‘The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan’ and other women’s organizations hold a demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul, South Korea demanding the Japanese government’s acknowledgment through formal apology, legal reparations, and compensation for the “comfort women” issue. Up to now, the issue of “comfort women” forced into sexual slavery during the Japanese occupation has not been resolved.

Many women on the Korean Peninsula were victimized amid war and sex crimes, division of territory and separation of families, and the Cold War and military culture. In the process, women exemplified that “peace is life” and the basic condition for living. Women have played an active and direct role in conflict resolution, beyond just being victims of conflict, to realize peace. Women are pursuing their equal participation and full involvement in
all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Peace on the Korean Peninsula is both an issue between South and North Korea, as well as an international issue. The Korean Peninsula experienced Japanese occupation and division by foreign powers. The Korean War was an international conflict, with the parties negotiating the armistice agreement between USA, China and North Korea. Achieving peace on the Peninsula is essential not only for the cooperation between South and North Korea, but also for the support of nearby countries in Northeast Asia.

“Women Making Peace” (hereinafter referred to as “WMP”) aims to play a role of connecting women from the South and North unable to meet due to the division of South and North Korea, and to connect the Korean Peninsula with the international community. Through the women’s organization acting as a bridge, WMP intends to create mutual understanding and trust between South and North Korea, and promote dialogue and exchanges between women on the Peninsula and nearby countries. To achieve peace on the Peninsula with such sublime principles in mind, domestic as well as international solidarity must be considered an important factor. Domestic and overseas solidarity activities are not only undertaken by various women’s organizations, but also with peace movements along with men. By doing so, this empowers women’s rights and has a positive impact on spreading the gender perspective within peace movements. These activities will contribute to improving the status of women in South Korean society.

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2011, the status of South Korean women ranks 107th among 135 countries. The gender gap index published annually at the World Economy Forum clearly shows the status of women compared to men. Peace activities of women’s groups, including Women Making Peace, make contributions to improve the status of women
in the area of peace and security.

This piece of writing summarizes international solidarity activities of South Korean women’s organizations and civil society groups. Activities are aimed to prevent armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, achieve peace, and increase women’s participation in the decision making process for peace, security, unification, and diplomatic policies. Specific examples of these activities include participation in and solidarity with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), hosting the Northeast Asian Women’s Peace Conference, and the Women’s Action on Military Spending, among others.

1. Solidarity with Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)

From March 29 to 30, 2011, the Northeast Asia Regional Steering Committee Workshop for the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) was held in Beijing, China. Representative from the 10 cities of Seoul, Pyongyang, Tokyo, Kyoto, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taipei, Vladivostok and Ulaanbaatar met and discussed plans for the next 5 years to prevent armed conflict and maintain peace in Northeast Asia. South and North Korean relations have gotten worse, and while tensions between governments were rising, civil society has actively looked for ways to prevent such conflict. In this meeting, a delegation from Pyongyang participated for the first time since the GPPAC Northeast Asia Regional Network was established. From South Korea, the meeting was joined by Women Making Peace and People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy.

GPPAC was established in 2003 in response to the call made by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for an international conference of civil society organizations working in the field of conflict prevention in his 2001
report Prevention of Armed Conflict. In response to a proposal by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP), an international conference for establishing a ‘GPPAC’ East Asia Regional Network was held in Mindanao, the Philippines in October 2003. During this conference, Peace Boat (Japan), Women Making Peace (South Korea), and the Asia Peace Alliance strongly insisted that GPPAC Northeast Asia and GPPAC Southeast Asia should be organized independently because of the different situations in Southeast and Northeast Asia. Therefore, the decision was made to establish the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network.

In 2004 GPPAC Korea was created, and as Japan-based Peace Boat visited each country in Northeast Asia, the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network gradually came to life. The main characteristic of the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network is the fact that it was not a network of nations but a network of cities. As Peace Boat visited each country in Northeast Asia, they noticed issues in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and issues between South and North Korea. Thus, they proposed organizing GPPAC Northeast Asia as a framework for gathering various opinions, by creating a network centered on cities, not countries. This was allowing even while taking into account the ‘One China Policy’ of China, for Taiwan the right to have a voice in the international community, the independent experiences of Hong Kong, and the conflict between South and North Korea.

On February 2005, delegations from 9 cities, representing all parts of Northeast Asia other than Pyongyang, gathered and held the ‘Northeast Asia Regional Conference for Prevention of Conflicts’ in Tokyo. Since then, the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network has hosted conferences in various locations, including Tokyo, New York, Seoul, Mt. Keumkang, and Ulaanbaatar. Every time a conference was held, Peace Boat, the regional secretariat requested Pyongyang to participate.
Peace Boat’s efforts to maintain contact with Pyongyang started reaping fruit in 2010. After the artillery attack to Yeonpyeong Island on November 23, 2010, the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network sent delegations to Washington D.C. (Nov. 30 – Dec. 4) to meet with related parties in the US government, politicians and think tank experts, and discuss ways to resolve the crisis on the Peninsula. The delegation consisted of Peace Boat, Women Making Peace, Blue Banner (Mongolia), and a representative of the GPPAC Global Secretariat, located in The Hague. This GPPAC delegation took place immediately before a GPPAC international delegation, including several overlapping members, visited North Korea. The GPPAC delegation to the US proposed the resumption of the Six Party Talks and North Korea-US dialogue as the only board of representative that can become the foundation of regional peace and a security system, on the premise that a shift in paradigm is needed from the dominant remaining Cold War structures to the creation of a regional peace and security system, in order to achieve peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. US political circles acknowledged the need for the denuclearization and stabilization of the Peninsula and were considering the resumption of the Six Party Talks. But after the Yeonpyeong Island incident, the US’s negative perception of North Korea grew even worse.

After the visit to the US, related parties of Peace Boat, the GPPAC regional secretariat, visited Pyongyang to meet with high ranking North Korean government officials and peace organizations, to outline the result of their visit to the US and exchange ideas for resolving the conflict peacefully. Through the visit to the US and North Korea, the GPPAC delegation found that there is a need to create trust between the US and North Korea, as well as North Korea and the members of the Six Party Talks. In addition, they acknowledged again that the denuclearization of North Korea can only be achieved through creating a peace regime on the Peninsula. Furthermore, they
confirmed that the US and North Korea had considerably different views on the order of its implementation. The GPPAC delegation’s visit to Pyongyang increased North Korean organizations’ interest in the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network, and as a result of these efforts, the Korea National Peace Committee of North Korea attended the GPPAC Beijing conference in March 2011.

The North Korean participation in the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network has some aspects in common with GPPAC’s stance in relation to preventing conflicts.

First, the pursuit of New Partnership. The participation of civil society organizations in preventing disputes and realizing peace is important, and new partnerships must be built with various agents. One government or
organization cannot solve every armed conflict on the planet. It is also important to not only have the active participation of the government, but also of civil society organizations. Moreover, there is a need to look for a new cooperative relationship, where civil society organizations, activists, scholars, government representatives, and international organizations can work together to resolve disputes.

Second, it aims for a shift from reaction to prevention. International NGOs and governments of all nations generally focused on reacting once a dispute breaks out, rather than preventing the conflict. In other words, they are used to a "culture of reaction." This must be transformed to a "culture of prevention." Conflict prevention means not to wait for a conflict to explode violently, but to take preemptive measures to reduce violence before it even arises. In order to establish peace, a mechanism must be put in place and activated, which encompasses political issues, development issues, humanitarian measures, and a human rights program for preventing the outbreak, recurrence, and continuance of armed conflict.

Third, the dynamics of the process are important. Conflict resolution and prevention is a process of transformation. Conflict resolution and a culture of prevention consider the dynamics of this process to be very important. That is to say, if conflict continues, it leads to the breakdown of human relations and the dissolution of community, and ends in unbelievable damage. Therefore, individuals and communities must work hard to overcome the scars of conflict, and transform the violent and destructive social structure into a peaceful structure, where they can coexist and reconcile. This is a continuous process and an endless process of transformation.

North Korea’s participation in the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network shows a process where civil society from Northeast Asia is pursuing a new
partnership for prevention of conflicts, which displays a possibility of the civil sector to first transform relations into post Cold War relations before governmental engagement. Northeast Asia was an area where extreme conflict between the socialist and capitalist systems was evident as it went through experiences of colonization and the Cold War, and is still unable to break away from the aftereffects of the Cold War era. The very act of civil representatives of 10 cities from South Korea, North Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan, Mongolia, and Russia gathering in one place to look for ways to cooperate in preventing conflicts in Northeast Asia, despite such grave political tensions, is important progress for Northeast Asian civil society, as it goes beyond the vestiges of the Cold War era and tries to create a world of win win cooperation and reconciliation.

By participating in the GPPAC Northeast Asia Network, Women Making Peace has received much inspiration for coming up with the concept of the Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference. By collaborating with the GPPAC network, the Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference has received ideas, as well as financial support.

2. Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference (NEAWPC)

From October 5 to 7, 2010, “The 2010 Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference” was held under the motto “Women’s Initiative for Creating a Korean Peace Regime.” Women from China, Russia, the US, Japan, Korea, and Northern Ireland participated in the event. When the idea of the conference was initially conceived in 2007, plans were made to hold “Women’s Six Party Talks”. At the time, there were no women present at the official government level six party talks. Only men were seen around the negotiating table, where the peace and destiny of the Korean Peninsula was to be decided. Where are the women? This reality was the reason behind coming up with alternative six party talks. ‘Women Making Peace’
organized a “South Korean Women’s Peace Delegation’ comprised of members of the National Assembly and representatives of women’s organizations. To prepare for the “Women’s Six Party Talks,” the delegation visited China, Japan, Russia, and the US, and met with North Korean women at the location of exchange between South and North Korea. The delegation emphasized that women’s participation must be guaranteed and that women’s requests must be accepted in the peace negotiation process in order to achieve true reconciliation, cooperation, and peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, and asked to attend the Women’s Six Party Talks. In addition, the delegation urged Northeast Asian women to play an active role in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the normalization of relations between North Korea and the United States, as well as North Korea and Japan.

In 2008, “Korean Women’s Association United”, “The Women’s Committee of the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation”, and “Women Making Peace” organized the steering committee for the Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference along with women active in various areas, and hosted the “2008 Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference” in Seoul. Participants of the Conference included representatives from women’s organizations from China, Russia, Japan, the US and South Korea, along with representatives from international women’s associations, and Congresswomen from Japan and South Korea. All attendants broadened their mutual understanding through dialogue with NGO representatives and talks with congresswomen from South Korea and Japan. The participants presented various experiences and views for establishing peace in Northeast Asia. Furthermore, they looked for ways to build trust in each other and foster mutual understanding, in order to overcome distrust and misunderstandings caused by colonial and Cold War experiences, and different social systems.
In 2009, the "Organizing Committee of the Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference" co-hosted the “2009 Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference” under the theme “Negotiating Regional Peace, Reconciliation and Cooperation” together with the Sigur Center for Asian Studies at the George Washington University in Washington DC. Women from the US, Japan, China, Russia, Korea, and the UK participated in this event. Former Prime Minister Myung Sook Han of the Republic of Korea and Ambassador Melanne S. Verveer, the US Ambassador at Large for Global Women’s Issues, gave keynote speeches. Participants wrote proposals for the US government and Congress, and visited Congress and the US State Department. They asked the US to take a comprehensive approach in solving the North Korean nuclear issue and peace negotiations on the Korean Peninsula, and emphasized the need to strengthen women’s role in the process of building peace and providing foreign aid. In particular, they met Ambassador Sung Y. Kim, the US Special Envoy to the Six Party Talks, and shared a broad range of topics on issues facing the Korean Peninsula. This event was an opportunity for not only vitalizing diplomacy by private women, but also a chance to look for ways women in the private sector and the government can cooperate to strengthen the participation and role of women in the process of fostering peace on the Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

The 2010 Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference (NEAWPC) consisted of 1) an open symposium, 2) a strategic meeting fostering a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula and searching for the role of women, 3) strengthening exchanges and the network of Northeast Asian women, 4) visits to the National Assembly and the US Embassy, and 5) a visit to the DMZ, the divider between South and North Korea.
The goals and activities of the 2010 NEAWPC were defined as follows:

First, the women’s network was strengthened by inviting women from countries participating in the Six Party Talks. It is not easy to invite foreign women participants as the event continues to be held. There are not many women organizations dealing with peace and national security in China and Russia, the US Women’s Peace Organization has little interest in the Northeast Asian region, and even though Japanese organizations showed much interest in the challenges facing the Korean Peninsula, they appeared to feel pressure in regards to expressing any kind of solidarity with North Korea. Moreover, women are a minority among experts and policy makers regarding this topic. Even if they are interested, they are sometimes hesitant to participate due to political considerations. Therefore, women from various areas, such as activists from women’s organizations, scholars, representatives of international organizations, and government officials were invited to raise
interest in the issues of the Korean Peninsula and to raise the voice of women.

Second, we looked for ways women can jointly contribute to peace in Northeast Asia. Representatives of each nation adopted a recommendation to the Six Party Talks countries through discussions. While they were concerned about the instability of the Peninsula after the Cheonan incident, they requested for military exercises not to be held, and instead for the provision of humanitarian aid to North Korea, carrying on dialogue and cooperation, and reconvening the Six Party Talks, to promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, organize Korean peace forums, implement the “September 19 Statement” including normalization of North Korea and US relations as well as between North Korea and Japan, take measures to convert the armistice agreement into a Korean Peninsula peace forum, execute UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and national security, carry out a women’s conference for the six party talks; and recruit 30% of women into the North Korean aid program.

Third, we aimed to deliver the recommendation to Six Party Talks countries and to foster cooperation between women and the governments for conflict resolution. The ending of the Korean War and the establishment of peace is not only possible through the signing of a peace treaty between governments, but also a process which both South and North Koreans participate in. To foster an enduring peace on the Peninsula, civil society and government activities must be in positive harmony. Women looked for ways to cooperate with governments participating in the Six Party Talks for peace on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia. Representatives of the NAWPC wanted to listen to each nation’s policy on the Korean Peninsula by visiting embassies, and tried to deliver women’s policy suggestions which were discussed during the peace conference. However, it was a sensitive
point in time, when Korea, the US, and Japan were in confrontation with North Korea, China, and the Russian government after the Cheonan incident. Therefore, it was not easy to meet embassy staff. Furthermore, since some women did not have a channel for dialogue with the governments of each country, we exerted various efforts with little effect. We visited and delivered the recommendation the US Embassy and had a face to face talk with two South Korean lawmakers.

Fourth, we urged the execution of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The majority of policy decision makers involved in peace and security in Northeast Asia are men. The NAWPC tried to change Northeast Asian countries’ awareness of the importance of implementing the UN Security Council Resolution, which emphasizes the need “for women to have equal participation and the possibility of complete intervention in all efforts for maintaining and promoting peace and security.”

Fifth, we aimed to improve the global leadership of women. We intend to raise the ability of women to become international leaders through improving their communication skills, increasing expertise and knowledge on international agendas, and fostering the ability to organize international events through meeting participants from women’s organization, international organizations, government bodies, and participants to peace negotiations, and hosting debates, visits to the National Assembly and embassies, strategic conferences, and site visits. We aim for women not to be treated as passive bystanders of peace negotiations, but to raise their international status as active participants.

NEAWPC is incomplete in terms of the women’s six party talks because North Korean women have not joined the conference yet. It reflects
that relations between North and South Korea and the situation on the Korean peninsula are unstable. However, the Organizing Committee of NEAWPC has a great dream that the women’s six party talks will take place someday and has held three conferences.

In December 2010, Partnership for International Strategies in Asia (PISA) of the George Washington University and Peace Boat US Section held a reporting meeting on the 2010 Northeast Asian Women’s Peace Conference at The George Washington University in Washington DC. Following presentation of the recommendations that emerged from the meeting of delegates to the 2010 Northeast Asia Women’s Peace Conference, an update on the Yeonpyong Island Incident at the Yellow Sea and humanitarian assistance to North Korea, and a presentation on “Women’s Roles in Peace Processes,” attendees discussed to promote implementation of the recommendations.
In February 2011, The Organizing Committee of NEAWPC, PISA and Peace Boat US held a parallel event of the UN Commission on the Status of Women titled “UNSCR 1325 and Peace for Sustainable Development” at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the UN in New York. It was sponsored by the Office of Rep. Young Hee Choi, Chair of the Gender Equality and Family Committee of the National Assembly of Republic of Korea. H.E. Mr. Herman Schaper, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN and Ms. Susan Braden, Senior Policy Advisor of the Office of Global Women Issues of the US Department of State and women’s activists joined the conference. National Action Agenda on 1325 and women’s movements to implement UNSCR 1325 were discussed.

On June 24th 2011, Rep. Young Hee Choi, Chair of the Gender Equality and Family Committee of the National Assembly, submitted ‘a draft resolution calling for the adoption of the UN SCR 1325 National Action Plan’ with other 31 South Korean lawmakers after she sponsored the parallel event of the UNCSW, The draft resolution was one of important initiatives to adopt the ROK national action plan on 1325. This is an achievement for implementation of UNSCR 1325 at the national assembly level after Women Making Peace raised awareness on the UNSCR 1325 in 2007.

The 2012 Northeast Asian Women’s Peace Conference will be held in Seoul, South Korea, on March 13–14, 2012 titled of “Nuclear Free World and Women’s Lives in Northeast Asia”.

3. Women’s Action on Military Spending

Women Making Peace, Korean Women’s Association United, Korea Church Women United, Suwon Women’s Association, Korea Association of Christian Women for Women Minjung, and Daejeon Women’s Association
for Peace organized a women’s peace campaign to celebrate the Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS) on April 11, 2011 on one of the busiest streets, Myungdong, in Seoul. Six women’s organizations had joint actions to focus public, political, and media attention on the costs of military spending and the need for new priorities. Participants were divided into two groups. One group with posters and signs informed people of what GDAMS is all about, and the other conducted a survey to passers by on alternative ways of using military spending. The survey showed priorities of citizens were work for women, education fees, medical assistance and job opportunities expansion. Daejeon Women’s Association for Peace also organized a peace campaign on GDAMS with other civil groups in Daejeon city on April 11, 2011.
Civil Peace Forum, founded on 1st October 2008 as the specialized organization of Civil Society Organizations Network in Korea, has held monthly forum for 2 years on the various issues such as ecology, peace, human rights, welfare, gender, and generation, etc. surrounding the Korean Peninsula. Thanks to support and cooperation of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the representatives, members of civil organizations, and relevant experts could gather to discuss about peace and unification of Korea in a way of citizen participation, thus find and spread the agendas which are meaningful to the development of the issues. Civil Peace Forum has led Korean civil society to take an active part through a solidarity frame among the personages from various circles regarding to peace issues in South Korea, and workshop for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. In addition, we will still widen the range of work and deepen the solidarity thus, ensure internal stability of the peace and reunification movement in a way of citizen participation.

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The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is a German non-profit, private, educational institution committed to the concepts and basic values of social democracy. Its efforts focus on cooperation for development, international dialogue, political education, economic and socio-political development, and study grants. The FES has offices in 105 countries.

The collaboration between Korean organizations and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung began in the late 1960s with the opening of an office in Seoul. While the form of partnership has changed over the years the basic aims and objectives have not changed. In Korea we want to foster dialogue between Korean and German institutions towards identifying appropriate policies, and towards identifying the most appropriate relationship between Korea and Germany, Korea and Europe and Asia and Europe. The Foundation wants to contribute towards a social and pluralistic democracy and the adoption of socially balanced economic policies as a way to sustainable development. Furthermore, FES is committed to sharing experiences from recent European history in order to promote peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula leading eventually peaceful unification.

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