



Presbyterian Mission

Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

The United Nations in The Korean Peninsula

In 1947, the UN established the **UN Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTOK)** to supervise the first general election in Korea, assist in withdrawal of occupying forces, and guide the state toward full independence. When the Korean War started three years later, the **United Nations Command (UNC)** was created to restore peace and security in the region.

A variety of UN offices took responsibility for reconstruction following the war's ceasefire agreement. Special agencies oversaw 260 major projects covering education, health, housing, and infrastructure. The UN The **UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** provided textbooks for primary schools while the **UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)** provided medicine, food, and clothes for children. In 1991, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution admitting North and South Korea as member states.

Today, South Korea is home to 25 offices and organizations operating under the United Nations. Their operations range from policy research and analysis to and capacity building for the public and private sectors. The Republic of Korea also contributes \$536 million and 356 staff members across the UN system.¹

In North Korea, the UN coordinates aid for 6.5 million North Koreans in 2017 in order to improve conditions ranging from food security and nutrition to health and sanitation. This includes vaccines for 335,000 children and improved water sanitation for 351,4000 North Koreans.²

The **UN General Assembly (UNGA)** has passed resolutions condemning the human rights situation in North Korea every year since 2005. Following North Korea's missile tests in 2016, the **UN Security Council** adopted sanctions against people involved with the project, in addition to other sanction against political leaders.³

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) & Korea

Presbyterian Mission in South Korea: The PC(USA) works in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of Korea, the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea, and the National Council of Churches in Korea. This collaboration centers on a broad range of work from higher education and youth ministries

to peace education, reconciliation, and reunification. The Church also supports a pair of mission co-workers in Korea and two regional liaisons as well.⁴

Presbyterian Peace Network for Korea (PPNK): This grass-roots network is a space for discernment, education, reconciliation, and advocacy for dealing humanely with both the past and ongoing conflict in Korea. As part of this mission, they advocate for a formal end to the Korean War and an eventual reunification of the Korean Peninsula.⁵

PC(USA) Policy on Korea: In keeping with past Assemblies, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) in St. Louis approved policies encouraging the Church to remain in solidarity through prayer with victims of the Korean conflict and join in efforts toward peace and reunification.⁶ In 2016, the Assembly recommended that the Church advocate for an official apology from the U.S. government for the killing of civilians at No Gun Ri in 1950.⁷

Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations (PMUN)

Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations is called to act on an issue when it meets three criteria: the PC(USA) has a policy regarding the topic, partner churches are in favor of action, and it appears on the UN agenda. In the case of Korea, PMUN has interpreted their ministry through participation in ecumenical advocacy on the UN Security Council.

NGO Working Group on the Security Council: The NGO Working Group was founded in 1995 to promote dialogue between the NGO community with foreign officials, policy experts, and members of the Security Council. PMUN involvement in the working group creates an exchange of information and perspective between the PC(USA) and the principal UN organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, including those responsible for continued sanctions against North Korea.⁸

In June 2019, PMUN co-sponsored an event on Human Rights and Jeju 4-3, in support of healing and reparations for those who were affected by the violent uprising which occurred while the island off the coast of the peninsula was under U.S. military control.

¹ <http://www.un-rok.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/United-Nations-in-the-Republic-of-Korea-Brochure.pdf>

² http://kp.one.un.org/content/dam/unct/dprk/docs/unct_kp_NP2018.pdf

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea_and_the_United_Nations

⁴ <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/global/south-korea/>

⁵ <https://hyeyoungkurtkorea.wordpress.com/2017/08/24/peace-network-for-korea-in-pcusa/>

⁶ <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000332>

⁷ <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/6297>

⁸ <https://www.globalpolicy.org/ngo-working-group-on-the-security-council-4-24.html>