

Statement from the Universal Peace Federation on Recommendations of its Northeast Asia Peace Initiative

We Ambassadors For Peace, who are religious leaders from the United States, having spoken in 120 cities in America, Japan and the Republic of Korea on the need to build a world in which all differences are peacefully resolved have come to the Demilitarized Zone to pray and call for peace in this land where so much blood has been shed in the past 100 years.

The Korean people have suffered through colonization, division and war. Today Korea not only remains divided but is a flashpoint of tension and conflict which could lead to the outbreak of another war that would affect all Asia and the world.

The present situation cannot continue; no one will benefit from this heightened tension. In war, all would be losers. We call upon the United Nations and particularly the major powers – the United States, Japan, China and Russia – to work together constructively for the sake of building permanent peace in the peninsula.

In UPF's peace building efforts, we keep in mind the two core principles common to all the great religions that guide our work: The principle of true love – of living for the sake of others -- and the principle of unification that calls us to seek mutual understanding, respect, harmony and cooperation between people of diverse races, religions, nationalities, cultures and worldviews.

Of all the major powers, the U.S. is perhaps the best positioned to solve the problem of North Korea. It must do so in strong unity with South Korea and Japan. We American religious leaders voice our concerns and recommendations especially to our own government because of the indispensable role it plays.

1. We must treat North Korea with dignity. America must ultimately relate to North Korea with a heart of respect, not contempt. This is the example that was personally set by UPF's Founder, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, when he visited North Korea in 1991.
2. We advocate an approach of firmness and engagement, coupled with fairness, rather than disengagement and confrontation. A policy of confrontation risks pushing North Korea to the brink, with destruction to the entire Korean peninsula as the unintended consequence.
3. The ultimate goal should be peace, prosperity and freedom for the entire Korean peninsula. We propose the U.S. promote change through participation and engagement, rather than confrontation, for the survival of the Korean peninsula
4. The United States should *prioritize* its issues in addressing them to the North. By making multiple demands at the same time, North Korea may only reason that our overwhelming pressures are intended to cause their system to collapse. Let us first solve the nuclear issue.

Then the U.S. can more effectively and naturally deal with other vital issues including human rights.

5. The U.S. should adopt a policy of embracing both Koreas. In this post-Cold War era, China has relations with each Korea. America should also have relations and influence with both Koreas. America needs to retain a strong presence in East Asia. Normalizing our relations with North Korea will in fact help prevent the North from pursuing its ambition of overrunning or causing upheaval in the South. U.S. help in the improvement of North Korea's overall position will also serve to improve North Korean human rights.
6. We also support the presidential appointment of a Special Envoy to North Korea who will enjoy the full authority and confidence of the President to build trust and understanding between our two very different nations and political systems. We believe that North Korea earnestly desires senior-level engagement with the United States, and that as trust is built, friendship can grow, resulting in normalized relations. In the end, with sufficient trust with the U.S., and the resulting sense of security, the North is very likely to fully denuclearize in a verifiable and irreversible manner.
7. To establish a greater trust, the United States should engage North Korea in a wide-ranging manner, including through athletic, cultural, and academic exchange, as well as through provision of necessary humanitarian aid, and technical assistance to enable the North to feed itself, power its homes and industries, and build a stronger economy so it can benefit from the region's prosperity. The Universal Peace Federation has exemplified this approach with North Korea over the last 15 years.
8. We support United Nations Security Council resolution 1718, unanimously approved on October 14, 2006. But beyond international sanctions, earnest and constructive efforts at dialogue and engagement are needed to permanently resolve this crisis. We support this week's efforts by Secretary General-designate Ban Ki-moon to visit the regional powers and seek ways the United Nations can play a more vital role in coordinating a peaceful approach to this problem.
9. We emphasize the importance of an interreligious council that will help focus on the values of dignity, respect for all people, and a firm belief in absolute principles of goodness that surpass all human frailties.
10. We call for an international peace conference of scholars and world leaders, with representatives from both North and South Korea.
11. UPF Founder Rev. Dr. Moon is highly respected by many in South and North Korea, and his principles of Korean unification widely acknowledged as the best solution for Korea. Inspired by his principles, the UPF and its affiliates have long been in the forefront of facilitating peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula. Since the emergence of the first

North Korean nuclear crisis in 1991, UPF's affiliate, the Summit Council, played an important behind the scenes role in encouraging the U.S. and North Korea to begin high-level dialogue that was previously non-existent.

12. Rather than continue to discuss the "Axis of Evil," let us create an "Axis of Peace," which should include the U.S., South Korea, Japan, and other nations willing to join. We call for former President George H. W. Bush and former President Clinton to unite together, as they did after the December 2004 Asian tsunami and again after last year's Hurricane Katrina in the U.S.. They should be empowered by the President to work towards bringing about a permanent peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue that will safeguard the entire Korean peninsula.