



## **The Report on Humanitarian Aids Project to North Korea the first half of 2011**

Today is the 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the armistice "agreement between the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, on the one hand, and the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's volunteers, on the other hand, concerning a military armistice in Korea." They agreed that "the undersigned, the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command, on the one hand, and the Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army and the Commander of the Chinese People's Volunteers, on the other hand, in the interest of stopping the Korean conflict, with its great toil of suffering and bloodshed on both sides, and with the objective of establishing an armistice which will insure a complete cessation of hostilities and of all acts of armed force in Korea until a final peaceful settlement is achieved, do individually, collectively, and mutually agree to accept and to be bound and governed by the conditions and terms of armistice." (Preamble, THE KOREAN WAR ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, Done at Panmunjom, Korea at 10:00 on the 27th day of July 1953)

The Bible says, "Friends are the people who always love and brothers are born to help people who are in need." All human beings should take care of the brothers and sisters who are in trouble regardless their races, nationalities and ideologies. However, in Korea divided for more than 60 years, the people don't share this universal Christian love in reality. We are witnessing our brothers' sufferings and miserable conditions but we couldn't do anything for them due to politics and ideological confrontation. We feel really regrettable for this situation.

As you know, TOPIK, which realized North Koreans' economic difficulties in 2007, has tried to give humanitarian aids to them. In particular, TOPIK has sent food and coal briquettes to North Korea for women and children. With subsidies from Anglican bodies around the world, TOPIK has sent them to Gaesung City, Geumgang Mountains, and Nasun(Rasun) City. Unfortunately, as the political relationship between North and South went sour, all humanitarian aids programs

have been stopped for last 2 years and TOPIK has no choice but to watch the sufferings and troubles of North Koreans with pity.

The Korean Church has tried to demolish the blocked wall between two Koreas for a long time. When nobody imagined that North and South couldn't meet each other, it was the Korean Church that met the North Korean Christians with help from the World Church and led the leaders of both sides to reconciliation and unification. The Anglican Church of Korea has played a leading role in this process.

The Korean Church is witnessing the relationship between two Koreas recede due to the ideological confrontation and can't bear this deadlock which might become fixing the division. We can't ignore the brothers and sisters' famine in North Korea due to the current political impasse. Especially the members of NCKK wanted to send 172 tons of flour last May through Amity Foundation of China. Because this project was done without Korean Government's approval, the legal problem may occur but NCKK members are firm that God's love can't be confined in the secular political boundary. This brave breakthrough by the Korean Church is giving hope to other NGOs which have helped North Korean people.

The members of NCKK plan to execute the second aids project which will ship 172 tons of flour worth of \$100,000. Fortunately, the Korean government expressed the possibility of approval. TOPIK is going to participate in this shipping as the previous one.

As the relationship between two sides has gone bitter, a number of humanitarian aids organizations have helped North Korea by way of the Chinese route. TOPIK also has helped a vocational training school in Nasun City. Rev. Paul Mooney and I visited the border area and Nasun City from June 27 to July 1, 2011. In this trip TOPIK supplied educational materials to the school and tried to find a foothold in the border area for our future project. TOPIK originally planned to send beauty stuff, sewing machines and a second hand truck engine. But the cost of the

engine was beyond our budget, which will be delay the next time. In upcoming winter, we are considering to send the engine when heating coal is being sent to the vocational school.

During the trip, one new suggestion was offered by the North Korean officials. They asked us to renovate a small health care center located in the outskirts of the city. They explained that most North Koreans in this area couldn't get proper medical services because most medical centers were collapsed. If TOPIK choose one of them, there is no doubt that the medical facility will give significant medical service to North Korean residents. With the dialogue with the North Korean officers, we felt improved mutual trust with them.

The other gift that TOPIK got from this trip was that we found a dependable partner whose name is Mr. Lee. So far, TOPIK has visited this area 3 times and got help from him. Mr. Lee started to understand what TOPIK has been doing and he is going to help us. He is a relatively big businessman and a member of the Communist party who is respected by his neighbors. TOPIK believes that Mr. Lee could be an excellent partner in the future.

Even though TOPIK and Korean Church have tried to do what God wants us to do for the suffering North Koreans, our holy mission hasn't been successful due to the iced political atmosphere. However, we can't stop our project to love the troubled brothers as water detours when it meets a stone.

Finally, TOPIK would like to express deep gratitude to the Anglican bodies which has helped us. We are marching for the achievement of "a final peaceful settlement" through humanitarian aids project to North Korea with your support.

**Peace in Christ,**

**The Revd Joachim H. Kim**

Sent from Seoul, Korea at 10:00 on the 27th day of July 2011