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## Narrative Report on 2009 TOPIK Activities

“Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love”  
(1 John 4:8)

The year 2009 was extremely tough to many people around the world. Due to the economic crisis all over the world, many people lost their jobs and suffered from reduced incomes. By the same token, the relationship between South and North Korea has become strained, which made last decade’s peaceful accomplishments in vain. To make things worse, there is an ideological conflict inside South Korea.

Even though TOPIK faced these tough realities, we have done many activities to promote a peaceful reunification of two Koreas and a peaceful environment in East Asian countries. Even in a deadlock between South and North Korean iced the relationship, TOPIK played a major role in alleviating this harsh situation with several projects: humanitarian aids for North Korean people, setting up a mission centre, peace education for young generation, building an East Asian Peace Network, and campaign for 100 memberships supporting TOPIK. All these major projects were possible thanks to the Anglican Communion’s prayer and support. TOPIK is deeply grateful to Anglican brothers and sisters who support us.

### ● *Sharing Movement between two Koreas.*

The first step to go to peace over conflicts is reconciliation and forgiveness. Without real forgiveness and reconciliation, peace is impossible. So TOPIK focuses on the campaign of forgiveness and reconciliation through North and South sharing movement. Sharing is a feasible sign of forgiveness and the first step to reconciliation. TOPIK, together with other humanitarian agencies for North Korean people, is sending coal briquettes to North Korea suffering from sever shortage of fuel and heating. In Dec. 2009, TOPIK sent 50,000 coal briquettes and plans to send another 50,000 in the end of Feb. 2010. In 2010, we planned to send these to North Korea twice but those plans halted due to South Korean government’s refusal to confirm. However, the government allowed us to send them in last winter. Because of the strained relationship



between two Koreas, almost all humanitarian aids have been stopped. So sending coal briquettes became conspicuous even though the size was small.



In 2009, TOPIK tried to secure some mission areas which couldn't be affected by two Koreas' political influence. The KuemGang Mountains area and Gaesung City located near DMZ have been fragile from political changes in Korea. In order to explore this area, TOPIK visited a border region between North Korea and China. And TOPIK started to help a vocational training centre in Ra-Sun City, the free economic zone bordering with China. In Dec. 2009, TOPIK visited a vocational training

school in that city and subsidized necessary educational materials for them. Without support and help from Anglican brothers and sisters around the world, this sharing movement can't be possible. In particular, there are \$35,200 from ERD, \$10,000 from ABM and \$2,100 from the Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Anglican Church of Japan).

## ● *Peace Education*

TOPIK is passionately concentrating on peace education. Due to the Korean War in 1950, there have been incurable scars among Korean people. Some people became slaves of mutual anger, animosity and apathy. Even in our church these negative pathos have dominated Korean people recently. Our lord called us as disciples of peace makers. It is very regrettable that there are anger, animosity, and apathy among Christians. So TOPIK tries to stimulate peace sensibilities for the clergy and lay people through peace education. Especially, the education focuses on young generation who will be responsible for our future. TOPIK sent Mr. Lee Chang Whi to an ecumenical peace camp run by the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center - Sabeel, Palestine in July, 2009. The Koran-Japan peace camp was held in a city call Whachun, near to DMZ where 50 young men and ladies from Korea and Japan participated. In June and December, 2009, TOPIK hosted peace prayer meetings asking to appease a strained relationship between South and North. In October, TOPIK took part in the march for peace and nonviolence initiated by World without Wars, The Humanist Movement which has branches in over 100 countries. We tried to invite Archbishop Tutu but he couldn't come to Korea.



### ● *Seeking a continuous collaboration with Anglican Communion.*

TOPIK has tried hard getting a continuous help from Anglican Communion. The peaceful reunification of the Korean peninsula becomes extremely crucial to secure a peace order in the Far Eastern Asia. The division of two Koreas was a political result from the dynamics of superpowers around the region. So we come to a natural consensus that the collaboration with the surrounding countries is quintessential to achieve unification of the Korean peninsula. With this idea in mind, TOPIK has done various campaigns to get help from neighboring countries and the world. The 14<sup>th</sup> ACC general meeting in June, 2009 Jamaica adopted a resolution that Anglican Communion will help TOPIK's activities. In July, 2009, TOPIK introduced its programs in the general convention of TEC. TOPIK participated in 150th anniversary of Japanese Mission and a seminar called 'The Role of Anglican Church for peace of the North Eastern Asia.' In the seminar, many activities of TOPIK were introduced and TOPIK asked a close collaboration with the Anglican Church in Japan. At present, NSKK set up a sub-committee for TOPIK under the peace and justice committee and started to work with TOPIK.



### ● *Setting up the East Asia Peace Network*



TOPIK tries to build the East Asia Network, which will play a major role in promoting peace in the East Asia and reunification of the Korean peninsula. The East Asian region where Korea belongs has different types of conflicts and pending agendas. For example, division of Koreas, Peace Constitution of Japan, and climates changes in the region are beyond domestic ranges. In order

for us to solve these problems, international solidarity and cooperation are absolutely necessary. TOPIK has taken an initiative in setting up the East Asian Peace Network. TOPIK has had several preliminary meetings, taken part in Anglican assemblies in the region and exchanged mutual interests. The Anglican Climate Meeting in Hong Kong in March was an opportunity to discuss an agenda like 'The Second Peace Conference Preparing Committee.' Last Sept. in Japan, Asian Anglican church leaders showed their strong will to the Second Peace Conference in the East Asia. For this project, The Archbishop of Canterbury's Anglican Communion Fund donated 5,000 British pounds.

## ● *Strengthening Internal Power inside TOPIK*

TOPIK set up a goal to recruit 100 memberships who would galvanize TOPIK's activities, to strengthen its internal power in Feb. 2009. TOPIK educated Anglican priests and lay, and refurbished a priests' organization to make great contribution to promote peace and justice. The Korean Anglican church used to have a peace and justice organization among priests. This organization played a leading role in bringing democratic political principles back from military dictatorship in the seventies and eighties. Its role has become shrunken because Korea has had civilian governments after nineties. However, in order to achieve peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula, many priests realized that their roles would be very important. So they rebuilt the peace and justice group, which has 40 priests and will fully support TOPIK's activities.

## ● *Participate in joint Church Programs of North and South*

TOPIK has joined unification efforts by North and South Korean churches. Two churches met 25 years ago, when nobody even dreamt the unification of two Koreas with help from churches around the world. As a result, the relationship between North and South has been positively developed for the last decade. The first step was the meeting for peaceful unification in Dosanso, Japan, 25 years ago. To commemorate its 25<sup>th</sup> year, North and South Korean churches met and had a meeting with an agenda for reunification of the Korean peninsula in Hong Kong in Oct. 2009. In this meeting, TOPIK introduced its activities and shared mutual cooperation for a good cause.

## *Future Plans*

Closing 2009, TOPIK had an evaluation meeting in Jan. 2010. 10 members evaluated last year's activities and discussed its plans in 2010 with Fr. John Lee, who used to serve as Unification Minister in the cabinet. Some agendas could be summarized as follows.

First, the sharing movement with North Korea should be continued. Even though TOPIK is facing difficulties due to the strained relationship between two governments, we have to make previous credible relationship more solid and expand an atmosphere of mutual understanding and reconciliation through the sharing movements. In particular, TOPIK should broaden its humanitarian aids near Ra-Sun city located in the Chinese border line. Ultimately, TOPIK will prepare to help North Koreans build small scale production facilities which can produce necessary goods.

Second, the year 2010 has many important connotations to Korea: the centennial anniversary of Japanese annexation, the 60<sup>th</sup> of the Korean War, the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Kwangju Democratic Movement and 10<sup>th</sup> year of 6.15 joint declaration for peace and



reconciliation by two Koreas. So many Koreans expect to open many opportunities for peace and prosperities. In terms of the relationship between North and South, many people anticipate and pray for have a turning point in this year. With these positive forecasts in mind, TOPIK politely asks a strong solidarity for peaceful reunification to Anglican brothers and sisters around the world. Particularly, TEC's role will be critical because the relationship between North Korea and the United States has a strategic importance. Without improvement of the relationship between the United States and North Korea, nobody can expect to a constructive relationship between two Koreas.

Third, TOPIK will try its best to strengthen the internal energy. It will recruit memberships as many as possible through peace education programs and prayer meetings for peace not only in Korea but also in East Asia. TOPIK set a goal to recruit 100 memberships but there was no active participation from lay people. However, TOPIK will organize a lay group who can play an autonomous role for TOPIK in 2010.

Lastly, it will be 3<sup>rd</sup> year anniversary of the first Peace Conference in Nov. 2010. TOPIK plans to host a small international conference in Nov. to evaluate TOPIK's activities and discuss new directions of TOPIK. I politely ask your prayer for this.

TOPIK really appreciates all the support and prayers from the Anglican Communion. Its sincere thanks will go to all brother churches in the world.

Peace be with all brothers and sisters around the world.

## **TOPIK**

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