



GPPAC Northeast Asia Statement Welcoming the 2018 Inter-Korean Summit: Supporting new hope for peace on the Korean Peninsula, towards a peaceful, nuclear-weapons free Northeast Asia

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Northeast Asia, a network of civil society organizations working for peace and dialogue in the region, wholeheartedly congratulates the leaders of the DPRK and the ROK, as well as the Korean people, for the historic achievement of the “Panmunjeom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula” issued following the Inter-Korean Summit of April 27, 2018 at the Peace House on the southern side of Korea's Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The Summit contributed to a significant reduction of tensions and indeed avoidance of the catastrophe of a potential nuclear war. Furthermore, it showed the world the true impact of committed leadership and diplomacy, and the direct, personal meeting between the leaders of both Koreas sent a powerful wave of emotion around the world.

The landmark steps of goodwill and promises for action shown on this day mark a historic moment, and the beginning of a “new era of peace” for the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. A peaceful resolution of the ongoing tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and a shift from the current Armistice regime to a permanent peace regime, is vital for the security not only of both Koreas, but for the Northeast Asia region as a whole. We strongly welcome the declaration to bring a swift end to the war on the Korean Peninsula, and realize a peace treaty, as well as the concrete steps outlined to end hostilities and encourage active cooperation. Concrete steps including the establishment of a joint liaison office, continued high-level dialogue, and active contacts will mark the historic start of this new area.

Reaffirmation of the common goal of attaining a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula through “complete denuclearization” is greatly encouraging. We also share the view that the DPRK's measures to cease nuclear and missile tests are important steps for reducing tensions. We sincerely hope that these developments will be followed by clear commitments for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and for nuclear disarmament by all related parties. Both Koreas could celebrate complete denuclearization by together signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We call on other parties in the region to also do so, as a step towards the future establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in Northeast Asia.

The encouragement of more active cooperation in social, economic and cultural fields is also significant, as are the steps outlined regarding practical implementation of previous agreements. We underline the role played by cultural exchange in creating the positive environment for the Inter-Korean Summit. Having organized regional civil society meetings at joint sites such as Mt Kumgang and the Kaesong Industrial Complex, we can directly testify to their significance as symbolic spaces for interaction between people from both Koreas and internationally, as well as for concrete cooperation and the development of joint inter-Korean institutions – important steps towards eventual unification. We therefore welcome commitments to expand such activities, such as on June 15 and other upcoming events. The clear declaration to restart reunions for tragically separated families, and solve humanitarian issues on the peninsula, are also crucial steps forward.

GPPAC Northeast Asia, with members from throughout the region including both Koreas, pledges to continue to do all we can to support diplomacy and the creation of an environment in which the Panmunjeom Declaration, as well as past agreements and future efforts to build peace, can be realized. In 2018, we will continue to convene the Ulaanbaatar Process, our civil society dialogue for regional peace and stability, to complement official processes towards the development of a peaceful, nuclear-free Northeast Asia.

We call upon the international community to undertake all efforts to support the implementation of the Panmunjeom Declaration, as well as previous joint agreements. The success of this Summit should be carried on to the upcoming US-DPRK discussions, which we sincerely hope will conclude with concrete steps towards denuclearization and a peace treaty for the Korean Peninsula. Space should be ensured for all stakeholders, including GPPAC members, civil society, states and the United Nations, to make utmost efforts to build on this success, and work towards the establishment of regional peacebuilding mechanisms for Northeast Asia.

The Summit is a powerful symbol of a process to overcome conflict and achieve peace through shifting from reaction to prevention. We sincerely believe that the realization of peace on the Korean Peninsula will develop into peace for the Northeast Asian region, and in turn contribute to momentum for building peace and security around the world.