

BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

Who's the Rogue Regime?

By: Mark Haley Member of the Kelowna Peace Group

Canada once again shows the world it is a leader for world peace by hosting a conference in Vancouver January 16 to advocate for “an aggressive diplomatic campaign designed to force the rogue regime (North Korea) to the negotiation table and avoid devastating military action”.

"We continue to find ways to advance the pressure campaign against North Korea, and send a unified message from the international community: 'We will not accept you as nuclear weapons nation' said U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

Before our breasts swell too fully as we inhale too deeply of these CBC vapors, it might be time to ask a few questions.

Wasn't there another message sent by the international community, a treaty initiated by a Nobel Prize-winning organization (ICAN), and endorsed by 122 nations at the UN last July which said “We do not accept *any* nuclear weapons nations”?

Which Canadian ally, after leading a three year war which destroyed North Korea and killed 20 percent of its population, has been threatening nuclear annihilation of North Korea for decades, long before a North Korean nuclear program existed?

Which country is implementing a trillion plus dollar program to “modernize” their nuclear arsenal to make their nukes more “useable”?

What if Russia repeatedly massed 300,000 troops along the Ukraine border, conducted fly-overs with stealth and nuclear weapons-capable aircraft, and announced plans for “regime change” as the US continues to do in the case of Korea, what would Chrystia Freeland have to say?

Finally, though North Korea is labeled as a bellicose dictatorship, human rights violator and practitioner of cruel and unusual punishment of political dissidents isn't this description far more justly applied to Washington's principle Arab ally Saudi Arabia, the place where 14 billion dollars worth of Justin's “jeeps” are headed?

Statement of the Vancouver Women's Forum on *Submitted by: Hannah Hadikin for the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace*

We, the undersigned 16 delegates from five countries of the Vancouver Women's Forum on Peace and Security on the Korean Peninsula, have gathered in Vancouver in solidarity with Canada's Feminist Foreign Policy to promote a peaceful resolution to the crisis on the Korean Peninsula. Sanctions and isolation have failed to curb North Korea's nuclear weapons program and instead severely harm the North Korean civilian population. A Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons will only be achieved through genuine engagement, constructive dialogue, and mutual cooperation. We issue the following recommendations to the Foreign Ministers participating in the January 16 Summit on Security and Stability in the Korean Peninsula:

- Immediately engage all relevant parties in dialogue, without preconditions, to work toward achieving a nuclear-free Korean peninsula;
 - Abandon support for the strategy of maximum pressure, lift sanctions which have a harmful effect on the North Korean people, work toward the normalization of diplomatic relations, remove barriers to citizen-to-citizen engagement, and strengthen humanitarian cooperation;
 - Extend the spirit of the Olympic truce and affirm support for inter-Korean dialogue by initiating:
 - i) the continued suspension of joint US-ROK military exercises in the south and nuclear and missile tests in the north,
 - ii) a pledge not to conduct a first strike, nuclear or conventional, and
 - iii) a process to replace the Armistice Agreement with a Korea Peace Agreement;
- 2) Adhere to international human rights mechanisms, including all the Security Council recommendations on Women, Peace, and Security. In particular, we urge you to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which acknowledges that the meaningful participation of women in all stages of conflict resolution and peace building strengthens peace and security for all.

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The above recommendations are based on our long experience engaging with North Koreans through citizen diplomacy and humanitarian initiatives, and from our collective expertise on militarism, nuclear disarmament, economic sanctions, and the human cost of the unresolved Korean War. The Summit is a sobering reminder that the gathered nations have a historic and moral responsibility to formally end the Korean War. A pledge not to conduct a first strike can de-escalate tensions by significantly reducing the apprehension of an attack and the risk of miscalculation that could result in an intentional or an inadvertent nuclear launch. Resolving the Korean War can be the single most effective action to halt the intense militarization of Northeast Asia,¹ which gravely threatens the peace and security of 1.5 billion people in the region. The peaceful resolution of the Korean nuclear crisis is key step toward the total global elimination of nuclear weapons.

Background on Recommendations to Foreign Ministers

- 1. Extend the spirit of the Olympic truce and affirm support for inter-Korean dialogue by initiating: a.) the continued suspension of joint US-ROK military exercises in the south and nuclear and missile tests in the north, b.) a pledge not to conduct a first strike, nuclear or conventional, and c.) a process to replace the ceasefire with a Korea Peace Agreement.**

2018 marks the 65th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement, a ceasefire signed by military commanders from North Korea, China, and the United States on behalf of the U.S.-led UN Command.¹ The Vancouver Summit presents an opportunity for nations that contributed arms, troops, doctors, nurses and hospitals to the U.S.-led military coalition to collectively call for a peace agreement as promised under Article IV of the Armistice. On July 27, 1953, sixteen Foreign Ministers signed an addendum to the Armistice affirming: *"We will support the efforts of the United Nations to bring about an equitable settlement in Korea based on the principles which have long been established by the United Nations, and which call for a united, independent and democratic Korea."* The Vancouver Summit is a sobering reminder that the gathered nations have a historic and moral responsibility to formally end the Korean War.

A pledge not to conduct a first strike can further de-escalate tensions by significantly reducing the apprehension of an attack and the risk of miscalculation that could result in an intentional or an inadvertent nuclear launch. As signatories to the UN Charter, member states are required to settle disputes by peaceful means. Moreover, a pre-emptive military strike on North Korea, however limited, would almost certainly trigger a massive counter-strike and result in a full-scale conventional or nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula.

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. The U.S. Congressional Research Service estimates as many as 300,000 would be killed in the first few hours of combat and upwards of 25 million people would be impacted on both sides of the Korean DMZ.

Resolving the Korean War can be the single most effective action to halt the intense militarization of Northeast Asia,¹ which gravely threatens the peace and security of 1.5 billion people in the region. The massive military build up has negatively impacted the lives of the people living near U.S. military bases, in Okinawa, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Guam and Hawaii. The dignity, human rights, and collective right to self-determination of peoples in these countries have been violated by militarization.. Their lands and seas which they depend upon for their livelihoods and which carry cultural and historical significance, are controlled by the military and contaminated by military operations. Sexual violence is committed by military personnel against host communities, especially women and girls, and the belief in the use of force to solve disputes is deeply instilled to keep the patriarchal order of society and world.

- 2. Support direct diplomacy, without preconditions, of all relevant parties to the Korean crisis and work to immediately minimize the humanitarian impact of sanctions against North Korean citizens, which have a particularly acute impact on women and children.**

Foreign Ministers must address the impact of increased UNSC and bilateral sanctions against the DPRK, which have grown in number and severity. While advocates of sanctions regard them as a peaceful alternative to military action, sanctions have a violent and catastrophic impact on the population, as evidenced by sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s, which led to the premature deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children.¹ The UNSC insists that UN sanctions against North Korea aren't targeted at the civilian population,¹ yet evidence suggests to the contrary. According to the 2017 UNICEF report, 28 percent of all children aged 5 and under suffer from moderate to severe stunting. While UNSC Resolution 2375 recognises the "great unmet needs" of the citizens of the DPRK,

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it places responsibility for these unmet needs solely with the DPRK government and makes no mention of the potential or actual impact of the sanctions themselves. The sanctions themselves are increasingly targeting the civilian economy in the DPRK and are therefore likely to have further negative impacts on human livelihood. For example, bans on textile exports and on the dispatch of workers abroad are all significantly affecting the means whereby ordinary DPRK citizens typically earn the resources to support their livelihood. Furthermore, recent measures aimed at restricting the DPRK’s import of oil products risk further negative humanitarian impacts. According to David von Hippel and Peter Hayes,; *“The immediate primary impacts of responses to oil and oil products cut-offs will be on welfare; people will be forced to walk or not move at all, and to push buses instead of riding in them. There will be less light in households due to less kerosene and less on-site power generation. There will be more deforestation to produce biomass and charcoal used in gasifiers to run trucks, leading to more erosion, floods, less food crops, and more famine. There will be less diesel fuel to pump water to irrigate rice paddies, to process crops into foodstuffs, to transport food and other household necessities, and to transport agricultural products to markets before they spoil.”*

In his letter, the UN Humanitarian Resident Coordinator for North Korea cites 42 examples where sanctions have hampered humanitarian work,¹ which was recently affirmed by Sweden’s UN ambassador.¹ The UN, international organisations, and NGOs in the DPRK have for several years faced increased operational difficulties, such as the absence of international banking systems through which to transfer operational funds. They have also faced delays to or prohibitions against the provision of essential medical equipment and pharmaceutical products, as well hardware for farming and water-supply systems.

The success of sanctions against the DPRK looks dim given that the opening of dialogue between the US and North Korea is conditional upon the DPRK’s commitment to denuclearisation. This precondition does not address the underlying causes of the DPRK’s nuclear programme, namely the unresolved nature of the Korean War and the continued and rising geopolitical tensions in the region, which long predate the DPRK’s nuclear programme and can in part be regarded as a key motivation for it to acquire nuclear capability. Instead, we call for engaged diplomacy – actual dialogue, normalized relations, and the start of cooperative, trust-building measures that have the potential to create and sustain a stable political environment for reciprocal and beneficial ties in the region and for the prevention and early resolution of possible conflict.

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3. Adhere to international human rights mechanisms, including all the Security Council recommendations on Women, Peace, and Security. In particular, we urge implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which acknowledges that the meaningful participation of women in all stages of conflict resolution and peace building strengthens peace and security for all.

The global Study reviewing 15 years of 1325 UNSCR implementation provides comprehensive evidence demonstration that women’s equal and meaningful participation in peace and security efforts is vital to sustainable peace.

The review, spanning three decades of 40 peace processes, shows that of 182 signed peace accords, an agreement was reached in all but one case when women’s groups influenced the peace process. The ministerial meeting follows the launch of Canada’s National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, demonstrating a commitment to the inclusion of women at all stages of the peace process. This meeting is an opportunity for all governments to ensure women’s participation on both sides of the table. Those countries present at the Summit with a Feminist Foreign Policy must allocate funding to women’s organizations and movements to further their capacity for participation.

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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honor, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeace.20m.com

BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. For information call (250) 442-0434 or email L4peace@telus.net.



What's Up?

'Primeval: Enter the Incomappleux', produced by award-winning doc filmmaker Damien Gillis and features work to protect our many endangered species and rare forests. Filmed on location deep in the heart of BC's Selkirk Mountains, this 20-minutedocumentary is the story of the majesty, magic and endurance of one of the world's last truly intact temperate rainforests - the incomparable Incomappleux. Presented by *Valhalla Wilderness Society* **February 15th @ 7:00 PM @ Castlegar United Church, 809 Merrycreek road.** For info visit **vws.org** or contact Amber at 250-509-0840 or amberpeters@live.ca. Admission is by donation.

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moves the Doomsday Clock ahead 30 seconds. It now reads 2 minutes to midnight (the end of the world). For more information go to: <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/43350-doomsday-and-the-apocalyptic-trump-nuclear-war-fighting-doctrine>

Video of the Sept. 21, 2017 Walk the Drum and Peace Concert are available for \$10 for the set. To order call Laura at 250-442-0434 or email at L4peace@telus.net

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>

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Conclusion

2018 marks seventy years since the proclamation of two separate Korean states, the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the north. Korea had been denied sovereignty after liberation from Japan, its colonial oppressor, and was instead arbitrarily divided by Cold War powers. Hostilities erupted between the competing Korean governments, and the intervention of foreign armies internationalized the Korean War. After three years of war, more than three million dead, and the complete destruction of the Korean Peninsula, a ceasefire was signed, but never turned into a peace agreement, as promised by the signatories to the Armistice Agreement. As women from nations that participated in the Korean War, we believe 65 years is far too long for a ceasefire. The absence of a peace agreement has arrested progress on democracy, human rights, development, and the reunion of Korean families tragically separated for three generations.

Editor's note: In the original statement are footnotes but because of the lack of space I have not used them. If you wish to see these footnotes please contact Laura at L4peace@telus.net.

Follow the path of the unsafe, independent thinker.
Expose your ideas to the dangers of controversy.
Speak your mind and fear less the label of 'crackpot' than the stigma of conformity.
And on issues that seem important to you,
stand up and be counted at any cost."
Thomas J Watson (1874-1956)

That anyone who possesses power has a tendency to abuse it is an eternal truth. They tend to go as far as the barriers will allow.
Montesquieu

Civil disobedience becomes a sacred duty when the State becomes lawless or, which is the same thing, corrupt."
Mohandas Gandhi

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-442-0434** or **L4peace@telus.net**.
The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.