

GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

JULY &
AUGUST
2014

Monthly news on the struggle against
the Jeju Naval base project

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South Korea



The Pope Has Left, but Hope Remains

Image: Society of Jesus, Korea Province
Article by Joyakgol

Pope Francis has wrapped up his significant five-day visit to Korea and left to Vatican, but still the hope from his trip remains here. When we heard that three Gangjeong villagers were invited to the Mass for Peace and Reconciliation on the last day of the visit, we were very excited. We all pictured the scene where the Pope would hold hands with the villagers to give consolation. We hoped he would make remarks on the Jeju naval base during the mass, about the threat it poses to peace in Northeast Asia as the US and China watch each other and try to dominate the region. However to our dismay nothing like that happened. The unexpected and unwanted attendance at the mass by President Park Geun-Hye changed the atmosphere. Secret service agents were all over the place at the cathedral. We couldn't raise our voice. In the end, the three Gangjeong villagers were unable to reach the Pope much less deliver their gift to

him directly.

Disappointed but still motivated, Gangjeong activists decided to make an on the spot video message and send it to the Pope before his departure. We wanted to let him taste how we do things in the village. We chanted and sang a song for peace. Father Mun said in the video message to the pontiff that we, the people of Gangjeong thank him for giving us strength to continue the fight for justice.

During the Pope's visit, the pinnacle moment in terms of the Gangjeong peace movement was when the Roman Bishop made a surprise visit to the Jesuit center in Seoul where he met with 4 Gangjeong Jesuits and praised them. His exact words can be translated as 'you have accomplished the most challenging duty.' Yes, the Pope not only knew about Gangjeong, but he understood exactly the meaning of the peace movement that is aimed

at transforming Jeju Island into a non-militarized de facto island of world peace.

It was this January when we heard the news that the most respected peace messenger might come to Korea. At this time we started writing letters to the Vatican. We created a website called pope2jeju.org and the letter writing campaign went viral. Thousands, if not tens of thousands of letters from all around the world were sent to the Pope. Our goal was simple and clear. Convince him to visit Gangjeong, Miryang or other places where people suffer from violence, social injustice. Was our campaign successful? Yes. Even though the Pope didn't physically come to the village he showed the world that he is with us in spirit. That gave me hope and strength to continue the resistance.

ROK Navy base construction in losing battle against Typhoons

By Go Gwon-II
Co-Vice Mayor, Gangjeong village

Instead of fighting against any enemy military in pursuit of national security, the South Korea navy is fighting with typhoons at the currently under-construction Jeju naval base.

Two years ago, six of the seven caissons (huge concrete structures for breakwaters) which had been provisionally put in the sea were destroyed by Typhoon Bolaven and have been dismantled as trash in our ocean. Additionally, in July this year when Typhoon Neoguri passed through Jeju, three more caissons that had already been put in their planned locations were either dislodged or fell forward. A tremendous budget will be consumed again to restore those damaged structures.

Typhoon Neoguri was merely 19.8 m/sec at its highest wind speed according to the Seogwipo weather station. The measured value of the sea wave energy was only half the level of that of Bolaven according to the Mara-do observatory. Still,



Image: Cho Sung-Bong

On July 9, Typhoon Neoguri, relatively weak when it passed by Jeju, still managed to dislodge 3 of the breakwater caissons at the Jeju naval base construction site. Each caisson costs several million dollars and will now likely be destroyed without environment concern.

three caissons have been damaged.

I cannot but raise doubts that such results occurred due to the inadequate location of the base construction. One, the naval base is being built on a cape and not in a bay. Two, the naval base is being built on a sandy area.

Three, the south sea of the Jeju Island is greatly and regularly affected by seasonal winds and typhoons. Four, the main sea route chosen by the base passes through a dangerous underwater rock area. The Jeju naval base has to face against such natural disadvantages.

There are clearly limitations to the ability to artificially solve these and similar problems. And in the midst of all this the ROK navy is now facing a budget deficiency.

If the navy cannot face nature it will surely fall short when facing any "enemies" with an operational base!

Emergency Forum Faces a New Conservative Island Government

As a conservative in the ruling party became the new Island governor as a result of this year's June 4th local election, on July 7, "The People Working to Make Jeju the Demilitarized Peace Island" hosted an emergency forum in the City of Jeju, titled, "Where will Jeju, the Peace Island to be Demilitarized Go in the Era of the Won Hee-Ryong Island Government." Yang Yoon-Mo, who was released in April after a full term imprisonment of 1 year and 6 months, was a main organizer of the forum.

The forum was facilitated by Ms. Ahn Hye-Kyung of Arts Space C while Jeju civic group representatives such as Mr. Koh Chang-Geon, Mr. Kang Ho-Jin, Ms. Hong Ri-Ri, Mr. Oh Young-Deok, Dr. Jeong Young-Shin, Prof. Heo Sang-Sou and Mr. Hyun Chi-Hoon made presentations on the following topics respectively: citizens' rights, social economy, women's rights, environmental policy, military base matters, Jeju natives living on the mainland, and youth. Discussions followed, the first being an evaluation of the June 4 local election.

Dr. Jeong Young-Shin, who presented on the topic of military bases and Peace Island, pointed out that the truth investigation process the Won Island government has publically pledged to carry out to examine the truth about the Jeju naval base project could be used as a tool of immunity for government bureaucrats if not carried out thoroughly. He emphasized the need to verify the sincerity of the Island government to act urgently. In addition, he pointed out the need for Jeju civil society to conduct its own urgent self-examination, proposing a way forward for the Island people.

Reminding us that Jeju civil society, including Gangjeong Village, has demanded the realization of a Life and Peace Island, he proposed a future vision of Jeju not based on large-scale development. In the discussion, he expressed a strong sympathy with the proposed idea of 'Peace for the Sea' through inter-island solidarity, an expanded view from that of a 'Peace Island.'

The forum, in which a number of different opinions

were presented from different fields, was an important first step forward in what will be four years under a new conservative Island government. The seeds of future progress have already been planted.



Image : Dolphin

Regis Tremblay's documentary "The Ghosts of Jeju" had its Korean premiere at the Gangjeong Peace Center on August 2.

Gangjeong Hosts Many Young Adult Camps

By Shining Lake

A lot of visitors came to Gangjeong Village in July. Especially at this time of the year, there are more young adult groups than other times. It is their summer vacation time so they came to stay in Gangjeong and want to help in some way for the village. In the second week of July, volunteers came to stay and build houses with the Magaji Housing Co-op. They worked so hard all day long from early morning till very late evening. On many days it was rainy and windy because of typhoon while they are working outside.

In the same week, another young adult group called 'Young Adults Square' visited Gangjeong and stayed for a week. About 60 college students joined many different activities to learn about the Gangjeong struggle such as the human chain, a movie screening of Forgotten Memories of the Korean War, a lecture on US Militarism in Asia and visit to April 3rd Peace Park.

The following week, one more group held a peace camp called 'Peace Pilgrimage'. They are a Christian group and this is their 3rd peace camp in Gangjeong. Approximately 70 participants joined various activities to help villagers and activists such as farming, painting a mural, construction for the housing project, ocean action and making banners. Every night, a peace culture night was held at Gangjeong Port, Peace Center and/or the Village Ceremony Hall. It was really great to have those young adults groups visit in the middle of the hot summer. Their presence brought a new and cheerful energy into the village. It was also a meaningful time for them to learn about the modern history of Korea and its ongoing issues. Gangjeong seems to have become such a learning place for many people to be challenged and to think about peace and justice in the world.

Habitat for Peace Camp Builds Gangjeong Peace

By Magaji Housing Co-op



Image : Cho Sung-Bong

Members of the first team to join the construction camp clear away and organize the Samgeori area in preparation for the buildings.

We, the members of Magaji Housing Co-op, are peace activists currently living in Gangjeong. We have experienced and witnessed the difficulties the peace workers and activists encounter in their attempts to set up home in Gangjeong. In the last few years the rental price has doubled due to the cancellation by the city government of the green belt zone around Gangjeong for the naval base construction. This has instigated broad and serious gentrification. As many construction workers from the naval base rent rooms in Gangjeong, it's almost impossible for the activists to find affordable homes inside the village.

We named our project "Habitat for Peace", because our aim is to build cheap and stable homes for peace activists, who are willing to settle in Gangjeong. We hope to build a foundation for a "peace immigrants' community" in Gangjeong, which could eventually spread out to the entire island and host international peace workers. We envision this project

will support the peace movement in Gangjeong to stay alive and guide the new comers to a life for peace.

From July 7-25, we had a special camp which brought many people to come to help build houses in Gangjeong. The first team that came was 20 people, mostly architecture and design students. Then a second team of around 70 volunteers came.

The teams designed, built and decorated 7 small buildings. These included 4 houses, 1 guest house, 1 community space and 1 communal bathroom, all which are temporarily installed near the Samgeori community cafeteria.

With more people gathering to live in these homes, we expect that a community will form of members who work towards an ecological and peaceful life together. The life of peaceful values that Gangjeong village has birthed can be cherished and nurtured in this community.

International Solidarity



Image : PSPD (People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy)

A die-in protest against the Israel massacre in Gaza on August 2 in Myeongdong, Seoul. Weekly marches and daily one-person protests have been held by Palestine Peace and Solidarity in South Korean and other groups calling for an end to Israeli aggression and in solidarity with Palestinians.

Peace for the Sea International Peace Camp

By Emily Wang

“Peace for the Sea International Peace Camp”, held from Aug 3rd to 6th in Gangjeong village, Jeju Island, aimed to build on the inter-island solidarity for peace among three islands of Okinawa, Taiwan, and Jeju. These three islands, located in East Asia, share a connected background of conflict and face a shared systematical violence of militarism in the region.

Around 50 participants from Okinawa, Taiwan, and Jeju and also from Indonesia, Hawaii, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Spain, Unites States and mainland Korea participated in this program.

Every day, the presenters from Okinawa, Taiwan and Jeju brought us different but connected island stories according to different topics of war bases which are causing environment damage historical struggle, and other aspects of US militarism. These participants have also joined to the daily 100 bows, the human chain activities and the Gangjeong dances in front of the gate of the naval base construction site. Ocean activities and sea protesting during the peace camp was a direct way to show the participants solidarity with Gangjeong. On the last day of peace camp, participants made a common statement of solidarity related to the base and presented it in Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and English in a press conference during the daily human chain activity in front of the Naval Base Construction gate. The camp produced the following statement:

“Here in Jeju, we are furthermore inspired by the courage and integrity of those who have long opposed militarism and state violence in Okinawa and Taiwan and other islands in East Asia. We share parallel backgrounds and many common experiences, and we stand in solidarity as we engage in a common struggle against anti-democratic militarism.

We also share a close kinship with the sea, and we embrace our duty to protect the right to peaceful oceans, which is our common human inheritance.

We therefore challenge the manifestations of state violence on Okinawa, Taiwan and Jeju. Given that reducing military tensions in Northeast Asia is essential to promoting peace throughout the world, all three islands must be demilitarized and restored to their former long-standing existence as peaceful communities at the maritime crossroads of Northeast Asia. For the sake of a more secure future in the region and for the world, we urgently call for a newly Demilitarized Peace Area without military bases in Okinawa, Taiwan and Jeju.”

We regard the outcome of the Peace for Sea International Peace Camp as an important steps for the demilitarization of the peace islands in addition to the regional and world peace. Next year, our friends from Okinawa invite you to their islands to speak out for peace to the world with the same spirit. And then the year after to Taiwan...

The Frolics of Defiance in Gangjeong

By Kim Youngnan

By the end of the first “Peace for the Sea” International Peace Camp, we participants had gathered many good memories among new friends, but one experience very familiar to Gangjeong activists left a lasting impression on me...

Occurring every day at the main gate to the construction site in Gangjeong, the midday direct actions have a touch of the surreal. As participants in the Peace Camp, we were invited to join the Gangjeong activists for these events, and we initially stood beside them as they began to line the street in front of the construction gate. Then, with music piped in through an outdoor sound system, we newbies tried to follow along as the others moved fluidly in sync with each other in expressive, sometimes cheeky dance motions cued to the upbeat songs whose Korean lyrics celebrate Gangjeong and protest the naval-base construction. As we danced and guards tried to move us away, at least a few hulking cement trucks or other construction vehicles would be stalled each day, waiting for the entrance into the construction site to clear. At one point, we all joined hands and swung forward into the street; at other points, we clustered in smaller groups and circled around. It all seemed more festive than any other protest movement I had ever seen...What is happening during this time, which seems like a temporary “blockade-by-dance-party”? The Gangjeong activists in fact do not explicitly refer to them as “protests” but rather as a “time for getting to know people.” [...]

[...] The midday gatherings seemed to reflect an important lesson that Gangjeong can offer regarding a question that has likely faced us all: In a long-standing confrontation against militarism, how can we sustain a movement for peace? The Peace Camp gave us inspiring answers in so many ways. It is by sharing not only information but also stories and life histories; it is by engaging not only in acts of resistance, but also in ways of having fun together. I loved how the Peace Camp included so many activities that nurtured our spirits, as there was time set aside to enjoy music, art, storytelling, dance, and the delights of nature, particularly the unforgettable afternoon we spent playing in the crystal-clear water among the rocks of Gangjeong Stream. [...]

Learning about Taiwan from the Outside

By Cindi Lin

“Why are you going to Korea to join the anti-naval base protest?” asked most of my Taiwanese friends before my journey to the peace camp as they couldn’t see the relationship between the Gangjeong naval base and Taiwan. To be frank, as an ordinary citizen, I was also unable to answer this question...I am not an activist; I didn’t aggressively plan to go to Gangjeong one day after hearing the story. It was not until a professor invited me to share stories about Taiwan to international friends at the peace camp. During the camp, I unexpectedly newly met a family member who had been a victim during the White Terror period, a time I knew little about.

Not until when I was in my 20s did I learn more about Japanese colonial history in Taiwan in Okinawa. I didn’t know there was a US army base in Taiwan during the Vietnam War, or that the base was actually near to my hometown, Ching Shui. This history is not clearly mentioned in textbooks. All I learned from Taiwanese middle school textbooks is how Taiwanese people resisted the Japanese Colonial government and how American soldiers heroically helped China to triumph in WWII. All the impressions left on me during school were overturned after I met my Okinawan friends. Before that I couldn’t relate to the fact that Taiwan and Okinawa were actually part of the same country during 1876~1949, it was only a border marked by our dominators that separated us...While we were back in high school, the February 28 Incident and White Terror era were only mentioned in a few pages of our textbooks. I didn’t feel much sympathy over the incident...However, citizens like Mr. Tsai are striving to preserve the history. I and Great Uncle Tsai are actually distant relatives...This is my first time to listen to the matters of what really happened in that age from a family member. Listening to his story, the image became vivid. It is definitely not just another sad story. The incident became something to be memorable from sense of my skin. Even though the Peace for the Sea International Peace Camp was against the US naval bases, the thing that impressed me the most was learning more about Taiwanese history from outside Taiwan...The phenomenon of the contradiction between government propaganda and unknown civilian history exists not only in Taiwan, but is a significant issue throughout all of Asia. This makes solidarity important. [...]

Impressions on Joining Peace Camp

By Orié Saito

[...] The street atmosphere, history, and situation of the Gangjeong village are very similar to Okinawa and it made me want to show it to the people of Okinawa. I also thought that I would like to bring to Gangjeong the messages and nature where the Okinawa people have put their hearts. Cultural exchange is important. Unity and solidarity are as well. In the past, I wanted to be a sea-diving woman and this time I was able to see the sea-diving women of Jeju. It made me want to live in Jeju and be a sea-diving woman, but as I joined the peace camp, I realized that as a Japanese person, I cannot escape from Okinawa. I have many friends there who I want to continue on with in friendship. Still, I like Gangjeong stream. I like the look of it, especially its big rocks. If I could see it, I'm sure that I would like Gureombi as well. I'm sorry that I can't see it.

During this peace camp, I also joined sea protests. Even though there are sea protests in Henoko, I have not yet personally joined them myself. But in the future I think I will live in Henoko to participate in such actions, so this camp was like a way to practice for me. I think we must never give up. Things only end when no one is willing to fight. Especially, Korean-Japanese relationships for exchange are very important because of our histories.

International Peace Camp

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1. Group picture after the ocean activity at Moetburi.
2. Participants hold flags.
3. Peace for the Sea! Demilitarized Peaceful Island!
4. Kayaking in the ocean.
5. An activist from the USA plays guitar while surrounded by police in front of the construction site.
6. Participants listen carefully to a lecture.

Images : Shin Jee-In



2014 Gangjeong Grand March for Life and Peace

By Shining Lake

'Remember the History of Resistance! Stop the Jeju Naval Base'

The Gangjeong Grand March for Peace & Life was held from July 29th till August 2nd. The theme was 'Remember the history of resistance, Stop the Jeju naval base'. The march started from Jeju Government Hall with participants from Jeju, the mainland and abroad. Participants walked a total of 68 km, passing by Hangpaduri, Saebyul Oreum and Hwasoon. Every day, some 300 participants walked together in rain and sweat soaked clothes all day in spite of the strong sun and a typhoon, shouting 'No naval base!' In particular, this year participants could learn about the history of resistance on Jeju by visiting several different historical sites from the Goryeo Dynasty, Japanese occupation and Jeju April 3rd Massacre.

Many of the participants had joined the two previous marches in 2012 and 2013 and joined again to continue their support for the Gangjeong struggle, believing the Jeju naval base construction project will be cancelled one day. In the meantime, international participants from Okinawa, New Zealand, Australia, USA, Lebanon and the UK raised their voices against the militarization of Jeju and the world. The march was co-hosted by a total of 107 different organizations and groups from Jeju and the mainland. At the closing event on the last day, Gangjeong Village Mayor, Cho Kyung-chul gave a speech in which he explained how grateful he was to everyone for their participation, for making the event so successful, and for their encouragement in sustaining this long struggle. Although the Grand March has ended, the struggle against the Jeju naval base is not over yet!



Lina K.

Through the scorching sun, wind and rain we marched. The energy of the crowd the music the songs and the many delicious snacks kept us going. Children, parents, activists, students, teachers, Catholic nuns, Buddhist chanting and the support of the Gangjeong community and Bishop Kang U-II among others motivated all to complete the march from Jeju city to beautiful Gangjeong. The event was a fun social gathering that brought people from all walks of life to support peace and oppose the environmental and social harm caused by military bases.

Personally, I found the march to be very hard to complete over four days, however along the way I met many new friends, had many interesting conversations, loved the beautiful scenery of Jeju Island and enjoyed the delicious healthy meals that we were provided with. The Peace March was a great opportunity for everyone involved to show support for and solidarity with the Gangjeong community, and to acknowledge their hard long struggle. This Peace March was a small microcosm of a bigger transnational community that advocates for peace and peacefully resists state and military violence.



Seth

Experiencing intense humidity and sunlight as well as heavy rains and wind during the four day walk helped us to bond together quickly, and it brought home the reality of what a diverse and precious place Jeju Island is. So many children, parents, students and grandparents from Korea and all over the globe -walking and eating and singing together.

It struck me several times how lucky we were to be walking together like this, in our shared goal of preserving Jeju as a non-militarized island where peaceful, simple relationships with land, neighbor and self remain possible.

What an absurd tragedy that such profoundly important and basic human needs are under attack. And who is benefitting from this "progress" that alienates neighbor from neighbor, human from landscape, and makes it increasingly difficult to listen to one another and the land?

Walking for peace in Jeju is walking for peace in the world. We must keep walking together, eating together, singing together, and sharing our thankfulness for land and friendship. We must keep building our resolve to resist the evil that would take away such fundamental human needs in exchange for money, "security" and power. What an honor to be on the Earth's side in this struggle.



Yuchi Kamoshita

Since I started to think about Peace in my life, I have reflected on Korea, China, and Taiwan as well as other Asian countries who were invaded by imperial Japanese army. As our grand or great-grand parents helped to invade these countries, I always have some deep pain in my heart.

We continue to have difficult relationships between these countries and this issue is always played in the political games which can disturb a mutual understanding that is reached between civilians...The importance of international solidarity at the grass roots level is now becoming increasingly important.

I joined the Grand March 2014 in Jeju and I had several reasons to walk this island. Of course, to express my feelings against the naval base, but also to offer a prayer for the victims of 4·3 and victims of the Japanese colonization. To feel Jeju, to understand the way of life. The great nature of Jeju gives life to the people of this island. To meet and communicate with people of Korea and international friends.

By visiting Gangjeong village and joining the movement I was inspired by the leadership of religious people and a presence of international team. I also met a lot of young people take a part in this movement which I haven't seen in Okinawa's movement. It is my hope that more religious people stand up and dedicate their lives to the peace and social activities. Now Okinawa's struggle is facing a turning point. The expansion of Camp Schwab at Henoko has now started. I believe that people of Okinawa need more international solidarity now. Humbly, I ask the people of Korea to come to stay in Okinawa for support and encourage the movement.



Tom

It was a wonderful experience joining the Grand March this year with local residents, friends and solidarity activists. Marches have long been a common form of protest, solidarity building and awareness raising in Korea, connecting people from a broad range of social struggles. To me, the experience was as much about spending time with people and learning by sharing ideas as it was about making a statement against the destruction of Gangjeong and the militarization of Jeju. The cultural elements of the march such as song and dance added an important social aspect.

One vivid memory is of Seth Martin and his banjo offering an impromptu performance to youngsters in a circle at the end of the third day of the march. Another personal highlight was climbing the volcanic rock formation of Sebyeol Oreum. Atop the grassy hill, participants gathered to fly flags.



International solidarity messages received for the 2014 Gangjeong Grand March for Life and Peace (Excerpts)

From here in Kabul, we're grateful to catch courage from you. Wars and threats of increasing violence afflict Afghanistan, and so we are all the more grateful for your insistence that we can nonviolently resist the war makers. - Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Non-Violence

Your flag flies at the Tuesday weekly demonstration when we gather at the American base, NSA/NRO Menwith Hill. - Lindis Percy, Campaign for the Accountability of American Bases

You walk for all the people of the world who dream and struggle for peace and justice. Peace for Jeju! Peace for the world! - Kyle Kajihiro, Hawai'i Peace and Justice/DMZ-Hawai'i /Aloha' Aina Network

Every day we remember and are thankful for the activists who are in a prison cell. Your persistence and faithfulness is an inspiration to so many around the world. - Jack and Felice Cohen-Joppa, The Nuclear Resister

Your struggle is our struggle and an international struggle against warmongers who destroy people's environment and peace. - Angie Zelter, Trident Ploughshares

Seeing the current insanity towards ordinary people in Gaza and Ukraine, struggles in Gangjeong remind us of the conscience and the sensibility of human beings. - Makiko Sato, Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space



Gangjeong 2014 Grand March for Life and Peace

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1. The march in beautiful nature of Jeju.
2. International participants with bishop Kang Woo-Il.
3. Musicians play and sing.
4. Climbing Saebyeol Oreum.
5. Children play on Hwasun Beach.
6. Marching in the forest with music.

Images : Song Dong-Hyo, Lee Woo-Ki

"I Cannot Remain Impartial Before Such Huge Grief"

By Fr. Pat Cunningham



Image : Gangjeong Village Story

Catholics' fast and pray in central Seoul in solidarity with the Sewol ferry victims' families search for truth and justice.

120 days after the sinking of the ferry, a national tragedy causing great pain and national introspection and among rash and inhumane calls from some quarters calling for the country to 'move on'; Pope Francis' arrival seemed fortuitous as it helped refocus national attention and bring the media spotlight right back on the harrowing grief of the families. Their call for an independent and transparent investigation and the enactment of special legislation and prosecutions of those found guilty still falls on deaf ears. However, the catchphrase 'the Sewol may have sunk but the truth will not sink' underlines the determination of families and supporters alike that such tragedies be prevented from happening again. In the run up to the beatification ceremony on Aug 16, Fr. Mun Jeong-Hyeon, the Catholic Priests Association for Justice and religious have been engaged in a 16 day prayer fast in

solidarity with the families protesting the government's inaction. On his car parade around Gwangwhamun Pope Francis met with Kim Young-oh, (presently on his 38th day of hunger strike) the father of one of the students and he also complied with the heartfelt desire of Lee Ho-Jin, the father of another victim for baptism and proceeded to invite him to the enunciator in Seoul where he conducted the ceremony.

Apparently advised not to wear a yellow ribbon, which is a symbol of tribute to the Sewol victims the Pope replied "I cannot be impartial before such huge grief." Their grief and their call for justice was in his heart and his outpouring of sympathy and care for those deeply hurting was in marked contrast to a government seemingly so distant, harsh and out of touch with a people's cry for justice.

World Council of Churches Calls on Members to Oppose Jeju Naval Base

Last fall, from October 30 until November 8, 2013, The World Council of Churches (WCC) held its every 7-years global assembly in Busan on the southern tip of the mainland of Korea. Gangjeong villagers, activists and supporters hosted both a workshop on inter-island solidarity and an exhibition booth about Gangjeong's struggle. At the time, Gangjeong's struggle was also brought before the assembly as an issue to be discussed in the official statements released each time by the WCC. The public issues committee and the WCC delegates which had the delegated authority to choose which issues would appear in official statements, voted to choose Gangjeong. Gangjeong and its supporters were overjoyed, however due to unresolved issues, there was not time to finish and release the official statement by the end of the assembly and it was pushed back to July 2014 when the WCC central committee would meet again to resolve remaining issues. Finally, from July 2-8, the central committee met in Geneva, Switzerland. There they finished the remaining statements and released them including the one related to Gangjeong.

In an official statement entitled, "Statement towards a Nuclear-free World", the WCC called on "member churches and related ministries and networks" to "Oppose the expansion of military bases, nuclear forces and missile defences in Asia or targeting Asia, and raise awareness of public resistance to such military expansion including the new naval base at Gangjeong Village on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea."

According to the WCC, they represent over 500 million Christians in more than 110 countries, making them one of the world's largest religious councils. This clear mandate for its member churches, ministries and networks to oppose the Gangjeong naval base is a major win for the Gangjeong struggle!

The Tyranny of KEPCO in Cheongdo

By Sister Roselina

Cheongdo-gun in Gyeongbuk was once a quiet rural farming village where 84 residents lived. In 2009, residents became aware that a 345kV transmission tower was going to be constructed in their village. All of the residents were opposed to the tower at the time, but now there are only 17 left continuing to protest against KEPCO's (Korea Electric Power Corporation) ongoing project.

Over the past 6 years, KEPCO has never given a full public explanation to explain to the villagers of Miryang and the Cheongdo why the transmission towers have to be built in these rural areas or why the transmission line cannot be buried underground. So on August 7th National Assemblyman Kim Jenam visited Cheongdo to appeal to the public and KEPCO through dialogue, but KEPCO refused his request to meet.

Seven transmission towers are planned to be constructed in Cheongdo. Among these, towers No. 22 and No. 24 have already been constructed. Tower No. 23 poses a danger as it is being constructed within 100 meters of residents' homes. On August 8th, the police arrested Baek Changuk, representative of the Cheongdo Joint Committee for Opposing the 345kV Transmission Towers who had prevented KEPCO from building the towers. Including Baek, 22 peacekeepers have been arrested by the police to date. However, on the 10th of August the Daegu Lower Court dismissed the accusation of obstruction of business brought against the protestors by KEPCO. At night, villagers eat dinner and sing songs together alongside Committee members in the protest tent. But if the towers are built, no one knows how they will live.

Trial Updates



- ▶ On July 2, Rev. Kim Hong-Sul was fined 3 million KRW (about \$3,000 USD) after being charged with obstruction of business and obstruction of justice. In January 2013, he performed 3,000 peace bows alongside National Assembly members in front of the main construction gate to demand that the ruling and opposition parties keep to their agreement to suspend construction during a 70-day verification period. He had already been handed down a Supreme Court sentence of imprisonment for 1 year with a 2-year suspension for protesting the blasting of the Gureombi Rock in 2012.
- ▶ On July 3, the Supreme Court dismissed an appeal by Kim Eun-Hye, a young female peacekeeper who was unjustly imprisoned for 94 days in 2013 as a result of the First Court decision in which she was falsely charged with assault. As a result of the Supreme Court's dismissal of her appeal, her sentence of 8 months imprisonment suspended for 2 years will be retained. The courts were never able to find proof of her use of 'violence,' and therefore she has been imprisoned simply for the 'possibility' of using violence.
- ▶ On Aug. 8, two male peacekeepers, Kim K.N. and Kim Haku were handed down First Court decisions of 6 months' imprisonment suspended for 2 years with an additional 100 hours of community service (for the charge of obstruction of justice) and a 1 million KRW (about \$1,000 USD) fine (for the charge of insulting a police officer) respectively. The two were accused of committing the offenses when they supported a Catholic brother by protesting to the police during a daily mass in Nov. 2013.

One of the features of recent trials is that more and more Gangjeong protesters are receiving additional punishments such as supervised protection and/or community service. In particular, the former, which used to be applied only to general crimes is being used as a means to weaken the will of protesters. Under such punishment, one's daily life is not only monitored but one has to report on their whereabouts once a month. Community service forces one to complete a certain number of labor hours, limiting one's freedom.

- ▶ In addition, following the imprisonment of Lee Jong-Hwa and Park Seung-Ho on July 3, two other peacekeepers, Ms. Choi Y. M. and Mr. Jang Joon-Hoo were imprisoned on July 22 and Aug. 8, respectively, for refusing to pay fines. Jang was released after 5 days and Choi after 16 days. Park Seung-Ho was released on August 27 after 56 days.

**Gangjeong
Prisoners
of
Conscience**

No.

319

Mr. Lee Jong-Hwa
Since July 3, 2014

Thanks for the letters you have sent so far. Mr. Lee is expected to be released in early September.



No More War Exercises!

No to RIMPAC!

June 26 - August 1

No to Uiji Freedom Guardian!

August 18 - 28

Change in Behavior of Gangjeong's Sweetfish

The behavior of sweetfish (euneo) in Gangjeong River has changed according to Gangjeong Young Men's Group.

According to the report from the recent evaluation conducted by the Korean Navy, the number of sweetfish living in Gangjeong river has diminished to less than a half that of last year. Go Jong-Hwa, former chairman of the Gangjeong Young Men's Group, said that he couldn't find the usual schools of fish this time. Yoon Ho-Kyung, another former chairman of the same group, explained that the marine construction work might not be the only reason for the decline in the number of the fish; while it is true that the ocean area where the fish breed has been destroyed, there may be many other factors influencing the ecology such as the onshore environment.

According to Yoon, "Sweetfish eat water moss. When the number of sweetfish diminishes, the water becomes contaminated. Once, agricultural pesticides leaked into the river and killed many sweetfish, causing the amount of moss to increase abnormally and creating a rotting smell." He stressed the importance of taking immediate action and suggested possible actions that could be taken by villagers and activists such as building an artificial fish-way for sweetfish to ascend the river:

"Every year, the Gangjeong Young Men's Group volunteer to restore the fish-way and guide the fish upstream by hand, but it's never enough. The fish should be able to reach the upper region of the river by themselves, which is essential for maintaining their numbers. We must push for a project to install a proper fish-way as soon as possible."

Go Man-Seok, current chief of the group, said that it's also absolutely necessary to come up with an original solution to prevent visitors from discharging raw wastewater. He urged for an installation near where Gangjeong River meets the ocean, known as Moetburi, to filter the wastewater and sent it to a disposal facility, so that visitors could enjoy the river without polluting it.



Image : Joyakgol

During the end of July and the beginning of August, an Irish film crew came to Gangjeong. They will create a 25-minute documentary about the peace movement in Jeju. It will be aired in November on the Irish TV Channel, RTE. Here they interview Jeong Young-Hee, farmer and Gangjeong Women's Anti-Base Committee Chairwoman.

How You Can Help

1. Write letters to Gangjeong's prisoners of conscience.
2. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
3. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...)
4. then share about it on social media.
Visit Gangjeong!
5. For other ways to help and more visit us on the web.

For More Information

<http://www.SaveJejuNow.org>
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/NoNavalBase>
<http://www.facebook.com/SaveJeju>
<http://www.twitter.com/SaveJejuNow>

For Gangjeong related videos, visit savejejunow.org or check these Vimeo/YouTube users :

Vimeo : cho sung bong / DH Song / Regis Tremblay
Youtube : Gang-Jeong Il-Gi / Shalomsea / 1234yz100 / Sungbong2012

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Theme
Disarmament in North East Asia -
Theological Reflection and Analysis

• Opening ceremony begins with welcome by the Gangjeong Defenders, traditional Korean percussion, and an opening Mass.

• Conference content
Keynote Lectures : Bishop Kang Woo-il, Stephen Kelly, SJ (US), Bishop Tani Daigi (Japan), Responses by Lee Taeho (PSPD), Cheong Wooksik (Peace Network).
Focus Group Discussion : Domestic and international experts and activists for demilitarization and peace.
Venue : Seogwipo Parish (except opening keynote)

• Gangjeong Village
100 Morning Bows for Peace, Gangjeong History and Culture Tour, Photo Exhibition documenting disarmament activism and the daily lives of activists, Gangjeong Dance rehearsal, Cross of Peace activity, Contemplative Prayer Walk, Concert, children's program Evening Talk - Brother Han Yul.

Participants Open to all interested persons
Participation fee confer registration form (food, lodging, mementos)
Jeju Diocese participants contact parishes.
Registration Please contact the Jesuit Research Center for Advocacy and Solidarity by Sep. 10 if possible.
jesuitadvocacy@sogang.ac.kr tel. 02) 3276-7708
Facebook: Jesuit Advocacy

2014.9.26~28 Gangjeong Village / Seogwipo Parish

Conveners Catholic Jeju Diocese, Korea Province of the Society of Jesus Cooperation Gangjeong Village Citizens Association, Gangjeong Defenders
Support Justice and Peace Commission of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Korea, Catholic Solidarity for realization of the Jeju, Peace Island
Korean Conference of Major Superiors of Men's Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life, Association of Major Superiors of Religious Women in Korea

Gangjeong/Jeju Cultural Events in Seoul

By Shining Lake & Pang Eun-Mi

August and July saw two different Gangjeong and Jeju related cultural events in Seoul. First, the play, I-Nyeok, meaning 'you' in Jeju dialect, was performed 12 times in Seoul from July 24 to August 3. The play was directed by Gangjeong activist Pang Eun-Mi and tells the story of Gangjeong. According to Pang:

"I was passing by Gangjeong. I witnessed a scene in which the nation in collusion with chaebols (conglomerates) was slaughtering Gureombi Rock which is itself about 30,000 years old and located in a community that has been living for together for 500 years. Villagers said they had been struggling for five years. But the media had been derelict of duty, so people on the mainland didn't know at all. Just as in the April 3rd massacre in 1948. I couldn't just pass by. Villagers and peace activists shouted and cried together, 'Stop the construction, leave Gangjeong and Gureombi as they are!' Development capital and the nation are stronger than those of us who want to protect nature and peace so they trample on us. In the end I made this play as a way of raising awareness of what is happening Gangjeong to people. I-Nyeok is a monodrama containing five different roles of women who hope to lead simple and peaceful lives with the ocean and Gureombi...but despite their hopes being brutally destroyed by governmental (state) power."

Meanwhile, Jane Jin Kaisen, a visual artist and filmmaker born on Jeju but raised by an adopted family in Denmark held the first screening of her new film 'Reiterations of Dissent' on the 8th of August at the 14th Seoul International New Media Festival.

'Reiterations of Dissent' explores the suppressed history and the fragmented memories of the Jeju April 3rd Massacre of 1948. Through six video narratives, Kaisen uncovers various underlying political motivations and portrays how different aspects of an unreconciled trauma keep resonating in the present landscape of Jeju Island. The artist explores this history through literature, the memories of survivors and relatives, and through shamanistic rituals mediating between the living and the dead.

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GANGJEONG
FRIENDS!

[HTTP://CAFE.DAUM.NET/GANGJEONG79S/POK7/1](http://cafe.daum.net/gangjeong79s/pok7/1)

August 6 and 9, 2014.
69 years since the brutal
and terrible atomic bombing
of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.