

# GANGJEONG VILLAGE STORY

September 2015

Monthly news on the struggle against the Jeju Naval base project

Published by Gangjeong Village in Jeju, South Korea



Image by Haryn- On the 16th of September, early in the morning, Aegis destroyers including Sejong the Great, made their first entry into the currently being built Jeju naval base. The navy mentioned that they were testing how the ships would be entering the base alongside the pier. The navy is planning to send a total of 22 military ships by mid-October to conduct similar tests.

## Peace for the Sea to be continued!

Article by Emily Wang

To make Peace for the Sea in East Asia, firstly, we need to engage the islands divided by borders but actually connected by the sea to recognize the common challenges we face and create the people's power to overcome the national government and global empire's oppression on us. Following the 1st Peace for Sea International Peace Camp (PC) in Gangjeong, Jeju Island in 2014, the 2nd PC was held from Sep 19 to 23rd in Henoko, Okinawa.

Around 25 people from Jeju and Korea, around 15 from Taiwan, and around 30 people from Okinawa and other areas have altogether formed a great team to learn about Okinawa's war history and peace struggle from the direct field trip. The sharing and presentations of the participants from different islands strengthened the interactions to create a peace solidarity across all borders.

The Okinawa PC also involved direct action like

kayaking in Oura bay and picketing and protesting in front of the gate of camp shwab where the construction cars for Henoko new base used to pass by.

Every morning at 6 am, participants went to the gate for picketing and then went back for the breakfast and other programs. In the last morning of PC, Emily, one of PC participant, in her 7 month pregnancy joined the picketing besides the sit-in protesters.

While removing the sit-in protesters, one male police tried to drag Emily away even though she didn't join the sit-in protest. Her husband ran to protect his pregnant wife and explained to the police that she is pregnant, but unfortunately he was violently dragged away immediately. Worrying a lot about the safety of his wife. He resisted the police and while being dragged he kicked one policeman without meaning to. Thus, he got arrested. This was the first arrest of a foreigner in the Henoko struggle. The detention was

unexpectedly prolonged to 10 days by the prosecutor, and the main questions the husband received was not about the incident but about the Peace for Sea International Peace Camp.

Due to the arrest, all the Peace Camp participants protested in front of the police station, and first handedly witnessed the real human rights situation in Henoko. By realizing how militarism destroyed nature and life, all the PC participants made a common declaration to demand a stop to military exercises, and military constructions including the base construction in Gangjeong, Takae, Yonaguni, Ishigaki, Miyako, Henoko.

Concluding the camp, the team from Taiwan volunteered to hold the 3rd Peace Camp in Taiwan. Step by step, we are on the way to achieving Peace for Sea!

## The Real Struggle Starts Now

By Sunny

(An excerpt from Bishop Kang U-il's long address during the opening mass of the St. Francis Peace Center on Sept. 5.)

There are people who ask whether the struggle has finished, now that the naval base is almost completed. No, the struggle has not finished. The real struggle starts now. In April 2005, I expressed my opinions, for the first time, against the naval base construction. I gave five reasons:

First, war is a tragedy. It cannot be a solution among nations. It has not been a solution in the past nor will it be in the future.

Second, when a state power employs military forces, self-defense can only be justified through strict conditions that gain support from the citizens. The mobilization of state power through the Gangjeong naval base can never be called self-defense.

Third, modern weaponries are man-killing weapons on a massive scale. The expansion of military arms cannot lead to peace.

Fourth, we are dumping tremendous budgets into arms production. What if this money was used for the nation's progress, for the poor?

Finally, why should there be a military base in Jeju? An island wounded by the April 3rd incident? Jeju is a Peace Island, designated by the government. The relationship between any military base and the Peace Island is like water and oil.

There are people who say that there is no more need for the struggle since the Gangjeong base has been almost completed. No, the real struggle starts now.



Image by Inter-island Solidarity for the Sea of Peace. During the Peace Camp for the Sea of Peace, Okinawa, 2015, some participants had the chance to take kayaks in the sea of Henoko.

## The 2nd Gangjeong Peace Conference

After months of preparation, the 2015 Gangjeong Peace Conference was held from September 7-9 at the St. Francis Peace Center in Gangjeong village with the invited 70 participants and 130 attendants. The first speaker, Bishop Kang Woo Il, criticized our dehumanized world where the possibility of peace is decreasing due to neoliberalism. The second speaker, Professor Go Chang Hun, of Jeju National University, said that "international organizations need to designate Jeju as a UNESCO international protected area, and as a buffer zone of peace between the US and China."

The third presentation was made by Magosaki Ukeru from Japan. He said, "The US does not like Japan and South Korea to go into appeasement diplomacy with North Korea. China does not want tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Japan, China and South Korea should discuss seriously the easing of tensions on the Korean Peninsula."

The first evening, a banquet was held for the invited participants, Gangjeong villagers and activists. On Sep 8th, the Bishop of Okinawa discussed the military base situation and peace activities in Okinawa. Subsequently, participants were divided into three small groups; the Group for Converting Aldreu Airfield into a Peace Park, the Group for Solidarity in Northeast Asia, and the Group for Peace Education. Participants joined the daily Gangjeong Life Peace Mass, the human chain, and the Gangjeong dances at the entrance to the naval base construction site. In the afternoon, speakers from each of the three groups gave presentations about their group's work. Asitomi Hiroshi, a representative from Henoko, gave a presentation to the members who belonged to the Group for Solidarity in Northeast Asia.

## Hotpinkdolphins went to Taiji to stop dolphin hunt

By Joyakgol

Ever since Hotpinkdolphins commenced dolphinarium boycott campaign in 2011 and after returning successfully five captive dolphins back to their home Jeju sea in 2015, one might think that the number of dolphins kept in the tank in South Korea has been decreasing. On the contrary, it is rising. There used to be 27 captive dolphins in July 2011, but as of September 2015, there are 44 performance cetaceans in Korea and 30 of them are from Taiji, Japan, the notorious dolphin hunt village that catches thousands of dolphins and whales every year.

We were appalled to know that a whopping 70 % of them were caught and sent all the way to here from the tiny whaling town which we believed was one of the biggest supporting pillars of the dolphin show industry. We wanted to do something about it. The dolphin hunt season starts in September 1, so we held a press conference on the day in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul to demand a halt of the killing and tried to deliver our letter to an official but then they refused to listen to our opinion. So Hotpinkdolphins flew all the way into the belly of the beast.

Every morning at 5 o'clock, we would wake up and walk to the harbor where 14 hunting boats go out to the sea. We would monitor daily situation, take pictures and post them on the internet. We didn't break any law but the Japanese police wouldn't leave us alone. They followed us everywhere, questioning us, holding us for several hours, disturbing us. With the help from the police, the Taiji hunters drive dolphins to the cove and the water turns red today. The cruelty has to stop.

## Henoko Resistance Continues.

By Dongseok

On Sept. 19th, despite people's protests and parliament members' oppositions the security drill (war drill) was passed in the general meeting of the Upper House, Japan. It is to allow Japanese self-defense military activities by expanding Japan's intervention in international conflicts. On Sept. 21st, Onaga Takeshi, the Okinawa governor, made an address in the UN Human Rights Council, in Geneva. He appealed for people's right to self-determination and human rights in Henoko, Okinawa.

He posed the question "how a nation that can not protect its people's freedom, equality, and democracy can share one's values with other nations in the world?" The Japanese Government is imposing a new base construction in Henoko, ignoring people's opinion shown in the election in Okinawa last year, he expressed his will to stop the new base construction with various legal ways. On Sept. 30th, the sit-in in front of Camp Schwab, Henoko, hit its 450th day.

## The Trans-Pacific Partnership

By Sunny

Not well known to the public is the Asia Pivot's economic strategy termed the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). According to Hyun Lee of Nodutdol (a progressive Korean organization advocating for social change), the TPP is designed to put economic pressure on China. Lee argues that the TPP is a geopolitical tool for the United States to control the Asia Pacific region by strategically undermining China's economic alliances by the US creating its own economic block around the Asian region. Japan, Australia, Brunei, Singapore, and soon also South Korea, are all part of the TPP and also take part in joint US Navy/military exercises. As China's influence wanes, it will be forced to join the TPP, which will negatively affect the Chinese economy due to the agreement's strict intellectual property protection, state-owned enterprise regulations, and high labor and environmental standards.

The inevitability of the TPP is urgent today in light of the recent Article 9 revision by the Japanese government and the Aegis destroyer deployment to Gangjeong. The TPP follows these military arrangements with its own economic agreements, with the difference between changes to Article 9, the deployment of the Aegis destroyer and the TPP is that the TPP is difficult to see and context as it happens in secret meetings of corporate lawyers and investors. We must understand urgently how to resist the TPP as it applies to the Gangjeong people as much as every citizen bound to the TPP.



Image by Inter-island Solidarity for the Sea of Peace. In the southwest of Okinawa prefecture, Yonaguni, Ishigaki, Miyago islands are facing the threat of Self Defense Force base construction. An SDF base has no real difference from a US base. Our visit to Yonaguni and Ishigaki aimed to strengthen inter-island solidarity even within Okinawa prefecture in order to create a genuine sea of peace in East Asia.

## International Solidarity



Image by an event organizer/ On Sept 11 Pat Cunningham shared with participants of the May 18 Memorial Foundation's annual 'Academy' held in Gwangju on the theme of 'Peace in Gangjeong, peace on the peninsula'. The 22 participants from Asian and African countries send their deepest support and solidarity to the people of Gangjeong and some expressed a wish to visit Gangjeong in the future.

# Daelim to suffocate Gangjeong financially, again

As the war base construction is allegedly reaching to the final stage with Aegis warships docking at Gangjeong port, it was recently reported that Daelim, one of the two major constructors of Jeju naval base along with Samsung, claimed compensation of approximately 20 million dollars to the Korean Navy for the construction delay.

A lawmaker revealed in September 22 a document presented by the Ministry of Defense that Daelim sought the compensation money to the government, claiming anti-base protests caused

a big loss and the Navy replied that an arbitration process would solve the claim.

Just like Samsung that claimed about 33 million USD compensation to the Navy for the delay of commencement of construction, Daelim in trying to suffocate Gangjeong village financially.

Last month, the Navy had to give to Samsung about 25 million USD indemnification which the state apparatus vows to have anti-government civic groups pay. Then, who are the anti-government civic groups?

Gangjeong villagers, Jeju islanders and all the common people who don't want to see the pristine island turn into a heavily-militarized war-preparing the geo-political forefront. It's us. You and me. What a price to pay!

The whole southern part of Jeju is becoming like an unsinkable aircraft carrier. I don't mind paying but we need to stop the war drums.

(1 US dollar=approx. 1,100 KRW)



Image by Gangjeong Village Story: The navy is building a detour road which directs to so called cruise terminal currently in construction. Excavation investigation on cultural treasure which is a part of construction is being done just behind the communal restaurant.

## Watching Samsung

Six people who made a performance protest about Samsung three years ago led a press conference in front of Samsung headquarter on 2 September. They denounced Samsung C & T who will receive compensation of approximately 25 million USD from the Government, after its demand of additional cost of about 33 million USD due to the delayed construction of the naval base. The navy has stated that it will demand reimbursement from the villagers and activists. This press conference coincided with the 4th year of remembrance for the Gureombi fence when the navy blockaded the road to the Gureombi Rock coast on 2 September, 2011.

It was on 19 March, 2012 that the six carried out a performance entitled 'the Bleeding Gureombi' in front of the Samsung C & T building, as a way to highlight the crime of building a naval base through their company. Prosecutors asserted that the six violated more than four laws, however the court stated that the six are free in more than half charges. Acknowledging charges only in parts, the court made a decision to fine them approximately 450 USD for each member. The Supreme Court dismissed the prosecutors' appeal on 23 June this year so the original court decision was maintained.

## Trial Updates

▶ On 10 September, the high court dismissed an appeal by a peace activist, Park Jong-Hoon so the 1st court decision of one year imprisonment suspended with two year probation, and 120 social service hours on him was maintained. He will soon apply for an appeal to the Supreme Court.

▶ On 14 September, the Media Choongchung reported that the Daejeon regional court made a decision to pay compensation to its reporter, Ms. Jung Jae-Eun. Jung had applied for compensation following the court decision of not guilty when she was indicted for the charge of violating the law of light crime. In 2011, Jung crossed the naval base construction fence twice along with Catholic priests and peace activists and reported on their entry to the Gureombi Rock with articles and photos. The prosecutors made a summary indictment on her in violation of the law of light crime, however Jung disobeyed this indictment and applied for a regular trial. The original court made the decision of not guilty in 2013 and the higher court dismissed prosecutor's appeal. Jung's lawyer stated that the Daejeon court decision made it clear that this was for the protection of a basic right to freedom of media.

## The Song of Gangjeong

By Brando

I've been listening to Leonard Cohen for 23 years. His masterful words speak volumes, and they speak succinctly, with elegance, humor, and with "a love so vast and scattered it can greet you anywhere," as he sings in "Heart with No Companion."

Two years ago I sang "Bird On the Wire" during our No Drones Peace Walk in Maine. Two of our friends from Voices for Creative Nonviolence, Buddy Bell and Kathy Kelly, walked with us. Kathy told us that she and her friends had been blasting Leonard Cohen songs out of their Baghdad hotel window as the U.S. bombed the city. One of the songs she mentioned was "Anthem," a song I'd always liked. But hearing Kathy's story convinced me to learn and sing it. This is the refrain:

*Ring the bells that still can ring.*

*Forget your perfect offering.*

*There's a crack - a crack - in everything.*

*That's how the light gets in.*

That said, here's a list of songs I offered imperfectly while in Gangjeong. They were often sung while standing in the breakdown lane 4 feet from a long line of construction vehicles spewing poisons as they idled. Many strong voices have been heard in Gangjeong singing songs of freedom, praying, and reading children's books, etc. I'm honored to have been welcomed as one of these many voices and look forward to future imperfect offerings.

Surfer Girl by the Beach Boys; Don't Take Your Guns to Town, Johnny Cash; Leonard Cohen's songs Anthem, Bird on the Wire, and Heart with No Companion; Proud Mary by Creedence Clearwater Revival; Bob Dylan's License to Kill; Fly Me to the Moon (a song of love and flight played to counter two shows of force by ROK's intimidating stunt jets the Black Eagles, who spewed white smoke the first time, red, white and blue the second); Woody Guthrie's This Land Is Your Land (This Earth is Your Earth); Here Comes the Sun by George Harrison; Stand by Me; Mexico by Morrissey; My Way; Otis Redding's Dock of the Bay; The Boxer by Simon and Garfunkel; Jesus Walking on the Water by the Violent Femmes; and Ready to Go Home by Hank Williams. Also one song in Korean, The song of Gangjeong by Entild.



Image By Documentary Nomad Team. The Documentary Nomad Team visits Gangjeong for the community screening. It takes place for 3 days at the peace center and a number of independent films and documentaries are screened. Likewise, Gangjeong has become "must visit" place among people interested in social justice issues and peace building activities.

# 'NO to THAAD' : 50 Days Peace Action in 50 Cities

By Regina Pyon

'NO to THAAD' missile defense system protest for 50 days in 50 cities is being held by the SPARK peace organization. This campaign started in Mokpo, southern port city on 5 September with the press conference and has moved to eastward to cities including Busan and Daegu over the past weeks and is coming up to Daejeon, Pyongtaek and then finally Seoul on 23 October. Members of local branches of SPARK and supporters are visiting traditional markets, tourists' sites, college campuses in major cities to distribute leaflets and let people know the truth about the THAAD missile defense system.

Concurrently there are one person demonstrations are being held in multiple locations including the US embassy in Seoul, and protest photos taken at the sites are shared through social media. This campaign was planned to spread word largely because the annual Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) between US and South Korea is to be held in late October. The 50 day campaign's main slogan is: No to THAAD 'missile defense' system stop the US and Japan destroying peace and economy.

Coincidentally, 3-10 October, 2015 is 'Keep Space for Peace Week' that is International Week of Protest to Stop the Militarization of Space. Protests are being held in the US, Japan, UK and India with the key peace issues : 'Stop Drones Surveillance & Killing' No Missile Defense, No to NATO, End Corporate Domination of Foreign/Military Policy, Convert the Military Industrial Complex, Deal with climate change and global poverty.

During that week the SPARK campaign truck will move to South Korean cities including Jeonju, Daejeon, Pyongtaek, Seong-nam and Suwon.



Image by the visiting group. Gangjeong people visit Miryang Village where local residents have been struggling to protect their hometown from building 765kV transmission towers to celebrate Chuseok (full moon holidays) together and stand in solidarity. The banner is made by one of Gangjeong activists and is written about Miryang villagers' voices. "We climb up the mountains today again. Our bodies get sore and our hearts get weary. We try so hard to stop the helicopter fly but they end up flying. The police say we should die but they will not. Nonetheless, we climb the mountains. It's because we have those who are holding our hands with their warm hearts and hope. Our hearts never lost."

## How You Can Help

1. Write a letter to the South Korean government to stop the Jeju base project and to the US government to stop the support for it.
2. Write letters to Gangjeong's prisoners of conscience.
3. Stay updated by joining our Facebook groups and following us on twitter.
4. Organize a solidarity event (concert, movie screening, protest, etc...)
5. Then share about it on social media.
6. Visit Gangjeong!
7. 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](http://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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# Peace Book Café Now

By Choi Sungku

In Gangjeong Village we are very lucky to have the Peace book café which opened 4 years ago in April 2012. The Peace book café has so many stories to share about and for the people of Gangjeong, but unfortunately had to close in April this year due to financial strain.

Thankfully we were able to reopen the café on 2 May with a new manager who is also a member of the international team, a mother of 2 year old girl and one of the villagers of Gangjeong for the last 4 years. We hope that we can create a place of rest and relaxation for the villagers and visitors from all of the world. We plan to set up a nice cozy table in front of café to have cool resting place with a view of the beautiful sky of Jeju. The café will be decorated with wall art painting and we hope you will be able to visit Gangjeong village and Peace book café soon.

For more information, please go to [space4peace.org](http://space4peace.org)

**Our thoughts and prayers with our Syrian brothers and sisters. Stop the war! Stop the violence!**