



C.I. Korea Country Group Meeting

June 14-15, 2009, Beijing

Statement

Members of the international Caritas network met to discuss the present situation of North Korea and the ongoing aid program of the network. In view of the prevailing conflict on the regional level and the constant humanitarian crisis in North Korea the participants of the meeting have formulated the following statement.

1. Peace on the peninsular

The North Korean Government has shown actions and issued propaganda which threaten neighbors and provoke the international community. This leads to an escalation of the situation where armed interventions are considered to be options for solving conflicts.

Caritas advocates a peaceful solution of conflicts in a Christian spirit. It rejects any armed intervention which might cause further human tragedies. Sincere negotiations with practical outcomes for improving the living situation of North Korean people are the most appropriate way to find solutions and open new perspectives for development.

2. Denuclearization in the region

The North Korea Government has conducted nuclear tests and is determined to continue with the development of its nuclear destructive potential.

Caritas stands for the respect of life and nature. Nuclear disarmament in the whole region is redirecting the way towards a peaceful development. In times of economic crisis the de-investment in the development of nuclear arms and other mass destructive weapons is very much needed to overcome poverty.

3. Humanitarian aid for North Korean people in need

A majority of the North Korean population is living in a constant precarious state as regards meeting their basic needs. In many areas, especially in the social sectors of health and education, the infrastructure is in a poor state. Elderly people, children and pregnant women are among the most affected vulnerable groups.

Since several years Caritas is trying to reach out with its assistance to North Korean people in need. It will continue to mobilize support and implement together with its partners and counterparts effective measures. In order to follow up the aid given, access to the beneficiaries is needed. Caritas sees humanitarian aid as a part of a long-term engagement in the cooperation with local organizations and partners in the social development in North Korea.

4. Unifying efforts

The international Caritas network is supporting its member Caritas Korea in coordinating the aid activities. One of its important roles is to invite other organizations and church initiatives in joining efforts to assist North Korean people.