



For Immediate Release

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International Women Peacemakers Appeal for DMZ Crossing at Panmunjom

May 15, 2015—The 30 international women about to embark on their historic walk across the De-Militarized Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea to call for an end to the Korean War welcomed the news today of official approval from the South Korean government.

“Seoul has decided to allow the foreign activists to cross the DMZ,” said the Ministry of Unification. “But the government plans to recommend them to use the western corridor along the Gyeongui railway, (instead of the truce village of Panmunjom).”

The international women’s peace walk is scheduled for May 24, International Women’s Day for Peace and Disarmament. Nobel Peace Laureates, Mairead Maguire from Northern Ireland and Leymah Gbowee from Liberia, will walk with women leaders from fifteen countries, many of which participated in the 1950-53 Korean War. Their goal is to draw global attention to the urgent need to end the Korean War by replacing the ceasefire with a peace treaty, to help reunite families separated by the DMZ, and to ensure that women are involved at all levels of the peacebuilding process. North Korea gave official approval last month for the women’s peace walk and symposium in Pyongyang.

“We greatly appreciate the South Korean Ministry of Unification’s approval of our crossing,” said Mairead Maguire. “As peace women, however, we are crossing the DMZ to end the Korean War, and Panmunjom is where the armistice agreement was signed and the living relic of the unresolved Korean War.”

“I know that thousands of South Korean women have prepared for months to receive us on the other side of Panmunjom,” said Gloria Steinem. “I hope the South Korean government will honor their hard work and allow us to cross at Panmunjom.”

The women’s peace walk has [garnered wide international support](#), including endorsements from U.S. President Jimmy Carter, authors Alice Walker and Naomi Klein, Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama, co-founder of Twitter Evan Williams, actor Robert Redford, and physician Deepak Chopra.

The international delegation urgently appeals to both governments to cooperate to make this historic crossing for peace and reconciliation at Panmunjom in the Joint Security Area, the most symbolic vestige of Korea’s division and unresolved war.

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