

WHEREAS, throughout the countryside, churches are caught in the middle of the conflict. In Bojaya, Choco, in May 2002, one hundred nineteen Afro-Colombians were killed in their church, where they had taken refuge during a fight between two armed groups. Colombian pastors and church leaders met with the United Church of Christ Ecumenical Delegation in July 2002 and reported on their situations. Their common plea to North Americans was, "No more arms, no more arms;" and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress has authorized increased funds for U.S. military action in support of the Colombian government as part of drug enforcement, war against guerrilla groups, and protection of oil pipelines; and violence toward churches and church leaders has increased in the areas of intensified military action at the expense of humanitarian aid and human services, particularly in Arauca; and

WHEREAS, the Colombian Mennonite Church continues to provide strong leadership for Christian unity and peace in Colombia and to give support and encouragement for evangelical (Protestant) churches who are under attack. Justapaz, the peace and justice office of the Colombian Mennonite Church, and CEDECOL, the Colombian Council of Evangelical Churches, need and deserve our support.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Twenty-fourth General Synod asks Wider Church Ministries to develop programs to support Colombian churches and church leaders under attack; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Synod urges Justice and Witness Ministries to call attention to U.S. support for the militarization of Colombia at the expense of humanitarian aid and human services and to the increased attacks on churches and church leaders; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Justice and Witness Ministries call on the United States government to grant Temporary Protective Status to Colombians who are in need of international protection, as urged by the

United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Synod encourages church delegations, including representatives of the national offices, to visit Colombian churches and councils of churches and to support their humanitarian and peace work; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, that Wider Church Ministries provides information for local congregations to develop direct relationships with Protestant congregations in Colombia through the Sister Church program of Justapaz and CEDECOL. Materials will also describe the process for becoming sanctuary churches, providing protection and hospitality to Colombians needing to flee for safety; and

LET IT BE FINALLY RESOLVED, that all congregations of the United Church of Christ be urged to pray and work for peace in Colombia and to develop church partnerships and letter-writing campaigns to officials here and in Colombia. Congregations are urged to work for an end to U.S. policies that add to the violence among our brothers and sisters there.

Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available

12. GLOBAL NONVIOLENT PEACEFORCE

Mr. Hayes then directed delegates to the Resolution "Global Nonviolent Peaceforce" and moved its adoption.

03-GS-19 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution "Global Nonviolent Peaceforce."

GLOBAL NONVIOLENT PEACEFORCE

WHEREAS, the Fifteenth General Synod passed a pronouncement declaring the United Church of Christ to be a Just Peace Church, and said pronouncement included declaring our opposition to war, violence, and terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the Eighteenth General Synod passed a resolution on active nonviolence, proclaiming the United Church of Christ's commitment to nonviolence and the promotion of active nonviolence as an appropriate response to violence; and

WHEREAS, millions of persons in countries all around the world continue to be afflicted with the scourge of violent conflict.

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Twenty-fourth General Synod affirms the establishment of the Nonviolent Peaceforce in its creation and the deployment of a highly trained group of active and reserve specialists in conflict resolution, nonviolent strategies, negotiation skills, and civil social development.

Funding for the implementation of this resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

13. ADVOCATING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Mr. Hayes continued by moving the adoption of the resolution "Advocating Peace and Reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula"

03-GS-20 VOTED: The Twenty-fourth General Synod adopts the resolution "Advocating Peace and Reconciliation in the Korean Peninsula"

ADVOCATING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

WHEREAS, Jesus' prayer in John's Gospel implores God, "That they all may be one" (John. 17:21 NRSV); and

WHEREAS, the psalmist writes, "How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!" (Psalms 133:1); and

WHEREAS, Matthew says, "Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive." (Matthew 21:22); and

WHEREAS, Jesus states in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the peacemakers," (Matthew 5:9); and

WHEREAS, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 says, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us;" and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ maintains a partnership with the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea; and

WHEREAS, the Korean people suffered under Japanese occupation for fifty years and the Korean Peninsula was divided at the thirty-eighth parallel by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the United States following the defeat of Japan at the end of World War II and that in the ensuing Cold War environment, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the United States each supported the development of a government and a separate country of the divided peninsula, a division that has continued beyond the truce of the Korean War in 1953; and

WHEREAS, many families were divided when some members migrated across the border to escape communism; and

WHEREAS, isolation, embargoes, floods, and drought have undermined the economy of North Korea; and

WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea has maintained work for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula as a justice priority and has requested that we include this concern in our prayers; and

WHEREAS, the Kyung-ki Presbytery has adopted a resolution calling for the reunification of Korea; and

WHEREAS, at the 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Korean