Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation: Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Initiatives in the Asia Pacific Context.¹

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Abstract

Jeju 4.3 Would Be a Reconciliation Initiative in a Cooperative Age of Asia Pacific. The Jeju delegation already took next steps for the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation in March of 2015 in Washington D.C. If we learned something good from the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Initiatives, we may say we can find a pathway to launch a more civilized and environmental sustainable “Peace Island” in a future. Jeju islanders will continue reviving the Tragedy until a complete reconciliation process is achieved. The participation of the United States is essential. Moving forward together as democratic nations committed to justice will signal the importance of reconciliation to our nations, the world, and to the soldiers who proudly served America as well.

Key words: the ‘peacetime’ Jeju 4.3 Grand Tragedy, Next Steps, 4.3 Reconciliation Initiative, environmentally sustainable “Peace Island”, the Participation of the United States

¹ Korea Jeju Petition Delegation Group (World Environment and Island Institute of Jeju National University, The Diocese of Jeju, Jeju 4.3 Victim Family Association, World Association for Island Studies, Islanders’ Solidarity for Jeju April 3, Jeju National Artists’ Association, Committee of Administrative Autonomy of Jeju Special Self-Governing Provincial County co-preside over Next Steps for The Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Colloquium 2015 in Washington D.C. from March 26–27, 2015. Hawaii Law School and North Carolina Law School of USA and Hokkaido Law School of Japan support it. The author would like to thank Professor Eric Yamamoto of University of Hawaii, Dr. Kunihiko Yoshida of Hokkaido University, Dr. Alfred Brophy of University of North Carolina, Dr. Tae-hyun Nam of Salisbury University, Dr. Sang-soo Hur, Miyoko Pettit of University of Hawaii and Hawaii Law School group for their valuable contributions and insights.
Introduction:

On the 26th of March 2015, Korea Jeju Delegation of the Jeju April 3 Petition Group for a Joint South Korea and United States Jeju 4.3 Task Force to Further Systemic, Comprehensive and Enduring Social Healing Through Justice (Jeju Delegation) visited the offices of American Senator, Mazie Hirono and Congressman, Mark Takai in Washington. There, we donated copies of the English version of the National Committee Report on Jeju 4.3 Truth and Reconciliation (the Report) of the ‘peacetime’ Jeju April Third Grand Tragedy (the Tragedy) to staff. On behalf of the Jeju Delegation, I am honored to express our thanks to them below:

"Greetings! Today I am so happy to give greetings from Jeju island and speak briefly about the South Korea Jeju April 3rd 1948 Incident and the National Committee Report on Jeju April 3rd Truth and Reconciliation. The detailed exhaustive Report shows that many thousands of ordinary people in villages of Jeju died or were severely injured. The South Korea government has taken some steps to implement recommendations for reconciliation. And April 3rd has been declared a National Day of Jeju 4.3. Observance in March of 2014. But there is a deep sense that social healing is incomplete. To help in next steps for reconciliation, Jeju people are hoping that people in the U.S. and elsewhere read the new English version of the Report and other sources about the Incident and inquire about responsibility for the tragedy then and reconciliation now. We are also hoping for eventual collaboration by many diverse interests in Jeju, South Korea and the U.S. to bring about full reconciliation. The future of Jeju 4.3 social healing is alive. There is hope that working together will help reconcile the events that happened so long ago and foster a comprehensive and enduring social healing process for the families and communities that were lost and for all involved. There is clearly a desire of the local Jeju survivors and families of 4.3 to advance the mutual interests of the people of Jeju and the governments and people of South Korea and the United States and strengthen our bonds through reading National Committee Report on Jeju April 3rd Truth and Reconciliation. Thanks."

Bishop, U-il Kang of the Diocese of Jeju, who has worked for the Jeju 4.3 Peace Foundation as a chairperson of recommendation committee of the Jeju 4.3 Peace Award since 2014, also emphasized the injustices and sufferings of the Tragedy as below:

"I’d served as auxiliary bishop in the Archdiocese of Seoul up to 2002, after which I was transferred to the diocese of Jeju where I’ve been serving as the Diocesan bishop for the past 13 years. Before I came over to Jeju, I knew that a certain unhappy incident happened in the past history of Jeju long time ago, but I was absolutely ignorant of the background and concrete outcomes of the incident since the Korean government did not allow for several decades to investigate, study or to publish on this tremendous inhuman shameful tragedy. We’ve lived the half of the last century without having any notion of sufferings, tears,
death and oppressions of our own countrymen. Having encountered with many islanders and several documentations in Jeju, I felt very sorry and guilty that we lived without any knowledge and conscience about our neighbor’s tragedy. I was greatly stupefied that the massacre which I only saw in documentary film on Holocaust committed by Nazi had happened also in my own country by my compatriots. I guess that it is our duty to acknowledge this historical crime committed by the State and to transmit our remorse to those who do not know. And I believe it is our responsibility to declare that this kind of massacre is apparently an unlawful and unforgivable inhuman crime which should never be repeated in the future in whatever situation. It is my personal experience that I am called to testify this reflection to as many people as possible. I believe God took me to the island of Jeju for the purpose of proclaiming the history of this deplorable tragedy.  

The aim of this article is to illustrate how and why the reconciliation initiative of 4.3 would establish a conclusion to the outstanding issues regarding accountability, the parties acknowledgement of their involvement in 4.3, and to provide a forum of all parties to voice their comments and needs based on justice. First of all, we look at the streams of efforts of reconciliation Initiative since 1994 at the grassroots level of Jeju Island. It has taken 20 years of effort of Jeju islanders to write down the Petition for a Joint South Korea and United States Jeju 4.3 Incident Task Force to Further Implement Recommendations and Foster Comprehensive and Enduring Social Healing Through Justice (the Petition) with spirit of the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation. Secondly, Jeju islanders recognize that a Reconciliation initiative from the grass roots level of Jeju society was important in reaching USA authorities because they knew reconciliation initiatives are an expanding global phenomena. The United States has issued congressionally–authorized and presidentially–delivered apologies to Japanese Americans for the Second World War race–based internment and to Native Hawaiians for the 1893 destruction of nationhood. Globally many countries have undertaken formal reconciliation initiatives to address past injustices, including Canada, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, South Africa, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Timor–Leste, Indonesia, Cambodia and South Korea.

Thirdly, Jeju islanders have made efforts for finding the Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation toward A More Civilized Jeju Island as an Environmentally Sustainable ‘Peace Island’ since 1988. Through long processes of Jeju 4.3 reconciliation initiatives, Jeju islanders have tried to set up their vision of World Peace island, which would contribute to peace–promoting activities for reducing tensions and conflicts in the Asia Pacific and between the two Koreas. Especially since 2004, they want Jeju island to play a peaceful role as a more neutralized peace island rather than as a military island having with a naval base.

**Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation : Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Initiative at the Grassroots Level**

The Korean Democracy Movement and Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Initiative at the Grass Roots Level It has taken 20 years for Jeju islanders to have initiated Korean signatures for a Petition at a grass roots level. In particular, the Korean Democracy Movement has allowed Jeju islanders to say the truth about their reality and perspectives concerning the massacre, and to seek reconciliation for the Tragedy. On the mainland, unrest erupted with the Gwangju Democracy Uprising in May 1980, leaving many dead. In the aftermath, student activists and members of democracy movements pushed for investigations of government abuses, including Jeju 4.3 ( Paragraph 20 of The Petition: March 27, 2014). Through retrospect we can look at the case of Daranshi cave, in Jeju. In April of 1992, Jeju 4.3 Research Institute (then Director: Professor Ko, Chang Hoon) announced the discovery of the remains of 11 people who were slaughtered by the Korean army in December of 1948 at Darangshi cave at the outskirts of Jeju city. It was the first and complete document as it witnessed to the public vividly how innocent people were killed by the Korean army during the ‘peacetime’ Jeju April 3rd Tragedy. Paradoxically because I successfully made a clue for truth finding of the Tragedy, I went to court and left my university for two years. In 1999, the National Assembly—the legislature of South Korea—passed the Special Act for Investigation of the Jeju April 3 Incident and Recovering the Honor of Victims. The Act initiated transitional justice for the emerging democracy: it purposely dropped inaccurate references to Jeju 4.3 as a “communist” uprising; acknowledged Jeju...
residents’ resistance to perceived unfair or abusive government policies and practices; and authorized commemoration projects, including a cemetery, museum, park and financial and medical subsidies for victims (Paragraph 19 of The Petition: March 27, 2014).

The Act also established the 4.3 National Committee to investigate the truth, identify the victims and restore victims’ honor. The Committee conducted a thorough three-year investigation, interviewing many witnesses, consulting experts and reviewing thousands of documents—in Korean and English—culminating in a detailed report (translated into English in 2013). Acting on the Committee’s recommendations, the South Korea government began a healing process that included a concise presidential apology, government-sponsored museum and extensive public memorial and gravesite and limited financial payments to a few. (Paragraph 20 of The Petition: March 27, 2014).

As part of the democracy movement’s concern about historic injustice, in 2005 the National Assembly passed the Framework Act for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission primarily to address abuses during the Korean War—and not Jeju 4.3. The Commission produced an interim report in Korean in March 2009, recommending memorials, official apologies, education, additional legislation and the correction of official historical records victims (Paragraph 23 of The Petition: March 27, 2014).

It was evaluated as a wonderful progress from the public that, on August 2 of 2013, Mr. Moon Hyun Jung, chairperson of Jeju 4.3 Victim Family Association and Mr. Chang Ha Hyun, chairperson of Jeju Police Veteran Association had a press conference to cooperate with each other for their coexistence and harmony (Jemin Daily Newspaper: August 3, 2013).

Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Stalled and the United States’ Absence from the Social Healing Process

But there remains a compelling sense among many that Jeju 4.3 social healing is starkly incomplete. As described in paragraphs 3 and 12–14, the wounds persist and the reconciliation process has stalled. As one Jeju resident explains, “people still hurt.” Another points out that there is “great impact on the lives on the Jeju people” even decades after the Incident. In recent years, particularly after the 2007 South Korea presidential inauguration, reconciliation efforts in some respects regressed with renewed inaccurate descriptions of Jeju 4.3 as a communist insurgency (Paragraph 21 of The Petition: March 27, 2014).

Another reason for stalled reconciliation is that the United States thus far has been uncooperative or absent at all stages of the reparative justice process. The South Korea government has not yet formally requested U.S. participation in reparative efforts. As supported by the 2013 Report, Jeju residents, South Korean and American scholars and a former U.S. army colonel, conclude that the United States too played an important role in Jeju 4.3 and now bears some responsibility for joining in efforts to heal past and persisting wounds (Paragraph 22 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

The National Committee’s 2013 English Translated Report on Truth and Reconciliation of the Jeju 4.3 Grand Tragedy.

Summer 2013 marked the publication of the...
English translation of the National Committee’s 2003 Investigative Report on the Jeju 4.3 Tragedy (“Translated Report”). The translated version is momentous. For the Korean populace it exposes to vast new audiences a startling and horrific peacetime chapter of South Korean history. For English readers, in entirety, the over 700-page, 1,300-footnote Translated Report reveals fresh insights into significant facets of the Tragedy and its consequences. The Translated Report sheds brighter light on the extent of both South Korea and United States responsibility for past harms and present-day social healing (Paragraph 2 of the Petition).

On Jeju Island, despite initial reconciliation efforts, there remains a compelling sense that Jeju 4.3 social healing is “unfinished business.” In recent years social healing efforts stalled and in some respects regressed. Many Jeju survivors and victims’ families still suffer unaddressed physical, emotional, cultural and economic wounds. Traumatic pain persists across generations of families. And military and environmental concerns highlight struggles to uplift Jeju as an island of peace and sustainability (Paragraph 3 of the Petition).

Next Steps for Genuine Jeju 4.3 Social Healing

In light of the new English translation’s revelations of responsibility and the compelling sense that Jeju 4.3 social healing is incomplete, this petition addresses next steps. Joint participation by the South Korea, United States, and Jeju governments and people is now crucial. The future of Jeju 4.3 social healing is alive and compelling (Paragraph 4 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Creation of A Joint South Korea and United States Jeju 4.3 Incident (Grand Tragedy) Task Force to Assess and Further Coordinate, Implement and Oversee Social Healing

This petition calling for creation of a Joint Task Force results from a broad-based movement in South Korea and beyond. The Joint Task Force would be a creative yet practical way for South Korea, the United States and Jeju people to mutually engage in more fully implementing past reconciliation recommendations and in overseeing future steps toward comprehensive, systemic and enduring social healing through justice—in ways that benefit Jeju people as well as South Korea and the United States (Paragraph 5 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Executive or legislative action could generate the mandate for the Joint Task Force. The Task Force’s membership would include all significant participants in Jeju 4.3: the South Korea and United States national governments, the Jeju local government and Jeju 4.3 survivors and descendants, bolstered by South Korean and American researchers and community supporters. It could be administered by an existing institute or organization and observed by selected scholars and human rights organizations. The Joint Task Force would be jointly funded and staffed (Paragraph 6 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

A Joint Task Force would foster reparative justice (words and actions that repair) and thereby enhance the democratic legitimacy of both South Korea and the United States. The Joint Task Force would not replicate the work of the 2000 National Committee. Rather the Joint Task Force’s five main goals would be:

1) to build upon the National Committee’s inquiry (which was completed several years ago and without United States cooperation) by updating, by making any needed corrections, and by filling any gaps;

2) to assess the completeness of the National Committee’s recommendations particularly in light of new and updated information;

3) to assess the effectiveness of actions already taken and determine what more is needed to repair the persisting damage (both individual and
communal);  
4) in light of #1, 2 and 3, to recommend further concrete next steps for implementing the National Committee’s recommendations and to oversee follow–up steps as part of a larger integrated justice plan to engender comprehensive, systemic and enduring social healing; and  
5) to do these things to foster reparative justice in ways that benefit the Jeju people and also assure accountability and enhance the democratic legitimacy of both South Korea and the United States (Paragraph 7 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Mutual Interests in Mutual Engagement

South Korea and United States interests strategically converge with Jeju’s interests in furthering reconciliation. Participation would demonstrate South Korea’s resolve to enduringly heal the wounds of its people. This is important at a time when South Korea faces regional security issues. Engagement in the Jeju 4.3 social healing would also demonstrate the United States’ legitimacy as a democracy not only professedly but actually committed to human rights and reparative justice. And it would also bolster South Korea and U.S. linkages on complex issues of international trade and security (Paragraph 8 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Our next steps for the Jeju April 3rd Reconciliation Initiative is based on Korean reconciliation measures that designated April 3 as a National Memorial Day for Victims of the Jeju April 3rd Grand Tragedy on March 24, 2014. The first National Memorial Service saw the participation of Korean Prime Minister, Mr. Chung, Hong–won on April 3, 2014. This petition calling for creation of a Joint Task Force results from a broad–based movement in South Korea and beyond. This Jeju People’s Petition Force results from a broad based movement in South Korea beyond. As it started from faculty and students of Jeju National University and victim families in March of 2014, it has extended to local and national assembly men, businessmen, and bureaucrats beyond borders since last September to this March through off line and on line (www.peaceisland.asia). It reached over 20,000 people until March 21, 2015. In a word Jeju islanders need to make a road to social healing through redress within the framework of 4.3 reconciliation.

The Jeju 4.3 Grand Tragedy : Truth, Historic, and Persisting Wounds

Truth

According to the 2013 National Committee Report, at the end of World War II following Japan’s occupation of South Korea, and during the emerging Cold War, South Korea entered peacetime under U.S. military supervision. In March 1947, many Jeju residents demonstrated against harsh government policies and violent police practices and commemorated National Liberation Day. Under U.S. supervision, the national police killed and injured protestors, leading to general strikes in Jeju and the subsequent imprisonment of strike organizers. Despite advice by U.S. military officials that the main cause of the uprising was opposition to police brutality and food policies and not an incitement to communism, the U.S. military commander falsely characterized the resistance as a broadscale communist uprising. The police began to characterize Jeju as an “island of Reds” even though U.S. investigators found few communists among Jeju residents. Once labeled an “island of Reds,” the U.S. anti–communist policy opened doors to sustained violence (Paragraph 9 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

On April 3, 1948, some residents with bamboo spears and farm tools confronted police and government officials in an effort to stop police violence, protest the upcoming election and support a unified Korea. U.S. military leaders sent additional armed forces. High–level U.S. officials also authorized South Korean army and police to act against Jeju citizens and widespread violence erupted (Paragraph 10 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

After the Republic of Korea was established in August 1948, with U.S. military leadership supervising and overseeing South Korean military and national police actions, and with U.S. military personnel still in place to support the new government, suppression of the Jeju people accelerated. The government declared martial law in November 1948 and indefinitely detained many and summarily tried and executed thousands. Many others were killed in their villages or in the fields (Paragraph 11 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Historic and Persisting Wounds

The 2013 National Committee Report details enormous loss over several years. An estimated 30,000 of Jeju’s 280,000 residents were killed (the government’s official figure is 14,231 as now of March of 2015). Tens of thousands more were injured, with hundreds tortured, and many more summarily detained. The violence left at least 300 villages, 20,000 households and 40,000 homes destroyed (Paragraph 12 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

The damage of Jeju 4.3 continued even after the close of Jeju 4.3 events. With many killed or injured and a number of women sexually assaulted,
the working population was largely destroyed, leaving many communities and families barely able to survive. Those who survived, including many orphans, were often impoverished. The long-term individual financial impact continues into the present (Paragraph 13 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Jeju people also suffered collective trauma from destroyed communal structures, including villages, schools, workplaces and family networks. Later governing regimes also suppressed efforts to discuss the civilian killings and imprisoned those who spoke out about Jeju 4.3. For many families losing loved ones, homes and villages, the unresolved psychological trauma persists over generations. And residents still suffer from the stigma of being falsely branded “communists” under a lingering guilt-by-association system. Those residents have been largely excluded from the social healing process (Paragraph 14 of the Petition: March 27, 2014). We can look at persistent trauma from a documentary of grandmother, Ah-young Jin’s life titled as “Grandma with the White Cotton Scarf” with historic and persisting wounds and lamentation for 56 years (1948–2004).

Responsibility

According to the 2013 National Committee Translated Report and other records, U.S. and South Korean military leaders and the national police overreacted to Jeju residents’ acts of resistance to perceived unfair government practices and policies that led to widespread food shortages, police brutality and outside groups’ extortion of local residents. The United States and South Korea worried about the spread of communism. But, in addressing legitimate concerns, U.S. and South Korean military officials and national police fostered the mischaracterization of Jeju as an “island of Reds,” which contributed to sustained violence (Paragraph 15 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

According to the 2013 National Committee Translated Report, U.S. military leaders gave direct orders that initiated early Jeju 4.3 events. This was followed by close U.S. oversight over the South Korean military and police suppression operations, including an order to kill anyone within five kilometers of the coastline. From August 1948, the U.S. military held continuous operational control over the South Korean police according to the “Executive Agreement on Interim Military and Security Matters during the Transitional Period” between the South Korean president and the U.S. military commander. The U.S. military also supplied weapons, aircrafts and other resources (Paragraph 16 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

South Korean and American scholars and a former U.S. army colonel, conclude that the United States too played an important role in Jeju 4.3 and bears some responsibility for healing past and persisting wounds. They also point to the United States’ absence from or lack of cooperation in reconciliation efforts to date. According to one American scholar, Jeju 4.3 “has yet to be acknowledged by the United States.” Another concludes that the role of the United States in Jeju 4.3 is clear and “[i]f it should come to pass that any Koreans succeed in gaining [recognition] from the American Government for the events of 1945 to 1953, certainly the people of [Jeju] should come first.” A South Korean scholar observes that besides initial reparative measures by the South Korea government, “[b]oth the South Korean and U.S. governments . . . have failed to [take responsibility and] respond to other recommendations.” (Paragraph 17 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

As for comments on presentation about presentation on “Assessing the National Committee 4.3 Report, Recommendations and Implementation—Revitalizing Present-Day Social Healing Through Justice, I learned that Professor Alfred Brophy, as one of discussants, emphasized that we need to consider all perspectives about it. According to his comments, most important thing is to confirm that we need to understand accurate writing history about it. Secondly, it is essential for us to need to understand justice about the situation. Thirdly we can use many strategies for handling this issues properly. Fourthly we need to know story of USA Involvement in the Tragedy. Finally we make an effort to reach at true reconciliation through social healing the Tragedy.

Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation: Reconciliation Initiatives Proceed at global level

The Resurgence of Jeju 4.3 Social Healing Advocacy In recent years grassroots Jeju 4.3 justice organizing, galvanized by Jeju’s emergence as a “Peace Island” and model of environmental sustainability, has attracted international scrutiny and ignited a resurgence of Jeju 4.3 social healing advocacy. Jeju people, local government officials and supporters advanced those initial grassroots efforts. Scholars and community advocates also publicized Jeju 4.3 history and crafted beginning recommendations for next steps through convenings in Jeju and Hawai‘i and through popular and academic publications. A renewed 4.3 Special Committee of the Jeju Self-Governing Provincial Council, which laid a foundation for truth—
finding activities from 1993 to 2003, might play an important future role. The 2013 Translated Report integrated these forces into a Jeju 4.3 social healing movement (Paragraph 23 of the Petition: March 27, 2014). At the grass roots level, Jeju National University launched the Peace Island Forum 2001: Jeju April 3rd and World Peace, the second one in 2002, the third Harvard 4.3 one in 2003 to share with spirit of Jeju 4.3 Peace overcoming laments of the Tragedy and Hawaii one in 2012. In February of 2014, Jeju National University install Island Trauma Healing Center of World Environment and Island Institute for some preparations for Jeju 4.3 Social Healing Advocacy.

In 2014, the Jeju April 3rd Peace Foundation also established the Jeju 4.3 Peace Award. The first winner selected was Japanese Korean novelist, Mr. Sukbum Kim, who had written the 4.3 novel in Japan, such as novel “the Volcanic Island” to share with peace spirit of Jeju people in January of 2015.

Toward Creation of a Joint South Korea United States Jeju 4.3 Incident Task Force

The petitioners therefore call for creation of a Joint South Korea and United States Jeju 4.3 Incident Task Force to Further Implement Recommendations and Foster Comprehensive and Enduring Social Healing Through Justice. As described in paragraphs 6 and 7, that Task Force would focus on potential next steps in view of past assessments and recommendations, in light of evolving social, economic, political and environmental conditions and in consideration of the compelling sense of many that Jeju 4.3 social healing is “unfinished business.” Petitioners also call for South Korea, United States and international human rights support for creation of the Joint Task Force and its operations (Paragraph 24 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Reconciliation initiatives are an expanding global phenomena. The United States has issued congressionally-authorized and presidentially-delivered apologies to Japanese Americans for World War II race-based internment and to Native Hawaiians for 1893 destruction of nationhood. Globally many countries have undertaken formal reconciliation initiatives to address past injustices, including Canada, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala, South Africa, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Cambodia and South Korea (Paragraph 25 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

According to the International Center for Transitional Justice, truth commissions are only a first step toward reconciliation. Reconciliation is a long-term multi-faceted social and legal process that brings the possibility of significant benefits but that is also fraught with potential for incompleteness or even backlash and regression. Implementing task forces are therefore emerging as a crucial next step for reconciliation efforts globally. Colombia and South Africa are two examples of countries with truth commissions that made significant, yet incomplete, strides toward reconciliation. They each now need a mechanism to assess the effectiveness of their initiatives and to recommend next steps toward genuine social healing. Peru also took steps to implement truth commission recommendations to redress human rights violations, but these efforts too are stalled and incomplete. The International Center for Transitional Justice’s recent assessment evaluated and made further proposals about comprehensive reparations and implementation of existing truth commission recommendations. It serves as one model of a grounded, expertly staffed vehicle for implementing viable commission/committee recommendations and for charting forward-looking next steps toward social healing in light of evolving social, political and economic conditions (Paragraph 26 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

The 2000 National Committee’s work, although significant, has not yet yielded widespread and sustained Jeju 4.3 social healing. An independent evaluative and implementing body is now essential. A Joint Task Force would serve as this crucial next step toward genuine reconciliation—helping implement unfinished recommendations, assessing the effectiveness of actions to date and recommending and overseeing further concrete actions (Paragraph 27 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

A Brief Account of Stalled Jeju 4.3 Social Healing by Japanese Scholar

Professor Kunihiko Yoshida assesses some aspects of Jeju 4.3 Social Healing as below in December of 2012: “The April 3rd [1948] Grand Massacre [known as Jeju 4.3] on Jeju Island encompassed the mass killing of some 30,000 Jeju residents, the torture, rape and prolonged detention of many more, the destruction of at least 40,000 homes and the burning of numerous villages. It lies at the heart of a leading South Korean redress initiative. Known as the Jeju 4.3 Incident( “Jeju 4.3”), the mass killing
and destruction by South Korean military, paramilitary and police under United States authority and oversight was a taboo subject under South Korea national governments through the 1980s. Inspired by the democracy movement, the 2000 National Assembly legislated for Jeju 4.3 truth finding and reconciliation, with an emphasis on the suffering of victims and their families. The resulting 2003 Korean language report of the “National Committee for Investigation of the Truth About the Jeju April 3 Incident” ascertained historical facts, examined responsibility and made recommendations. Immediately after then-President Roh Moo-Hyun visited Jeju and apologized to survivors and their families. The national government also took active steps toward social healing. But reconciliation efforts stalled after 2007. [Even though] the beautiful peace park, the inspiring memorial as well as the informative April 3rd museum have been established . . . , the problems still exist: (a) [redress] is very limited; (b) many victims still can’t get any reparations because of their [wrongful] status as the core group of ‘communist guerrillas’, how miserably they were slaughtered; (c) the U.S. secondary responsibility has not been discussed legally at depth yet, despite [the fact that the U.S.] also played an important role for this genocide!” (Paragraph 1 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

A Four-Stage Process Toward Authentic Reconciliation

Genuine reconciliation initiatives embody words and actions that foster the kind of justice that promotes comprehensive and enduring healing for those injured and for society itself. Social healing through justice (that is, “by doing justice”) has its roots in social psychology, theology, law, economic justice, political theory and indigenous practices, as well as in emerging international human rights principles of reparative justice. Those principles embrace mutual engagement by all with some responsibility in order to repair the damage wrought by injustice. They also ground social healing’s four pillars—recognition, responsibility, reconstruction and reparation. Those pillars shape reconciliation initiatives that address truth-telling through formal tribunals, reconstruction through public apologies, memorials, guarantees of non-repetition and changes to relevant laws and practices, as well as reparations through restitution, compensation and rehabilitation (Paragraph 28 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

The Joint Task Force would be an integral part of a four-stage process for Jeju 4.3 social healing through justice. The first stage is submitting a petition to South Korea and the United States calling for the Joint Task Force. The second overlapping stage encompasses generating broad based support for creation of the Joint Task Force among South Korea national and local government officials and institutions and people as well as among U.S. officials and public and international scholars, advocates and human rights observers. The third stage is creation of the Joint Task Force along with supporting a Social Healing Center on Jeju Island. The final stage consists of balanced Task Force operations that are mindful of social healing’s pillars—recognition, responsibility, reconstruction and reparation (Paragraph 29 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation: A More Civilized Jeju Island as an Environmentally Sustainable ‘Peace Island’

Grassroots advocates, including victims, survivors’ families, teachers, students, artists, filmmakers and local officials and business people, as well as Jeju and international scholars, are contributing to fashioning next steps (Paragraph 30 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

The Joint Task Force’s work in assessing words and actions thus far and in further recommending and overseeing future healing steps would benefit Jeju survivors and families as well as support efforts to uplift Jeju globally as an environmentally and sustainable “Peace Island.” It would help create a new comprehensive history that gives voice to the people. It would embrace concerns about dignity and autonomy. It would address important economic, cultural, security and environmental matters. And it would likely foster more comprehensive, systemic and enduring social healing through justice (Paragraph 31 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

Mutual engagement in the Joint Task Force would also significantly benefit the South Korea and United States governments and people. This petition for a Joint South Korea and United States Task Force therefore is not a criticism. Rather, it is a realistic reparative justice response to past actions and a forward-looking path towards enhancing the democratic legitimacy of the United States and South Korea and furthering their mutual interests in security and responsible economic development in the Asia Pacific arena (Paragraph 32 of the Petition: March 27, 2014).

We need to take a lesson from Costa Rica which have set up the tradition of peace pursuits in Central America. As the result of high evaluation of some achievements from 15 years’ efforts (1985–2004), Jeju people are still proud of the Korean government’s designation of Jeju Island as World Peace Island on January 27, 2005. In particular, Jeju Island is proud that they have succeeded in the Three Splendors (Freedom, Equality and Peace) traditions from a cultural heritage of “Three Nothings” (No beggars, No gates and No thieves). But Jeju authorities now face their first daunting task of resolving a controversial issue around the possible establishment of a military base on the island, which could become a potential “detonator” for social discord. In May of 2007 Korean government and the Navy announced it would resume a naval base development project in Jeju Island. Even though Gangeong residents ‘strong and persistent resistance against it, the Navy have constructed naval base for last 7 years.”

... Okinawa was torn apart by the worst battle of the Pacific War in the spring of 1945 while Jeju was almost unscathed. Jeju also escaped most of the Korean War but only after enduring its own special suffering. No one here forgets the revolt that broke out on April 3, 1948, and raged for more than two years. Far more people were killed in the battle of Okinawa, well over 200,000, more than half of them civilians, than on Jeju, where at least 30,000 died, most of them civilians cut down in army massacres. The difference in casualty figures, however, is no guarantee that Jeju could not in some regional cataclysm become a battleground similar to Okinawa. The clouds of war hovering on distant horizons cast vaguely disturbing shadows here even as tourists and conventioneers flock to the island. China’s claims to the waters on its periphery from the South China Sea to the Yellow

Sea may seem irrelevant considering that more than half the tourists filling the hotels and tour buses are Chinese, but any expansion of the Chinese navy sends tremors of fear around the region. If Okinawa proves anything, it is that bases are magnets for attack. One base needs another and another. For those fighting construction of any new base, the lesson is, “Don’t let it happen here.” That argument probably won’t stop completion of the navy base on the island but may keep Jeju from becoming another Okinawa.¹³

Jeju islanders have kept in mind that NGO groups of the IUCN supported a motion of “Protection of the People, Nature, Culture and Heritage of Gangeong Village (Motion 181: IUCN)” even though it was not approved by General Assembly of it in September of 2012.

Let me introduce another real situation to you a phenomenon “China is the largest trade partner for this export–driven country, and President Park Geun–hye of South Korea has cultivated closer ties with China, meeting President Xi Jinping several times. Some in Jeju who welcome Chinese investment have even worried that a naval base under construction here will be used by American warships and chase away Chinese investors. But China’s aggressive moves to declare control over nearby seas has also worried many South Koreans, who fear China will eventually be such an important economic partner that it could dictate policy. Of particular concern is that it could drive a wedge between South Korea and the United States, which most South Koreans still consider their best national security partner.” Jeju is South Korea’s front line of contact with the Chinese,” said Kim Nam–jin, an official with the Jeju provincial government in charge of cooperation with China. “What we do here is a test bed for how South Korea shapes its relationship with and policy on China.”¹⁴

Jeju doesn’t want to repeat its sad history of suffering among big powers, especially from tensions or conflicts between China and U.S. Rather, perhaps it should be considered as a peace buffer zone having already invited a “World Environment University as just one potential organization of the UN upon Jeju’s three Splendor Spirits on its islanders’ tolerant philosophy if the Korean government accepts it. If we have two peace buffer zones in Jeju Island and the DMZ, this means Korea could take one more step toward a relatively neutral Korea through internal means, rather than by international efforts. To make Jeju a genuine peace buffer zone, it is essential to obtain international status as a peace island such as Costa Rica did. In 1949, Costa Rica abolished its military. The Costa Rica case showed that if people of a small country made endless efforts to build up a peace–promoting tradition, it could play a peaceful role with getting international awareness of neighboring countries. It’s time for Korean people to make a big decision whether we can the making of special role of Jeju as a peaceful and neutralized buffer zone for both peaceful coexistence of two Koreas and agreement among 6 Party Talk Countries.¹⁵

At the 10th anniversary conference in January of 2015, I suggested it will be desirable that we can establish a World Environment University in Gangeon village as an alternative to resolution of conflict from construction issues of Gangeon naval base, as a symbol of “Environmentally Sustainable Peace Island” through sponsorship of “World Peace Island Treaty” by 6 Party Talk countries if Korean and Jeju government agrees to do it.¹⁶

Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation : Jeju 4.3 Would Be Reconciliation in a Cooperative Age of Asia Pacific to Benefit All.

As one of the organizers of Next Steps for 4.3 Reconciliation colloquium 2015 in Washington D.C., I concluded it as my message, “A Time for 4.3 Reconciliation in a Cooperative Age of 21st Asia Pacific.”

“I want to give sincere thanks to all so we can prepare for a time for 4.3 reconciliation in a cooperative age of 21st Asia Pacific together. We can begin the steps to open prospects for 4.3 reconciliation involving the Jeju people, USA and South Korea, so that all can benefit and strengthen ties to each other. We appreciate in the informative presentation this morning on “A Next Step in the Jeju 4.3 Social Healing Process,” including an account of U.S. redress for the World War II mass internment of American citizens. And we appreciate the Jeju delegation’s presentation this afternoon on prospects, potential and possibilities of “Next Steps for the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation” and Authentic Reconciliation”. We are ready to spread Jeju islanders’ message of peace and justice to the world. So, it will happen an age of 4.3 Reconciliation between USA and Korea. We can find Jeju island pathway reaching at an environmental “Peace Island” through World Peace Island Talk by 6 Party countries in a near future.

Thank you so much.”

¹³ Donald Kirk, “Battling with paradise,” Korea Times ( June 14, 2012).
¹⁶ Chang Hoon Ko gave a keynote speech at 10th Anniversary conference: Peace Island is Still alternative to Jeju Island ? (January 27, 2015).
Bishop, U-il Kang recommend four state processes for authentic reconciliation by mutual engagement in the Joint Task Force of South Korea and the U.S.

"In order to bring forth an authentic reconciliation, efforts through comprehensive and enduring healing for those injured and for the whole society shall be implemented in Korea as well as in the U.S. who actively played a crucial role since the beginning of 4.3 Tragedy. The process of healing needs to be completed through four pillars—recognition, responsibility, reconstruction and reparation according to international human rights principles of reparative justice. Truth telling in formal tribunals, reconstruction by public apologies, memorials, reparations through restitution, compensation and rehabilitation should be properly performed. For this purpose we suggest that the embarkation of the Joint Task Force is imperative. The mutual engagement in the Joint Task Force would significantly be a great benefit to the people of South Korea and the U.S."

Professor Alfred Brophy of University of North Carolina recommended, as one of the discussants that the next steps for Jeju 4.3 reconciliation colloquium, is that ‘English reading audience may read the National Committee Report but also this book/journal (presented by scholars) that challenges the accuracy of the Report raises the question of which account presents the “accurate history.” And they will find it difficult to support any of our next steps unless we can show the Report’s accuracy. So, doing something about what is the “accurate history” will be crucial before any next steps can be effective.

Professor Kunihiko Yoshida pointed out that ‘It will be important to English reading audiences that the key parts of 4.3 were very difficult, and very different from Vietnam, or the Korean War, or even WWII. Otherwise it may likely be mischaracterized (as it has been) as a fight against communism against wartime. The difference may seem obvious — since this was peacetime under American control etc. But many will not see it unless it is clearly written.

One additional important next step is to appropriately reframe the 4.3 effort as a “Jeju 4.3 Truth and Reconciliation Initiative” as part of a lengthy and significant “Truth and Reconciliation process.” People everywhere know that this means a serious significant government effort to tell the truth and heal the wounds. Our efforts of based upon “The National Committee Report on Jeju 4.3 Truth and Reconciliation” are to foster peace and to heal the wounds of Jeju’s people while strengthening ties of South Korea and the US.17

It was so impressive that President Obama emphasized that a day of commemoration is not
enough to repay the debt paid by the marchers who were brutally beaten 50 years ago as they demonstrated for voting rights. "If Selma taught us anything, it’s that our work is never done," the President said near Edmund Pettus Bridge, where the confrontation between authorities and marchers was captured in film and photographs that jolted the nation (CNN News: March 8, 2015).

In the same context, it was so impressive that the Jeju delegation already took next steps for the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation in March of 2015 in Washington D.C. If we learned something good from the Jeju 4.3 Reconciliation Initiatives, we may say we can’t find a pathway to launch a more civilized and environmental sustainable “Peace Island” in a future. Jeju islanders will continue reviving the Tragedy until a complete reconciliation process is achieved. The participation of the United States is essential. Moving forward together as democratic nations committed to justice will signal the importance of reconciliation to our nations, the world, and to the soldiers who proudly served America as well.

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