

# South Korean church leaders hope for peace following Kim's death

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December 19 (ENInews)--Leaders of a South Korean church council expressed on 19 December "sincere condolences" on the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

"We ask [the] international community to cooperate continuously, not taking this for breaking of security on the Korean peninsula, but for building peace in the region of North East Asia," said General Secretary the Rev. Kim Young Ju and the Rev. Kim Ki Taek, chairperson of the unification committee of the National Council of Churches in Korea, based in Seoul.

On 19 December, Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency announced that Kim Jong Il, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea, chairman of the National Defense Commission and supreme commander of the Korean People's Army, died on 17 December from heart failure at the age of 69.

"[We] pray that God's consolation be with people in North Korea who are in the midst of grieving and suffering," the church leaders said. "It should not be a moment which is threatening peace on the Korean peninsula and worsening of North and South relationship."

"We hope that South Korean government take this to ease conflict between North and South, sending a condolence delegation consisting of representatives from government as well as from society including the religious community and paying its respects to the deceased," they added.