RESOLUTION CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST KOREANS IN JAPAN

ADOPTED by the General Assembly

Background Information:
In 1984 the General Board took official notice of the existence of the American Asian Disciples as a constituency group in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, and that they were to be related to the Division of Homeland Ministries. Concerns of the American Asian Disciples were to be reported to the General Board. The following resolution was presented to the Division of Homeland Ministries for transmission to the General Board with the request that the General Board submit to the 1985 General Assembly in Des Moines, Iowa, in behalf of AAD.

Persons of Korean ancestry have been subjected to a consistent pattern of discrimination limiting their full participation in Japanese society, including restrictions on their opportunities for education and employment. Most long-term resident Koreans in Japan today were brought from Korea to Japan during World War II to contribute to the Japanese war effort, or are descendants of such persons. The Koreans were granted Japanese citizenship at that time, but were stripped of their citizenship by the San Francisco Peace Treaty of 1952. Subsequently they have been treated as aliens by the Japanese government, despite the fact that many of them are now third generation residents having no home other than Japan.

Japanese law requires that aliens must be fingerprinted every three years beginning at the age of sixteen. Except for aliens, the only other persons in Japan who must be fingerprinted are criminals. The social stigma of being treated like a criminal is deeply felt. When the law was instituted Koreans made up 93% of the foreign population.

A major campaign is being conducted in Japan in opposition to this fingerprinting requirement. The United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) and the Korean Christian Church in Japan, both of whom are linked with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and other North American denominations in the Japan North American Commission for Cooperative Mission (JNAC), have been actively involved in this campaign.

Furthermore in 1984, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) received a communication from the Kyodan, which was acknowledged by the General Board of the Christian Church at its June 1984 session in St. Louis, Missouri. Recent reports from Japan indicate that the Japanese government may be moving toward elimination of this fingerprinting requirement.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, August 2-7, 1985, declare its support for the effort to eliminate the fingerprinting requirement for aliens in Japan because of its discriminatory impact against long-term resident Koreans in Japan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that notice of this action, which is an act of Christian unity and solidarity, be communicated to the United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) and the Korean Christian Church in Japan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) be encouraged to write to the President, the Secretary of State and the members of Congress of the USA; and, the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the members of Parliament in Canada, sharing this concern.