

ESCAPING NORTH KOREA: THE PLIGHT OF DEFECTORS

HEARING
BEFORE THE
TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.tlhc.house.gov>

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ESCAPING NORTH KOREA: THE PLIGHT OF DEFECTORS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2010

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C.

The Commission met, pursuant to call, at 1:28 p.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward R. Royce presiding.

Mr. ROYCE. Good afternoon. I want to thank our witnesses for being here today to this very important hearing, and I also want to thank my colleagues, and so many activists that are here in the audience, so many good citizens that are just concerned about human rights and some of the deprivation, some of the torture, frankly, that people are subjected to today in North Korea, and a way in which we might lend our voices in order to put a stop to this type of inhumanity. And this is Save the North Korean Refugees Day.

This is the campaign that is up on the Hill. And I think it is fitting that this hearing is scheduled as a part of your activities, and we are pleased to join in your efforts to highlight the plight of these refugees. And I would like to recognize the hard work of the staff here on the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for helping put this hearing together, and also Ms. Yung Kim and others who have been involved in this effort.

With that said, last month, I traveled to Ottawa, Canada to participate in the seventh general meeting of the International Parliamentarians Coalition of North Korean Human Rights and Refugees, and this is a group of parliamentarians from many different countries around the world who are committed to helping the cause of North Korean human rights through taking legislative action. And since its founding in 2003, I have served as the co-chair, along with our co-chairman Hwang Woo Yea of South Korea, and Representative Nakagawa of Japan and Representative Gun Dai Lee of Mongolia. And this was the first time that we held our meeting in North America, and I am very glad that the Canadian Parliament was the host, and I believe this conference succeeded in spotlighting North Korea's abysmal human rights practices.

We had a number of North Korean defectors, former prisoners, who were there at the conference, and we heard their testimony. And I think this is important while we form ideas and build momentum for the types of actions that we need to take.

Now with that said, before I continue further, I am going to turn to my colleagues, Mr. Chris Smith and then Mr. Frank Wolf, for their opening statements.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for convening this very important hearing. And I see so many familiar faces, friends who have done so much on behalf of North Korean human rights. Suzanne Scholte comes to

mind right off the bat, and certainly a good friend who will be testifying momentarily, people who have suffered so much. Thank you for being here today.

We welcome everyone joining us this afternoon, particularly the witnesses who have defected from North Korea. I have read your biographical sketches, and I am truly in awe of your courage and strength. Only a very strong person could survive what you have gone through, first in North Korea, then in China, where you were trafficked and abused, then back to North Korea, where you were tortured. And only a very brave person would twice defect from North Korea.

The horror of life in North Korea exceeds our comprehension. Not only is there famine, man-made famine -- this summer's food shortages in North Korea were reportedly as bad as those in the 1990s, when 1 million people starved to death. But the government intentionally creates an atmosphere of fear and terror among its own people. The misery wrought by the North Korean government is demonstrated by the tens of thousands of North Koreans who desperately try to escape to the People's Republic of China, where no welcoming committee awaits them, but instead a life on the run from the North Korean spies and the Chinese government, which inhumanely and in defiance of international law, including and especially the Refugee Convention, returns the refugees to the hands of the hands of the North Korean authorities, who torture them and send them to concentrate camps.

In the 2008 U.S. Committee on International Religious Freedom report, it is reported that a group of 60 repatriated North Koreans were executed outright, killed, murdered. And, of course, the other people who await the refugees in China are the traffickers, the modern day slave traders who sell the refugees into the nightmare of sexual slavery and prostitution.

According to the Korean Times, 90 percent of the women who flee North Korea fall victim to traffickers, and the Chinese government does nothing about it. In fact, it is the Chinese government's ruthless policy of repatriating North Koreans that makes them so vulnerable to the traffickers. The Chinese government actually offers bounties to Chinese citizens who turn in North Koreans, and it is the Chinese government's one child policy that causes sex selection abortion and gendercide that creates a huge market for trafficked women.

It is no wonder, yet so sad, to read that 67 percent of North Koreans in China suffer from the state of severe psychological distress technically known as an arrest. China has spent too many years on the tier two watchlist, pursuant to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, and it is time to recognize reality and put China on tier three, unless it changes its policy dramatically and immediately.

Again, I want to thank Chairman Royce for convening this important hearing, and also Chairman Wolf for his ongoing and abiding interest in human rights, especially North Korea. And at this point, I would like to yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. We will go to Congressman Frank Wolf.

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Royce, and thank you, Chris. I appreciate it. I want to thank the witnesses, too, many who have traveled far. As you know, tomorrow is the second annual Save North Korean Refugees Day, so the hearing is very, very timely.

For decades, the people of North Korea have really been almost ignored by some respects. North Korea maintains an extensive network of Soviet-style gulags across the country. When the country falls, when the North Korean government falls, and it will

fall, I think it will fall -- I think it is going to really fall fast. And in fact, if you recall, Ronald Reagan called the Evil Empire in 1983. The CIA said they were very strong, they were going to go on. In 1989, the Berlin Wall collapsed. And I think something is going to dramatically happen. It will be on the news 7 o'clock in the morning. You will hear it, and it will just flood in.

But when they collapse, I think a lot of people in both political parties and in this administration are going to feel very guilty for not having looked into this. And I think the onerous things that are going to come out will really shock people. The State Department's former special envoy for human rights in North Korea estimated approximately 200,000 political prisoners languish in these gulags. Countless individuals attempt to flee the country each year. And the situation, frankly, is not getting any better. And I will just submit the whole statement.

But China, China who holds our debt -- and when this administration goes over there, they bow down to the Chinese. What China is doing to those who manage to escape is brutal. Hopefully, when President Obama meets with the leaders, particularly the leader of China later on this year, he will raise this issue. He will raise this. This administration has lost its voice. It is silent on these issues, and this ought to be in the forefront.

Nuclear issues are important, but human rights for the people of North Korea is particular important, too. So I want to thank Mr. Royce again for the hearing, and Mr. Smith and Mr. Pitts for all the great work that they do, and thank all the panel for coming. I yield back, Ed.

[The information follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE FRANK R. WOLF, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

First, I would like to thank our witnesses, many of whom have travelled great distances to be with us today. As many of you know, tomorrow is the second annual Save North Korean Refugees Day so this hearing is particularly timely.

For decades the people of North Korea have been repressed—first under the totalitarian rule of Kim Il-sung, and following his death in 1994, his son, the infamous Kim Jong-il. North Korea maintains an extensive network of Soviet style gulags across the country. The State Department's former special envoy for human rights in North Korea estimated that approximately 200,000 political prisoners languish in these gulags. Countless individuals attempt to flee the country each year seeking freedom and a better life. Unfortunately, the situation is not much better for those who escape by crossing the border to the People's Republic of China.

All too often these defectors are exploited by extensive trafficking networks inside of China. These networks utilize dogs to track down and capture North Korean refugees, particularly vulnerable women and girls. Additionally, the Chinese government persists in unlawfully repatriating any North Korean refugees caught inside its borders. Once returned to North Korea, these refugees often face imprisonment, torture and even death .

As North Korea prepares for a transition in leadership, the United States must be more vocal than ever in calling on the regime to improve its abysmal human rights record. We understand that President Obama will meet with Chinese President Hu Jintao during the November G-20 Summit in South Korea. This issue, with profound human rights implications, should be on the agenda. While the current situation in North

Korea appears bleak, no one anticipated the rapid fall of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. No one anticipated the sudden collapse of the Soviet Empire. So, I remain hopeful that in my lifetime we will celebrate the liberation of the North Korea people. Thank you again and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. Congressman Joe Pitts.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to each of our speakers and to the guests that have traveled to be here today. Tomorrow, as has been said, marks the 2010 Save North Korean Refugees Day. On this day, we will remember the incredible suffering of the people of North Korea, and the courageous stories of those who have managed to escape.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of meeting dozens of North Korean refugees who have escaped and survived under unimaginable conditions. But no matter how many times I hear their stories, I am continually amazed by the strength and courage of these individuals, who risk their lives for a chance at freedom.

There are numerous reports of the suffering going on inside North Korea: prison camps, severe torture, forced abortions, and almost certain death for those who have tried to escape North Korea and have been forced to return. But there is also documentation of human rights abuses outside the North Korean borders. For those North Koreans who are able to escape, it is a very difficult road that lies ahead. Once they cross the border into China, they are treated as illegal immigrants rather than political refugees. The Chinese government periodically cracks down on those refugees, either deporting them back to North Korea, or allowing North Korean authorities into China in order to seize the refugees.

In April of 2008, Chinese public security agents conducted daily inspections of the homes of Chinese citizens of Korean descent living in villages and towns near the border. Penalties for harboring North Korean refugees reportedly were increased, including higher fines. Searches by public security officials of the homes of ethnic Koreans living in villages and towns near the border intensified. One resident reported that penalties for harboring refugees included imprisonment and fines ranges from 8,000 to 10,000 *yuan*. That is approximately \$1,150 to \$1,445.

Refugees who are repatriated are routinely subject to arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and even execution. For those who are not repatriated, life remains difficult as well. Women and girls are often captured or lured by human traffickers, and are then sold into marriage or forced to serve as sex slaves. Men and boys are also exploited by forced labor camps. Those who are lucky may find a menial, low-paying job that allows them to survive, in hopes of ultimately being resettled in South Korea or somewhere else. And despite being a party to various UN refugee conventions, China has not allowed UN agencies, and particularly the UNHCR or NGOs to have access to North Koreans residing in China.

It is vital that the international community and the United States take more specific, deliberate action aimed at helping the people of North Korea. The North Korean people need to hear the message that they are not alone. I applaud the various organizations and individuals who are at a high degree of personal risk helping the North Koreans. Thank you for your work.

To the North Korean defectors across the world and here with us today, I want to tell you how incredibly courageous and what an inspiration you are to us all. And to the

people of North Korea, please know that you are not forgotten. There are many who deeply care about your plight and are working to help you. We look forward to the day when we can visit a free North Korea and meet you in person.

I would like to extend a special welcome to all of our witnesses, and in particular to the defectors who are here with us today to share their powerful stories. Thank you to each one of you. We look forward to hearing from you. I yield back.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Congressman. Now let me just say there are some slides. These are pictures done by detainees, by North Korean prisoners, that I would like to show. As all of us know, there are over 200,000 political prisoners in North Korea today. And these are modern day gulags. And in these prison camps, the reports that we have received from these defectors is that people are systematically executed or tortured or abused. And we know that from the torture that they have shown us on their bodies. I have seen this firsthand, and so have other of our witnesses here. And it is a unique position that some of the NGO groups are taking now because they have gone to the United Nations, and they said, look, we want to see the government of the North Korea brought up on charges of crimes against humanity. And they have asked parliamentarians to begin to collect the evidence from those political prisoners about these crimes because they feel that this is a case that should be brought before the international criminal court for crimes against humanity, based upon the magnitude of the abuse that is occurring in these camps.

And in order to continue to sort of lift the level of awareness here, we are going to be presenting some of the testimonies that we heard from those who survived these conditions. And I received permission from the source who is responsible for collecting these stories in the NGO community that I am about to share with you. Those defectors are not with us today, but we are going to share their stories through the drawings that they made in prison, and they reflect the horrific experiences that they witnessed and that they were on the receiving end of. And the ones that are in color we are going to show to the media. The ones that are in black and white were done by a young woman in China, who has since been returned by the Chinese to North Korea. And so it was requested by the NGO group that we don't show those pictures to the media, in the interests of her security.

But Justice for North Korea has received these copies of these drawings, and I thought I would begin with the four color slides. And so if we can go to the first slide.

[Slide]

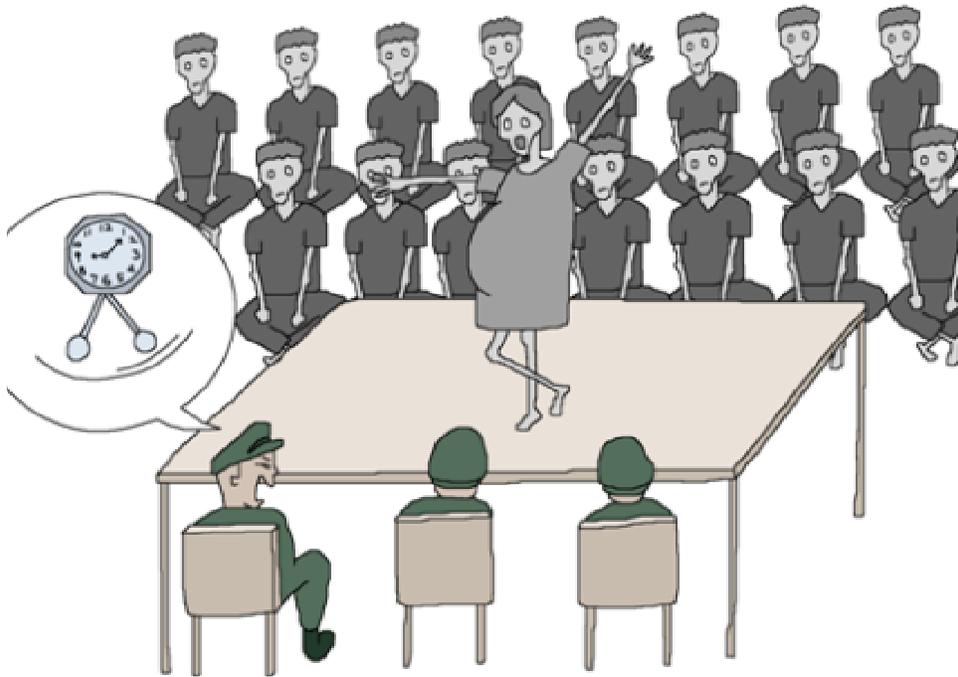


Photo caption: **“Clock Punishment”**: A pregnant woman displays human clock as the prison guards call out random hour and minutes while other prisoners are looking on.

Mr. ROYCE. This is the clock punishment. And as she expressed to us, she was pregnant, and they are asked to display human clock positions. The prison guards call out random hours and minutes, and with your arms and your feet, for hours at a time, you have to replicate the clock until physical exhaustion makes it impossible for you to carry on. And other prisoners are there to witness this as an example of what will happen to them.

[Slide]



Photo caption: *A wooden board is placed across the pregnant woman's stomach. The other prisoners are forced to jump back and forth to cause a forced abortion.*

Mr. ROYCE. The second drawing we have that she witnessed was a wooden board that was placed across a pregnant woman's stomach, and the other prisoners were forced to jump back and forth to cause a forced abortion. There have been a number of reportings of this particular technique.

[Slide]

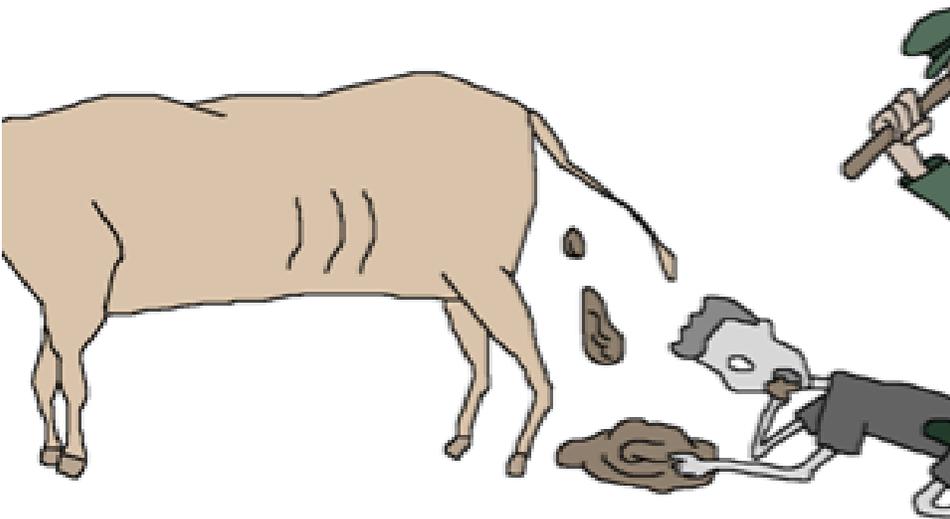


Photo Caption: *A starving prisoner picks out few kernels from cow's dung, but a guard strikes him hard with a bat.*

Mr. ROYCE. This is a starving prisoner who is trying to pick out kernels of corn. The guard is striking him hard with a bat. Let us go to the next slide.

[Slide]



Photo Caption: *The guard then makes the same prisoner stand upside down, kicks his stomach, and forces him to throw up.*

Mr. ROYCE. The guard has hung a prisoner upside down, and he is kicking him in the stomach. And now we will go to the slides down by the prisoner who escaped to China, but has since been recaptured since she was sent back to North Korea. And I am going to ask that the cameras be turned off at this time, okay, gentlemen? We appreciate that.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. She said to the NGO group when she was in China that dogs are treated better, and that they are stronger than people at the camp because they eat the remains of the dead corpses. Let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. She called this the goalkeeper punishment. There is a goal post at the camp, but prisoners are tied to the goal post for several hours in the scorching sun, deprived of food and water until they faint. We will go to the next slide.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. In order to stop contraband from coming into the camp, prisoners are stripped and endure physical examination. Let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. This is her rendition of the camp guard that she remembered. Let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. Part of the problem of being thrown into the frozen room, where they freeze the bottom of the floor, is that for males, when they are thrown in there, they move around continuously in order to survive. Females, she said, sit tight in shame, and one of the consequences of that is that your feet can freeze. Let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. And what she witnessed was for two girls whose feet were frozen, they cut off the women's feet. And, of course, you don't last long after that kind of treatment. But let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. This is what she called the airport punishment. Two prisoners were told by the guard to grab another prisoner and give him the airplane punishment treatment, which apparently is to throw him head on against a wall as if flying an airplane. Go to the next slide.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. Then this one they called the helicopter punishment, she said. And the prisoner is thrown high up in the air, and the goal is to try to get him to fall back straight head down, so that he lands on his head. Let us go to the next.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. This is the punishment for not keeping pace with the requirements. She said you work from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., but you are given a daily portion of 200 grams of kernels. And it is hard to keep up the pace with this meager ration because you are expected to carry or transport three blocks. She says there about 20 kilograms each. And if you can't do it, they will punish you, in this case, this young man, by making him stand with five additional blocks on his back.

She said the punishment in that case lasted about five hours. This was a quote that she gave about a punishment that was meant to send a signal to other people in the camp. "We will cut off your hands, which are no longer communist hands, for betraying the communist party." This was somebody who was sort of beyond redemption. So they decapitated his hands. She said for more routine -- let us go to the next slide.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. For more routine punishments, one frequent punishment, a guard will make a prisoner hold his hands through the small hole where food is served to the prisoners. And then the guard uses a sharp steel wand or a wooden bat to strike down on his hands. She said this was so random and without cause that it was hard to figure out sometimes why the guards were doing this to particular prisoners, but this was pretty routine.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. Obviously, getting pregnant is forbidden, and a guard is kicking a female prisoner hard in her stomach. This particular prisoner apparently was impregnated when captured and repatriated from China. The Justice for North Korea organization rescued this woman in May of 2010. She was repatriated four times. She got pregnant, but faced abortion during imprisonment.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. She defected again, but was sold to a Chinese man. She was found when she was four months pregnant and wandering around southern China. She defected

through the Korean Embassy in Laos. The girl in the picture is now her four year old child.

[Slide – Restricted to hearing]

Mr. ROYCE. On September 24th of 2009, Justice for North Korea rescued nine defectors from China and brought them to Hanoi, Vietnam. They are entering the embassy of Denmark there in Hanoi. And just to go through the list here, it includes a young girl who was sold for \$100, a woman who was sold but escaped from the Chinese husband she was sold to, a mother and a daughter who was rescued by a missionary, a couple who is a former medical doctor, and a man who was also repatriated four times, but survived it and escaped a fifth, and this time successfully because they are all now resettled in South Korea.

[Slide]



Photo Caption: *In 2006, these North Korean children were sent to a prison in Laos due to mismanagement or lack of protection by the South Korean Embassy when they were under their custody. They requested resettlement in the U.S. But they eventually resettled in South Korea.*

Mr. ROYCE. This shows three North Korean children. They had all lost their parents. One of the children witnessed her mother being sold to human traffickers in China. And when she was 17, she realized she was about to be sold, and she escaped. The brother and sister defected from North Korea in early 2000. They were trying to escape to Thailand when they were captured at the border between Thailand and Laos. They served three months in prison there, and the police in Laos were demanding \$3,000 from an NGO that was trying to assist them in return for the release from prison. They had threatened to repatriate them, first to China, and then of course they would have been sent back to North Korea.

After those stories on these three children were reported, the South Korean embassy got involved, and these children now are all in South Korea. They arrived there April 26th. We will go to the next slide.

[Slide]



Photo Caption: *This man is one of two defectors (North Korean laborers/loggers) who is about to enter the Korean Consulate compound in Vladivostok, Russia in March 2010. He requested resettlement in the U.S. The UNHCR made contact with him and was transported to Moscow in August. On Sept. 8, he arrived in the U.S. and he is the 100th North Korean defector to be granted asylum in the U.S.*

Mr. ROYCE. This photo of Mr. Chou -- this is the last slide -- was taken in March, just before he was about to enter the Korean consulate in Vladivostok, Russia. And as some of you have followed, you know he is the 100th refugee who was granted asylum in the U.S. since the passage of the North Korean Human Rights Act. He is one of about 40,000 North Korean laborers who were sent to Russia's Far East to work in a labor camp. And this is what is interesting. They work very long hours as loggers, 15 hours a day. But the wages are taken by North Korea, 80 percent of the wages; 20 percent are given to them to live on for food, actually less than 20 percent. And the working environment and the treatment of the laborers are the equivalent, they say, of slavery, of modern day slavery.

There are 10,000 North Korean laborers over the years who are throughout Russia, sort of escaped, and are living hand to mouth today. But this tells you something about the circumstances of human beings in North Korea today and their plight. You have thousands of North Korean children who have been left orphaned, just like those three teenagers that we saw on the slides, or whose mothers have fallen victim to human traffickers, or whose parents have been repatriated. And these children frequently lack any sort of documentation for North Korea because a child born to a North Korean woman and a Chinese man cannot register their birth, as the Chinese government refuses to recognize their existence, and if they do find them, repatriate. Now, of course, they are

repatriated to North Korea, who refuses to recognize them because they are half Chinese, and we know what is going to happen if that happens.

So they are neither North Korean nor Chinese. They are literally stateless. And to help these children find a home, in March of this year I introduced HR4986, the North Korean Refugee Adoption Act of 2010, which calls on the State Department to develop a comprehensive strategy to help these children be adopted by U.S. citizens. And to date, this bill has over 30 bipartisan cosponsors, and I hope to see it advance as soon as possible.

So I thank you all, and now we will go to our first panel. And I am delighted that Carl Gershman is here. He is president of the National Endowment for Democracy. And in addition to presiding over their grants program, he has overseen the creation of the *Quarterly Journal of Democracy*, International Forum for Democratic Studies, and other programs. He also took the lead in launching the World Movement for Democracy, and prior to his work with the endowment, he was senior counselor to the U.S. representative to the United Nations, where he served as a U.S. representative to the U.N.'s third committee that deals with human rights issues, and also is alternative representative of the U.S. to the U.N. Security Council.

Kang Su-Jin is founder and director of the Seoul-based Coalition for North Korean Women's Rights. They help rescue trafficked North Korean women. Ms. Kang is a defector herself. She was the manager of supply from 1991 to 1998 of a hotel in Pyongyang, the biggest hotel there. And after working conditions deteriorated in the 1990s, she visited China and saw how much better off people were, and she decided to defect at that point.

Bahng Mi Sun, special eyewitness, human traffic in North Korea, refugees in China. We very much appreciate Ms. Bahng being with us. She was an actress in the Musan Mining Propaganda Troop. Her husband, who was a miner, starved to death. And concerned about access to food, she and her children escaped to China in 2002. She was seized by human traffickers, who threatened her children if she would not go with them. She tried to escape. She was arrested by authorities. She was sent back to North Korea, where she was sent to one of these labor camps, and as a result of severe beatings that she endured there, she now walks with a permanent limp.

She was able to escape in 2004, and she is now determined to help the North Korean women refugees who are being exploited and sexually trafficked in China.

Then we will hear from Jo Jin Hae. She was born in a North Korean province in the north. She lived in an area where hunger was so widespread, that one by one -- or she, I should say. One by one her family members starved to death. And out of a family of nine, only she and her mother and younger sister survived. The three of them defected to China to avoid a similar fate. She lived there for 10 years with an abusive Chinese family. The family fled, but were captured and repatriated in North Korea. They endured enormous amounts of torture and hardship. And after several months of suffering, she escaped again back to China, and became active in helping other North Korean refugees. And for this work, she was arrested again, forced to endure extreme hardship, this time in a Chinese prison, for over one year. And thankfully, she was bailed out of jail and was accepted for asylum in the United States in March of 2008.

And lastly, we will hear from Steve Kim, founder and director of 318 Partners. He was a New York businessman. He traveled frequently to China when he became

acquainted with the dire circumstances facing North Korean refugees, and he began a program entitled Schindler's Mission to Rescue Refugees from Persecution and Starvation. In 2003, during a rescue of North Korean refugees, he was arrested. He was sentenced to five years in prison. He now leads 318 Partners' mission to continue his work and is regularly rescuing refugees, especially female victims of trafficking.

He is also the subject of both an upcoming book and a documentary about his experiences and the plight of the North Korean people and the refugees in China.

So we will go now to Carl for your testimony. Thank you, sir. Carl, if you could hit that button.

STATEMENT OF CARL GERSHMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

Mr. GERSHMAN. Yes. Thank you very much, Congressman Royce and Congressman Smith, Congressman Pitts, Congressman Frank Wolf, who had to leave, Congressman McGovern, who chairs the commission. I want to thank you all for the opportunity to address this commission on this most important issue of human rights.

I believe that North Korea is the most closed and repressive country in the entire world. Today happens to be the last day of Chuseok, which is the Korean day of thanksgiving when people gather together to give thanks for the abundant harvest and to honor their history and ancestors. We can only hope and pray that one day the people of North Korea will be able to give thank for a life of freedom of well-being, and that day is still to come.

I might note that just this morning, President Obama in his speech to the General Assembly called attention to this problem in Korea when he said that he would be visiting Seoul later in the fall for the G20 meeting, and he said that the Korean peninsula, and I quote his speech from this morning, "provides the world's clearest contrast between a society that is dynamic and open and one that is imprisoned and closed." And I am happy he said that.

I also want to note that on October 21st, the NED will be hosting a major conference with the Korean NGO NKET that will look at the implications for human rights and democracy of the coming leadership transition in North Korea. There will be a number of important South Korean activists coming to this conference, along with Kang Chol Hwan, the author of the acclaimed memoir, *Aquariums of Pyongyang*.

When the NED started its grants program on North Korea more than a decade ago, the country was separated from the rest of the world by an impenetrable wall of silence and neglect. While North Korea remains a harsh totalitarian system, I think that we have made some progress working with friends in South Korea and other countries in ending this isolation. I have just returned like you, Congressman, from Canada, where I attended the tenth in a series of annual international conferences that has been organized with NED's support by the Seoul-based Citizens Alliance for North Korean Human Rights.

Previous meetings held in South Korea, Japan, Central Europe, and Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, and Australia have contributed to the emergence of groups in many countries working on North Korean human rights. Numerous reports have been published on the prison camp system and other horrendous abuses. Films such as

Crossing, Kimjongilia, and Yodok Stories have been produced that vividly bring to light the harsh conditions in North Korea. And now a UN monitoring process has been established that was spearheaded for six years by Viti Muntarbhorn, the special rapporteur, a very competent Thai legal scholar and human rights advocate. And we look forward to working with the new special rapporteur, Marzurki Darusman, the former attorney general of Indonesia.

During this period, the NED grants program has steadily expanded, starting with human rights advocacy and documentation, then involving broadcasting and information into North Korea by four independent radios, and more recently by helping defector networks of young people, intellectuals and others, establish channels of communication with counterparts inside North Korea, and to link them for the first time to the world outside.

Indeed, it is my view that of all the new developments that affect the struggle for human rights in North Korea, none has been more important than the steady growth of defectors from North Korea now living in South Korea and in this country as well. Just a decade ago, there were virtually no defectors at all, which is one of the reasons North Korea was so isolated from the outside world, and so little was known about it. Today, they number some 20,000.

There are many reasons for this exodus: the famine that has forced people to flee in search of food, the increased porousness of the border with China, the slow erosion of the regime's instruments of totalitarian control, and the breakdown of the information blockade. Taken together, these elements have increased the incentives to leave North Korea, while reducing, albeit still modestly, the impediments preventing such flight.

The result is that there is now in South Korea a substantial and steadily growing population of defectors, many of them still in their 20s and even younger, who have the potential to open up and change North Korea in ways that are highly effective, if not well understood or adequately supported by South Korea and the international community. Already these defectors have established NGOs of various kinds, among them radio broadcasting operations that target North Korean elites as well as grassroots people; a magazine circulated in North Korea containing articles on culture and current events, many of them based on information gathered from inside the country; and even an incipient think tank connected to the internal networks that is trying to encourage the development of a North Korean civil society.

Last February, when I visited Seoul to attend a conference, I had a roundtable discussion with about 20 of these defectors. And obviously, we will be hearing from more of them today. Some of these were young people who had developed a defector network linking college students on campuses throughout South Korea, and encouraging them to become active in human rights work. The leader of this network was a young man who received training in a citizen's alliance program and is now working on a degree in international relations at Sokang University in Seoul.

He said that he had been able to overcome his anger against the North Korean regime only by channeling it into work for human rights, and that while he was tempted to leave school to devote himself full-time to human rights work, he had decided to finish his degree program so that he could set a good example for other defector students. Another example was a student studying philosophy because he wanted to better

understand how he could help North Korea make the transition from Juche ideology to democracy.

There are also two young women, one working on a degree in police administration so that she might help a new North Korea train police who would protect the people and not oppress them, and another majoring in international relations so that she could learn more about democracy and human rights. The intellectual and operational capacity that is developing among North Korean defectors deserves recognition as a significant new asset in the struggle for human rights in North Korea. There are many ways this new capacity can be nurtured and supported.

For example, as the defectors expand their networks inside North Korea, enabling them to gather more information about the society, they will be able to help in developing their analytical and reporting capabilities so that they can use this information to effectively promote change, sponsoring internships for defector with NGOs and new democracies as a way to satisfy their great hunger to learn more about the experience others have had in trying to build democracy after dictatorship. Another priority is helping defectors develop their writing and communication skills. The NED is exploring new ways to help these networks grow and develop. For example, our Center for International Private Enterprise is planning to study the informal markets in North Korea called Jangmadang, to learn how they function and how the participants in such markets can be tailored educational materials on entrepreneurship and free markets.

The National Democratic Institute, another core grantee of the NED, is hoping to mentor defectors by sharing with them the lessons it has learned in scores of countries undergoing democratic transition. Develop new ways to support change in North Korea is just one of the vital roles that defectors can play. Of equal importance is their ability to function as a bridge population, linking what are after six decades of separation, enmity, and suspicion, two profoundly different Korean societies.

So far, South Koreans, with the exception of the Citizens Alliance and a few other farsighted groups, have not seen the advantage of having a sector of the population with real access to North Korean society. They prefer to deal with North Korea through official political contacts, such as those initiated as part of the Sunshine Policy, and costly economic experiments like the Kaesong Industrial Park. But the defectors offer something different and potentially much more valuable: authentic people-to-people contact that can end the isolation of the North Korean people and also enable South Koreans to overcome their own isolation from an alien Korean society that they may one day have to live with.

As a population acculturated to the South but with roots in the north, the defector community is an invaluable resource that can facilitate the eventual integration of the now destitute and closed society of the North into a dynamic, open, and united Korean peninsula. This is especially true of the so-called 1.5 generation of young defectors that are still malleable and open to new ideas. They want to learn how people in South Korea and other countries respect and defend human rights and democracy, how political parties organize and campaign, how workers fight for their rights, and entrepreneurs compete in the marketplace, how journalists report the news and NGOs educate, defend, and give voice to civil society. And they want the knowledge and professional skills that they will need to become productive and participating citizens.

They are, in other words, a resource that needs to be developed by investing in their education and training, with the goal of producing what Andrei Lankov, the Russian scholar who himself grew up in a communist society calls the first generation of modern North Korean professionals. Having such a core of proficient and highly motivated professionals will be an indispensable asset when the time for the rebuilding of North Korea comes, as someday it surely will.

Chairman Royce and Congressman Smith and Congressman Pitts, and the members of the commission, the fact that such people could have emerged out of the nightmare of North Korea, the nightmare that you showed in those drawings and photographs, is a small miracle. It is also a significant opportunity for liberalizing and ultimately for liberating North Korea. And given the human and security interests that are at stake, I think we would be foolish not to seize this opportunity. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Gershman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CARL GERSHMAN

Mr. Carl Gershman
National Endowment for Democracy
Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
North Korea

September 23, 2010

Chairman McGovern, Chairman Wolf, and Members of the Commission:

Thank you for inviting me to testify on the new developments in the struggle for human rights in North Korea, including the increase in the number of defectors from North Korea now living in South Korea. As you are aware, the Endowment is a nonprofit, bipartisan grant-making organization created in 1983 to strengthen democratic institutions around the world through non-governmental efforts. With its annual Congressional appropriation, the Endowment makes over a thousand grants each year to assist pro-democracy groups in Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, the Middle East, and Latin America.

The Endowment grants program for North Korea, started in 1998, has grown beyond anything that we could have imagined at the time, involving support not just for human rights advocacy and documentation (including ten annual international human rights conferences), but also for broadcasting news and information into North Korea by four independent radios; publishing a quarterly magazine, *Imjingang*, that gathers information from within North Korea on culture, economics, politics, and other developments and circulates it back inside; and helping defector networks of intellectuals and former military officials establish channels of communication with counterparts inside North Korea to link them for the first time to the world outside. Over the last ten years, there have been many new developments that affect the struggle for human rights in North Korea, including the growing international awareness of the issue. But none has been more important, in my view, than the steady growth in the number of defectors from North Korea living in South Korea.

Just a decade ago there were virtually no defectors at all, which is one of the reasons North Korea was so isolated from the outside world and so little was known about it. North Korea remains a tightly controlled totalitarian system, the most closed society in the entire world. The North Korean Gulag is still in place, as is the apartheid-like system of hereditary political castes known as Songbun; and there are still famine-like conditions in Hwanghae province, which used to be called the country's rice bowl. The extremely limited reforms decriminalizing some market activities that the regime introduced in July 2002 were reversed in October 2005, when the regime banned the sale of grain on the market and tried to restart the Public

Distribution System. The assault on private markets, which the regime views as a threat to its total control of the society, was subsequently intensified when all able-bodied men, and women below the age of 40, were banned from market trading; and last November when the regime imposed a currency exchange intended to abolish markets entirely. The regime, facing widespread anger and dissatisfaction after the currency revaluation, was forced to roll-back some components of this initiative. In March, a senior official in charge of this policy was reportedly executed for his role in the failed initiative. Recently, it was reported that Park Pong-ju, a former prime minister who had been previously banished for championing market-oriented economic policies, has been reinstated in the government.

The regime's effort to restore its total control of the society is ultimately futile. The markets are a coping mechanism by an utterly destitute population, and trying to destroy them will only worsen the already catastrophic conditions in North Korea and widen the cleavage between the elite and the people. A recent report by Hyeong Jung Park of the Korea Institute for National Unification emphasizes that since the currency exchange is understood by the people to be a decision imposed by the central government, it could also "lead to an historic turning point where conscious resistance against the regime becomes stronger in the mid-to-long term." While it is not clear when that turning point will be reached, there is no doubt that the totalitarian system in North Korea is inexorably eroding and is not the closed monolith that it used to be. This provides the context for our efforts in the period ahead to support human rights, development and democracy in North Korea.

There are some 20,000 defectors in South Korea today, a substantial and steadily growing population, many of them still in their twenties and even younger, who have the potential to open up and change North Korea in ways that are highly effective, if not yet well understood or adequately supported by South Korea and the international community. Already these defectors have established NGOs of various kinds, as I mentioned before, among them radio broadcasting operations, a magazine circulated in North Korea based on information gathered from inside the country; and even an incipient think tank connected to internal networks that is trying to encourage the development of a North Korean civil society.

These defectors serve three vital functions. First, they offer a way to reach into North Korea, both informally by phoning and sending remittances to family members, and more formally through the defector networks already noted that enable intellectuals and former military officials to develop channels of communication with counterparts inside. Second, they are what are sometimes called a "bridge population," an exile community that links their oppressed homeland with their country of residence, giving voice to the voiceless society left behind and interpreting that society to the larger world. And third, as a population acculturated to the South but with roots in the North, the defector community is an invaluable resource that can facilitate the eventual integration of the now destitute, isolated and closed society of North Korea into a dynamic, open and united Korean peninsula.

This is especially true of the so-called 1.5 generation of young defectors. They are still malleable and open to new ideas. They want to learn how people in South Korea and other countries respect and defend human rights and democracy, how political parties organize and campaign, how workers fight for their rights and entrepreneurs compete in the marketplace, how journalists report the news and NGOs educate, defend and give voice to civil society. And they want the knowledge and professional skills they will need to become productive and participating citizens. They are, in other words, a resource that needs to be developed by investing in their education and training, with the goal of producing what Andrei Lankov, the Russian scholar who himself grew up in a communist society, calls "the first generation of modern North Korean professionals." Having such a core of proficient and highly motivated professionals will be an indispensable asset when the time for the rebuilding of North Korea comes, as someday it surely will. It is extremely important, therefore, that their potential role be factored into the unification process proposed by President Lee Myung-bak, as well as into the assistance programs of the U.S., Canada, and other democracies.

The intellectual and operational capacity that is developing among North Korean defectors deserves recognition as a significant new asset in the struggle for human rights in North Korea. There are many ways this new capacity can be nurtured and supported. For example, as the defectors expand their

networks inside North Korea, enabling them to gather more information about the society, they will need help in developing their analytical and reporting capabilities so that they can use this information effectively to promote change. Sponsoring internships for the defectors with NGOs in new democracies can be a way to satisfy their great hunger to learn more about the experience others have had in trying to build democracy after dictatorship. Another priority is helping defectors develop their writing and communication skills.

International democracy assistance organizations are beginning to explore new ways to become involved. For example, the Center for International Private Enterprise, one of the NED's four core institutes, is planning to study the informal markets in North Korea, called Jangmadang, to learn how they function and how the participants in such markets can be given tailored educational materials on entrepreneurship and free markets. The National Democratic Institute, another NED core group, is hoping to mentor defector activists by sharing with them the lessons it has learned in scores of countries undergoing democratic transition. The European Union is providing support to defector radio broadcasting through Reporters without Borders, and a number of European countries are showing a new interest in providing help. On October 21, the Endowment, in cooperation with our long-time grantee, NKnet, will be hosting a conference examining ways to improve human rights and democracy programs in North Korea, including a discussion about information flow and the role of defectors. I might note that NED is also linking groups from around the world, such as the National Human Rights Commission of Korea and the U.S. Holocaust Museum, to share knowledge and advance common goals in the struggle for democracy.

I believe that there are three core tasks before us. The first is to expand and diversify the kind of programs already underway, many with NED support, in the areas of human rights advocacy and documentation, broadcasting and communications, and capacity building for young defectors and others from North Korea. Second, governments and non-governmental organizations that provide humanitarian and development assistance inside North Korea should try, to the extent that they can, to foster the learning of problem-solving skills as part of programs that provide medicines and medical equipment and train North Korean health workers, or that focus on increasing crop production or countering land erosion and deforestation. Finally, it is important to begin to treat the steadily growing community of North Korean defectors in South Korea as a critical asset and not as an economic and social burden.

Chairman McGovern, Chairman Wolf, Members of the Commission, the defectors represent a real opportunity for advancing democracy in North Korea. These are courageous individuals who have overcome tremendous obstacles, and they need our assistance and our solidarity. Let us join together in the defense of human rights and in support of freedom the people of North Korea so desperately need.

Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. I think it is also, Carl, a testament to the spirit of humanity that it can exist anywhere. But the ability to mentor the 1.5 generation would seem, if you are looking long range, absolutely crucial.

Mr. GERSHMAN. It is something we have to focus on. I think it is our top priority at the NED.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you. We are now going to hear from three of the defectors. We will go first to Ms. Kang, who at one point was head of supply for the largest hotel in Pyongyang. Go ahead, Ms. Kang, please.

STATEMENT OF SU-JIN KANG

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Ms. KANG. Thank you for your taking interest in the human rights of North Korea and women in China. As one of the many North Korean refugees, I thank you sincerely for this opportunity to speak before you.

I am originally from Pyongyang, and I escaped North Korea and entered South Korea in the year 2002. Currently in South Korea, 78 percent of the almost 20,000 North Korean defectors are women. The motivation for starting the organization Coalition for North Korean Women's Rights in 2006 was to help the resettlement and integration into South Korean society of North Korean defectors, and to defend our human rights and our rights as citizens.

This year, our organization has interviewed 100 North Korean defector women who are living in South Korea. And among the 100, 90 percent of them had experienced being sold into a human trafficking ring while in China. Broadly speaking, the North Korean women who had escaped into China went into China for the reasons of staying alive and for finding food. They weren't really looking to stay in China too long. They rather wanted to make some money and find some food and bring money and the food back home in North Korea.

However, during this process of finding work, they would not have imagined in their wildest dreams that they would be sold and traded in a human trafficking ring. However, once they are in China, they are often sold into these human trafficking rings. From then on, the lives of these North Korean women would go on a downward spiral. And for the sole reason of them being illegal aliens, they are treated as subhuman by the Chinese, and they are forced to become sex slaves and endure beating and other shameful treatment.

There are some women who knowingly do enter into these human trafficking rings. And why would some of these North Korean women knowingly enter into the human trafficking rings? The reasons are as follows. The traffickers would threaten and blackmail these women, and tell these women that unless they do as told, that these women will be reported to the Chinese police, and that these women will be forcibly repatriated back to North Korea.

The North Korean refugee women know that once they are repatriated, they will be jailed, beaten, sent to labor camps, and otherwise receive very harsh punishment. Fearing this type of treatment, the women have no choice but to be sold into these human trafficking rings. Choosing between the two evils, North Korean refugees choose to be

sold into slavery because they fear return to their home country, where they would be beaten and otherwise cruelly treated.

This is the tragedy that is facing these women, and this is the tragedy caused by dictator Kim Jung-il. Now, Mr. Steve Kim's organization, 318 Partners, and our organization have partnered together to rescue North Korean refugee women who are in China. And most recently, from a study and survey done with North Korean refugee women in China, a lot of these women, who were sold into rural farm areas to Chinese men, who otherwise would not have had been able to find a wife and get married, learned to speak Chinese, found out more about the realities of life in China, and escaped the farm life and went to the cities to work in bars or in the Internet sex-chatting industry.

There is also the situation of the children of these North Korean refugee women in China. The status of the children of these women is one of the most serious issues for the refugee women and their children. If efforts are made to register the children with the state authorities in China, then the fact of one of the parents being an illegal alien would be known, and this would increase the possibility of a forced repatriation of the North Korean.

In China, for a child to go to school, there must be proof and some sort of identification that proves the child's identity. Due to these kinds of problems, the children of North Korean women born with Chinese men often would not get a chance to go to school, and are alienated from receiving any education.

China became a signatory to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol in 1967, and thus China has the responsibility to protect the refugees who have escaped their homeland and are in China. China has the duty and obligation to protect those who do not have nationality or otherwise are unable to return to their home country.

However, the Chinese authorities look at the North Korean refugees as illegal economic migrants, and therefore do not recognize them as refugees, and continue to put these people for repatriation back to North Korea. In light of this situation, the United States and other members of the international society must continue to pressure and urge China to hold human rights views that is fitting for a nation that is becoming a large developed nation.

The Chinese government must stop the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees, and allow for North Korean refugee women at least a temporary right of residence, especially for those women who have lived with Chinese citizens for five to ten years, and also to protect the human rights of these women. And also the children of North Korean refugee women who were born with Chinese husband must be allowed to attend formal schooling, and also the reward given to Chinese citizens who report refugees to the Chinese police must be stopped as well.

As long as North Korea does not collapse, and as long as there is no reform in North Korea, there will be a continued movement of North Korean refugees streaming out of North Korea and into China. The support of North Korean defectors-led groups and the training of the defector leaders is something that will truly prepare for the eventual reunification of the peninsula, and as such, the ones who can take the lead and help to democratize North Korea, and those would be the defectors from North Korea.

Therefore, there must continue to be a support an interest for North Korean human rights, and we certainly hope, and I hope, I implore in this room that there will be

continued interest on North Korean women issues, and that the United States, along with the international community continue to provide support and help to all of us who are in dire need.

Thank you for this opportunity.

[The statement of Ms. Kang follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SU-JIN KANG

Ms. Su-Jin Kang

Coalition for North Korean Women's Rights

Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Escaping North Korea: The Plight of Defectors

September 23, 2010

I am originally from Pyongyang, and escaped North Korea and entered South Korea in 2002.

Currently in South Korea, 78% of the almost 20,000 North Korean defectors are women.

The motivation for starting the organization, Coalition for North Korean Women's Rights in 2006, was to help the resettlement and integration into South Korean society of North Korea defector women and to defend our human rights and rights as citizens, through our own efforts and will.

This year, our organization has interviewed 100 North Korean defector women who are living in South Korea, and among the 100, 90% experienced being sold into a human trafficking ring in China. Broadly speaking the North Korean women who have escaped into China went to China not for the reason of staying and living in China, but rather to earn and make money and feed and keep alive their family left behind in North Korea. And during this process of finding work, they would have never imagined in their wildest dreams that they would be sold and traded in a human trafficking ring. However, once they are in China and are sold into these human trafficking rings, from then on the lives of these North Korean refugee women go on a downward spiral, and for the sole reason of them being illegal aliens, they are treated as subhuman by the Chinese, forced to become unwilling sex slaves, and in addition endure beatings and other shameful maltreatment. There are some women who are knowingly sold to these human trafficking rings, and those women who of course don't know that they have just been sold and traded.

Why do some of these North Korean refugee women knowingly allow themselves to be sold and traded in human trafficking rings? The traffickers threaten and blackmail the women by telling them that if the women do not listen to the traffickers, they will report the women to the Chinese security authorities, and that they will be forcibly repatriated. When this happens, the North Korean refugee women know that once repatriation happens the will be jailed, beaten, sent to labor camps, and overall just receive a very harsh punishment. Fearing this treatment, the women have no choice but to be sold into these trafficking rings.

Mr. Steve Kim's organization, 318 Partners, and our organization, have partnered together to rescue the North Korean refugee women who are in China, and most recently from a study and survey done with North Korean refugee women in China, a lot of these women who were sold into rural farm areas to Chinese men who otherwise would not have been able to find a wife and get married, learned to speak Chinese, found out more about the realities of life in China, and escaped the farm life and went to the cities to work in bars or in the Internet sex-chatting industry.

There is also the situation of the children of these North Korean refugee women in China. The status of the children of these women is one of the most serious issues for the refugee women and their children. If efforts are made to register the children with the state authorities then the fact will be made known that one of the parents is an illegal alien, and there is an increased chance of forced repatriation. In China, for a child to go to school, there must be proof, and some sort of identification, that proves the child's identity.

Due to these kinds of problems, the children often do not get to go to school and are alienated from receiving an education.

China became a signatory to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol in 1982, and has the responsibility to protect refugees who have escaped their homeland and are in China. However, the Chinese authorities look at the North Korean refugees as illegal economic migrants and therefore do not recognize them as refugees, and continue to put for the position that the issue of the refugees is a matter between China and North Korea and not something a third country or an international organization need to be involved with. In light of this situation, the United States and other members of the international society must continue to press and urge China to hold human rights views that is fitting for a nation that is becoming a developed nation. The Chinese government must stop the forced repatriation of North Korean refugees, and allow North Korean refugee women who have lived with ethnic Chinese citizens for 5 to 10 years, and their offspring, at least a temporary right of residence, and protection from human traffickers and violation of human rights. Children of North Korean refugee women and Chinese husbands must be allowed to go to school, and the rewarding of money for Chinese citizens who report on refugees must be stopped as well.

As long as North Korea does not collapse, and as long as there is no reform in North Korea, there will be continued movement of North Korean refugees streaming out of North Korea due to hunger and economic hardships. The supporting of North Korean defectors-led groups and the training of defector leaders is something that will truly prepare for the eventual reunification of the peninsula, and as such the ones who can take the lead and help the democratization of North Korea are the defectors; therefore there must be continued support and interest for North Korean human rights and the North Korean refugee issue by the United States and the international community.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, thank you. We will now go to actress Mi Sun Bahng. Go ahead, please.

STATEMENT OF MI SUN BAHNG

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Ms. BAHNG. My name is Bahng Mi Sun, and I entered South Korea on January 8, 2004. After having lived in hell for so long, once I came to South Korea, I was in heaven. And I am especially delighted to be here in the U.S., which is paradise on earth. Before escaping from North Korea, I had lived in the city of Musan in North Hamkyung Province. And during the so-called March of Adversity, my husband, who was a laborer in a mine, had starved to death. And in order to save my young children, I had risked my life to cross the Tumen River, and fortunately I arrived safely on the other side of China.

The first people that I met as soon as I set foot in China were Chinese brokers. Once they saw me, they used the safety and well-being of my children to threaten me. Finally, I was separated from my children, and I was sold for 4,000 Chinese *renminbi*, approximately \$594. What was more infuriating was that these Chinese brokers would call North Korean defector women as pigs. And we were treated like indeed pigs.

I found out for the first time that there were such violent and shameless people in the world. And even if such people existed, how can they call human beings pigs, and how can one human being sell another human being? What hurt me more was that even though I was being treated in this inhuman manner, there was no place for me to go to and plead my grief, and this was frustrating and infuriating. In a period of a few months, I was sold two or three times, and one day I had succeeded in escaping in the process of searching for my children -- I am sorry. Rather, I did succeed in escaping. However, in the process of searching for my children, I was caught by the Chinese police and was forcibly repatriated to North Korea.

After my experience in the labor reform camp in North Korea, and during the camp imprisonment, I actually had suffered an injury, and my leg from the injury became severely handicapped. I am officially classified as physically handicapped in South Korea. Now, who is to blame for all this? This is all because of the dictator Kim Jong-il in North Korea. It is also the fault of Hu Jintao, whose government arrested North Korean defector women and forcibly repatriated all of these women, and to allow for these women to suffer unspeakable harms.

If we are all human and if we had hearts, we would not let these two dictators do what they want, and the way they had done. I am not well read, learned, nor sophisticated. But I refuse to stay silent in the face of the tragedy befallen my homeland. Thank you for this very important opportunity to speak before you. Due to time constraint, I will end my testimony here. And lastly, I would like to thank all the North Korean human rights activists who are actively working in this area, and would like to especially thank Ms. Scholte and other human rights organizations for their efforts and help. Thank you very much.

[The statement of Mr. Bahng follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MI SUN BAHNG

Ms. Mi Sun Bahng

Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
Escaping North Korea: The Plight of Defectors

September 23, 2010

My name is Bahng Mi Sun and I entered South Korea on January 8th, 2004. After living in hell on earth that is North Korea and coming to South Korea, I feel like I have entered heaven. Also, for me to be here in the beautiful country of the United States today, and to meet distinguished people here, I feel there is no greater honor for me than this.

Before escaping North Korea I lived in the city of Musan in North Hamkyung Province, and during the 'Arduous March', my husband, who was a laborer in a mine, starved to death, and in order to save my young children I risked my life to cross the Tumen River and fortunately I arrived safely on the other side in China.

The first people I met as soon as I stepped foot in China were Chinese brokers. Once they saw me they used the safety and well-being of my children to threaten me. Finally I was separated from my children and sold for 4,000 Chinese *Yuan Renminbi* [Approximately \$594]. What was more infuriating was that these Chinese brokers called North Korean defector women 'pigs', and treated us like animals.

I found out for the first time that there were such violent and shameless people in the world like these brokers, and even if such people existed, how can they call human beings 'pigs' and how can one human being sell another human being? What hurt more was that even though I was being treated in this inhuman manner, there was no place for me to go and plead my grief and this was frustrating. In a period of few months I was sold two, three times, and one day I succeeded in escaping and in the process of searching for my children I was caught by the Chinese authorities and forcibly repatriated to North Korea.

After my experiences in the labor reform prison camp, jail, and prison, and from the injuries suffered in my leg from the beatings and torture, I am officially classified as a physically handicapped person in South Korea.

Who is to blame for all this? This is all because of the dictator Kim Jong Il in North Korea. Also, isn't it also the fault of Hu Jintao, whose government arrests North Korean defector women and forcibly repatriates all of them and as a result suffer unspeakable suffering? If we are all human, if any of us had any hearts, we will not sit still and leave these two dictators alone.

Due to time constraints I will end my testimony here, and lastly I would like to thank all the North Korean human rights activists who are actively working in this area, and would like to especially sincerely thank Suzanne Scholte and other human rights organizations for their work and effort. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. And we would like to thank Bahng Mi Sun for her courage and endurance and her testimony here today. Thank you very much. Ms. Hae-Jo Jin, your testimony, please.

STATEMENT OF JIN HAE JO

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Ms. JO. Hello. My name is Jin Hae Jo. I have been in the U.S. for three years, coming here through the grace of the almighty God and with the help of Pastor Philip Buck. And also, I would like to say my sincerest thanks for this opportunity to speak before you.

Since coming to the U.S. and having lived such a free and happy life, I have to say I have gained quite a bit of weight. I have even heard recently from another person that I would have a hard time getting married, and that I must go on a diet. This actually is a sign of me having eaten so much delicious and good food. And this is something that had eluded me for so long while I was in North Korea.

When I was forcibly repatriated from China to North Korea, I was 22 pounds lighter than I am now, but even in North Korea, I was teased for my weight. People used to say to me that if they caught and ate me, they could eat more three months.

We have a situation where people in the free world have excess food, and for us women we have to worry about our images and getting married. But in North Korea, even now, there is not even enough corn meal gruel to go around, and thus people are facing hunger, starvation, and dying of such starvation problems. Recently, I had received a letter from a pastor who had taught my sister and I in bible study, and he had looked after us for quite some time before. In the letter, he had recounted his times spent eating a meal with a few North Korean defectors, who had just come out of North Korea a couple of days prior to the meal, and were telling the pastor some of the most current, up-to-date news about North Korea.

They told the pastor that a large number of people lost their homes in the recent flood, and that a large amount of crops had been lost during the flood as well. These people who were so devastated they had left North Korea for China to seek a lifeline, but were all caught and arrested by the border security, and were sent to prison in North Korea, forced to rebuild government buildings damaged and swept away by the floods, and they were forced into various other types of labors. These detectors had told the pastor that every time a person had died, they would become manure for fruit trees, and a common phrase that developed amongst the prisoners would be that when someone dies, they would say that someone just became manure. That is how it is in North Korea.

Also, the world would not be the same without women, of course. And here in the U.S., people open doors for women so that women will enter first. They show respect and care to women. And women receive love here. But the women of North Korea, even now because of Kim Jong-il and Hu Jintao, there are some North Korean women who are sold for less than the price of dogs here in the U.S.

My dear mother, whom I love and admire so much, protected me so I was not sold nor traded in a human trafficking ring. But during my ten years of living in China I had seen many, many women sold and traded in these trafficking rings. Every time I saw

these women, my heart ached and was in pain because my own sister, who had left North Korea at the age of 18 to find food for our family, was also sold to a trafficking ring, and will probably never come back to our family. And I don't even know if I will ever meet her again in my lifetime.

Almost 80 percent of North Korean women who go to China go to try to save their hungry and starving families back in North Korea. But in many of these cases, the women end up not being able to help their family at all, and become a source of money in fact for others, rather. Before my sister had left our house, my father, in order to save us who were starting and dying, went to China and brought home a sack of rice from a relative in China. For this crime, he was arrested by the North Korean security agent and had died at their hands from torture and starvation.

My own grandmother died of starvation right before my eyes, her last wish having been that she wanted to eat one piece of a steamed potato. My two-month old baby brother had also died from starvation. My mother had left the house in search of my sister, who had left home. My baby brother was waiting for our mother's bosom to come back and feed and nourish him, but he could not wait, and died.

In less than a year, four members of our family had died. I stood before my grandmother's grave and vowed that I would come back and that I would care for my younger brother as I took my mother's hand, along with my sister's hand, and went to China looking for food. Since we had no shoes on, our feet soon developed blisters and started bleeding, and we were weak from hunger. Our own mother had suffered torture in prison and was in no condition to look out after the three of us.

We had decided to leave our younger brother at home, at someone else's house in fact, and we promised our younger brother that we would come back in five days to get him. When we were leaving him at the house, my brother held onto my pant leg and cried out, sister, why are you taking the little sister, but not me. I told him that mother and I will be back with rice, and that the little sister would bring candies and cookies along. And thus we were able to soothe him for the time being.

We did try to return as quickly as possible, but due to the wet season, the river became swollen, and we had also heard the news that the government was executing people who did not participate in the election of Kim Jong-il. We could only send someone after two months to go and bring our younger brother back, but by then we had heard he had left the house and then he was on the streets somewhere. And at the time, he was age five. And eventually we heard that he had died from sort of a starvation.

I am not sharing my testimony here at this place to solicit your pity, nor for you to feel sorry for me. My reason for being here today is to ask for people in the world and all of you here to come together and concentrate your efforts to help with the situation so that there will be no more children who suffered like I did and who still suffer from living through the type of situation that I had described to you earlier.

I still have nightmares of being repatriated back to the North Korea. I want to share this painful experience and make a sacrifice of myself, and also I plan to live strong and diligently and work hard to make sure that North Korea, the regime would fall. And I want to be one of those people who will help bring about changes to North Korea, and I seek help from a proud country such as the U.S. and South Korea in my endeavors.

The most important reason that I am here today is to share with you that the hunger has been ongoing in North Korea for ten years, and over ten years, and countless

North Korean women have been sold and traded in trafficking rings, including my own sister. And I want freedom to come to them so that one day they would reap the benefit of a free life.

The day will come when there is a possibility that these women in North Korea -- these women rather in China could turn to the Chinese police and seek protection from these traffickers. There are over 1 million refugees from North Korea. I note that there had only been 100 refugees, such refugees who have been accepted into the U.S. I appreciate the opportunity that is given to me today, and lastly, may God bless all of you here today, and all the people working for the human rights of North Korea, and also those people who have supported us in the past and will continue to do so into the future. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Jo follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JIN HAI JO

Ms. Jin Hai Jo

Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission
Escaping North Korea: The Plight of Defectors

September 23, 2010

Hello, my name is Jin Hae Jo, and I have been in the United States for three years, coming here through the grace of the Almighty God and with the help of Pastor Philip Buck.

Since coming to the United States and living such a free and happy life, I have to say I have gained quite a bit of weight. I have even heard recently from another person that I would have a hard time getting married, and should go on a diet; this actually is a sign of me eating rich, delicious food and gaining weight that was elusive in North Korea. When I was forcibly repatriated from China, I was 22 pounds lighter than now, but even in North Korea I was teased for my weight – people used to say of me ‘if they caught and ate me they could eat for three months.’

We have a situation where people in the free world have an excess of food and for us women we have to worry about our image and getting married, but in North Korea, even now, there’s not even enough cornmeal gruel to go around and thus people are facing hunger and dying of starvation, of which all of you distinguished gentlemen sitting before me are well aware of, and of which I am so worried and concerned about.

Recently, I received a letter from a pastor who had taught my sister and I Bible study and looked after us for some time; in the letter he recounted his time spent eating a meal with a few North Korean defectors (men) who had just come out of North Korea two days prior to the meal and were telling the pastor the most current up-to-date situation in North Korea. They told the pastor that a large number of people lost their homes in the recent floods that happened in North Korea, and that a large amount of crops were lost to the flooding as well. These people who were so devastated they left North Korea for China to seek a lifeline, but were all caught and arrested by the border security and sent to prison in North Korea, forced to rebuild government buildings damaged or swept away by the floods, and dying from the forced labor or from epidemic of disease resulting from the floods. These defectors told the pastor that every time a person died they would become manure for fruit trees, and a common phrase developed whereby whenever someone died, people would say, “someone just became manure”; they all would lament why there was no war to end the misery in North Korea.

Also, the world would not be the same without women, and here in the United States, people open doors for the women to enter first, showing respect and care, and women receive love here, but the women of

North Korea, even now, because of Kim Jong-il and Hu Jintao, there are some North Korean women who are sold for less than the price of dogs here in America.

My dear mother whom I love and admire so much, protected me so I was not sold or traded in a human trafficking ring, but during my 10 years of living in China I saw many, many women being sold and traded in these trafficking rings. Every time I saw those women, my heart ached and was in pain, because my own sister, who left North Korea at the young age of 18 to find food for our family and was sold to a trafficking ring, will probably never come back to our family and I don't even know if I will ever meet her again while I am still alive.

Almost 80% of North Korean women who go to China go to try to save their hungry and starving families back in North Korea, but in a lot of cases these women end up not being able to help their families at all and become a source of money for others. Before my sister left our house, my father, in order to save us who were starving and dying, went to China and brought home a sack of rice from a relative there; for this 'crime' he was arrested by the North Korean security agents and died at their hands from the torture and starvation. My own grandmother died of starvation right before my eyes, her one last wish being able to eat one steamed potato. My two-month old baby brother also died from starvation. My mother had left the house in search of my sister who had left home; my baby brother was waiting for our mother's bosom to come back and feed and nourish him, but he could not wait, and died. In less than a year, four members of our family had died. I stood before my grandmother's grave and vowed that I would come back and tearfully I along with another younger brother and my younger sister took our mother's hand and left for China to find a better life for all of us.

Since we had no shoes on, our feet soon developed blisters and started bleeding, and we were weak from hunger; our own mother had suffered torture in prison and was in no condition to look out after the three of us. It was decided to leave our younger brother at someone else's house, and we promised our younger brother that we would come back in 5 days to come get him; when we were leaving him at the house my brother held on to my pant leg and cried out, 'sister, why are you taking little sister but not me?'; I told him that my mother and I will be bringing back rice, and little sister would be bringing candies and cookies, and thus were able to soothe him. We tried to return as quickly as possible but due to the wet season the river became swollen, and we had also heard news that the government was executing people who did not participate in elections for Kim Jong-il; we could only send someone after two months to go and bring our brother back, but by then we heard that he had been left out and abandoned in the streets and in his young tender age of 5, he died in a field of reeds crying out, 'sister, when are you coming back', and starved to death. To this day I am so sorry in my heart for not bringing him with us, and I miss him dearly every day.

I am not sharing my testimony here at this place to solicit your pity or for you to feel sorry for me. My reason for being here today is to ask for people in the world and all of you here, to concentrate your efforts and together, help with this situation so that there will be no more children who suffered like I did and still suffer from living through this kind of family situation, of feeling longing, feeling sorry, and feeling hurt, and even in my sleep I have nightmares of being repatriated to North Korea and live in fear.

I want to take this pain and experiences and make a sacrifice of myself and live diligently and work hard to make sure the regime in North Korea falls, and I want to be one of the people who will help to change North Korea to a great and proud country like the United States of America or South Korea. However, I work 12 to 14 hours every day and I can barely make the rent and car payment, and so I have no time to study or go to school, and so I am just getting by like this.

The most important reason I came today to share with you is that the hunger has been going on for 10 years, and countless North Korean women have been sold and traded in trafficking rings, including my own sister, and I want freedom to come to them so that the day will come when they will reap the benefits of a diligent life, the day will come that when there is injustice they can turn to the police and the law and receive help, and I earnestly pray and wish for that to come true soon and beseech all of you here today. Lastly may God bless all of you here today and all the people working for the human rights of North Korea, and to all those who have supported in the past and will continue to support us. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Ms. Jo. I know it is hard for Americans to believe the magnitude of this, the 200,000 prisoners that are in these camps, and the magnitude of the inhumanity. But my father had his brother's camera when the U.S. troops broke into Dachau, the concentration camp there. And the photographs that he took there are eerily similar to the photographs that we see smuggled out of North Korea. And the conditions in that concentration camp, with the starved bodies stacked up like cord wood in front of the ovens, and a boxcar where when they opened it there was only one living soul left alive in that boxcar -- the rest had been left to starve to death -- the treatment, the inhumanity is very real, and the magnitude of this that is going on in North Korea is very great. And we thank you for your testimony. We thank Steve Kim for what he does as director of 318 Partners.

Steve, could we have your testimony, please?

STATEMENT OF STEVE KIM, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF 318 PARTNERS MISSION FOUNDATION

Mr. KIM. Thank you, Chairman Royce and the members of the commission. My name is Steven Kim, founder and president of 318 Partners Mission Foundation. In 2000, I was in the province of Canton, China helping North Korean refugees flee from the Chinese police. I was arrested, however, in September 2003 for carrying out what my team calls the Schindler's Mission, and sentenced for five years in prison. My advocates in Washington, D.C. pressed the Chinese government, but I had to work to reduce my sentence to four years. Immediately upon returning home to the United States in September 2007, I established 318 Partners Mission Foundation to continue the Schindler's Mission.

In May 2008, God set a seal upon my heart to rescue trafficked North Korean women in China. This became the focus of 318 Partners' rescue ministry. We receive rescue requests for trafficked women from several different sources, namely North Korea Refugee Women's Coalition in Seoul, missionaries in China, NGOs founded and led by North Korean defectors, and news and radio reporters. We successfully rescued 66 North Korean refugees since May 2008. Among them, over 80 percent are trafficked women, who are forced into prostitution or abusive marriages.

I identified three chronological patterns of trafficked victims in the past decade of my rescue ministry. In the 1990s, North Korean refugees escaped to China simply because they would starve to death if they stayed. Knowing how desperate and vulnerable these women are, the Chosun-jok, or ethnic Korean-Chinese, targeted these women and learned to become expert traffickers. Eventually, the Chosun-jok established a thriving market of prostitution because these women could not report to the police in fear of repatriation to North Korea. These women are mainly sold to single farmers in China. By 2020, nearly 30 million men in China of marriageable age will be without female counterparts. The market for prostituting North Korean women is growing alarmingly fast in China because of this severe gender imbalance.

In early to mid 2000, the majority of North Korean women were trafficked into China because they lost their business as inexperienced merchants. To compensate for the loss of their only income, they crossed the river into China. Inevitably, traffickers

trapped and sold them into sexual slavery, only this time, they were sold deeper into the country, such as to Heilongjiang or Shandong Province.

In late 2000, the traffickers erected a system of trafficking that yielded immense profit. After gathering three to six women in North Korea, the broker bribes the border guard to let them cross into China. Once in China, another broker leads these women into the inner provinces and sells them for three to five times their premium price. Afterwards, the inner-province brokers bring the women to a final buyer, usually to farmers or to brothels, and there they are sold for 10 to 20 times their initial price.

Currently, we have quite a number of rescue requests from women trapped in the cyber-porno industry. The owners of these cyber-porno businesses are Choson-jok who run their business in an apartment and force the women, usually four to six cramped into a single room, to perform services in front of the webcam for endless hours. These women are usually in their early teens to their 30s. It is very easy for these owners to keep these women from escaping because they have nowhere to go. However, if they are caught from running away, they are subject to severe beatings and are threatened to be sold to an even more notorious boss, or even worse, to be reported to the police, whereupon they would be repatriated and sentenced even to death in North Korea.

We can address the trafficking crisis by pressing the Chinese government to recognize these women as refugees, not economic migrants or illegal aliens. If this is established, these women can report to the police without fear of repatriation. If China still refuses to recognize them as refugees, we must at least convince China to let UNHCR protect them from being trafficked. Additionally, if missionaries and brokers are allowed to assist these women to the freer third countries in Southern Asia or neighboring Mongolia, where these women can request asylum in these countries' embassies.

I would like to add the testimonies of those 16 trafficked victims who made it to a free country through 318 Partners in the past year. Thank you for your time and this much needed opportunity to testify on behalf of trafficked North Korean women in China.

[The statement of Mr. Kim follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVE KIM

Mr. Steve Kim

318 Partners Mission Foundation

Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

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September 23, 2010

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In early to mid 2000, the majority of North Korean women were trafficked into China because they lost their business as inexperienced merchants. To compensate for the loss of their only income, they crossed the river into China. Inevitably, traffickers trapped and sold them into sexual slavery, only this time, they were sold deeper into the country, such as to Heilongjiang or Shandong province.

In late 2000, the traffickers erected a system of trafficking that yielded immense profit. After gathering three to six women in North Korea, the broker bribes the border guard to let them cross into China. Once in China, another broker leads these women into the inner provinces and sells them for three to five times their premium price. Afterwards, the inner-province brokers bring the women to a final buyer, usually to farmers or to brothels, and there they are sold for ten to twenty times their initial price.

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I would like to add the testimonies of those who made it to a free country through 318 Partners. Thank you for your time and this much needed opportunity to testify on behalf of trafficked North Korean women in China.

16th Rescue of Trafficked Women:

Young-Ok Kim (Born 1982) Ham Kyung Province, NK: She left NK on 2006, and was sold to a Chinese man in Heilongjiang Province, China for 7,000 Yen (US\$1,050.00). Currently she is on the run from that man.

Sun-Nyu Kim (1973) Ham Kyung Province, NK: She was sold on 2002 to a Chinese family. With this family she had a baby boy. The boy is 5 yrs old. When arrested to the Chinese police in Jan. 2009, she was repatriated to NK. However, the opportunity for escape happened again from NK to China.

Kwang-Ok Choi (1966) Ham Kyung Province, NK: This woman escaped from NK in 2002. She was repatriated twice to NK but, has lived in Heilongjiang Province till recently. She escaped from the family in which she was living. She is hiding for now and is asking for help.

17th Rescue Results (3 North Korean Orphans from China)

Name: XX Go Born: 1998 Llang Kang Province, NK

Name: XX Go Born: 2003 Llang Kang Province, NK (Brother & sister)

Name: XX Chun Born: 2006 Llang Kang Province, NK



These orphans have gone into South Korea on around April 22nd and, after an inspection, are currently receiving special education and protection for orphans at a government appointed safe house. 318 Partners is planning to contact these children soon through a South Korean administrator. As you well know, these children all want to come to America. We are having contact with the family that wants to adopt them.

18th Rescue (2 Orphans Living in North Korea)

The 18th rescue was special in that it was the first rescue attempt to bring out 2 orphans from inside North Korea. At the end of March, the rescue team in China made contact with the guardian of the children, and plans were made for a rescue at the Tumen River banks on a certain day at a certain hour. Although, after all the game plans were set for crossing the river, both parties were standing by ready at the scene of the proposed rescue at the appointed time, the guide for the children on the North Korean side lost her nerve when she saw North Korean

border guards patrolling the river banks and was not able to give the proper password, resulting in the failure of the rescue. This set back the whole process of the rescue to square one. For this rescue, PSALT has given a tremendous amount of financial support, so we are crestfallen that nothing came of the rescue attempt, and we are just so sorry to you all related to PSALT. We are still asking around for news of the children's welfare, but we have not received any response. Because it is summer, nowadays, the river has swollen and all attempts by those fleeing North Korea to cross the river have been suspended. We will keep you abreast as news reaches us.

19th Rescue Trafficked Women - April 22, 2010

Song-Hyun Choi (1990) Ham Kyung Province, Left NK in May, 2007

Personal Account of Song Hyun Choi: I left NK through On Sung, North Ham Kyung Province. At first I was sold to a Chinese man in a farm town in Heilongjiang Province for 15,000 Yen (US\$2,000) by a Korean Chinese in Yanji. It was terrible for a young girl like me to be exposed to such things, but I had no choice. I was forced to obey this man to survive. Moreover he kept on threatening me if I disobeyed him. The consequences would be repatriation to North Korea. I was hopeless. For an 18 year old girl with no knowledge of geographical information and knowing nothing of their language I was totally isolated. I had to live with a man who was 13 years older than me, by force without any opinion on preference. Frankly, for my age, I should have the opportunity to go to college and have a dream life married to a dream husband. But I was desperate for a girl who was under 20, being sold and forced to live like this. I had no freedom to go out because I was North Korean, who was in danger to be arrested and repatriated to NK. That man didn't allow me to go out at all. I wanted to make money for my family in NK, but I had no chance to go out to make money. I was only a sexual play mate to that man every night. One day I had a chance to go out and I fled from that house. I just came to Yanji city and I was referred to a place where I could make lots of money, which was the Computer Chatting industry. I am working under heavy surveillance and I have no freedom. Please help me to escape from this atmosphere. I want to go to Korea. I will wait for your good news. Thank you. April 19, 2010. From Yanji. (Choi was contacted to a regular client for asking help)

19th Rescue-2

Mi Kyung Jang (1988) Ham Kyung



Escaped December, 2008

Personal Account: My name is Jang Mi Kyung. I left my home town in December, 2008. I was living with my mother but no father, we were very poor. So I decided to cross the river to work at a restaurant making 500 Yen (US\$80) a month. I followed a man who was going to get me a job. But soon as I crossed the river, I found I was trapped and I couldn't work at a restaurant because I was North Korean. That man who brought me wanted to return and he needed money to get going, he paid by a Chinese Korean broker and had left. I didn't know what was going on that time, but, I was told to follow that man to a farm town in Heilongjiang Province. I was married forcefully to a Chinese man where there were only Chinese. I had to make money for my sick mother but had no chance there. Later I found that the man had paid 15,000 (US\$2,000) for me. Now I have no choice but to live as his sexual play mate. I can't go out. This is like Hell to me. I am now sick myself. After 6 month later I could understand their language a little. Then, one day, I fled from that place. I thought I couldn't live like this forever. I just got on a bus and came to Yanji where I luckily met a NK neighbor, who could give me help. She told me she wanted to go to S. Korea and asked me to go along. So I have decided to go to S. Korea. I would like to make money in S. Korea so I can feed my family in NK. I like to have freedom of my own. Please help me to get going to S. Korea, Please! Thank you.

19th Rescue-3

Keum-Ju Kim (1983) Ryang Gang Province



Escaped from NK in Feb, 2009

Personal Account: I left NK in 2009 following a woman into China because it wasn't easy to live on my own in NK. She was my neighbor who I knew very well. She knew that I was living poor, she had suggested me to go to China to have a better life there. She told me that in China, I wouldn't go hungry. So, because of my status in NK, I was forced to follow her. I crossed the river with her by the guidance of a border security guard. I came to Yanji with her and she made money from a Korean Chinese boss and left. I was alone. Since then, I was taught how to do computer work and what was the so called Computer Chatting Industry. I didn't know what the meaning of Chatting was in the beginning. He guided me on how to do everything in the very beginning. He threatened me that if I don't follow him, he would report me to the police. If I don't do what he told me to do, he will curse me. I had to follow what he told me to do and followed the client's request. I only know that I am in Yanji city but I don't know where I am. I had never been out since. It is very hard for me to live like this. I would rather go back to NK living without freedom and poverty. By then, I had a Korean client who wanted to help me out of there. I asked him to help and he told me he would find a way. He gave me your number to reach and finally I was given a chance for now that I could get out of this place. Can I go to S. Korea and live free over there? I want to leave here as soon as possible. Please help me. Thank you. (She has been rescued and now in S. Korea)

20th Rescue Information - Sept. 14, 2010

Keum-Hee Lee (Born 1981) Ham Kyung Province, NK

She escaped from NK in 2004. This woman was sold to a man where she had a son. She was severely abused by her husband by beatings regularly when the man was drunk. She is now fleeing from that man, hiding in a place far from that man. She was referred by a NK Women Coalition in Seoul, Korea. This is the contact number in China through a landlord phone. (Mi-Ok Lee 151-4xxx-61xx)

20th Rescue Trafficked NK Women

Soo-Young Kim, 18 Years, month old NK mother in Yanji.

She was working in a Karaoke Bar, where she met a man who had a son, 7 years in age, married man. From this man, she got pregnant and had a baby in 8/14/2010. But, this man had sold this baby to a family who did not have a child. The baby's father had this kind of thing and very occasionally beat her and threatened to report her to the police that she is a North Korean woman. Her neighbor was so pitiful to her but no one knew how to help her. We have no idea where she is hiding now. But if I go to China, I could find her. I will go there in August, 2010. When I meet her I would like to help her. But I want you to help this girl, out of China to be free to Korea. (The one who was asking to help is Kim, PSCORE, Seoul-based North Korean Refugees' Organization.) She has been rescued on 9/6/2010. She is now in Thailand, waiting for the Korean government to contact her and being transferred to S. Korea

20th Rescue -3

Mi-Kyung Kim (Born 1990)

Sold to the place where Computer Chatting in May, 2009. She has no idea where she is but she seems that she is nearby Korean Consulate in Yanji or Shenyang. No parents. Raised by her Uncle. Arrested by the Chinese police once. Had bad heart. Could connect by MSN, internet phone. (xxfrbx8@live.co.kr): I am 21 years old. My name is Mi Kyung. I am working at a place where a Chinese Korean is boss for Korean client. Crossed into China in May, 2009. My parents passed away so I was raised by my uncle. When I got old enough, I was uncomfortable to live at my uncle's house. One day a man I knew told me there are good place to work in China, so I just followed him to get a good job and to be independent by myself. But I found I was sold after the man left. Where I was sold had 4 NK women were working Computer chatting through video screen. I don't know where I am exactly but I am sure I am in Hanam, Yanji. They told me Yanji Shenyang consul office is nearby. I was talking to the men I am chatting with, they told me that they asked Korean Embassy if they could help me, but the answer was impossible. Next to the Embassy, there are lots of police around the building. And very scary to even be near that place. I am using a MSN Messenger ID borrowed from a Korean client. I found NK Women's Coalition by chance; I learned your phone number to call through MSN. I told them about my situation



She showed client her photo during conversation through MSN.

My boss is a Korean Chinese, and he himself told me to help me but I couldn't trust him. Last Oct in 2009, Chinese police stormed our place and arrested all other girls who were working there. I was arrested together with them but I was heart attack at that time, they were afraid if I could die, they had released me. They didn't want to have any trouble having a NK refugee die in their place. Right now, I am alone. But I am always scare of the Chinese police might come back again to arrest me to repatriate back to NK. Boss is not watching me that crazy but never let me go out. He gave me something to eat but not enough. I could go out by breaking window, but, if I wander in the street I am fearful I could be arrested to the police again. I don't like to do Computer chatting with strange man. I want to get out of here. One thing comfort me is that I was lucky to meet good client so that they refer me NK Women's Coalition and how to go to S. Korea. I am young and have many things to do. I hate here. I want to escape from here soon as possible. Please help me. (March 10, 2010 Mi Kyung Kim)

Personal Testimonies of 12th Rescued Trafficked Victims - November 21, 2009

1) Name: Lee KH (Born 1975: HamKyung: High School Grad: Sewing Technician)



Aug. 2003: Cheated by a man she met at her farm field trip in NK, she came to China and was sold to a Korean-Chinese for RMB 10,000 (\$1,500).

Dec, 2003: Arrested by the Chinese police, but released after paying some penalty by a man who bought her and is living with her. With fear of being arrested again, she left that house, moved to Dalian, where she found her way to S. Korea, by leaving her home.

My Story by KH Lee: I was a technician at the clothing factory. When I visited a different farm, I met a man I liked. He enticed me to come to China to make a better living with him. So I left my country, NK to China, with him on the mid-night of Aug 17, 2003. While I was staying at a Korean-Chinese house for about 10 days and sold to a place called Heilongjiang for 10,000 RMB I didn't know I was sold for such amount at that time. I lived by myself with a farmer who worked at a farm. In Dec, 2003, I was arrested to the police because a Korean-Chinese neighbor accused me as an illegal NK in China. Fortunately, because of the man I was living with, he paid some of the penalty; I was released without being repatriated to NK. But I was so fearful that I was an illegal alien in this country. I told the man that I would be arrested again so instead I would rather go to another city to make money. With his permission, I came to Dalian and made myself a new life. Then, later I heard S. Korea would accept NK refugees as their country people and they would support me for the settlement. So I decided I would go to S. Korea. My new brother in law went to S. Korea to make a living and he connected me to find a NK refugee organization that helped NK refugees going to S. Korea. This is how I got connected to you. Please help me to go to S. Korea. Thank you.

2) Name; Lee CS (Born 1979: Hamkyung: High School Grad: Nurse)



Oct. 2003: Followed a man whom she loved to China, who was a human trafficker, she was sold to an old country farmer. She had lived her life with him for 6 years as a sexual partner. When she heard her neighbored NK refugee women were leaving their home to S. Korea; she just followed them to go to S. Korea.

Self Story of Lee CS: I came from xx county, Hamkyung province in NK. I was just staying at my home after high school. Then, I had a chance to learn to be a nurse, where I fell in love with a man, but he happened to be a trafficker. He tempted me to go to China to live a better life, so I just followed him, my love at that time. I didn't know the language, where I was at that time, I just followed

him and I ended up with an old farmer who lived in the depths of the mountains. He was very suspicious that I might be running away, so he wouldn't leave home without locking the door from outside. I lived with him as his partner for 6 years. This made me sick and very tired. This was the main reason why I have followed my friend from NK into the same village, who wanted to go to S. Korea for their better life. I have no idea how to go to S. Korea. But I just heard this through my friend who was living at the same village, sold like me. Please help me to get out of this miserable life and make it to S. Korea. Thank you.



3) Name: Kim JO (Born in 1967: Hamkyung Province: High School: Farm Worker) Dec. 2002: When I was swindled of all my money at the market, I decided to go to China to make money for recovery. Followed a man, who happened to be a human trafficker to cross the border and sold to many different places. June, 2006: I was informed to the Chinese police when I wasn't listening to a man, arrested, repatriated to NK and detained for 3 months at the detention center where I was badly beaten to transfer to my home town detention place. Nov, 2006: My mother bribed some of the guards to get me free. Feb, 2007: Crossed River into China for 2nd time. Fearing of being arrested and repatriated to NK, She has decided to go to S. Korea, where she can live free without any fear. Met a South Korean organization who helps NK refugees connected to 318 partner's mission.

Story of Refugee Kim JO: I was a merchant selling goods at XX city market in Hamkyung province, I was severely sick for 3 months from Sept, 2002 to spend all the money saved for the business. My mother's wealth wasn't that good either; however, she could borrow me 1,000 won in NK money to start over in business. I went out to do the buying and selling at the market. But the money I had was too little to make profit. One day, I met a young girl at the market who asked me about my business and told me if I come to China, I could make much more there. Then she introduced me to a man whom I could follow to China. But it wasn't like what the young girl told me when I was found in China later. She was one of the team of traffickers. But, no time to regret, I have decided that I have already made it into China and I would make money on my own. We, together with other 4 NK women, walked from Changbei for 3 days to Limgang. I asked the man who brought me to China that I wouldn't marry anyone, but want to make money, instead. But as he pretended to help me, he sold me to a man who was a poultry farmer. As I was staying there for

3 days, I realized they were going to marry me. So that night I escaped from them. Even though I didn't know the language or area, as we walked all the way when we got there, I could find the man's house who I was first sold to. That man was so frightened when he saw me, then, immediately he was so happy to see me that I could escape from the buyer's home. He offered me 500 RMB every time I could escape from the place he sold me to. Since then, I was sold to various places, then, I escaped from that place. But he often didn't give me 500 RMB. I felt bad whenever he cheated others and didn't get my share. So I just made myself at home till now to a man whom I met when I was sold in Jilin province. When I was settled at this man's house, I asked him that I needed to make money to support my family in NK. He agreed and started to help me to have a business in Baisan city, where I met a Korean-Chinese woman. However her husband found me as a NK woman, he had approached me to have an affair. I immediately refused. Then, after failed numerous attempts to get to know me, he informed me to the police on Nov. 2006 as an illegal NK refugee. I was arrested and repatriated to NK. In my hometown detention center, my mother rescued me by bribing the security official when I was in a deadly disease. I was released and, fortunately, I was recovered. Then in Feb, 2007, I left NK again but at this time for good. I have decided that I wouldn't come back to NK anymore. But it wasn't safe to live in China without any proper documents. By that time, I got a call from a NK refugee friend who had made to S. Korea. She introduced me a Korean NGO and connected to 318 Partners Mission. Please give me your mercy and help me to get to S. Korea where I can live freely without fear of being repatriated into NK. Thank you.

4) Name: Choi MA (Born 1965: Hamkyung: High Scholl Grad: Factory Worker)



May, 2001: Swindled all the money when doing business, crossed the border into China with a friend my neighbor. Both were sold to a farmer in Heilongjiang province when they asked for help from a Chinese family. After living a year at this place, she escaped from there and worked as a house helper and restaurant helper. But later she was arrested to the police. April, 2004: Repatriated to NK. Oct, 2004: 2nd escape from NK. When working at Heilongjiang province, she tried to find a way to S. Korea, met a man who approached her for help, stayed with this man for 4 years, but couldn't make it. After 4 years, left from this man and contacted this Korean NGO organization in S. Korea that helped me to connect to 318 Partners.

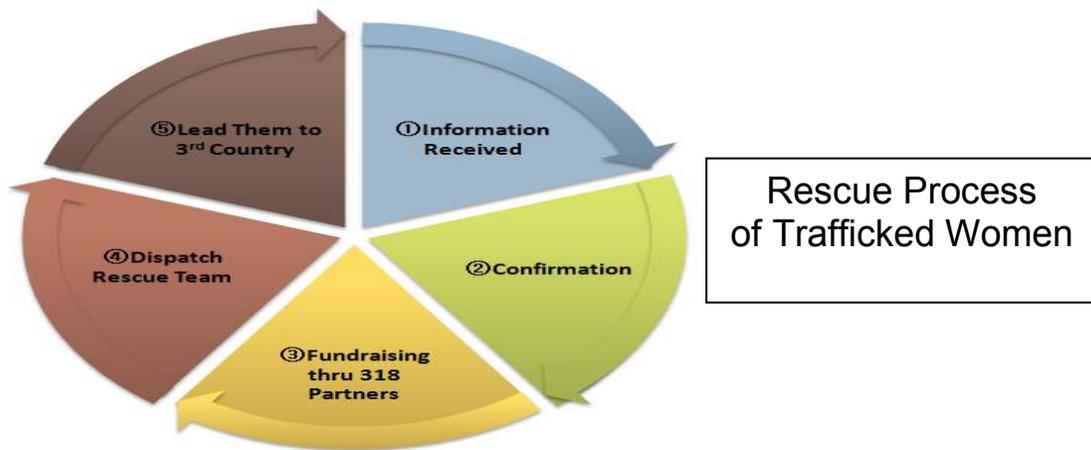
Story of Choi MA: I came from xx county in NK, a merchant who sells and buys at the market by suing money from my friend. I was doing fish business. One day I wanted to buy fish cheaper direct from the fishing boat, I gave all the money I had. But he was a swindler. I couldn't get a penny back from this fisherman. So I had to leave my home to China to make money with my friend. We were too hungry in China so we went into a Chinese family house, where we met an old couple who received us kindly by offering us some food to fill our stomach. They even offered us a place to sleep. The next day, their son came and offered me a working place. I left my friend there and followed him. Since then, I have never met my friend again. I was introduced to a family of Mother and son, farmer. I worked hard for a year, but I could never see any money on my hand. I couldn't live like that. So I left that house thinking of my children whom I left behind in NK. I got a job as a house worker in Mudanjiang city. But I couldn't work more than 5 months because of fear of arrest. I worked at a doctor's office but I was arrested to the police on April, 2004. After repatriation, I was confined at Onsung a local detention center till I was released and re-escaped from NK on Oct. 2004. I worked again at Mudanjiang area at restaurants, tea house and so on. Then, I was looking for the way to S. Korea. But it wasn't easy. Whenever I met Koreans or Korean-Chinese, I always asked them to get me to S. Korea. One day, a Korean-Chinese approached me saying that if I listen to him, he would let me come to S. Korea. I followed him for 4 years, but nothing had happened from him. I ran away from him after 4 years to the Mudanjiang city again. But later he found me and called me to come down to Guangzhou, southern province where he found a way to S. Korea. So I went there to meet him but it was again a lie. However there I could find a group in S. Korea that could help me to come to S. Korea. This is how I got to know and connected 318 Partners Rescue Mission. Please help me to achieve my dream to come to S. Korea.

5) Name: Kim HO (Born in 1969: Hamkyung: High School Grad: Farm Worker)

May, 2003: Doing business at Hyesan city. Hearing that she could make good money in China, she followed a man into China, sold to a Korean-Chinese in Shandong province for 4,000 RMB (\$600). Lived to that man for 7 years till she heard that the man who went to S. Korea having a mistress there. She felt

that she had no more hope on him; she escaped and looked for a way to S. Korea. Then she heard a neighborhood NK woman friend was leaving to S. Korea, she, without hesitating, followed her.

Story of Kim HO: I came to Hyesan city to do business with my sister in 2003. I have been living in the inner country my whole life; I never felt that was the border area to China. One day, a strange man approached me and told me if I come to the other side of the river, I could make lots of money in short time. So I just felt if I could go there to see if his word was true. So I followed him to see the opportunities in China. But he was a liar. I followed him to Shandong province without knowing their language and I was being sold. After a few days passed, I realized I was sold to them, I strongly requested to go back to my country. But he told me that I was sold and if I don't listen to him, I would be informed to the police so I should keep quite. He told me my cost was for 4,000 RMB (\$600). So I had to live there for 7 years with him. As he was a Korean-Chinese, he went to S. Korea to make money. But not very long, I heard he was having a family in S. Korea with another woman. I have lived with him by trusting him as my husband. But when I realized he was no longer being my man, I felt unsecured for myself. So I left myself leaving behind a 6 years old boy from him to come to S. Korea. But it wasn't easy to find the way to S. Korea. One day a NK woman, whom I met at the village, told me if I wanted to come to S. Korea. She said she had a connection to come to S. Korea. I didn't hesitate anymore. I left that house to come to S. Korea. Please help me to make it to the free country where I can live in peace.



Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Kim. We are going to go now to Chairman McGovern.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Well, first I want to thank Chairman Royce for yielding the time and for his commitment to human rights. And I apologize that I was late. I am in a meeting with the Speaker of the House on a nutrition bill, so I am back and forth. But I wanted to come by this specifically because I feel very strongly about the issues that were talked about here today. I want to thank all of you for being here to testify. I want to thank you for your courage. You validate the brutality of the terrible regime in North Korea. And, Mr. Kim, you talked about an issue that I am deeply concerned about, and that is that China should not be sending people back to North Korea, where they are often times tortured and killed. It just doesn't make any sense, and I would like to think that the United States could have maybe greater influence in persuading China maybe that there is a third way to deal with people who have fled prosecution.

So I appreciate your testimony, and we will certainly follow up on the recommendations. And I would like to ask unanimous consent for placing in the record my opening statement. And again, thank you very much for being here, and thank you for your commitment to human rights and your courage.

[The information follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES P. MCGOVERN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND COCHAIRMAN OF THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I thank my Co-Chairman Frank Wolf for recognizing me, and I want to thank him for having called this important hearing today. I would also like to apologize to our witnesses for being late, but I was unavoidably detained by urgent congressional matters.

Today's hearing on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is particularly timely as speculations abound on what North Korea's next domestic and international moves could be. And – as per usual – even the most experienced North Korea observers are completely baffled by the unpredictability as well as the opacity of political events in this completely closed-off country. We may -- or may not -- see a transfer of power from Supreme Leader Kim Jong-il to his third son, Kim Jong-un, which may – or may not – happen at the upcoming Workers' Party Conference, scheduled for September 28th. Today, there is news that North Korea promoted three senior officials who have been involved previously with the United States in nuclear negotiations. This change in leadership may indicate North Korean willingness to reengage in denuclearization talks.

While those developments remain shrouded in complete secrecy, what is painfully clear is the suffering of the people inside the DPRK and of hundreds of thousands of defectors in neighboring countries. All of you here today are powerful reminders of the severity of the suffering and the urgency with which the international community must address it.

As my colleagues and our witnesses have already explored the breadth of the human rights violations in North Korea, I will not do so here again. Suffice to say, the situation is so abysmal that the former U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Vitit Nuntarbhorn [**Noon-tar-born**], described it as "*sui generis* [**soo-ee GEN-er-us**](in its own category)."

Because the suffering is so clear and urgent, we simply cannot be satisfied by just denouncing the situation in justifiably harsh language either here in the U.S. Congress or at the United Nations, and just by doing so expect that changes on the ground will occur. If that were the solution, North Korea would be a human rights paradise today.

We clearly need strong and consistent criticism and documentation of North Korea's human rights situation in all international fora such as the UN Human Rights Council, the UN General Assembly, the World Bank, as well as in all regional bodies to create pressure on North Korea to engage in a meaningful human rights process. The international community was successful once before in the endeavor to move North Korea to engage in the Six Party Talks on nuclear issues. And while the talks are currently stalled, there may be new signs of life from China. Given North Korea's paranoia vis-à-vis the United States and the DPRK's complete isolation, we need to break North Korea out of this detrimental mindset with the help and support of other global and regional powers that hold some sway over Pyongyang [**pyuhng-yahng**]. From a human rights perspective, this includes Russia and China, countries with poor human rights records of their own, but there is no realistic alternative to those powers if we are to achieve any real improvements for the people suffering today and tomorrow. An independent and exclusive human rights mechanism modeled on the Six-Party-Talks and the "2+4" process which led to Germany's reunification at least should be given a chance to see if it could produce positive results. After all, we cannot simply throw up our arms in utter frustration declaring that nothing can be done about North Korea. The people of North Korea deserve better. Thank you.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Chairman McGovern. We will go now to Congressman Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me ask -- I think we are running out of time. Are we going to be turning in for the votes?

Mr. ROYCE. You are fine.

Mr. SMITH. First of all, thank you all for your testimony and for your bravery. This really is a very troubling -- beyond troubling. This is outrageous what both the North Korean government under Kim Jong-il and the Chinese government under Hu Jintao are doing to people, victims who are before us today. I would like to ask you a couple of very specific questions. You know, on Saturday, we will recall and remember with great sorry the 30th anniversary of the implementation, the beginning, the creation of the one child per couple policy in China.

Mr. Kim, you just mentioned a moment ago that there are some 30 million men -- some even put the estimate as being higher. Some even say it may be as many as 40 million men who will not be able to find wives by 2020. They are missing approximately 100 million girls in China, women, as a result of the one child per couple policy. And frankly, Mr. Wolf said earlier that the United States has not found its voice or has lost its voice on human rights violations in both North Korea and in China. I would say it is even worse. We have been complicit by providing money to organizations like the United Nations Population Fund, which has aided and abetted the one child per couple policy, with its forced abortion and forced sterilization policy, and there is a direct, not an indirect, a direct consequence. The missing girls has created a huge magnet for the traffickers to abuse young women, women who somehow get across the border, not knowing that these brokers, these modern day slave traders, are waiting right across the border's edge.

So there is all kinds of blame here, and unfortunately, the UN, the United States government, especially under this administration, which has absolutely not raised this issue in any meaningful way -- as a matter of fact, we have done even worse. We have given \$50 million. Now, we are going to do it annually, maybe even more, to the UN Population Fund, which has been the prime cheerleader and enabler, the enabler-in-chief, of the one child per couple policy. They have whitewashed these crimes repeatedly.

I met with Peng Peiyun in Beijing, who ran the program, and she kept telling me over and over again, the UNFPA is here, and they see no coercion. They see no forced abortion. And again, you have borne the brunt of those consequences.

Let me also say, too, and ask Carl Gershman, who is a great defender of human rights and has done a fabulous job for years -- question. How would you rate the implementation of the North Korean Human Rights Act, particularly as it relates to refugees, about 100. We thought there would be many thousands of North Korean refugees who would be finding safe haven in the United States.

Let me also ask you, if you could, I read -- and you mentioned Juche a moment ago. I read a book that I actually found on the website, "A Voice of the Martyrs," and that is Richard Wurmbrand, who is the great human rights leader in Romania. His son runs that and others within his family. But it was all about Juche, the brainwashing. And maybe some of our distinguished North Korean witnesses might want to speak to it.

We don't understand in the West really -- read books -- you just don't really understand, I don't at least, the self-reliance, the deification of Kim Jong-il, his father

before him, perhaps his son will follow, and the brainwashing that goes on that so mal-affects the young people in North Korea, if you could speak to that.

And finally, on the refugee convention, one of our witnesses, Mi Sun Bahng, you spoke about North Korean women being spoken of as pigs, and you as first pig. You also spoke in your written testimony, the expanded version, about how the first husband you were sold to treated you like an animal from the first day. And I am wondering, you know, just to get a flavor and a sense of the depravity here -- you know, we often talk about racism. This smacks of the worst form of racism, and obviously, the mistreatment of women as chattel slaves. Could you speak to that issue as well, the Chinese men treating the North Korean women in such a racist and such a depraved way.

Carl, if you wanted to start.

Mr. GERSHMAN. Well, thank you, Congressman Smith. And I want to again congratulate you for the passion you bring to these issues. You spoke to that parliamentary meeting we had last week about these issues as well, and I think you were incredibly persuasive. And what it brings to mind when I hear you speak about these issues in that way is the fact that when Indira Gandhi in 1975 declared an emergency, and then she had an election foolishly, it was because of this family policy that she lost that election because the Indian people protested. And in the end, you know, we have got to work on these issues. But in the end, the only real solution to this is to hear from the Chinese people, just as we want to hear from the North Korean people, and through democracy.

In my remarks, you know, I see the incredible suffering that is taking place. But I also see in this potential for liberating the people of North Korea. And I think 100 is not enough, Congressman. We have to find ways, through a cooperation with South Korea, of enabling more people to come to freedom, to recognize the people who fled as refugees, to have them protected by the refugee convention, to bring them to freedom, and then to help in their education so that ultimately, as I said, they can become part of the rebuilding of North Korea.

I believe that is surely to come. We don't know how soon. They are going through this leadership problem right now. I don't think that this is a terribly stable system. And I think we have to begin to prepare now, as Lee Myung-bak is beginning to prepare, you know, through a tax policy to try to develop a fund for the rebuilding of North Korea. I think we have to start preparing now for the rebuilding, and I think these defectors can play an important role in that.

Mr. ROYCE. Who would like to answer the question on Juche?

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Ms. KANG. Basically, Juche has the philosophy that my own destiny is in my own hands. But that is in philosophy only. That is not actual practice. In North Korea, if you lived there, not a single thing could be done on your own. There is no will to be exercised. All things that are taking place and all things that I would be doing in North Korea would be really according to the dictator's wishes.

Mr. ROYCE. Well expressed, I thought. And lastly, Ms. Bahng. Did she want to respond to the last question?

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Ms. BAHNG. I had not even known that I had human rights until I came to South Korea. When I was in North Korea, I did not realize people had human rights, and I did not know that I could have exercised some of these rights.

Because I was victimized in the human trafficking myself, and because I had lived in China for some time, I know where a lot of these women are sold to and where a lot of these women are sent to, and I wanted to, once I got to South Korea, to find ways to stop this human trafficking from taking place. I wanted to rescue these women, and also stop this vicious cycle. But the biggest problem that I had actually run into was that I did not have enough funds.

And also, I wanted to actually find ways to stop North Korean women from having to go through China to come to a free world. I wanted to find ways to bring these North Korean women to the free world directly. But then again I ran into the same problem. I didn't have the funds.

Mr. ROYCE. Well, we want to thank you very much for coming here today and sharing with us first your concerns, and second sharing with us in a way that perhaps many of us can assist you in your mission. And so, Ms. Bahng, Ms. Kang, Ms. Jo, Steve, and Carl, we thank you all for coming up here and testifying. We are out of time on the vote. We have got no time left on the vote, and we have a series of six votes before us.

So I just wanted to wrap up by again expressing my deep appreciation for you serving as witnesses here today, and for all that you have tried to do to help refugees in North Korea. Thank you very, very much. We stand adjourned.

[Applause]

[Whereupon, at 2:50 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD



**Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (TLHRC)
Hearing Notice**

Escaping North Korea: The Plight of Defectors

**1-3 p.m.
Thursday, September 23
2172 Rayburn HOB**

Please join the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for a hearing on the status of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The North Korean regime under the leadership of Kim Jong Il is one of the worst violators of human rights in the world. Countless individuals attempt to flee the country each year seeking freedom and a better life. Unfortunately, the nightmare continues for many who cross the northern border into the People’s Republic of China. All too often these defectors become victims of human trafficking or face repatriation to North Korea if discovered by Chinese authorities. As North Korea appears to be preparing for a transition in leadership, the human rights situation remains precarious.

To discuss these issues, we will welcome as our witnesses:***

Carl Gershman, president, National Endowment for Democracy
Su-Jin Kang, founder and director, North Korea Women’s Rights
Mi Sun Bahng, North Korean defector
Jin Hae Jo, North Korean defector
Steve Kim, founder and director, 318 Partners

***Witness list subject to change.

If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth Hoffman (Rep. Wolf) or Hans Hogrefe (Rep. McGovern) at 202-225-3599.

James P. McGovern, M.C.
Co-Chairman, TLHRC

Frank R. Wolf, M.C.
Co-Chairman, TLHRC

North Korea Freedom Coalition News Update

The North Korea Refugee Crisis: “Desperate Life or Death” Defections on the Rise

Background: North Korean refugees began crossing over the border into China when famine struck North Korea in the 1990s. This problem was of such concern to Kim Jong-il that through the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s (DPRK) government broadcasting they warned North Koreans not to go to China explaining that China was experiencing a civil war and although conditions in North Korea were difficult, they were much worse in China. Those early refugees who crossed the border were shocked when they got to China: it was a “paradise” compared to North Korea-- people had electricity, cars, and most importantly, food. News spread and soon at least 500,000 North Koreans were estimated to have crossed the border to try to find work or food to feed themselves and their starving families back home. Estimates vary widely from 10,000 to 300,000 of how many North Korean refugees are in China today, but there is no doubt they are all in grave danger because China signed an agreement with the DPRK to arrest these refugees and force them back to North Korea.

China’s Violation of International Law: Under international law, the moment a North Korean defector crosses the border they meet the definition of an asylum seeker because it is a criminal offense, punishable by death, for a North Korean to leave their country without permission. China is obligated not to repatriate them as a signatory to the 1951 U.N. Convention on Refugees and its 1969 Protocol. Every North Korean who is forced back to North Korea by China is tortured and imprisoned, and those who are found to have crossed more than once or been in contact with Christians can be publicly executed.

China’s Policy Leads to Human Trafficking: China continues to force refugees back to North Korea knowing these refugees will face certain torture and imprisonment, and increasingly public execution, for the crime of fleeing their famine-stricken homeland. Furthermore, China jails humanitarian workers who try to help refugees, refuses the UN High Commission for Refugees access to the North Korean asylum seekers, and blocks the refugees from seeking resettlement in countries willing to resettle them. Their policy has led to what North Korea Freedom Coalition Chairman Suzanne Scholte describes as “the most avoidable human rights tragedy occurring in the world today” forcing the refugees into severe danger and exploitation with over 80% of North Korean women being exploited by human traffickers, sold into brothels, forced to work for internet pornographers, or to Chinese men as sex slaves or “wives”.

Contributing to this situation is the shortage of women in China resulting from China’s one child policy. North Korean females are in demand and human traffickers are luring them into China. There are markets for these North Korean where the traffickers describe the North Korean females as “pigs” and sell them like animals.

North Korean men are also exploited as slave laborers, while North Korean children, many of whom were born to Chinese fathers and North Korean mothers, are abandoned and stateless.

Sadly, this tragic situation receives little attention because efforts by journalists to report on it have been extremely difficult as the incident with Laura Ling and Euna Lee illustrates. The two reporters went to China to report about the trafficking of North Korean women only to be abducted and held by North Korea until former President Bill Clinton was able to gain their release.

An Immediately Solvable Crisis: The North Korean refugee crisis is unique in that they are the only refugee population that have the ability to be immediately resettled as they have South Korean citizenship under the Republic of Korea constitution and the United States has consistently offered resettlement for those who qualify. Hence, this situation could be immediately remedied if China would simply follow their international treaty obligations and allow the UNHCR to fulfill their mission, stop jailing humanitarian workers, and work with the many countries that have offered resettlement of North Korean refugees.

Recent developments: The following are reports collected from news stories and non-governmental organizations on this continuing crisis.

Desperate 'Life or Death' defections on the rise: Defectors who flee North Korea these days are not ones who cross the border by 'safely' paying off border security guards, but more and more North Korean citizens are risking life and limb to cross the Tumen River. A stringer for Free North Korea Radio reported on the 29th that the rate of defections on the Tumen River reminded him of the rate back in 2000, when there was an increase in the rate of defection. However, due to the increased surveillance and patrol by the Chinese security apparatus, most of the defectors who brave high currents are caught even before setting foot in Yanbian, and are repatriated. (Free North Korea Radio, August 30, 2010)

Crackdown on Refugee Families: Kim Jong-il issued an order to reinforce the crackdown on refugee families at the China-North Korea border. A strike force, a professional unit to stop further escapes, was formed in the North Korean Ministry of People's Security. An activist at the border says, "The atmosphere at the Public Security Bureau in China and at North Korean guard posts is very tense. China placed a ruthless 'shoot to kill' order on refugee helpers that refuse to cease their activities. On June 4th, 3 Chinese people were killed by the North Korean border garrison. Subsequently, a gun battle broke out between two border garrisons in late-June." (Open Radio for North Korea, August 28, 2010)

Jail Term of North Korean Refugees Extended: "Repatriated North Korean refugees are in jail for extended periods," said a Hamgyeongbuk-do Hweryung source, who was released at the end of last year from Jeongur-ri re-education center, a prison only for North Korean refugees. "Refugees with just financial purposes used to be sentenced to less than 3 years but when I first went to the re-education center in the spring of 2009, my jail term was extended to as many years as I stayed in China." (Open Radio for North Korea, August 28, 2010)

Defection Attempt Detected: A source in China reveals that the Kim family, defectors heading to South Korea, got lost in Yanji. Mr. Kim, along with his wife and son, attempted a challenging escape after Kim's mother arrived safely in South Korea. There is a high possibility that the family has been captured and detained in a prison camp such as Jeongeori, which is known for its brutality. The rumor among neighbors of Mr. Kim that his mother finally made it to the South, will weigh heavily upon him and could double the amount of punishment he will receive. (Open Radio for North Korea, August 28, 2010)

NED President cares about NK markets: The President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) spoke out about the North Korean markets and the government controlled ration system on August 21 in Toronto, Canada. Mr. Carl Gershman said, "Some North Korean merchants are already crossing the border legally. The market system has risen in North Korea because of the inefficient public distribution system which does not function properly." (Radio Free Asia, August 21, 2010)

North Korean defectors speak at human rights conference: At the International Conference on North Korean Human Rights, Young-Cheol Kim and Mi-ran Kim, North Korean defectors, discussed their horrifying experiences and escape. Malnutrition, torture, severe punishment, executions, unsanitary conditions, prostitution, rape, violence, human trafficking, slavery and

oppression are the key terms to describe the present situation in North Korea where violations of human rights continue to escalate and human suffering soars. (Digital Journal, August 20, 2010)

Hardships of North Korea Women: Hua-Jin Lee, a PhD at Hanyang University, conducted an in-depth interview with 11 married North Korean women in their 30s and 40s, who escaped North Korea since 2000, and published a paper. His paper, "The Human Rights Abuses and Process of Identity Changes Viewed Through North Korean Women's Marriage Lives in North Korea, China, and South Korea," reveals the cases of North Korean women who chose to escape North Korea in order to get away from hardships, but ended up facing forced marriages with Chinese men, and sold into human trafficking rings. (The Chosun Ilbo, August 19, 2010)

Nightmares of North Korean female refugees: A recent research on 11 North Korean female refugees reveals that they have suffered in North Korea, China, and South Korea. Since The Arduous March in 1995, North Korea cut rations so that women were forced to sell things in order to support the family. In this male-centered society, women often experienced domestic violence as well. Even after they escaped from North Korea, North Korean women were often trafficked and sold to Chinese men, in order to avoid forced repatriation. They are often exposed to violence including forced sex. (The Chosun Ilbo, August 19, 2010)

Why defect if they have rice?: 13 North Korean refugees were transported from China to Hamkyung Province in North Korea on August 14. North Koreans in that province reported that there was a 5 year-old child (female), 70 year-old man, and others in their 20s-30s (male=4, female = 9), who were treated as cargos. (Free North Korea Radio, August 17, 2010)

Almost all defectors hidden in Chinese rural area were caught: Refugees who have been hiding in the Yanbian rural area were all caught and repatriated by North Korean security agency personnel and Chinese public security authorities in a joint operation. A stringer for the Free North Korea Radio says that since last spring, North Korean Security Agency intensified its plan of arresting defectors in rural areas of China. More defectors are now hiding in big cities. (Free North Korea Radio, August 17, 2010)

Attempted defection is punished more harshly: The North Korean regime treats those who attempt to defect very harshly and sends them to prison camps. Last March, a family of six who tried to cross the Tumen River was arrested, and after two months, sent to Yoduk concentration camp. (Free North Korea Radio, August 16, 2010)

Lives of North Korean defectors: The typical North Korean refugee in China is a middle-aged woman (women outnumber men roughly three to one since it is easier for them to leave the village and reach the border). She has spent all her life working at a farm in a remote North Korean village. At best she might be a primary school teacher or a low level clerk in the local administration. Of course there are elite refugees, but those constitute a small minority. (Korea Times, August 15, 2010)

More Middle-Class North Koreans Defect: Before the currency reform in North Korea, most of the defectors were so poor that they did not care whether they would be killed if they were caught fleeing the North. But since the currency reform, more middle-class North Koreans have been fleeing the North. A North Korean source said that, in recent days, many people who lost their savings due to the currency reform have reportedly decided to flee. (The Chosun Ilbo, August 7, 2010)

A society that bestows an honorific term to evil: Free North Korea Radio reports on the experiences of a North Korean woman defector who in 1999 witnessed the beating and torture, and eventual miscarriage of another North Korean woman defector who was singled out for carrying the seed of a Chinese bastard mongrel child. The officers and members of security

bureaus or detention centers are called an honorific term, 'sun-seng-nim', by those held in these places. (Free North Korea Radio, August 6th 2010)

POWs held in mine for 50 years: A father of a missionary and North Korean defector, who is a POW from the Korean War, is still detained in the mine for 50 years. Byon Won-shik was born in Kangwon-do, South Korea in 1931. He has been detained in Sangha mine at Onsung-kun, North Hamkyung where hundreds of POWs are also detained. There are POWs from the UN as well. (Mission of Refugees—NGO report, August 3, 2010)

7 defectors were caught and executed publicly: On June 29th, 2010, seven North Korean defectors, including ones from Shinuiju, were arrested by Chinese police in Dandong, China. Within a month, around July 29th, they were repatriated and executed in North Korea. Currently, a female defector with South Korean nationality is held in prison in Dandong. (Mission of Refugees—NGO report, August 3, 2010)

Among 12 defectors, China sent 10 back to North Korea: In October 2009, in Unnam province in China, 12 North Korean defectors tried to escape from China to fly to Korea and the U.S. However, a Chinese Korean (Chosun-jok) leaked information to the Chinese police and they were all caught. The Mission of Refugees sent a large amount of money so that 2 of them could be released, but the rest of them were sent back to North Korea. (Mission of Refugees—NGO report, August 3, 2010)

North Korean refugees trapped for 2 years inside Japanese Consulate in Shenyang, China: Life Funds for North Korean Refugees highlighted the plight of North Korean refugees in China by reporting on an article carried in the Asahi Shimbun, of more than a dozen former ethnic Korean residents of Japan who had moved to North Korea, and escaped. They have subsequently sought refuge at the Japanese Consulate in Shenyang. China has demanded that the Japanese Foreign Ministry sign a pledge refusing future help to North Korea refugees, if these dozen refugees are granted permission to leave China. (Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, August 1, 2010)

Jolie raises concern at plight of repatriated North Koreans: Actress Angelina Jolie, Goodwill Ambassador for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, showed concern about North Korean refugees being persecuted when they are sent back to North Korea. Tens of thousands of North Koreans are believed to be hiding in China after fleeing their impoverished homeland. Many try to travel on to South Korea via a third country because Beijing repatriates those refugees it arrests, under a widely criticized agreement with Pyongyang. (AFP, July 28, 2010)

North Korean defector now resettled in Canada reminisces about life in North Korea, and in China: A North Korean woman, Mrs. Lim, who has now resettled in Canada, talked about her life in North Korea and how she and her family suffered through the famine and the breakdown of the public distribution system. After escaping via the Tumen River to China with her daughter, she lived a life of fear of repatriation and of being sold into a human trafficking ring. She says "When I was in China a lot of my fellow countrymen were saying North Koreans came to China and lost their children", because the mothers were often times sold to forced marriages. To avoid being caught and sold in a trafficking ring, she found a job as a caretaker for an elderly rural couple. It was while in China she learned how bad and evil North Korea was, and eventually, ended up in Canada. (Radio Free Asia, July 26 2010)

Arrested S. Korean POW Sent Back to N. Korea: An 81-year-old South Korean prisoner of war from the Korean War is known to have been sent back to North Korea after being arrested in China in August last year. A source from the South Korean government said, "The government has made tremendous diplomatic efforts (to bring him to South Korea) but he was eventually sent back to North Korea." It was reported the South Korean government contacted Chinese diplomatic authorities more than 50 times since he was detained in China, but Beijing failed to

notify the South Korean counterparts of the whereabouts or condition of the 81-year old POW. (AFP, July 26, 2010)

Pyongyang Ordered To Destroy Baggage Boats To Prevent Defection: North Korea bolstered the hunting and arresting of North Korea escapees; North Korea has sent large numbers of arresting agents to Yunnan and Shandong, with the help of the Chinese government. Also, Pyongyang ordered the destruction of all the baggage boats which were used as a means of escaping North Korea through the Yellow Sea. Baggage boat is a means of living for North Koreans as well as an instrument to earn money for firms (The Chosun Ilbo, July 11, 2010)

North Korea Taking Fight to China: North Korea has large numbers of agents in Yunnan, a major Chinese province on the route to Southeast Asia for refugees, and Shandong, where a large number of South Koreans reside, to catch North Korean refugees hiding in China. A source reported on the telephone interview with The Daily NK, "Both the Defense Security Command of the Chosun People's Army and the National Security Agency have been mobilized to track down escapees. Their targets are general North Koreans in China, but those heading for South Korea are the top priority." According to the source, the agents have been in China since June (Daily NK, July 11, 2010)

Strengthening Punishment, 14 Expected Public Executions: According to NK Intellectuals Solidarity, 14 public executions are expected to be held this week in Hamkyung, North Korea. They are accused of letting people escape from North Korea and spreading narcotics. Since last June, the Worker's Party and National Security Agency cooperated in overseeing defection suspects, defection supporters, drug sellers, and cell phone users and arrested dozens of people. This harsh censorship seems to greatly increase the fear of the residents. (The Chosun Ilbo, July 9, 2010)

The Constant Threat of Exploitation: Being labeled a defector squarely exposes them to sexual victimization in third countries such as China. Defectors are exposed to sexual crimes when a defector has no other choice but to offer up her body to earn a living and when a defector is victimized by a Chinese human trafficking organization. "North Korean defectors are either sexually victimized by their brokers during the process of defecting, or become easy targets for human trafficking once inside another country due to their need to keep a low profile," explained one anonymous defector. Another extremely important point is that North Korean defectors residing in China are not categorized as 'refugees', which effectively strips them of any legal protection from the state. (Daily NK, July 5, 2010)

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Detainees in China face more mental than physical abuse, U.N. Special Rapporteur says: Manfred Nowak, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, told an Open Society Institute gathering here that authorities in China set out to "break the will" of convicts and detainees to make them believe that they have committed a crime. (Radio Free Asia, June 21, 2010)

They fled from the nightmare of North Korea – only to be sold into slavery in China: North Koreans continue to breach the 900-mile border of North Korea-China. Most make the risky crossing from the North Korean side, with no plans to return. "I defected to China in March 2007

for a new opportunity outside North Korea but I was victimized by human traffickers and sold to an entertainment club and restaurant where I worked as a virtual slave for two years,” said Pang Yon-ju, a 26-year-old woman now living in Seoul. “I was terrified by the possibility of arrest at any time by the Chinese police.” (Herald Scotland, June 20, 2010)

More than 1,000 North Korean refugees in the world, according to UNHCR: The UNHCR recently published a report on refugees and asylum-seekers, saying that the number of North Korean refugees overseas has reached over 1,000 in 2009. (Radio Free Asia, June 17, 2010)

Shooting of 3 Chinese Smugglers Explained: Although it was reported that the North Korean border guard did not know who was on the boat and fired at it in the dark, in fact, both sides already had close relations, according to a trader, Kim. The North Korean guard had apparently passed several antiques which he had obtained in the North to the Chinese smugglers. However, the Chinese smugglers refused to pay money for the antiques, claiming they were all imitations. After a while, the smugglers said they would give other goods of equivalent value instead of money and then tried to leave, at which point the guard apparently shot them. (Daily NK, June 17, 2010)

Two Publicly Executed in Hoiryeong Because of Their Cellphone Use: A Public Distribution System (PDS) worker named Kim, convicted of the murder of a National Security Agency agent in March of this year, has been executed alongside his younger brother. On March 26th, an agent with the National Security Agency’s Radio Frequency Monitoring Unit, Choi, discovered Kim talking to one of his brothers in China. Kim apparently begged Choi to show leniency, but Choi refused so Kim murdered him. Kim’s mother, wife and 3-year old child have all been sent to the No. 22 Hoiryeong Political Prison Camp following the case, according to the source. (Daily NK, July 15, 2010)

US Ambassador in the State Dept says, “China should protect North Korean refugees from human trafficking”: Ambassador Luis CdeBaca in the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking In Persons in the State Department says on June 14th that the Chinese government should be involved in actual screening of people within the North Korean refugee flow to determine which are the people who are actually trafficking victims. He also points out the fact that North Korean government harshly punishes the repatriated refugees and sends them to gulags, where they experience tortures and sexual abuses. (Radio Free Asia, June 14, 2010)

Train inspectors Arrested for Overlooking Smuggling: Five train inspectors in the transit police bureau were arrested for overlooking smuggling operations. Train inspectors near the border are responsible for blocking smuggling and inspecting illicit materials, but they tend to be well off because they receive 100,000 NK Won for each smuggling case. (Good Friends, June 10, 2010)

Increase of border security also applies to Chinese smugglers: The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed the North Korean shooting of three Chinese smugglers attempting to cross the border between the two countries. The three were engaged in smuggling copper and were shot as they came towards Sinuiju by boat on June 4th. (Daily NK, June 9, 2010)

Youth Facing Espionage Execution in Shinuiju: A young man from Shinuiju was executed after being accused of leaking information on currency redenomination by communicating with South Korea via mobile phone. (Daily NK, June 9, 2010)

North Korean spy agency ordered assassination of defector Hwang Jang-yop: North Korea’s Reconnaissance Bureau, a spy agency, allegedly masterminded a recent assassination attempt on the North’s highest-ranking defector to the South. The two North Korean agents, known only as Kim, 36, and Tong, 34, were arrested in April on charges of plotting the assassination of Hwang Jang-yop, formerly the Secretary of the North’s ruling Workers’ Party and

Chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly. They arrived in Seoul via China and Thailand last December disguised as defectors. (Yonhap News, June 4, 2010)

Man arrested for exploitation of North Korean refugees: The 53-year-old identified only as Na is accused of recruiting about 160 North Korean women and ethnic Koreans in China to engage in Internet sex chats with South Korean clients or to strip in front of webcams. (AFP, May 29, 2010)

Special Police Squads Organized to Strengthen Regulation Against Residents: According to sources, about 300 special police squads have been formed in each province to take action to block out information on foreign countries and root out anti-regime suspects at a time of rising tensions regarding the Cheonan incident. (Daily NK, May 25, 2010)

A Female North Korean Spy Is Caught: South Korea has arrested a woman on charges of spying for North Korea, the National Intelligence Service here said Sunday. Kim Mi-hwa (36) allegedly obtained classified documents about the Seoul subway through a former Seoul Metro employee identified as Oh and reported the information to the North. (The Chosun Ilbo, May 24, 2010)

Laura Ling, journalist who was detained in North Korean prison in 2009, tries to reveal the reality of North Korean refugees: In the interview, Laura Ling says, "[Many] women [defectors] are trafficked into really horrendous situations in neighboring China. They are forced into marriages. They are lured into the prostitution industry. And because China does not regard North Korean defectors as refugees ... they will send them back across the border to North Korea if they are caught. [...] They will be sent to North Korea's notorious labor camps and possibly face torture or worse." (NPR news, May 19, 2010)

New ID Card project threatens defector families: A new national identification card will begin to be issued on May 17th. Since the North Korean authorities tried to computerize citizen databases, families of defectors are about to be in a risky position. If they have not previously reported missing family members, they will be treated as suspicious, and be placed under increased monitoring. (Daily NK, May 12, 2010)

Increasing Number of Spy Acts: The National Intelligence Service in South Korea said in a report to the National Assembly in 2005 that it had detected 670 orders sent by North Korea to agents in the South over the previous five years. Military intelligence officials told the defense minister in 2008 that there were around 170 communist sympathizers within the South's military, around 50 soldiers caught passing on classified information, and internal probes focusing on 100 such cases. (The Chosun Ilbo, April 22, 2010)

2 Spies Held in Plot to Kill Senior North Korean Defector: Hwang Jang-yop, the former Secretary of the North's ruling Workers' Party and Chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly, spoke about the arrest of two North Korean agents who had been sent to assassinate him. "There are probably more agents somewhere out there whose mission is assassination," he said. (The Chosun Ilbo, April 21, 2010)

Pyongyang Detains North Korean Defector: A North Korean defector, Lee, working for the Free North Korea Radio (FNKR) as a correspondent, was abducted by the North's security agents on Feb. 19 near the border between China and North Korea. Kim Seung-min, director of the FNKR, was informed by a secret correspondent based in the North that Lee was nabbed by security agents and detained by the authorities. Kim said Lee was scheduled to meet with his wife and son, who live in the North, near the border area at that time and was caught by the agents who were waiting for him. (The Korea Times/The Chosun Ilbo, April 18, 2010)

Cell Phone Users Given One Last Chance: The National Security Agency has decided to severely punish those users of Chinese cellular phones in border cities near the Tumen River who fail to report their illegal cellular phones (Daily NK, March 23, 2010)

North Korean Soldier Successfully Defects Across DMZ: A North Korean soldier successfully crossed the DMZ and Military Demarcation Line (MDL) into South Korea along the Kangwon Province border (Daily NK, March 4, 2010)

Korean Children Left in China: North Korean children in China are afforded no protection under the country's laws. There are about 2,000 "defector orphans" in China, with a possible total of 30,000 North Korean defectors living in hiding. On the other hand, "stateless orphans"—children born out of relationships between North Korean women and Chinese men with their mothers subsequently deported to North Korea—are currently believed to number 10,000-20,000, and are unable to get an education because they lack official Chinese papers. (Radio Free Asia, February 12, 2010)

Suffocating and killing a newborn baby...: Free North Korea Radio reports on atrocities committed by North Korean security agents on women who were repatriated from China; these atrocities were revealed in an event held in Seoul to prosecute Kim Jong-il at the International Criminal Court. A North Korean refugee woman who was forcibly repatriated to North Korea by Chinese authorities recounted how she was repatriated in August of 2005 when 7 months pregnant, but was beaten daily until she gave birth in November, but the woman's newborn baby's life was snuffed out by a North Korean soldier who suffocated the infant. (Free North Korea Radio, December 3, 2009)

North Korea Gives Up on "Boat People": North Korea has ceased calling for the immediate return of a group of eleven people who made a rare and successful defection attempt directly between North and South Korea in October 2009. (Daily NK, November 27, 2009)

Defector Describes Graft, Torture: An elite defector described bribery and corruption in North Korea as standard practice. He came under investigation for "giving money to traitors" and he was tortured in a number of ways, including sleep deprivation. Medical parole and numerous bribes allowed his early release from a 15-year-sentence, and he escaped to China after that incident. (Radio Free Asia, November 22, 2009)

The Pain and Suffering of Illness—A Defector's Memoir: The stream of refugees arriving in South Korea has reached almost 20,000. But each person chose their journey for various reasons - hunger, avoiding a prison sentence or in search of freedom. Like any refugee, I did not leave because I desired to. But no matter how much I wanted to stay in my motherland, I had no choice but to escape. I buried everything from my previous life in the land which I had left behind: my childhood, which overflowed with innocence and bliss, my married life which, in contrast, had only brought unhappiness and pain, and the moments when I hovered on the threshold of life and death, shuddering at the sight of a plastic container filled with my own blood in the prison-like room of a TB hospital... (Daily NK, November 16, 2009)

80-Year-Old POW Detained in China: A South Korean POW in his 80s who crossed the North Korea-China border in August is being held in Yianji and the South Korean government is attempting to negotiate his release. While defectors are routinely sent back by the Chinese authorities, if the South Korean government makes a direct request about them by name then the Chinese are not able to deport them. (Daily NK, October 23, 2009)

'We Had No Choice': Kim Yeon Hwa, the wife of a North Korean defector who resettled in the U.S., says, "We were struggling to survive, and, as we lost three children because of the food shortages, I began to change my mind regarding defection. After my husband was caught in China and forcibly repatriated to North Korea, I knew we'd all have to defect. In North Korea, all members of a defector's family are regarded as traitors, so from that point on, I knew that we'd all

be seen as traitors, and our life in North Korea would become even harder.” (Radio Free Asia, October 5, 2009)

China Seized Defector Footage: Chinese authorities seized video footage of North Korean defectors filmed by two U.S. reporters who were arrested and jailed by North Korean authorities. Chinese authorities also captured documents from a missionary whose orphanage for North Korean defector children in China was filmed. The Chinese authorities asked the missionary to shut down the orphanage and deported him to South Korea on April 8, 2009. (Radio Free Asia, August 24, 2009)

Shadow Children Denied National ID: In China, the number of children having no national identity papers continues to rise. These "shadow children," born to female North Korean defectors and ethnic Korean-Chinese or Han-Chinese men, are denied the right to register as Chinese citizens. (Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, July 6, 2009)

Traffickers Prey on North Korean Women Fleeing to China: For thousands of North Korean women, the decision to flee their impoverished, repressive homeland often puts them at the mercy of human traffickers. In China, many are forced into prostitution or marriage with Chinese men. However, Beijing refuses to allow the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees formal access to North Koreans living in the country. (Voice of America, June 29, 2009)

Treatment of Repatriated North Korean refugees: A North Korean defector said, “Here I am in China yet again. I escaped from North Korea once more on November 27, 2008, but I know I could be re-arrested and sent back. Please help me. If I am sent back another time, I will probably not survive it. I hope someone can help me escape the endless prisons, beatings, tortures and starvation. I just want to find some peace in my life, something that will last.” (Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, April 30, 2009)

Refugee statistics from the Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress, September 26, 2007:

- The official Chinese government estimate on the number of North Korean refugees in China: 10,000.
- The estimated number according to various press reports: 100,000-300,000.
- The estimate according to the UNHCR (The UN High Commissioner for Refugees): 30,000-50,000.
- In 2006, the US State Department estimated the number between 30,000 and 50,000, down from the 75,000 to 125,000 range it projected in 2000.

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Appendix C – North Korea Freedom Coalition List of North Korean Refugees and Humanitarian Workers Seized by Chinese Authorities



“THE LIST” of North Korean Refugees and Humanitarian Workers Seized by Chinese Authorities (updated September, 2010)

The following represents a list that the Defense Forum Foundation (DFF) began compiling in 2002 of the names of North Korean refugees and humanitarian workers **who are known to have been seized** by the Chinese authorities as a result of the People’s Republic of China’s refusal to abide by the international agreements it has signed. **There are, of course, thousands and thousands of others who have been seized and forcibly repatriated to North Korea for which the date and location is not known to us.** It is estimated that the rate of repatriations escalated starting in 2004 as part of China’s campaign to eradicate the refugees in anticipation of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Many believed that China would ease up after the Olympics, but it never stopped its campaign to send North Koreans back to North Korea to face torture, imprisonment, and increasingly, execution for the crime of leaving North Korea. China’s violent policy and its refusal to allow UNHCR and humanitarian organizations access to the refugees has led the North Koreans to become further victimized: many end up as slave laborers, while 80% of female refugees become victims of sexual traffickers sold to brothels, internet pornographers or Chinese men as “wives”.

Background on “The List.” This list was first compiled in cooperation with seven NGOs working with DFF to rescue North Korean refugees and was compiled by Suzanne Scholte of the Defense Forum Foundation and reviewed for accuracy by the Seoul-based Citizens Coalition for Human Rights of Abductees and North Korean Refugees, the Japan-based Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, Abraham H. Lee of Refugee Plan, James Butterworth and Lisa Sleeth of Incite Productions, and several others who need to remain anonymous. The list has been periodically submitted to the People’s Republic of China along with letters requesting release of the individuals still in their custody and information about the whereabouts of those who have disappeared. It has been read aloud at many protest rallies around the world including several held at the PRC embassy in Washington, D.C., the PRC embassy in Prague, the Czech Republic and the PRC embassy in Warsaw, Poland. It has been submitted as part of testimony given by DFF to the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, the U.S. Congressional Executive Commission on China and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

The current update to this list was conducted by the North Korea Freedom Coalition and its member organizations: Ana Jang and PSCORE, Steve Kim and 318 Partners, Free the North Korean Gulag, and Kim Seung Min and the staff of Free North Korea Radio.

The Purpose: The purposes of this list are (1) to keep pressure on the government of China, because it is responsible for the fate of everyone listed on these pages; (2) to keep

the names before us always so that we will not forget their imprisonment and their suffering; and (3) to allow this list to be used by human rights organizations to help them join us in advocating for the release of all these individuals whether they are currently in Chinese or North Korean political prison camps.

REMEMBER: THIS LIST REPRESENTS ONLY A SMALL FRACTION OF THE NUMBER OF NORTH KOREANS THAT HAVE BEEN REPATRIATED AGAINST THEIR WILL TO NORTH KOREA.

A Note Regarding the Humanitarian Workers and China's Heinous Crime: Note that many of the humanitarian workers listed below were North Korean defectors who had obtained South Korean citizenship but were forced back to North Korea making China not only guilty of cruelty toward the refugees but also committing the same crime for which it has jailed humanitarians: illegally transporting people across the border, except in this case it is sending legal citizens of South Korea against their will to North Korea. We are not aware of any country whose government is committing this heinous act, other than North Korea which already has a reputation for abducting citizens from other nations.

THE LIST:

Repatriated on August 14, 2010

5 year-old child (female), 70 year-old man, and others in 20-30s (male=4, female = 9)

Seized on July 29, 2010 and executed publicly after repatriation

7 North Korean defectors, including ones from Shinuiju, were arrested by Chinese police in Dandong, China. Within a month, they were repatriated and executed in North Korea. Currently, a female defector with South Korean nationality is being held in prison in Dandong.

Repatriated on June 3, 2010, after seized in Dandong

2 men (50s and 60s), 8 female (20s and 30s). They were hiding in Dandong waiting to go to South Korea, but were seized on July 29. Three children (age 5 and 6) were released but ten adults were repatriated.

Repatriated in February 19, 2010 to be jailed in political camp

Jung Sang-Woon (POW, male, 84) who was seized and jailed in China in August 2009, was sent to a political camp in North Korea. The Public Security Bureau (PSB) in China learned from a member of the North Korea National Security Agency who visited China to repatriate North Korean refugees that Mr. Jung had been sent directly to a prison camp as soon as he was repatriated. Before his escape, he had been living in North Korea for 50 years, forced to work as a miner, since the Korean War.

Seized on February 19, 2010 near the border between China and North Korea

Lee, a defector correspondent for Free North Korea Radio (FNKR), was abducted by the North Korea's security agents on Feb 19 near the border between China and North Korea. Repatriated in October 2009 to North Hamgyong, Onsung gun
42 people including children were repatriated during October. Among them, 20 were investigated in Onsung-gun police agency.

12 Seized and 10 repatriated in October 2009

12 North Korean defectors tried to escape from China to fly to Korea and the U.S., in Unnam province in China, However, a Chinese Korean (Chosun-Jok) leaked information to Chinese authorities and they were all caught. The Mission of Refugees sent a large amount of money so that 2 of them could be released, but the rest of them were sent back to North Korea.

POW family repatriated at the end of September 2009

Two of POW family members, who entered Shenyang Korean consulate in mid September, were repatriated. They were arrested while staying outside of the consulate, due to "lack of facilities."

Seized in September 2009 near the Chinese-Vietnam border

Na Young-Hyo (male, 50), from Chongjin, North Hamkyong Province, defected from North Korea in July, 2009. His wife went missing in China during her attempt to flee to South Korea.

Chon Hye-Son (female, 37) from Chongjin City, North Hamkyong Province, North Korea. A victim of human traffickers in October, 2002, she is now traveling with her son, aged six, fathered by the Chinese man who "purchased" her from traffickers. Repatriated to North Korea in 2005, she defected to China for a 2nd time in September 2008.

Lee Chung-Kuk, Chon's son was born in 9 February, 2003.

Chon Jong-Hwa (female, 43), originally from Musan, North Korea, defected to China on 17 March, 2004. She is a former victim of human traffickers.

Kim Wun-Nyo (female, 50), from Wonsan, North Korea. She defected from North Korea on 10 May 2009.

Seized December 15, 2008 in Jirin China

Choi Young-Ae (female, 24), Yoon Eun-Sil (24, female)
Relatives of POW Mr.G, who have already resettled in South Korea.

Seized in September 2008 in Kunming Mountain area:

Twelve North Korean Refugees who were being held in Dandong detention center and scheduled to be deported back to Sinuju, North Korea on November 28, 2008. The oldest refugee was 48 years old and there were also children. There was a North Korean spy arrested with this group who was believed to have posed as a refugee to thwart their escape.

Seized on July 16, 2008, in Yanji with the pastor who was sheltering her:

Bahng Mi-Hwa (female, 36, born April 21, 1972) in North Hamkyung Province

Seized on April 21, 2008, in Kunming:

Liu, Gil-Hwa (female, 42, born November 25, 1966, in Musan)

Lee Ae-Sook (female, 26, born in 1982 in Musan)

Yoon Geum-Hee (female, 29, born October 26, 1979 in Hoeryong) and her four year old daughter,

Sohn Ok-Joo (female, 17, born July 27, 1991 in Saetbyeol)

Seized on March 30, 2008 on their way from Shenyang to Beijing (one hour from Beijing):

Lee Soo-Kyeong (female, 22 years old; born Cheong Jin City 10-5-87)

Kim Soon-Ok (female, 40 years old, born Hwae Ryong City, 7-4-67)

Kim Joon-Sik (male, 26 years old, born Hwae Ryong City)

Kim Joon-Nam (male, 24 years old, born Hway Ryong City, brother of Kim Joon Sik)

Seized on March 5, 2008 and were being held in Shenyang Border Patrol Detention Center:

Hahn Chang Kuk (male, aged 30)

Lee Jong-Sun (female)

Lee Kung-Shin (female, 30)

Lee Jong-Shin (female, 33)

Seized on October 24, 2007 in Yanji, Jilin Province

Lee Sang-Hyuk (male) and another North Korean refugee were seized by Chinese border police. Lee has already been jailed in North Korea for the crime of calling his South Korean relatives on a cell phone but escaped again to China.

Seized on October 9, 2007, in Beijing

Four North Korean defectors were seized at the South Korean international school. During this incident two South Korean diplomats were physically restrained by the Chinese police as they tried to prevent the arrest of the defectors.

Seized in June 2007 in Inner Mongolia

Over 44 refugees who were trying to make it to Mongolia to get to South Korea.

9 people from three families of POWs repatriated on October 11 2006

Kim, Yong-Wha

Lee, Jung-Hha

Lee, Jung-Hoon

And six others

2006 repatriated and publicly executed

Son Jung-Nam, former general of Korean People's Army was repatriated and publicly executed. He was accused of meeting and passing information to his brother Jung-Hun, who resettled in South

Korea.Repatriated on December 20, 2005

Kim, Geum-Nam (male)

After 60 days in Chinese prison, he was repatriated. He was interrogated and tortured for three hours one time while he was held at the Hyesan police agency. He was sent to a labor camp and stayed there for 5 days, but exempted from work due to his old age and severe frostbite

Seized on December 2, 2005 from a Korean School in Beijing:

Lee Chun-Sil had attempted to escape by entering a Korean school in Dalian on November 30, 2005, but was kicked out. So, she went to a Korean school in Beijing in December but the Chinese police arrested her. Despite appeals by the South Korean and American governments she was repatriated to North Korea sometime in February-March 2006 time period.

Seized on August 29, 2005, from a South Korean school in Yantai

Two males and five females who entered the school during a ceremony were repatriated to North Korea on September 29, 2005, despite repeated requests and appeals by the South Korean government to allow them to travel to South Korea.

Seized in August 2005 while attempting to cross the Mongolian border

Kim Song-Sook (female, 27) - her younger sister escaped to South Korea.

Seized on July 27, 2005, as they entered a Japanese residential quarter in Tianjin attempting to reach a Japanese international school:

Kim Yong-Hi, mother (DOB: 28 Jan. 1962)

Pae Wung, first son (DOB: 4 Nov. 1985)

Pae Yong, second son (DOB: 1 March 1995)

Kang Song-Hee (DOB: February 5, 1979)

51-years-old lady (name unknown)

All of the above are believed to have been repatriated except for Kang Song-Hee, who was being detained in Tianjin. Because she has been repatriated twice already, it is feared that if she gets sent back again to North Korea she will face terrible torture, even execution.

Seized on May 25, 2005, in Chang Choon City

Two North Korean females

Seized on May 22, 2005 during a worship service in Chang Choon City

One North Korean male aged 26 and three North Korea females

Seized on May 9, 2005, on the same day that Pastor Phillip Buck was arrested; Buck was trying to help them get to Mongolia

Choi, Sang-Muk (Male, 50)

Han, Song-Hwa (Female, 43)

Kim, Pyung-Yong (Male, 50)
Park, Jeung-Lan (Female, 45)
Cho, Young-Sil (Female, 43)
Kim, Myung-Ok (Female, 40)
Kim, Hyung-Suk (Male, 21)
Han, Kum-Sook (Female, 30)
Choi, Soon-Kum (Female, 60)

Seized in May, 2005, the following refugees:

Kim Ryong-Chul (Male, 26, Ham Heung City, South Ham Kyung Province)
Kim Kyung-Sook (Female, 25, On Sung, North Ham Kyung Province)
Kim Keum-Sung (5 month old, born in Tsingtao, China)
Kim Mo-Ran (Female, 22, Chungjin city, North Ham Kyung Province)
Male (name and age not known)
6-9 members of the Choi family (4 people: 1 male, 2 females, and a 5 year-old, names not known)
Kim Sung-Hee (Female, 26, Moo San, North Ham Kyung Province)
Kim Hyung-Hee (Female, 15, Moo San, North Korea Province)
"Sung Hee's mom?" (Female, 50, Moo San, North Ham Kyung Province)
2 Males (names not known; traveled separately from Yanji)
2 Females (names not known; traveled separately from Yanji)

Seized in March, 2005, in Longjing City in Jilin Province

Kang Gun ("Kang Sung-il" male, born 1969, Pyongyang) had become a South Korean citizen, but had traveled to China to get out information about conditions inside North Korea. He is credited with smuggling out footage of North Korea's infamous Yoduk prison camp that aired on Japanese television. He was reported as missing in Longjing City and believed to have been seized by North Korean agents in China and taken to Pyongyang. Because of his involvement in getting information out about North Korea's political prison camps, he is in grave danger of being tortured and executed. He is reported to have been held in Pyongyang and then sent to a political prison camp.

Repatriated January 2005

Han, Man-Taek (POW, 73) He escaped from the North on December 27, 2005, but was seized the next day.

Seized between 2001-2005 whereabouts unknown, these refugees were being sheltered by Phillip Buck

Kim, Hyun-Deuk (male, 55)
Han, Young-Ae (female, 49)
Kim, Hae-Young (female, 18)
Kim Chol-Min (male, 16)
Kim Chol-Joo (male, 14)
Han Eun-Hee (female, 29)
Han, Seung-Hee (female, 26)

Seized in early November 2004 from a hospital in Dandung, China

Lee Ju-Im (female, 73) – Mrs. Lee is a South Korean citizen who was abducted to North Korea during the Korea War; she had escaped North Korea and was recuperating in a hospital when she was seized by North Korea security agents.

Seized on 25 October 2004 in the Tongzhou area of Beijing

Two humanitarian workers who had defected from North Korea and obtained South Korean citizenship and were rescuing other defectors:

Lee Soo-Cheol (male, born 1963 in North Hamyoung Province) – Lee was held for 2 years without trial and then sentenced to two years imprisonment in 2006

Kim Hong-Gyun (male, born 1965 in South Hamgyoung Province)-Kim was held for 2 years without trial and then sentenced to 5 years imprisonment in 2006.

These rescuers were seized in a surprise raid at 3 am in the morning along with over 60 North Korean refugees who were hiding in two shelters, including 11 children and a 70 year old man.

The refugees include:

Kim Soon-Ok (female, 25, from Eundok), who defected to China approximately 7 years ago and who has two children aged 5 and 2 years old.

Kim Soon-Bok (female, 33, from Eundok), who defected to China approximately 7 years ago and who has one child, 3 years old.

Kim Kyung-Ok (27, from Eundok), who defected to China approximately 7 years ago.

It has been reported that more than 60 of these refugees were repatriated to North Korea on 9 November 2004.

Seized shortly after the October 2004 incident in Shenyang

Hong Jin-Hee (male, born 1969 in Hamyeung), a North Korean defector who had obtained South Korean citizenship and was involved in rescuing other North Koreans from China. He had managed to escape the surprise raid but was tracked down and arrested in Shenyang. He was detained for 2 years without trial and then sentenced to a 7 years imprisonment in 2006.

Seized on 25 October 2004

15 North Korean refugees attempting to enter the Korean consulate office in China.

Seized on 27 September 2004

9 North Korean refugee women and children at the Shanghai American School in Shanghai, China; two children were released to South Korean officials but the other 7 women and teenagers are still being held.

Seized on 8 August 2004 in Helong, Jilin Province, China

Jin Kyung-Sook (female born 24 June 1979), a North Korean defector who had established South Korean citizenship in 2002, and her husband had traveled to China to collect evidence of North Korea's opium cultivation when they were seized. Her husband escaped but she was forcibly repatriated to North Korea.

Seized July 2004 in Yenji

Oh Young-Sun (male, born 1965), a North Korean defector who had obtained South Korean citizenship, went to China to make a documentary about Mt. Changbei. While he was in China he met up with North Korean refugees and helped them escape to South Korea. Later, while he was filming the mountain Chang Bei, Bekdu mountain, he was arrested and tried in 2005 for the crime of helping North Korean refugees to escape to South Korea. He was given an eight year sentence.

Seized sometime between 5-10 June 2004 in Nanning, China

Yun Hyang-Shim (female, born January 12, 1956), who had defected from North Korea and is now a South Korean citizen. She was caught trying to help her son-in-law escape to Vietnam, and is being held in Nanji Prison in Nanning City.

Seized on 15 February 2004 at Nanning, Guangxi Province

Kang Eun-Hee (25), Park Il-Man (38) and 5 other North Korean refugees were seized by Chinese authorities and sent to Ansan refugee camp in Tumen, Ji-Lin Province on 5 March 2004. After going on a hunger strike to try to gain their freedom and safe passage to South Korea, they were repatriated to North Korea on 12 March 2004. They are reported to have been sent to Onsong Political Prison camp.

Seized in April 2003, somewhere in China

Newlyweds Kim Cheol-Hoon (born 1970 in Hwanghae Province) and Shin Sung-Shim (born 1981 in North Hamgyeong) were defectors that had become South Korean citizens. They were seized in China and abducted to North Korea while on their honeymoon.

Seized on 23 December 2003 while trying to travel to Beijing, China

Choi Song-Juk (mother of Lyu Myung-Ho and Lyu Sung-Ho – see 18/19 September 2001 entry).

Seized on 13 December 2003 in Guangxi with Takayuki Noguchi

Choi Yong (male, 60) and Shin Chung-Mee (female, 46), who are both Japanese-born North Korean refugees whom Noguchi was trying to bring safely to the country of their birth.

Seized on 5 December 2003 in Nanning City

Chinese authorities seized 36 North Korean refugees hiding in Nanning City, Kwangzi Province.

Seized on 26 September 2003 in Guangdong Province

The following refugees were seized when New York businessman Steve Kim was trying to help them. Kim served four years in prison in China, while the two Chinese women served two years in prison for helping these refugees:

- Choi Keum-Chun (male, 19)
- Park Young-Chul (male, 19)
- Park Hang-Chul (male, 52)
- Chung Song-Hee (female, 12)
- Park Kyung-Sook (female, 38) (mother of Chung Song-Hee)
- Chung Hwa-Keum (female, 36)
- Kim Il-Hwa (female, 36)
- Song Yeun-Hee (female, 40)
- Park Choon-Hee (female, 40)

Seized in early September 2003 in Yunnan Province, Nine of these refugees were arrested by Laos Police while trying to cross the Laos border but were repatriated to China and then to North Korea; while two eventually escaped again with the help of Pastor Buck to South Korea:

- Yun Jong-Ok, (female, 37)
- Yun Kwang-Chol (male, 34)
- Park (first name not known) (female, 31)
- Lee So-Bong (female, 54)
- Ko Kum-Suk (female, 34)
- Ko Hye-Suk (female, 32)
- Ko I-Song (female, 27)
- Ko Song-Hi (female, 24)
- Oh In-Sun (female, 20)
- Ko Jong-Hi (female, 40)
- Oh In-Chol (male, 15)
- Oh Jong-Hwa (female, 34)
- Kim So-Hi (female, 27)
- Sohn Mi-Hyang (female, 8)
- Chung Hye-Yong (female, 26)
- Kwak Hyon-Chol (male, 21)
- Kim Song-Jin (male, 20)
- Chang Chol (male, 19)
- Dong Song-Shil (male, 19)
- Kim Mi-Na (female, 16)
- Kim Un-Hye (female, 17)
- Yu Song (female, 15)

Seized on 5 September 2003 in Guangzhou

Dr. Woo Ri-Chae, a North Korean biological weapons expert, was seized while trying to enter the Australian consulate general office in Guangzhou. Dr. Woo's wife and children fled when he was seized.

Seized on 18 August 2003 at Pingxiang China near the Vietnam border

- Choi Soon-Hwa (female, 56)
- Song Jung-Hwa (female, 22)

- Lee Kwang-Rim (male, 23)
- Han Kwang-Suk (male, 14)
- Han Eun-Byul (female, 12)
- Moon Kwang-Hyuk (male, 22)

Seized on 7 August 2003 in Shanghai along with Fumiaki Yamada, who was later released

- Chang Gyung-Chul (male, 35, born 22 September 1969)
- Chang Gyung-Soo (male, 32, born 21 March 1972)
- Chang Mi-Hwa (female 35, born 15 January 1969)

The two brothers and their female cousin were repatriated to North Korea and the two brothers are believed to be in the North Korean State Security Agency detention center in North Hamgyung Province.

Seized on August 1, 2003 at the train station in Beijing while on their way to the South Korean Embassy

These refugees were being rescued by Rev. Jung and Rev Pak who were jailed for 1 and ½ years for helping them, but all 6 were repatriated back to North Korea six months later:

Mr. And Mrs. Lee

Mr. Park

Mr and Mrs. Kang and their daughter

Seized on 27 July 2003 in Beijing

These four were arrested outside a restaurant in Beijing. On the day of their arrest, they had arrived from the city of Yanji by the Tumen-Beijing express train.

- Lee Kil-Wun (male, 64, coal-mine administrator from the Onsong district, North Korea)
- Han Sun-Bok (female, 60, wife of Mr. Lee Kil-wun, former high school teacher, from the same district)
- Lee Song-Min (male, 31, son of Mr. Lee and Mrs. Han, worker, from the same district)
- Kang Myong-Ok (female, 35, from the city of Chongjin, North Korea.)

Seized on 27 July 2003 in Qingdao, China

Eight North Korean refugees including four children.

Seized April 2003 in Changbai China

Kim Chul-Soo (born, 1965) and Ji Man-Gil (born, 1971) were both from Hyesan, Yanggang Province but had become South Korean citizens. According to Kim's wife and Ji's brother the two traveled to China to try to rescue their family members including children from North Korea but were abducted by North Korean refugees to North Korea.

Seized on 18 January 2003 in Yantai City, Shandong Province: "The Boat People Incident"

Park Yong-Chol (male), a North Korean national. On 22 May 2003, sentenced to a 2-year imprisonment and a fine of 5,000 RMB. Believed to have been forcibly repatriated to North Korea in October, 2004.

Park Yong-Ho (In Chinese, “Piao LONGGAO”) (male), an ethnic Korean Chinese national. On 22 May 2003, sentenced to a 3-year imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 RMB.

Lee Yu-Son (female, born 21 Sept 1982 in Pyon an Puk Do, DPRK)

Kim Son-Hee (female, born 1 Sept 1961 in HanGyongPuk Do,DPRK)

Pee Okk-Ju (female, born 11 Feb 1988 in Han Gyong Puk Do, DPRK)

Kim Myong-Chol (male, born 28 Jan 1965 in Han Gyong Puk Do,RajingJangPyon Dong, DPRK)

Chu Hun-Kuk (male, born 29 Dec 1956 in Han Gyong Puk Do, Kil Ju Gun Yong Buk Ku, DPRK)

Kim Yong-Ho (male, born 17 Dec 1969 in Han Gyong Puk Do, Fe Ryong City, Yok Chon Dong, DPRK)

Kim Kum-Ok (female, born 28 Mar 1960 in Han Gyong Nam Do, Ham Hung Song Chon, DPRK)

Sin Young-Hee (female, born 14 July 1986 in HanGyongPukDo, SeppyorGunAnWonLi39, DPRK)

Choun Hyang-Hwa (female, born 10 July 1983 HanGyongNamDo, HamHung SongChonKang, DPRK)

Kim Un-Kum (female, born 25 June 1931 in Han Gyong Puk Do, Myon Chon Kun, DPRK)

Be Kwang Myong (male, born 1 Jan 1986 in Han Gyong Puk Do, Chong Jin Chong, DPRK)

Park Ran-Hee (female, born 17 Jan 1964 HanGyongNamDo, HamHungYongSongGuYoku,DPRK)

Lee Kyong-Su (male, born 18 February 1968 in Yang Kang Do, He San city, DPRK)

Lee Chol-Ho (male, born 28 August 1967 in HanGyong Puk Do,Chong Jin City,Chong Jin, DPRK)

Lee Chol-Nam (male, born 26 April 1969 in HanGyongPukDo,Chong Jin City, Chong Jin, DPRK)

JangYong-Chol (male, born 20 April 1955 in Han Gyong Puk Do,Chong JinCity,Chong Jin,DPRK)

Seized on 13 November 2002 at the Vietnam/China border

These seventeen refugees were seized by Vietnamese border guards and turned over to Chinese authorities. After their arrest they were held in Pingshang, Nanying City, Guangxi Province, China.

- Kim Ok-Ryun (female, 38)
- * Kim Myung-Hee (female, 33)
- Choi Kil-Sook (female, 62)
- Kim Kum-Dan (female, 67)
- Hwa Jung (28)
- Lee Sung-Yeol (male, 20)
- Kim Chul-Ho (male, 44)

- Lee Hwa-Jun (male, 35)
- Park Yoon-Sang (male, 54)
- Cho Kyung-Sook (female, 29)
- Cho Sung-Sook (26)
- Kwak Myung-Neo (male, 35)
- Yoon Seo-Young (female, 24)
- Chun Chang-Sup (male, 42)
- Hwang Tae-Wook (male, 9)
- Oh Song-Wol (4 year old child)
- Lee Dae-Ho (7 month old baby)

Seized on 31 October 2002 at the German School in Beijing

- Joo Seung-Hee (female, 41, Hamkyung Bukdo)
- Han Mee-Kyung (female, 17, daughter of Joo Seung-hee)
- Lee Sun-Hee (female, 39, Hamkyung Bukdo)
- Kim Ok-Byul (female, 14, daughter of Lee Sun-hee)
- Kim Kwang-Soo (male, 16, son of Lee Sun-hee)

Seized on 30 October 2002 in Dalian

Kim Gun-Nam (male)

Seized on 2 September 2002 at the Ecuadorian Embassy in Beijing

- Han Song-Hwa (female, 45)
- Cho Seong-Hee (female, 16, daughter of Han Song-hwa)
- Cho Hyun-Hee (female, 12, daughter of Han Song-hwa)
- Kim Yeon-Hee (female, 31)
- Cho Il-Hyun (female, 10 months, daughter of Kim Yeon-hee)
- Choi Jin-Hee (female, 28)
- Chung Kwon (male, 28)
- Cho Young-Ho (male, 20)

Seized on 31 August 2002 near the Mongolian border

Yun Kim-Shil (female)

Seized on 26 August 2002 at the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Beijing

These seven refugees (known as “The MoFA Seven”) attempted to apply for asylum at the Chinese Ministry of Foreign affairs:

- Kim Jae-Gon (male, 60) (born 1942, from Kowun Kun, Hamkyong Nam-Doh Province)
- Kim Jong-Nam (male, 36) (born 8-29-67, from Hwae-Ryung City, Hamkyong Buk-Doh Prvince)
- Kim Mi-Young (female, 37) (born 1970, from Un-San Kun, Pyong-An Buk-Doh Province)
- Jo Song-Hye (female, 27) (born 2-25-76, from Dan-Chun City, Hankyoung Nam-Doh Province)

- An Choi-Su (male, 40) (born 3-20-63, from Hungnam Ku, Hamkyong Nam-Doh Province)
- Ko Dae-Chang (male, 56) (born 9-4-49, from Pyongyang)
- Kim Hong (female, 29) (born 4-12-73, from Pyongyang)

Seized between 24-26 May 2002 in Yunnan Province near the Laos/Burman/China borders

Six North Korean defectors, of which three names are known:

- Lee Song-Yong (male, 3) (note his mother, Park Sun-hi (female, 31), defected successfully to South Korea in 2000)
- Lee Hong-Gang (male, 48)
- Kim Mi-Hwa (female, 30)

Seized on 20 May 2002 in Yanji, Jilin Province

Kim Kyung-il (male, born 17 January 1976). Mr. Kim is in Changchun Tiebi prison serving a 12-year prison term for the charge of helping North Koreans escape from China.

Seized on 10 May 2002 while attempting to reach Thailand

- Kim Chul-soo (male, 63)
- Kim's wife (female, 60)
- Kim's daughter (female, 30)
- Choi Soon-Kum (female, 59)
- Kim Myung-Wol (female, 45)
- Paek Nam-Gil (male, 18)
- Park Myung-Chul (male, 45)
- Han Young-Ae (female, 45)
- Han's husband (male, 47)
- Eun Shim (female, 10)
- Eun Shim's brother (male, 14)

Seized on 12 April 2002 in Yanji, China

Two refugees were seized along with Rev. Choi Bong-il who was sentenced to 9 years imprisonment when he was caught helping these refugees. One (Choi, Sung-gil, 23) escaped again to South Korea.

- Shin Chul (24)

Seized in 2002

Baek Nam-Kil (male 20) was forcibly repatriated to North Korea where it is believed he died of tuberculosis after three months in a North Korean detention center; his mother and younger brother were safely brought to South Korea by Phillip Buck

Seized on 6 March 2001 in Yunkil, Jilin Province, China

Jung Soon-ae (female, 46, born February 5, 1955); the mother of Gil-su; seized by Chinese police and repatriated to North Korea on 13 March 2001. On 15 April 2001 she was taken to a prison in North Korea. Most of her family has safely escaped to South Korea. Gil-su specifically requested that her name be added to THE LIST because “raising her name may keep her alive.”

Seized between 29-30 December 2001 near the Mongolia border

These refugees were seized on 29 December/early 30 December trying to cross the China/Mongolia border near the border town of Dongchi in northeastern Inner Mongolia when Pastor Chun Ki-won was arrested (Pastor Chun served eight months in a Chinese prison for trying to help these refugees). Two other refugees in the group who had U.S. relatives were allowed to go to Seoul. After their arrest, these refugees were held at Manchu-Ri Prison in China:

- Roh Myung-Ok (female, 38, wife of a SK citizen, Chung, Jae-song)
- Chung (Jung) Yoon (Eun)-mee (female, 10, daughter of Roh Myung-ok)
- Chung (Jung) Yoon (Eun)-Chul (male, 8, son of Roh Myung-ok)
- Kim Kwang-Il (male, 32)
- Kim Chul-Nam (male, son of Kim Kwang-il)
- Kim Ji-Sung (male)
- Nam Choon-Mee (female, wife of Kim Ji-sung)

Seized on 18/19 September 2001 in Yanji

These brothers are believed to be at Changchun Tiebei prison serving a 5 year prison sentence:

- Lyu Myung-Ho (male, 24, born 9 July 1977)
- Lyu Sung-Ho (male 22, born 8 September 1979)

Seized on 11 June 2001 from shelters established by Christian NGOs in Xian, Shaanxi Province

50 North Korean defectors including the following:

- Choi, Kum-Chul (male, born 10 December 1958); served time in prison at Changchun Tiebei prison; sentenced to 4 years in prison in China for helping North Koreans escape from China and then repatriated back to North Korea in May/June of 2005.
- Cho, Chul-Sok (male, 28, from Hamhung, Hamnam); currently in prison at Hoeryung (camp #22) political prison camp.
- Jung Yong-Chol (male, 42, form Onsong. Hambuk); currently in prison at Hoeryung (camp #22) political prison camp.
- Lee Kil-Su (male, from Wonsan, Kanwon); currently in prison at Hoeryung (camp #22) political prison camp.

During this time period, two surviving female North Korean defectors also reported that Kim Ju-Bok (male, 26) was seized in Dandong and repatriated to North Korea where he was sentenced to death for leading a group of North Korea defectors. Among his group were 6 defectors who were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment, and 17 defectors who were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in Yodok political prison camp

Seized on 16 September 2000 at their “safe-house” in Dalian by Chinese police

- Han Won-Chae (male, 60)
- Shin Keum-Hyun (female, 58)

Their son, Han Sin-Hyuk, was not captured and successfully defected to South Korea.

Seized on 17 January 2000 by North Korean security agents in China

Rev. Kim Dong-Sik (male, 53, born 10 October 1947). Rev. Kim is a citizen of South Korea but also was a permanent U.S. resident. It was confirmed by the South Korean authorities based on testimony by a North Korean defector that Kim was abducted to North Korea by North Korean spies. It is feared that he was tortured and killed, but we continue to hope that he may be alive. Kim’s wife, Young Hwa, and children live in Chicago.

Seized in Russia in November 1999, received refugee status from UNHCR, but Russia forcibly returned the refugees to China on December 30, 1999, and then China forcibly returned the refugees to North Korea on 12 January 2000

Note: one of these entries escaped again to South Korea

Kwang ho Kim (male, 23)

Ho-Won Chang (male, 24)

Young-il Ho (male, 30)

Young-Sil Bang (female, 26) (wife of Mr. Ho)

Woon-Chul Kim (male, 20)

Dong-Myung Lee (male, 22)

(Released due to being minor: Sung-il Kim (male, 13))

Seized on 6 August 1997 by Chinese police in Jian, Liaoning Province

Li Song-Nam (51)

Seized on 4 February 1997 at the Shanghai International Airport

Kim Eun-Chol (male, 35). Kim’s parents (Kim Jae-won and his wife) live in South Korea and believe he was sent back to North Korea.

Seized on 7 July 1995 in China

Rev. Ahn Seung-Woon, a citizen of South Korea, was in China when he was abducted by North Korean agents and taken to North Korea. He appeared on North Korean television that July and was last seen in Pyongyang.

Also note this other brave rescuer:

Disappeared in January 2005

Jeffrey Bahk, US citizen and resident of Georgia, disappeared crossing the Mekong River in January 2005 while helping six North Korea refugees escape. The six refugees made it to South Korea but no one knows what happened to Bahk. It was reported that he had drowned while others claimed he was in jail in Kenpun, Myanmar. ROK officials reported that they visited Kenpun, and he was not there. His wife and other family members have been trying to find out what happened to him.

FORMER NAMES FROM THE LIST THAT ARE NOW FREE

The following are defectors that were once on this list but made it to safety:

Repatriated in 2007 and 2008 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Choi Myung-Sin (female)

Repatriated in 2007 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Song Jae-Im (female)

Repatriated in 2006 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Lee Yu-Mi (female)

Repatriated twice in 1998 and 2006, but made it to South Korea in the end

Kim Sun-Sook (female)

Repatriated in 2005 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Kim Geum-Nam (male)

Park In-Sook (female)

An Hye-Young (female)

Repatriated in 2004 and 2005 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Sin Hyang-Sook (female)

Repatriated in 2003, 2004, and 2005 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Na Deok-Jin (male), underwent 15 day of investigation and “pigeon” torture

Repatriated in 2003 and 2005 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Yoon Boon-Ryun (female)

Repatriated in 2002 and 2005 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Um Choon-Sil (female)

Repatriated in 2004 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Seo Eun-Chan (female)

Lee Ok-Sook (female)

Seized in 2003 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

YangYong-Ho (male, born 30 March 1961 in Han Gyong Puk Do, mu san gun, DPRK)

Yang Gum-Soon (female born 2 December 1987 in Han Gyong Puk Do, mu san gun, DPRK)

Kim Young-Kwang (male, 20 years old, born in DPRK)

Seized in 2003 but escaped to freedom in Japan

Chiba Yomiko (alias) (female, born 23 September 1960 in Japan Osaka Ikunoku Tennoji)

Seized in early September 2003 in Yunan Province but escaped again in 2004 and made it to South Korea with help of Pastor Phillip Buck

Kim Kwang-II (male, 18)

Park Kum-Song (male, 18)

Repatriated in 2002 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Lee Young-Ok (female) and her son (14)

Seized on 12 April 2002 in Yanji, China

Choi Sung-Gil (23) was repatriated to North Korea but escaped again and is now in South Korea. She was seized with Rev. Choi Bong-II who was sentenced to 9 years imprisonment.

Repatriated in 2001 and 2002 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Lee Bok-Soon (female)

Repatriated in 1997 but escaped to freedom in South Korea

Kim Dong-Nam (male)

The following are humanitarian workers who were formerly in jail and were part of THE LIST, but happily have been taken off due to their release:

USA Citizens:

Seized on May 9, 2005

Pastor Phillip Jun Buck (American citizen since 1989, resident of Washington state, born January 6, 1941 in North Korea) was held in Yanji for the crime of helping North Korean refugees. Was in Chungdao city and had left with three American pastors to travel to Yanji via Beijing. All four were seized by Chinese police, but the three other American pastors were released. Buck was considered “a big fish” and he was held for a year and a half until his trial on December 30, 2005. The verdict was announced in 2006 deporting him on August 19, 2006. He received the 2007 Civil Courage Award from the Train Foundation for “steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk.” He is credited with rescuing over 100 refugees until his arrest.

Seized on 26 September 2003 in Guangdong Province

Steve Kim, (Kim Seung-Whan, born, 1949), an American businessman sentenced on 5 April 2004 to 5 years in jail, deportation and a 20,000 RMB fine for helping North Korean refugees; was being held in Yanji prison, Chan Chung prison, and the prison in Beijing. He was released September 25, 2007, one year earlier due to credits he earned as a prison laborer. He is credited with rescuing over 100 refugees until his arrest.

Seized 27 July 2003

Rev. Park Young-Hwa, an American citizen, was held for 1½ years for helping North Korea Refugees. He was seized on 27 July 2003, officially arrested on 8 September 2004, and released in late October 2004.

Seized on 12 April 2002 in Yanji, China

Rev. Choi Bong-Il (54), humanitarian worker caught helping two North Korean refugees and sentenced to 9 years imprisonment, but released on 22 September 2004.

South Korean Citizens:

Seized on August 2007 in Inner Mongolia

Yu Sang-Joon (male), a South Korean citizen (born in the DPRK) was arrested by Chinese police while trying to help nine North Korean refugees escape to Mongolia. He was released in November, 2007.

Seized on 18 January 2003 in Yantai City, Shandong Province

Choi Yong-Hun (male), a South Korean humanitarian aid worker. On 22 May 2003, sentenced to a 5-year imprisonment and a fine of 30,000 RMB. He was subjected to torture and beatings during his imprisonment and was released early on November 29, 2006. It is believed he was released early because of his weakened mental and physical health caused by the abuse he endured in prison.

Seized on 31 August 2002 in Changchun in Northeast China

Kim Hee-Tae, humanitarian worker seized along with eight North Korean refugees attempting to leave China. Sentenced to 7 years imprisonment, but was released on 15 July 2004.

Seized between 29-30 December 2001 near the Mongolia border

Pastor Chun Ki-Won, a South Korean human rights activist, was held from December 2001 until August 2002 (220 days in jail) for trying to help a group of North Korean defectors reach Mongolia.

Japanese Citizens:

Seized on 7 August 2003 in Shanghai

Fumiaki Yamada, humanitarian worker with Society to Help Returnees to North Korea and a citizen of Japan, was seized with North Korean refugees he was trying to help but released after a week.

Seized on 13 December 2003 in Guangxi

Takayuki Noguchi (male, 32), humanitarian worker with Life Funds for North Korean Refugees seized by Chinese police along with three Japanese-born North Korean refugees: a woman in her 40s (born in Tokai Region, Japan), a man in his 50s born in

West Japan, and Choi Yong, 61, who was born in Hiroshima, Japan. Noguchi was released in August 2004 after 9 months of incarceration.

Seized from his hotel room on November 2002

Hiroshi Kato, humanitarian worker with Life Funds for North Korea Refugees and a citizen of Japan, was seized at his hotel in China for helping North Korean refugees and held in prison for a week in November 2002.

Chinese Citizens:

Korea-Chinese who helped defectors, seized and sent to the North in April, 2008

Lee, Gi-Cheon (42), a broker for defectors, guided defectors to Yanji province from the border. He was seized by North Korean security agents near the Tumen River.

Seized on September 27, 2003.

Lee Bok-Ja (female, 51) arrested by Chinese Border Police and served a 2 year sentence for providing transportation to 4 North Korean refugees from her church in Yanji to Changchun city as part of a rescue operation with Steve Kim

Lee Young-ok (female, 46), the wife of a church pastor, arrested by Chinese Border Police and served a 2 year sentence for buying tickets for 4 North Korean refugees so they could travel from ChangChun to Guang Zhou in southern China as part of a rescue operation with Steve Kim

Both women spent part of their sentence (11 months) in the same prison with Steve Kim.

Seized on 22 May 2003

Park Yong-Ho (male), an ethnic Korean Chinese national was sentenced to a 3-year imprisonment and a fine of 10,000 RMB.

Seized on 18 January 2003 in Yantai City, Shandong Province

Kim Song-Man (Chinese version, "Jin CHENGWAN"), ethnic Korean Chinese national sentenced to 1 year imprisonment and a fine of 1,000 RMB. Kim served his sentence and is now free.

Many more Chinese citizens have been imprisoned and are in jail today but we do not know their names, only that they helped rescue refugees.

For more information or if you have additions or corrections to The List, please contact Suzanne Scholte at 703-534-4313 or email skswm@aol.com.