

## **Illegal Actions of North Korea**

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A territory of a nation belongs to that particular nation. But national policies and the process of enforcing the law cannot deviate from the universal ethics and governing principles. Nevertheless, North Korea, under the absolute monarchy of Jung-Il Kim followed by that of Il-Sung Kim, has rejected the universal code of conduct with a tenacious manner.

Recently North Korea has been criticized as an immoral nation by the international community for violating of human rights and illegal actions.

The primary reason why this serious problem has not been highlighted is because North Korea controls public speech and writing. Also, the works of international organizations such as the United Nations and “Reporters Without Borders” have been regulated by North Korean government.

At this point, organizations for North Korean escapees – 8,000 defectors in North Korea, Exile Committee for North Korea Democracy, and 200,000 defectors in China and other countries – has been established in order to report this terrible situation in North Korea. This organization is working as the first step by reporting incidents regarding the violation of human rights, forgery of fake currency, production of illicit drugs and weapons of mass destruction in North Korea.

I had worked as a North Korean soldier, both as a private and a lieutenant for a total of 16 years and entered South Korea in the year of 1999.

Currently I am working as the vice president of the Exile Committee for North Korea Democracy (President: Jang-Yup Hwang) and the president of Free North Korea Radio. I am here to testify about violations of human rights and illegal actions of North Korea based on the individual and group testimonies of North Korean escapees.

It has already been revealed how political criminals are treated in North Korean prisons through the testimonies of escapees like Chul-Hwan Kang, Hyuk Ahn, Young-Kook Lee, and Soon-Ok Lee, who spoke at the United States Senate Hearing.

Also, defectors who were once spies sent to South Korea like Myung-Jin Ahn confirmed a kidnapping of Japanese people by North Korean government.

Marketing of weapons of mass destruction and illicit drug dealings were exposed by Dae-Geun Lee (pseudonym) and Bok-Goo Lee (pseudonym).

These testimonies by North Korean individuals have been concealed by the society defined and established by North Korean illegality, or because of the movements promoting friendship between South Korea and North Korea. Now they are being presented through the activities of the organizations for North Korean civil rights.

There are 2 current issues brought up by North Korean defectors. The first one is North Korean government's violent acts of oppression against the movements working against the corrupting in North Korea. The second is the exploitation of labor in the prisons for political criminals and juvenile detention centers.

There was a recent public spectacle in Northern Hahm-Kyung Province where two persons on March 1, 2005, and one person on the following day, were executed by firing squad because they were helping North Korean escapees.

August of the same year and March of this year, it was revealed to the whole world that one soldier from 27th North Korean borderline defense brigade committed aggravated battery against a female escapee until the weapon was broken. Also, it was exposed to the public that he beat a person, inspected by the security system, with a rifle.

It is unfortunate that South Korea considers the pictures and the video clips from the hidden cameras to be unreliable. However, according to the seminar on "Psychological injury and healing" that was held on April 6, 2006, by "Doctors Without Borders" and "Yonsei Medical University Behavioral Science Institute", 87.3 percent of 200 North Korean escapees have witnessed a public execution.

Like this, execution by firing squad and violence carried out against any groups and individuals opposing Kim Jung Il despotism is pervasive not only in prisons but in all regions of North Korea and is still going on even now.

In addition to this violent policy, a series of evidence and testimonies have shown the infinite exploitation of labors.

The story by escapees from North Korean of forced labor camps is an example.

Song-Jung Kim (pseudonym, 46 years old) who was confined in one of the camps for 14 years and finally escaped North Korea in 1999 said that "There are over 1,000 people who died in the forced labor camps, from the pain and suffering while working more than 10 hours everyday to make furniture for North Korean government officials" and "their bodies are buried in hills near the camp with other trash."

At “Promoting Human Rights in Korea” that was held in Seoul in November, 2005, Keum-Soon Choi, an escapee, shared her story. She testified about her life in a North Korean prison where she was forced to work heavy labor while being given less than 100 corn seeds and salt soup as her daily food. She also said that in a camp located in Poong-Duk city, Northern Pyung-Ahn Province, she was to wake up at 4 a.m., have breakfast, and go out in the field to work until 10 p.m. and 12 of her fellow workers passed away in 1 year.

Compulsory labor, even for children, women, and the elders, is prevalent in the 10 prisons for political prisoners and the 20 jails, the re-education centers. It has been found that North Korean government secretly sells the products made by political prisoners as bicycles, daily necessities, and military materials made by these workers at international level with no paying to these workers.

North Korean opium cultivation known as “white peach” also part of the slave labor is sold by government.

Furthermore, every school aged child must work for at least 3 months of agriculture as slave laborer. They do not get paid for their work. They could not eat the food enough. All of it goes to the regime.

North Korean government started its secret opium cultivation in northern area of country, around the year of 1983. The government placed discharged soldiers at a large opium farm in Yun-Sah province in Northern Hwang-Hae, Boo-Ryung province in Northern Hahm-Kyung, and Jang-Jin province in Southern Hahm-Kyung. For three years, those workers were only given food to survive without getting paid and accomplished the order of the supreme commander of military, Kim Jung Il.

In addition, soldiers work without payment for 10 years in coal mine in Pyung-Yang city, gold mine in Northern Pyung-Ahn province, zinc mine in Northern Ham-Kyung province in order to earn cash for the regime to buy foreign goods. Some soldiers such as those in the army corps located at Geum-Gang Mountains are engaged in this ridiculous national policy from the first day they are drafted into the army.

There is a problem in the secret international sales of the valuables, opium, controlled goods produced by the forced labor. But also, this continued violation of human rights by the power of the regime in North Korea should be condemned by international community.

It would not be possible to discuss all the atrocities taking place inside the iron veils of North Korea. That would take many days and nights of discussion. Even then, that would not be sufficient. Instead, I would like to conclude my remarks by telling you about writing by a teenager escapee.

The teenager was 13 years old when he was forced to work on a farm under the guise of "farm support." The work on the farm was a heavy burden for this youngster. The work would have been difficult even for a grown up.

One day, the teenager found intestines to a goat in the trash dumpster. They were thrown away by soldiers. After washing them twenty times or so, the stench became mild. After boiling them three times, they were somewhat edible. He shared the intestines with his sister. He stated in his writing that the goat intestines were the most delicious things in the world.

His writing made a big news in South Korea. It also exposed the dark realities of North Korea.

North Korean regime forces young children to the fields under the guise of "farm support." During the Spring, children are sent to the fields for 40 days. During Autumn, they are subjected to 30 days of forced labor.

Children would be planting seeds for corn and rice stocks.

In the provinces of Hamhaebuk-do and Hamkyungbuk-do, there are large scale farms for growing opium. Students in nearby schools work on the fields to gather the opium extracts and to dry opium flowers and stocks. Those activities are carried out at the directions of their teachers and the state.

It is a well known secret that hard currency collected from sales of opium produced with forced labor from children, golds mined, collected from slave labor in the Czech, Russia and counterfeit moneys which is laundered by diplomats is deposited in the banks in Macao and Switzerland. The money is a slush fund for Kim Jung Il's personal use.

Kim Jung Il holds out that he has no money to buy corns for the starving people of North Korea. At the same time, he has his money for catering to his personal needs. He has spent 900 million dollars worth of money to permanently conserve the deceased body of his father. He is spending astronomical amount of money for his nuclear program. Yet, he has no money for the people. Kim Jung-II is no ordinary sinner that can be forgiven. He is the Satan himself. He must not be forgiven.

Once Kim Jung Il is expunged and a new democratic government is established in North Korea, the problems of human rights abuse, and other criminal activities that have been plaguing the world community will all be yesterday's news. There various means to achieving unconditional surrender from Kim Jung Il.

One of those means would be to freeze his slush funds resident in the Switzerland bank accounts. I implore the U.S. congress to investigate Kim Jung Il's accounts in the Switzerland banks and freeze those accounts.

Furthermore, there are many testimonies of escapees against North Korea including oppression and criminal acts against the population that will be revealed to the United States, Europe, United Nations, and Non-Governmental Organizations in all the countries through “White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea” being prepared by the Exile Committee for North Korea Democracy.

I hope these activities of North Korean escapees for improvement of human rights in North Korea will be supported by the international community and expect North Korea Democracy movements will overthrow the absolute monarchy of Jung-Il Kim. Lastly, I want to express my gratitude to the United States Senate and Ms. Suzanne Scholte of the Defense Forum Foundation who always pay attention and show interest in the North Korean defectors. Thank you very much.