



-CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY-

UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-Seventh session
26 February – 23 March 2018

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of
human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Mr. President,

Amnesty International welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We also welcome efforts by the DPRK authorities to cooperate with UN bodies on the rights of children, women and disabled persons.¹ We strongly agree with the Special Rapporteur that it will be most helpful for the DPRK to expand its cooperation with international human rights mechanisms, such as the various Special Procedures thematic mandates.²

Amnesty International shares the Special Rapporteur's concern that prisoners and residents of rural areas, people who are forcibly returned from abroad, and those living in poverty are among the most severely affected by human rights abuses.

DPRK nationals who left the country without valid travel documents have been forcibly returned from other countries in violation of the principle of non-refoulement, despite the risk of arbitrary detention, torture, forced labour and other ill-treatment in the DPRK.

Amnesty International remains gravely concerned by the stranglehold on the freedom of expression, including communications and information flow in and out of the DPRK.³ The vast majority of people are still denied access to the global internet, and continue to face arbitrary surveillance, arrest and detention when they attempt to make international calls or access outside information.

Amnesty International calls on the DPRK to:

- release those detained for exercising their freedom of movement, unless they are charged with an internationally recognizable criminal offence, and promptly tried in proceedings which meet international fair trial standards;⁴
- respect the freedom of expression, and allow North Koreans to legally contact the outside world, including their family members that are located outside the country, by mobile phone or allowing access to the internet;
- invite, without undue delay, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to carry out a visit, and also extend invitations to other Special Procedures, among others, the Special Rapporteurs on the right to education, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, as well as other human rights experts and NGOs.

Thank you Mr. President.

¹ See UN.Doc CEDAW/C/PRK/CO/2-4 and CRC/C/PRK/CO/5, and *report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities on her visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*, UN Doc. A/HRC/37/56/Add.1, 8 December 2017.

² Amnesty International, *State of the World's Human Rights Report 2017/18*, pages 225-277 (Index: POL-20/6700/2018, available [here](#)).

³ Amnesty International, *Connection Denied: Restrictions on Mobile Phones and Outside Information in North Korea* (Index: ASA-24/3373/2016, available [here](#))

⁴ Amnesty International, *North Korea: Further information: forcibly returned woman faces treason charges* (Index: ASA-24/7863/2018, available [here](#))