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UN Human Rights Council
Thirty-First session
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Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

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

Mr. President,

Since the release of the UN Commission of Inquiry report in 2014, Amnesty International has been concerned about the lack of cooperation from the government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the UN and international human rights monitors.

Extremely little information about the true human rights situation has been made available to the outside world.

This stranglehold on communications and information flow in and out of the country is consistent with our latest research.¹ With more than 3 million mobile phone subscriptions in the country, people are still denied their right to freedom of expression and the ability to make calls out of the country.

Foreign nationals travelling and living in the DPRK and a select few elites are the only people who have access to the international internet as we know it. North Koreans are confined to a computer network that only provides access to domestic websites and email.

Ordinary North Korean people continue to face arbitrary surveillance, arrest and detention when they attempt to make calls with outside world or access outside information through DVDs or other media.

¹ Amnesty International, *Connection Denied: Restrictions on Mobile Phones and Outside Information in North Korea* (Index: ASA-24/3373/2016, available <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa24/3373/2016/en/>)

Smuggled mobile phones, which allow connection with Chinese mobile networks, are one of the few channels through which contact with the outside world is possible.

In recent years, the North Korean government has tightened border security, and intensified surveillance over communications, thereby putting people who are legitimately exercising their right to freedom of expression under even greater risk.

Amnesty International urges the Human Rights Council to call on the DPRK government to lift all restrictions on the freedom of expression and to end all arbitrary surveillance and interference with communications.

We also continue to call for accountability over the full range of human rights violations in the DPRK.

Mr. Darusman, we express our appreciation for your sterling work as Special Rapporteur, and we wish you well in your future endeavours.

Thank you Mr. President.