

URGENT ACTION

TWO ESCAPEES RETURNED TO NORTH KOREA

Two North Koreans, who are part of a family of five who fled the country, have been forcibly returned to North Korea where they are at serious risk of arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, forced labour and possible death.

Kim Song-il and **Kim Son-hye**, who were detained in July by the Chinese authorities in the north-eastern Chinese province of Yanji Jilin have been forcibly returned to North Korea. They were travelling with three relatives, Kim Kwang-ho, his wife, Kim Ok-shil and their daughter. North Koreans caught in China without authorization are considered by the authorities to be economic migrants, rather than refugee or asylum-seekers, and are returned to North Korea.

Although all five family members were detained at the same time, Kim Kwang-ho, his wife and daughter were allowed to travel to South Korea in August. Kim Kwang-ho, Kim Ok-shil and their daughter had fled North Korea in August 2009 and settled in South Korea, where they obtained South Korean nationality. They left South Korea in December 2012 and returned to North Korea in circumstances which remain unclear. Given their South Korean nationality, China allowed them to return to South Korea.

North Koreans are prohibited from travelling abroad, including into China, without permission. Those returned to North Korea typically face arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment and forced labour. They are also at risk of enforced disappearance.

Please write immediately in Korean, English or your own language:

- Call on Kim Jong-Un to ensure that no one is detained or prosecuted for leaving North Korea, and that Kim Song-il and Kim Son-hye are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment, forced labour, enforced disappearance or the death penalty;
- Call on him to disclose the whereabouts of Kim Song-il and Kim Son-hye;
- Urge him to abolish the requirement for permission to travel internally and abroad, in compliance with North Korea's international obligations.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 14 OCTOBER 2013 TO:

Ambassador

Mr Sin Son-ho
Permanent Mission of the Democratic
People's Republic in New York
820 Second Avenue, 13th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA
Fax: +1 212 972 3154
Email: dpr.korea@verizon.net
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

Ambassador

Mr So Se-pyong
Chemin de Plonjon 1
1207 Geneva
Switzerland
Fax: +41 22 786 0662
Email: mission.korea-dpr@ties.itu.int
Salutation: Dear Ambassador

And copies to:

Minister of People's Security
Mr Choe Bu-il
Ministry of People's Security
Pyongyang
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Twitter: @uriminzok (North Korean
official twitter account)

**** Address appeals to Kim Jong-Un, Supreme Commander of the Korean People's Army, c/o each of the above ****

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Kim Kwang-ho, Kim Ok-shil and their daughter fled North Korea and settled in South Korea in August 2009. However, they left South Korea for China in December 2012. Kim Kwang-ho then returned to North Korea, followed later by his wife and daughter. In January North Korean media interviewed Kim Kwang-ho, his wife and another North Korean who had returned from South Korea. In the interview they said that they had been lured to South Korea.

The circumstances behind their return to North Korea, between December 2012 and early January, remain unclear. There are concerns that their return may not have been voluntary, and that the media interview was used primarily as propaganda to deter others from trying to go to South Korea.

In their latest attempt to flee North Korea, Kim Kwang-ho and his family are reported to have left North Korea on 24 June. .

Kim Jong-un, who came to power after his father's death in December 2011, has increased border controls, condemned border-crossers and threatened them with severe punishments, according to sources in North Korea.

In March 2013 the UN Human Rights Council voted to establish a Commission of Inquiry into human rights violations in North Korea. Among the violations to be investigated are the right to food, political prison camps, torture and other ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, discrimination, freedom of expression, right to life, freedom of movement and enforced disappearances.

The North Korean authorities refuse to recognize or grant access to international human rights monitors including Amnesty International and the Commission of Inquiry into human rights violations in North Korea. On-going restrictions on access for independent monitors, intergovernmental and humanitarian organizations impede efforts to assess the human rights situation in the country. Information that does emerge mainly through North Koreans living outside North Korea points to widespread and systematic violations of human rights, including severe restrictions on freedom of association, expression and movement, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment resulting in death, and executions.

Names: Kim Song-il (m), Kim Son-hye (f)

Gender m/f: both

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