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# Amnesty International

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## REPUBLIC OF KOREA (SOUTH KOREA) Singer Arrested for Publishing Songbook

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Amnesty International is calling for the release of a singer and a publisher who were arrested on 3 February 1996 for producing and distributing a songbook which is alleged to “praise” and “encourage” North Korea. The two are held under Article 7 of South Korea’s National Security Law and are considered by Amnesty International to be prisoners of conscience, held for the non-violent exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association. Amnesty International is also concerned that the two prisoners may be ill-treated during interrogation.

Lee Eun-jin, 30-year-old female singer and 31-year-old publisher Won Yong-ho were arrested on 3 February by the Seoul Police Administration. They have been accused of editing, publishing and distributing a songbook called *Song of Hope*, part of which the the authorities claim to be in violation the National Security Law. Lawyers for the two prisoners and family members were denied access to the prisoners on the day of their arrest

### **Background information**

Amnesty International believes that the mere publication and dissemination of songs, without the use or threat of violence, should not be considered a threat to state security. It is concerned that Article 7 of the National Security Law is being used arbitrarily to restrict freedom of expression in South Korea. Article 7 provides up to seven years’ imprisonment for those who praise, “encourage” and “side with” North Korea “with the knowledge that he or she might damage state security”. During 1995 dozens of political activists, students, academics, publishers and others were arrested under this provision of the law, some of whom were sentenced to prison terms.

Lee Eun-jin belongs to *Kot Dahji*, a well-known singing group comprising some 20 singers, musicians and composers. The group was established in 1989 and has recently performed on national television. Won Yong-ho works for *Minmaek* publishing company which was also established in 1989 and has published four volumes of the songbook *Song of Hope*. The first volume was published in 1992 and subsequent volumes were published in 1993, 1994 and 1995. The book has been retailed widely in South Korea.

Amnesty International is calling on the authorities to ensure that the two prisoners are protected from ill-treatment during interrogation which could last for up to 30 days. It is also calling for them to be granted regular access to their lawyers and families. Political detainees in South Korea are routinely deprived of sleep and threatened during interrogation and are often forced to make a "confession". Amnesty International believes that ill-treatment would be prevented in many cases if detainees were granted prompt and regular access to lawyers and their families.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION

### Please send letters and faxes:

- *Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Lee Eun-jin and Won Yong-ho, arrested for the non-violent exercise of their rights to freedom of expression.*
- *Calling for amendment of the National Security Law so that the rights to freedom of expression and association are protected, in accordance with international standards.*

### Send appeals to:

- President Kim Young-sam

The Blue House, 1 Sejong-no, Chongno-gu  
Seoul, Republic of Korea

**Fax: +82 2 770 0253**

- Mr Ahn Woo-man, Minister of Justice

Ministry of Justice, 1 Chungang-dong, Kwachon-myon  
Shihung-gun, Kyonggi Province, Republic of Korea

**Fax: +82 2 504 3337**

- Mr Park Il-yong, Director

National Police Administration  
209 Mi Kun-dong, Sudaemoon-gu  
Choongno-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea

**Fax: +82 2 720 2686 (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**

### Copies to:

- Mr Kim Young-soo

Minister of Culture and Sports  
82-1 Sejong-no, Chongno-gu  
Seoul, Republic of Korea

**Fax: +82 2 736 8513**

-diplomatic representatives of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) in your country.

- *This appeal has been sent to KOTARAN Coordinators for quick action by selected groups.*

**KEYWORDS:** PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE 1 / MUSICIANS / PUBLISHERS / WOMEN /

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 8DJ, UNITED KINGDOM

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