

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 25/20/93

Distr: UA/SC

19 May 1993

Further information on UA 137/93 (ASA 25/17/93, 27 April 1993) - Prisoner of conscience/fear of ill-treatment

SOUTH KOREA:Hwang Suk-yong

Hwang Suk-yong was held for interrogation by the Agency for National Security Planning (ANSP) from 27 April 1993 until 14 May when he was referred to the prosecution for further questioning. Amnesty International has learnt that he was not ill-treated but is concerned that under South Korean law he may be questioned for an excessive period (up to 50 days) before he is charged.

Amnesty International is also concerned about a public statement made by the ANSP which appears to have violated Hwang Suk-yong's right to be presumed innocent before trial. On 14 May the ANSP announced to the media the results of its investigation of Hwang Suk-yong. It said that he had met North Korean officials on several occasions, joined a pro-North Korean group abroad and had been "brain-washed" during his visits to North Korea. It also said that he had praised the "greatness of Kim Il-sung and the North Korean regime" while abroad and had asked North Korea to provide financial support to make a historical documentary film.

Amnesty International believes that the accusations against Hwang Suk-yong, if substantiated, do not amount to more than the non-violent exercise of his rights of freedom of expression and association. It continues to consider him as a prisoner of conscience and to call for his immediate and unconditional release.

President Kim Young-sam made an important announcement regarding the protection of human rights on 30 April. He is reported to have said that suspects should not be ill-treated during interrogation and that "the cabinet should take special steps to prevent the recurrence of human rights abuses". Amnesty International welcomes this positive statement but is concerned that prisoners continue to be arrested and imprisoned under the National Security Law, provisions of which have frequently been used to curtail the rights of freedom of expression and association.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern about the continued imprisonment of Hwang Suk-yong and calling for his immediate and unconditional release;

- expressing concern at the ANSP's statement of 14 May 1993 which appears to have violated Hwang Suk-yong's right to be presumed innocent before trial;

- welcoming President Kim Young-sam's statement about the protection of detainees but expressing concern that Hwang Suk-yong and other prisoners continue to be held under provisions of the National Security Law which may be used to curtail the non-violent exercise of their political activities.

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APPEALS TO

1) President Kim Young-sam
The Blue House
1 Sejong-no
Chongno-gu, Seoul
Republic of Korea

Telegrams: President Kim Young-sam, Seoul, Republic of Korea
Telexes: 24651 or 24652 or 24653 WOIMUBU K
Faxes: +822 720 2686 (please forward to President Kim Young-sam)

Salutation: Dear President Kim

2) Mr Kim Deok
Director
Agency for National Security Planning
Presidential Office
The Blue House
1 Sejong-no
Chongno-gu, Seoul
Republic of Korea

Telegrams: Mr Kim Deok, ANSP, Seoul, Republic of Korea
Telexes: 24651 or 24652 or 24653 WOIMUBU K
Faxes: + 822 720 2686 (Please forward to Mr Kim Deok)

Salutation: Dear Sir

3) Mr Kim Doo-hee
Minister of Justice
1 Chungang-dong
Kwachon-myon
Shihung-gun, Kyonggi Province
Republic of Korea

Telegrams: Minister of Justice Kim, Shihung-gun, Republic of Korea
Telexes: 24757 MOJUST K
Faxes: + 822 504 3337

Salutation: Dear Minister Kim

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO: diplomatic representatives of South Korea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 June 1993.