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# *amnesty international*

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**£SOUTH KOREA**

**@Appeal for the Release of  
Lee Jang-hyong**

**MAY 1994**

**AI INDEX: ASA 25/20/94**

**DISTR: SC/CO/GR**

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Lee Jang-hyong, 61-year-old former lieutenant and restaurant manager, who has been serving a life sentence under the National Security Law since 1984. Amnesty International has adopted Lee Jang-hyong as a prisoner of conscience as it believes that he was convicted unfairly, on the basis of a confession extracted from him under torture.

Lee Jang-hyong's case is similar to that of dozens of other prisoners in South Korea who were arrested during the 1970s and 1980s on charges of espionage. In many of these cases, the prisoners claim to have been held incommunicado, tortured and convicted largely on the basis of coerced confessions. Amnesty International and other human rights groups have urged the South Korean authorities to review these allegedly fabricated cases as a matter of urgency.

Lee Jang-hyong is a practising Catholic and is currently in Kwangju Prison. He was born on Cheju Island in South Korea but spent most of his childhood in Japan. During the Korean War (1950-53) he served as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps and he later worked as a restaurant manager in Seoul. During the 1970s and early 1980s he went to Japan on several occasions to visit his relatives and to seek advice about setting up his own business.

On 15 June 1984 Lee Jang-hyong was arrested but a warrant for his arrest was not issued until 20 August. He was taken to the Anti-Communist Division of the Police Headquarters in Seoul where he is said to have been held incommunicado for 67 days. During this time Lee Jang-hyong says that he was tortured and forced to confess that he had spied for North Korea. He was tried in January 1985 and sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of spying.

According to the prosecution, Lee Jang-hyong was recruited as a spy by an uncle living in Japan, a charge which he says he was forced to admit under torture and for which there appears to be no reliable evidence. He is also accused of visiting North Korea in December 1982, but his family and friends claim that during this period he was staying with a cousin in Japan. Lee Jang-Hyong's family also maintain that during his trial they were intimidated by the authorities into not appointing a sympathetic lawyer. He was therefore defended by a court-appointed lawyer who apparently did little to counter the prosecution's charges.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

**please send letters and faxes:**

- ◆ *expressing concern that Lee Janghyong is a prisoner of conscience, convicted after an unfair trial on the basis of a confession obtained under torture;*
- ◆ *calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Lee Janghyong.*

*Appeals to:*

◆ President Kim Young-sam

The Blue House

1 Sejongno

Chongno-gu, Seoul

Republic of Korea

*Fax: +822 770 0253*

◆ Mr Kim Doo-hee, Minister of Justice

Ministry of Justice

1 Chungang-dong

Kwachon-myon, Shihung-gun

Kyonggi Province

Republic of Korea

*Fax: +822 504 3337*

◆ and to diplomatic representatives of South Korea in your country.

**KEYWORDS:** PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE / MILITARY AS VICTIMS / BUSINESS PEOPLE /  
RELIGIOUS GROUPS - CATHOLIC / TORTURE/ILL-TREATMENT / ESPIONAGE / CONFESSIONS /

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