

Urgent appeal to the United Nations

- Case of banning the act of promoting North Korean human rights

Urgent appeal to the United Nations to strongly direct South Korean government to stop pushing for a ban on anti-North Korean leaflets and North Korea to stop threatening South Korea.

June 8, 2020

Greetings,

We are PSCORE, which stands for People for Successful COrean REunification. We are an NGO based in Seoul, founded in 2006. We are assisting North Korean defectors adapt to the fast-paced South Korean life, while promoting North Korean human rights. We are an NGO that has gained consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC in 2012. We are working with the Lawyers for Human Rights and Unification of Korea (Hanbyun), another Seoul-based NGO, to consider human rights in North Korea from a legal point of view.

Together we are asking the UN to take strong measures to stop this anti-human rights and unconstitutional law "banning the spread of anti-North Korean leaflets", which the South Korean government and the National Assembly are pushing for, and to immediately stop North Korea from violating North Koreans' rights to know, and to stop outside human rights groups from abusing their activities to use propaganda leaflets to trigger political disputes. On June 4, Kim Yo-jung, the younger sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, criticized North Korean defectors in South Korea for sending propaganda leaflets, calling on the South Korean government to "make a law to stop the spread of leaflets", threatening that if the South Korean authorities fail to take proper measures, they will completely withdraw from the Kaesong Industrial Complex and shut down the inter-Korean liaison office in Kaesong, and scrap the September 19 inter-Korean military agreement.

Then, South Korea's Ministry of Unification held an unscheduled briefing for about four and a half hours and said it was pushing for a bill to ban the spread of anti-North Korean leaflets. The Blue House said the propaganda leaflets against the North Korea do more harm than good, while the Ministry of National Defense said the dispatch of anti-North Korean leaflets by private agencies should be terminated as an act that poses a risk to the lives and property of the people in the border area by raising military tensions in the border area. Furthermore, on June 5, 21 lawmakers including Kim Hong-gul of the ruling Democratic Party of Korea, are trying to define the distribution of anti-Pyongyang leaflets as a "threat to public safety" and force them to go through the Ministry of Unification's approval.

We are astonished by the Blue House, the government and the National Assembly not protesting sternly against Kim Yo-jung's reckless remarks such as "bull in a china shop", "mongrel", and "human scum" against South Korean government and the fact that they are fully accepting Kim Yo Jong's claim to violate the fundamental basic rights of South and North Koreans' freedom of expression.

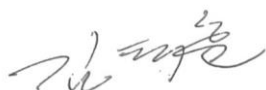
The South Korean government defined the leaflet dispatch as a “security violation act,” but it was North Korea that violated the September 19 military agreement by firing at the guard posts in DMZ last month with numerous other military provocations against the South. The South Korean government is oppressing the North Korean human rights movement. Kim Yo Jong’s words are intolerable, and the South Korean government is oppressing North Korean human rights.

North Korea's human rights violations are crimes against humanity, and in fact since 2014, the United Nations has been trying to refer the North Korean leadership to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The primary human rights violation from North Korea is the violation of the “right to Knowledge.” Freedom to pursue, receive, and communicate information and ideas regardless of borders through all media is a fundamental human right that has been guaranteed by not only the Constitution of the Republic of Korea, but also the "World Human Rights Declaration" or the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" (ICCPR), which North Korea has joined.

As declared by the First United Nations General Assembly on December 14, 1946, Freedom of Information is a fundamental human right, a touchstone of all liberty. Sending anti-North Korean leaflets to North Koreans to open their eyes and ears can never be an act of security risk. The Moon-Jae-In government has not established the North Korean Human Rights Foundation for more than four years despite the fact that the North Korean Human Rights Act has already been enacted on March 3, 2016. Despite several inter-Korean summits since 2018, the Moon government has given up human rights talks to improve North Korean human rights. Moreover, on November 7, 2019, he committed the atrocity of secretly and forcibly returning two North Korean defector sailors back to the North in five days.

This time, the Moon government is joining forces with the North Korean regime to severely restrict freedom of expression for both South Koreans and North Koreans. By all means, we are urgently requesting the UN agency to take a strong initiative to immediately stop this anti-human rights and unconstitutional law "banning the spread of anti-North Korean leaflets" and threats against the South Korea against the South Korean president, the government, the National Assembly and the North Korean regime

We are sending this document to both the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression as we think a collaboration on this issue would be more efficient.



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