

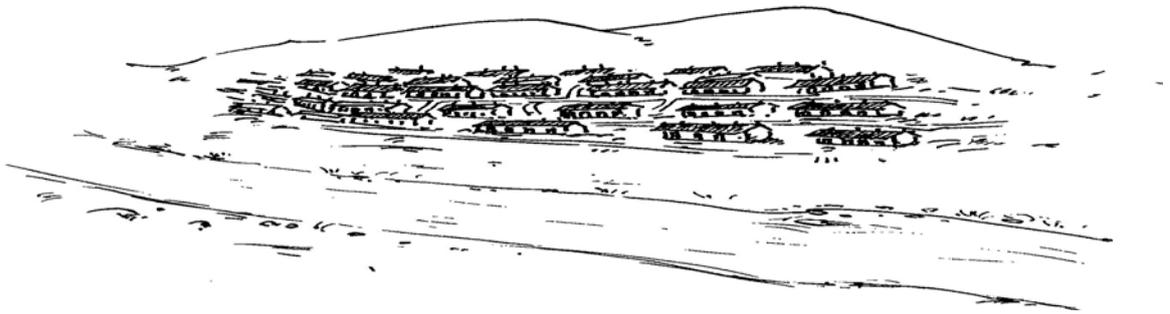
I Was a Political Prisoner at Birth in North Korea

My Family Background

My North Korean name is Shin In-kun (South Korean name: Shin Dong-hyuk). I was born on 19 November 1982. I was a political prisoner at birth in North Korea.

According to what I know from my father, Shin Kyong-sop, was born in 1946 in the village of Yongjung-ni in Mundok District, South Pyongan Province, near Pyongyang, North Korea. He was the 11th of 12 brothers. It was in 1965, when he was only 19 years old, that great tragedy struck his family.

One night, before dawn, policemen rushed into his house, carried away all the furniture, and loaded the entire family onto a truck. It took all day before they arrived at the camp No. 14, operated by the State Security Agency (SSA).



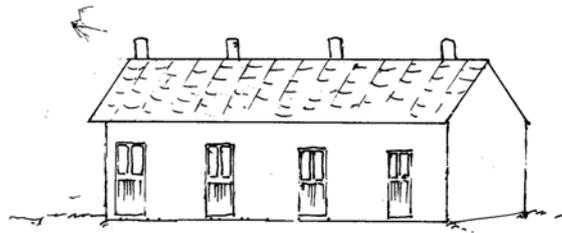
From the moment they arrived there, they were all separated and treated as beasts. With a few rare exceptions of meeting his younger brother in the same prison block, my father knew nothing about his brothers after this. My father was appointed to work in the mechanics' unit in the camp, and he did his job so well that one day my father was rewarded with the news that he would be allowed to wed a female inmate, Chang Hye-kyong. They became husband and wife from that time on.

They were allowed to be together for a mere 5 days or so before they were separated again. From that time forward, my father and mother were not allowed to see each other with the exception of some rare special favor in recognition of some outstanding performance in their work duties.

I know I have a brother who was born a few years before me, but I have little memory of him. I saw him only 3 or 4 times until 1996 when he was executed in the camp. He may have lived with my mother and me when we two brothers were very young. Nonetheless, I have no memory of him in the same house with me nor do I have [any](#) memory of him in my early days.

My Early Days

I was able to live with my mother for the first 12 years of my life. My mother was a farmer, starting work at 5 o'clock in the morning and returning home at 11 o'clock in the evening. She was always so busy and I have little memory of any affection between mother and a son.



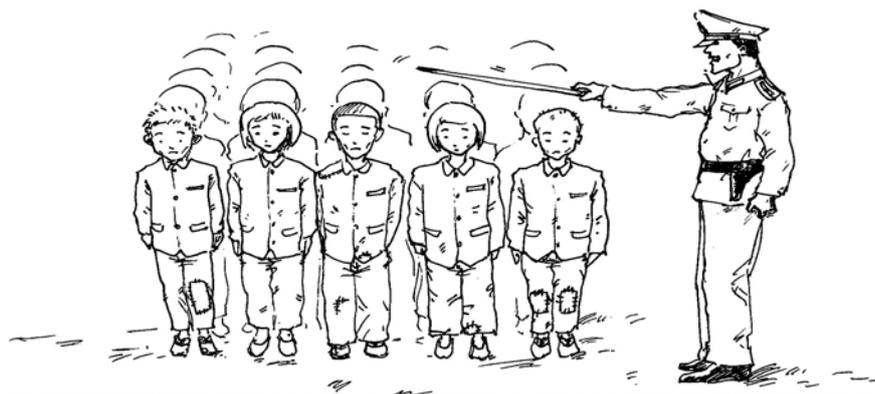
She brought home 900 grams of corn for herself and 400 grams for me, along with 3 pieces of cabbage, marinated in salt, and a very small bucket full of coal. In fact, she finished work at around 9:30 in the evening but was forced to attend a daily Ideology Struggle Session for one and a half hours.

In reality, the objective of these sessions is to punish prisoners for failure to accomplish a work quota, violation of rules, etc. During this time, prisoners are forced to accuse each other and beat fellow prisoners. From 11 o'clock, it is curfew and no prisoners are allowed to be outside their shelter. This is a standard routine for all prisoners in the camp.

I faintly remember that I often toddled my way to her work with her but she was always so busy that she did not have any time to show me her love. Today, I remember my mother but have no special feelings for her.

I remember that one day I was sent to the 5-year course primary school in the camp where we learned how to read, write, add and subtract, and nothing else.

I have no memory of the first day of school. I now remember that there were some 30 children in each class, two or three classes each grade up to fifth grade leading to a total number of some 400 children. I was never curious about where they came from – they were either born there like myself or arrived in the camp as children.

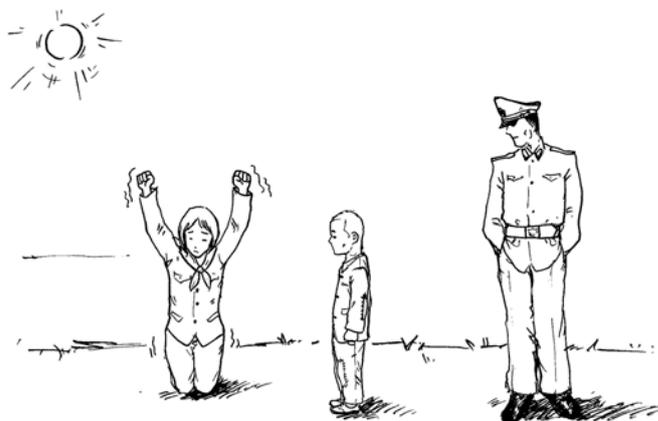


One day when I was 9 years old, my school teacher, always in SSA uniform, searched the children and found 5 grains of wheat in the pocket of a girl. He made her kneel directly in front of us and in full sight, then began to beat her head fiercely with a baton for about an hour until she fainted. It was strange to me that her head never bled but many bumps raised on her scalp from the punishment. We carried her to her house, and were told the next day that she had died quietly the night before.

A child was beaten to death and no one was held responsible nor punished! The school teachers in their SSA uniforms had the right to do whatever they liked. This is a common and almost routine case in the camp No. 14, not an isolated or exceptional case.

Once, when I was 10 years old, I followed my mother to work in the rice fields, as the children had been ordered to help their mothers plant the rice. The work began at 9 o'clock in the morning and we were under strict order to accomplish the work quota. On that particular day, my mother was quite weak and already somewhat pale in the morning. She complained about a headache. No one was excused from the work as this was the rule in the camp. I worked very hard to help my mother. Nevertheless, our work was very slow.

The SSA officer was furious with our slow work. My mother was ordered to sit on her knees on the paddy road with her hands raised straight up in the sun when all other prisoners were having lunch. Helplessly, I looked on. Precisely an hour and a half later, the SSA officer came to her and ordered to start work. She was already weak, badly punished, and had no lunch. Nevertheless, she did her best to do the work until she fainted at around 3 o'clock in the afternoon. That night she sat on her knees for two hours and some 40 prisoners accused her of being lazy at the dreaded punishment session that evening.



When I was 12 years old, I was sent to middle school and then to work from there on out. I was separated from my mother to stay with other children. There was no actual class in the middle school. We were given all kinds of work - weeding, harvesting, carrying dung, etc. No study, all work.

Power Plant Construction Work

We children were mobilized for the work of installing a medium-sized power plant during the period from spring of 1998 to the fall of 1999. We were between 13-16 years old. During this period, I saw so many children killed by accidents. I used to see public executions and dead bodies, but this was the first time I witnessed to many children who were killed by accidents. Sometimes, 4 to 5 children were killed a day. On one occasion, I actually saw eight people killed by an accident. Three plumbers were working high up on a tall cement wall, three 15-year-old girls and two boys were helping them with mortar below. I was carrying mortar to the children when I saw the cement wall falling. I shouted, "Look out! The cement wall is collapsing!" It was too late and 8 people were buried under many tons of mortar. No rescue work took place. The security officers just shouted at us, "Don't stop your work and keep working!" Once

again, this was not an isolated case but only one of many such cases in the camp.



I Was Tortured by Scorching

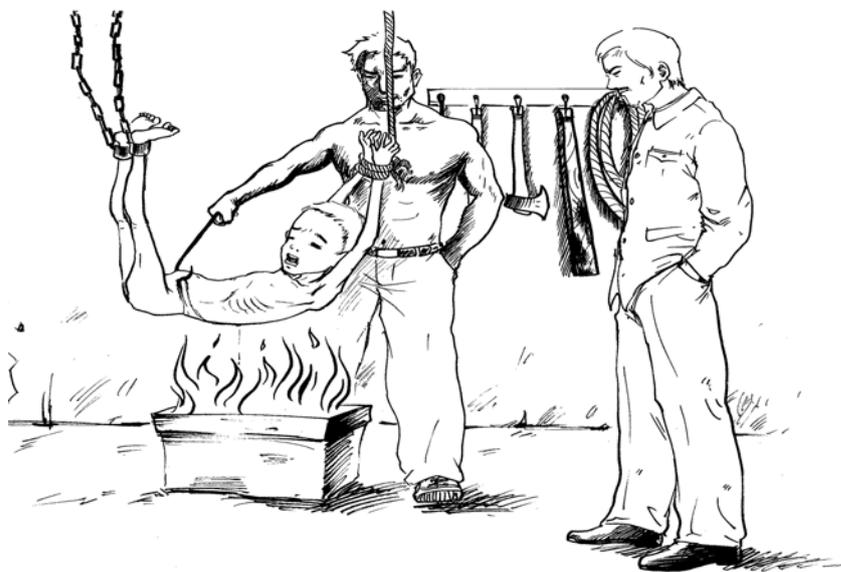
At around 8 o'clock in the morning, 6 April 1996, I was ordered to report to school immediately. I noted a passenger car waiting at the school. The people who emerged from the car approached me, no questions, hand-cuffed and blindfolded me and drove me to an unknown location. I felt like we were descending in an elevator, and I found myself in a dark chamber illuminated only by a single light bulb, when they removed the scarf from my eyes.

Directly before me was a man sitting at a desk in an empty room. He gave me a sheet of paper and told me to read it. There appeared the names of my father's brothers, two of whom had collaborated with South Korea during the Korean War and then fled to South Korea. This is the very first time I understood why my father and his brothers were brought here. I wrote my name and placed my fingerprint at the bottom of the document..

This was a secret underground torture chamber in Camp 14. I was in cell No. 7, a dark and small room with no light except a small electric light on the ceiling. There I was told that my mother and brother were arrested at dawn that morning while attempting to escape from the camp, and I was told to tell him all about a family conspiracy.

This was an awful and unthinkable crime and I jumped with surprise at the news. The next day I was taken to a chamber, full of all kinds of torture instruments. I was stripped, my legs were cuffed and my hands were tied with rope. I was

hung by my legs and hands from the ceiling. Some one told me to confess the truth about who started the escape plan. I said I had known nothing about it. Strangely, I had no fear at that moment. Even today, my lack of fear at that time remains a mystery. Someone started a charcoal fire and brought it just under my back. I felt the heat at my waist and shrieked. I instinctively struggled hard to avoid the flames. My torturers pierced me with a steel hook near my groin to stop my writhing, then blacked out.



I don't know how long I was unconscious but I found myself in a cell that rocked from my own feces and urine. I summoned all my strength to get up but felt great pain at my waist. I found blood and wounds at my lower abdomen. As days passed, the pain grew and my flesh began to decay, stinking so terribly that the guards avoided entering my cell. Next, they moved me to a cell opposite to mine. A very elderly person was in it. He said he had been imprisoned for well over 20 years. He had been reduced to skin and bones. He did not divulge any more about himself, but I will never forget how he quietly helped me in my time of need.

Once, as he gave me half of his food ration, he said, "you are a young boy and you need this food to stay alive." With his kind attention and, perhaps by the grace of God, I began to eat and my health began to improve. One day after many months sharing a cell with him, I was finally summoned by authorities and transferred. This was the last time I saw the old man, a living skeleton, who had

been so kind to me. I will never forget him and came to love him more than my parents. This was the man who instilled in me a strength of will that my parents had never been able to give me.

I was next brought to a room and found my father on his knees on the floor, and I learned for the first time that he had also been arrested at the same time as I had. We were ordered to be fingerprinted and to sign an affidavit saying that we would keep secret everything we knew about the place and would tell nobody about what happened to us or what we had seen. This was on November 29th 1996.

My Mother and Brother Publicly Executed

Then, we were blindfolded again and taken outside. I had been kept in an underground without sunshine about 7 months. They next took us to a kind of public square where a crowd of people had gathered. I recognized the place as a public execution site that was used 2 to 3 times every year. The hand cuffs were removed from our wrists, and we were told to sit in the front row of the crowd. We saw 2 convicts, a man and a woman, being dragged to the site from some distance. As the convicts were dragged closer, to my shock, they were my mother and brother!

My brother was obviously very weak, his bones clearly visible beneath his skin, My mother seemed swollen from head to foot and her eyes. An indictment was read aloud, the details of which I don't remember, except the final words, Chang Hye-kyong and Shin Ha-kun, enemies of the people, are sentenced to death.'



My mother was first executed by hanging and, then, my brother by a firing

squad. I simply could not bring myself to witness their murder. I looked at my father when the moment came. Tears were running down his cheeks and gaze was fixed on the ground.

After the execution, I was again separated from my father: He was sent to work on a construction site, and I was sent back to school. Things were no longer as they used be, I was now deemed the son and brother of traitors. Teachers just punished me repeatedly and arbitrarily for little apparent reason, and I was the target of constant discrimination. I urinated in my trousers many times as my teacher did not allow me to use toilet. I can never remember not being hungry. One day, I discovered 3 kernels of corn in a small pile of cow dung, picked them up and cleaned them with my sleeve before eating. As miserable as it may seem, that was my lucky day.

My Niece Raped

My niece was among a group of prisoners collecting acorns up on a hill one day when they were spotted by guards. My aunt and sister were separated from the group for questioning as to why they were so close to the barbed wire fencing.

My cousin was 21 or 22 years old at that time and was very pretty. Two guards began to fondle her, as her mother bitterly protested. The guards tied her mother up to a tree facing the trunk and blindfolded her. They then proceeded to rape her daughter in broad day light.

My aunt fainted. When she woke up, she found her daughter naked and lying unconscious on the ground and having trouble breathing. The guards were nowhere in sight, My niece never recovered consciousness.

Her mother wailed in a loud voice and told everyone she met in the camp about what had happened. Soon afterwards she disappeared, and no one knows what happened to her. This is how members of our family disappeared one by one.

Perhaps, my father's family line will disappear entirely from the earth. As tragic as it is, this is not only my family's story. The fate of all 40,000 to 60,000

prisoners in the camp can be decided just as capriciously.

At the Garment Factory

I finished middle school and was assigned to work as a sewing machine repairman at a garment factory. There were a total of about 2,500 prisoners in the garment factory; 2,000 of them were women. There were a large number of young women in their 20s, 30s and 40s, and many of them were quite attractive.

The women were not provided with proper uniforms, so their breasts were easily exposed to the prying eyes of SSA officers. Seven good looking women are selected to do the cleaning of SSA camp offices. Not surprisingly, many women vie for this position because they are able to escape the normal kickings and beatings while at work. Even the risk of occasional sexual abuse is considered profitable for the usual violence and wrath of SSA officers.

Park Yong-chun was a pretty girl from the same class as me and would be 25 years old now if she were still alive. She was picked to do the cleaning job in the camp office. One day, we discovered that she was pregnant. There were 4 of us from the same class, and we did our best to cover up her pregnancy. She would certainly disappear if found to be pregnant. But her pregnancy was soon discovered and she did disappear completely. No one knows what happened to her. This is what can happen to any women prisoners who clean the offices of camp officers.

One day, I was carrying a sewing machine base up to the 2nd floor when it dropped, as my arms became fatigued.



Sometime in mid-2004, late in the evening, just as the daily punishment session was over, when 4 SSA officers strangely appeared and asked us “Which cell has the largest army of lice?” Some prisoners responded, “Yes, we have a lot of lice.” The SSA officers said, “Ok, then, use this water to clean your body.” And they gave a bucket of water to a group of seven women in a cell and the other bucket was given to a group of 5 men in another cell.

Nothing immediately happened when they washed their bodies with the water, except that the water looked somewhat milky and had the same odor as the insecticides used in the fields. However, in about a week, red spots appeared all over their bodies, which began to fester. Within a month, their bodies were covered with running sores.

They simply could not get up for work. When we thought that they were about to die, a truck came one day and carried them away to an unknown location. Had I washed my body with that water at that time, I would surely not be here today.

One day in 2004, a Park (I am unable to remember his given name), a young North Korean prisoner, was assigned to my section of the garment factory. I was instructed to show him how to operate machines. We became good friends and through our conversation he opened up my eyes to the outside world for the first time. This young man had the experience of traveling in several countries in Asia and told me so many things about his experiences in the outside world. He encouraged me to escape from the camp at the first opportunity and to experience for myself a world outside my existence in the prison camp.

Escape from the Camp

On 2, January, 2005, about 25 of us, men and women including Park, went up to the mountain to collect firewood. I was in the lead I suddenly found barbed wire in front of us. I looked at the other prisoners around me who were all busy collecting fire wood.

At this moment, a memory flashed through my mind: of my mother and brother being executed, and the nightmare of the torture I experienced afterwards.

Carefully, Park and I approached the barbed wire. I had no fear of being shot at or electrified; I knew I had to get out and nothing else mattered at that moment..

I ran to the barbed wire. Suddenly, I felt a great pain as though someone was stabbing the sole of my foot when I was passed through the wire. I almost fainted but, by instinct, I pushed myself forward through the fence. I looked around to find the barbed wire behind me but Park was motionless hanging over the wire fence!

At that desperate moment I could afford little thought of my poor friend and I was just overwhelmed by joy. The feeling of ecstasy to be out of the camp was beyond description. I ran down the mountain quite a way when I felt something wet on my legs. I was in fact bleeding from the wound inflicted by the barbed wire. I had no time to stop but sometime later found a locked house in the mountain.

I broke into the house and found some food that I ate, Then I left with a small supply of rice I found in the house. I sold the rice at the first mining village I found and bribed the border guards to let me through the North Korean border with China with the money from that rice.

My Way to Freedom

As I was born a political prisoner, it was only when I had escaped that I saw North Korean society for the first time. I only saw it for 20 days, as I was miraculously able to cross the frozen Tumen River and safely arrive in China in January, 2005..

For about one year, I worked at a Chinese logging site at a remote mountain near the border and was given an amount of Chinese Yuen, equivalent to about 90 USD, for that entire year's work. I arrived in Qingdao via Changchun and Beijing by train and bus.

I begged a South Korean man at a Korean restaurant in Quindao for help. He took me to Shanghai and managed to bring me into the South Korean Consular

office. I am here in South Korea after spending 6 months in the Korean Consular Office in Shanghai.

Nov. 2006

International symposium on North Korean Human Rights Public Awareness Week

In June 2006, the North Korean Human Rights Law was established in Japan. This law specifies December 10-16 as the North Korean Human Rights Week and sets out that the government as well as regional institutions put efforts to increase public awareness on human rights violation of North Korea

In 2004, the States has passed the North Korean Human Rights Act, and in December 2005, the General Assembly has adopted the Resolution on North Korean Human Rights. The issue has also drawn the attention of Europe and now has become an international issue.

NGOs in Japan, with a view to inserting the spirit of the law into operation in practice, have often emphasized the importance of cooperation. The NGOs in concern therefore take the initiative to plan this special event.

The severe human rights violation and a food crisis have resulted in some 100,000 North Korean defectors in China. They are refused to be recognized refugee status by the Chinese government and still hiding out. "There are no refugees from North Korea" "They are all illegal migrants" the Chinese government has forcefully repatriated them to North Korea where they face severe torture, degrading treatment and often death. In case of women, they are sold to a forceful marriage with Chinese men, and become victims of human trafficking.

What is worse, the North Korean government has abducted innocent civilians from Lebanon, Thailand, Malaysia and Japan. The number of abductees is unknown. The sorrows and pain of their family members are beyond the word.

Given such a great opportunity of this kind, it is our hope to draw the great attention of international society to North Korean human rights violation by addressing the issue with special guests and experts with a view to providing policies and practical solutions.

Event Japan Executive Committee

Life Funds for North Korean Refugees (LFNKR),

The Society to Help Returnees to North Korea, RENK

The National Association for the Rescue of Japanese Kidnapped by North Korea
The Association of the Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea
The Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Related to North Korea
Japan Lawyers Association for Human Rights Protection in North Korea

US Executive Committee

Freedom House, North Korea Freedom Coalition

Crimes Against Humanity in Prison Camps in North Korea

Now What?

Chairperson, Distinguished Members of the International Community of Human Rights NGOs and Activists, Japanese Citizens, Members of the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen:

North Korea is still the most isolated country in the world today, a Cold War anachronism intent on maintaining its political power at the sacrifice of humanity, justice and the rule of law. Accordingly, reliable information on the human rights situation in North Korea is greatly limited, both inside and outside of the country.

However, in the wake of Communism's collapse in Eastern Europe and the former USSR, contact between North Koreans and the outside world has increased dramatically at all levels since the mid-1990s. As a result, the truth about the North Korean human rights situation has begun to slip through the cracks of the government's tightly clenched fist.

As a result, convincing and consistent evidence has come to our attention from a variety of independent and reliable sources about the shocking existence of secret, illegal prison camps in North Korea today and the plight of some 200,000 innocent and ordinary people, including women and children, who are detained without judicial review or due process legal procedures such as arrest, prosecution and trial.

North Korea's prison camps and ordinary prisons are the most abominable and horrifying examples of this- the crimes committed in these places are just as evil and pernicious as those of the Soviet gulag or the Nazi concentration camps, and even worse in that the North Korean camps have existed for years and years without broad international censure and action. These crimes have been perpetuated ruthlessly and systematically for decades in North Korea.

The existence of these camps and the bleak conditions and atrocities committed there are undeniable as they have been confirmed by many eyewitness accounts, including those of a former prisoner as well as a former guard who worked at several of the camps and a former senior official who was involved in actually overseeing them (these three are in this room right now). They have all attested to the shocking crimes against humanity committed by the North Korean regime against its own people.

Out of moral obligation, I wish to introduce to you this morning Mr. Shin Dong-hyuk, a former North Korean prisoner at one of the camps in North Korea. In fact, he was born in a camp and spent the first 24 years of his life there. Thus he had no knowledge of the world outside the camp and even of North Korea. All he learned was to read, write, add and subtract, and he was taught only at the most rudimentary level. He never learned about the multiplication table, for example.

His most important daily lesson was how to obey the camp's rules- in other words, to live the life of a slave.

One day in January 2005, he miraculously defected from the camp and saw North Korean society for the first time during the 20 days he was on the run. He arrived in China in early 2005. He spent about a year in there working at a logging site high up in the mountains and eventually found a South Korean who helped him go to South Korea sometime last year.

The researchers at the North Korean Human Rights Database Center in Seoul (NKDB) have collected and analyzed over 2,000 testimonies taken during interviews with North Koreans. As such, the NKDB researchers are the most well-informed and incisive experts in interviewing North Korean witnesses as well as in studying and verifying the information gathered.

The NKDB experts conducted countless interviews with Shin Dong Hyuk over a period of several months to investigate and validate the information in his testimony. Based on these frequent and exhaustive interviews, we are convinced that Mr. Shin's identity and story are authentic. A medical report by Dr. Gill Hinshewood of the London University College Hospital Medical School, a senior physician for the care of torture victims for 16 years, further supports his testimony. She examined Mr. Shin in London on 22 June 2007, and this report is available to you should you care to read it.

You will have an opportunity to hear from Mr. Shin directly at the meeting tomorrow. He published his autobiography last month, and hopefully his book will be available very soon in Japanese as well. Other witnesses here include Mr. Ahn Myeong Chul, a former guard at political prisoner camps No. 11, 13, 22, and 26 between 1987 and 1994. He defected from duty in September 1994 and arrived in South Korea in October of that year. Mr. Kwon Hyeok, another witness, was a former special secret agent in North Korea and was on duty in the Camp No. 22 for a special task force assignment during 97-98. He defected from North Korea in July 1999 and arrived in South Korea in April, 2000.

Their accounts in general and Mr. Shin's in particular will no doubt elicit shame in those who choose to turn their eyes away from the reality of the North Korean state's crimes against humanity. At the same time, the truth of their life experiences serves as a stern warning to those who stand prepared to sacrifice the human rights of the ordinary and innocent people of North Korea in favor of preventing that country's development of nuclear weapons and missiles.

Mr. Shin's presence here today with his appalling life story puts to rest an old argument as to whether or not secret prison camps exist in North Korea. With his presence, before us we have a confirmed case of the worst and most deplorable crimes against humanity, a serious challenge to the peace of mankind.

Now what? Are we going to sit and do nothing about it simply because the victims today are in no way personally related to us? Are we going to commit the sin of silence in the light of strong prima facie evidence for the crimes against humanity by the North Korean state?

I am fully convinced that unless we halt the inhumane and criminal practices perpetrated in North Korea today, such atrocities are bound to spread and occur elsewhere in the world and in the generations to come. This is precisely why crimes against humanity are deemed an international crime and are no longer limited to the sovereignty, jurisdiction or territory of a single nation. We must learn the lessons of history given to us by the great disaster of World War II, which could have been avoided if Hitler was stopped earlier. I am of the strong conviction that action in regard to North Korea is urgently needed. It is time for the international community to respond to and put an end to these ongoing and serious violations, and to rescue the ordinary people of North Korea from mass killings, arbitrary imprisonment, torture and related international crimes.

Under the circumstances, I wish to take this opportunity to urge the international community to intervene in the situation as a matter of global responsibility, and to marshal its resolve toward these crimes against humanity. We believe that international intervention works.

To this end, I wish to take note of the landmark report published in August of this year by Christian Solidarity Worldwide in London, entitled, "NORTH KOREA: A CASE TO ANSWER A CALL TO ACT," and call for the organization of an international network of legal experts, human rights NGOs and activists for the purpose of coordinated action and the exchange of information. Such a network should also consider, study, collect and examine evidence to determine the exact nature and scale of violations and to recommend what further action should be taken in order to bring the case to the attention of UN Security Council and International Criminal Court.

Let us make it a living reality for innocent North Korean prisoners to realize that they have not been forgotten by the free people of the world; indeed, that there are people of uncompromising principles who have sought and will continue to seek their freedom.

Before closing my speech this morning, please allow me to add my own views on the role of the South Korean government regarding the issue of North Korean crimes against humanity.

Korea has remained divided over the five past decades, a most tragic and deplorable situation that has led to the malignant growth of the Kim family's regime in the North and military regimes in the South, constituting the major hindrance to the peaceful development of Korea as a nation. Sadly, all the powers surrounding the Korean Peninsula have remained content with the status

quo, with little regard to the sufferings of the Korean people on both sides of the 38th Parallel. The ultimate goal of the Kim regime in the North, not unlike the past military regimes in the South, has been to keep itself in power. Few realistic efforts for unification have been undertaken under the mutual defense pacts concluded between North Korea, Russia and China on one hand and South Korea and the US on the other, thereby rendering any military options out of the question. Meanwhile, Koreans have been committed to the reunification of their nation, a nation that has remained homogeneous for thousands of years.

Thus, South Koreans are understandably no longer interested in repeating the decades-old policy of confrontation with North Korea that never worked, or in relying on outside help regarding this most crucial national issue for all Koreans. It must be understood that, under the circumstances, the most obvious and realistic choice for Koreans is to seek the reduction of tensions and hostilities as a first step to reconciliation. To this end, South Koreans are committed to bringing hard-line North Koreans to the negotiating table and out of their longstanding, stubborn isolation.

In this effort to open up a more constructive dialogue with North Korea, the South Korean government is trying desperately to maintain if not warm at least cordial relations between the two countries. Clearly, this is no time to expect the South Korean government to take up issues forcefully that may jeopardize its efforts toward peaceful unification. Therefore, it appears unrealistic at the present juncture to expect the South Korean government to play any significant role in the direct condemnation of the North Korean regime pertaining to its crimes against humanity.

Furthermore, if South Korean government raised this issue publicly with North Korea, it would run the risk of a return to the dirty propaganda that characterized the North – South relationship in past decades, with the North condemning South Korea and the West for spreading lies and interfering in North Korean internal affairs. This would do no good for the long-term prospects of combatting the human rights crisis. Thus, in reality, the value or efficacy of the South Korean government's raising the North Korean human rights issue is highly doubtful at this stage.

That said, I wish to suggest today that a strong and clear message be given to the South Korean government- though it cannot show open support, it must not and cannot hinder the international efforts to help the innocent victims of the North Korean crimes against humanity. Thank you.

Dr. Gill Hinshelwood MB BS 1963
London University College Hospital medical School

Dr. Hinshelwood was Senior Physician, Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture for 16 years, 1989-2005.

Dr. Hinshelwood has gained extensive experience (over 3,000 torture victims) of documenting torture and organized violence, and of the follow up treatment.

Dr. Hinshelwood examined Mr. Shin Dong-hyuk in London on 22 June 2007. Attached is her medical report of Shin Dong-hyuk.

Medical Report

Shin In-kun (N Korean name)
Shin Dong-hyak (S Korean name)
D.O.B 19th November 1982
Citizen of S Korea

Introduction

Mr Shin is a twenty four year old citizen of S Korea. He has been in the UK for a few days as a guest of Christian Solidarity Worldwide who are documenting his history. He is a single man with no dependants. I have read the testimony taken by CSW. I have seen and examined Mr Shin with the help of a male interpreter on 22,6,07.

History

Mr Shin gave me the following history. He was born in a prison camp in N Korea where his parents were prisoners. He lived with his mother until he was aged 12 years, and thereafter was housed in men's accommodation. His father was housed elsewhere and he saw very little of him. He had an older brother. He had schooling with other children of the camp. When he finished his education he worked on the machines in a garments factory, mainly making uniforms. Schoolchildren also had to labour from an early age. Mr Shin has made a very full statement about his life in the camp and I will not repeat it in this report.

Mr Shin has no memory of any tenderness from his mother. She worked long hours as a farmer and he supposes that he was left alone during that time, possibly tied to keep him out of the way. He recalls a life of daily physical and mental cruelty from the guards, teachers, and other prisoners. These included being beaten, kicked, pushed and dragged, and having stones thrown at him. Living conditions were basic and food always scarce. His daily food consisted of corn and other vegetables heavily salted. The prison regime was harsh for all

inmates and Mr Shin can recall countless injuries and deaths of prisoners through accidents and deliberate punishments. Mr Shin said his mother beat him severely once, for picking up a cucumber on their way back from the fields. There was always mistrust and Mr Shin made no close friendships. He said he knew no other life and had no curiosity.

Mr Shin has described a major incident when he was aged 14 years. His mother and older brother were arrested for trying to escape.

He says that on the morning of 6.4.96 he was handcuffed, blindfolded and driven to an unknown place. He learned about his mother and brother and was interrogated about his knowledge and part in the plot. He had no information to give. He was left in a small cell overnight and the next day taken to another room. Here he was stripped and his hands and feet tied. He was suspended from the ceiling by his arms and legs while being questioned. A fire was kindled on the floor under his back. The pain made him scream and writhe. When he did this a torturer forced a hook into the skin in his pubic area so that he could not struggle. He fainted.

Mr Shin does not know for how long he was unconscious. He regained consciousness in a cell. He was in great pain, and he had urinated and defaecated. His wounds became infected. He became weaker and feverish. He says that the guards refused to enter his cell because he smelled so bad. They just pushed food through the door. There were no toilet facilities. He was then moved into a cell with another prisoner, an older man who had been there a long time.

Mr Shin has described how this older male prisoner helped him regain his strength and health and give him the will to live. He was in the cell for seven months. When he was taken from the cell he saw his father briefly and realised that he too had been tortured for the same reason. Mr Shin and his father were forced to watch his mother hanged and his brother killed by firing squad for attempting to escape.

Thereafter Mr Shin was routinely ill-treated by the camp authorities for being the relative of executed prisoners. He was given harder work and beaten more frequently by his teachers and camp officials. He became nervous and isolated.

After leaving school he was assigned to work in a garment factory, repairing machines. On one occasion he was carrying a machine and dropped it. He was grabbed by guards, and dragged to a table. He was forced to kneel on the floor and his right hand was held on the table while a guard chopped the tip of his middle finger off. Mr Shin screamed. He did not faint. When he looked the tip was hanging off, still attached with a bit of skin which he pulled. He then went to the camp clinic to have it cleaned and dressed.

Mr Shin described witnessing countless severe accidents involving gross injuries and loss of life. He has also seen others subjected to cruel punishments and killed. He says he knew of no other way of life. He did hear about individuals who committed suicide, but did not consider this himself.

Mr Shin has described how in 2004 he was working with a prisoner who had lived in the outside world and who described a different way of life. He says he resolved to escape with this man and together they watched for an opportunity.

On 2,1,05 they were working near the perimeter barbed and electrified wire fence. They saw an opportunity and made a dash for it. His fellow prisoner died on the wire. He sustained burns and deep cuts to both legs, and received an electric shock, but somehow managed to keep going and ran.

The wounds on his legs became infected and took many months to heal. He found a way of surviving in N Korea for about 20 days until he was able to escape to China and eventually to S Korea, where he now lives.

Past Health

Mr Shin says that he was always thin and hungry as a child, and added that he presumes that if he had had serious health problems he would not have survived childhood. He does not recall ever seeing a doctor. There was a clinic at the camp which dispensed first aid. He had wounds dressed on a number of occasions, the most serious being when his finger was deliberately cut. When he had severe burns as described above his injuries were dressed by his fellow cell mate, and took many months to heal. He did not receive any medical assistance for these from the camp officials.

He says he was in a deplorable condition when he first arrived in China. He was under-nourished, his leg wounds became grossly infected, and he was fearful all the time. Nevertheless he was able to do physical work in a logging camp in China. With the money he earned he was able to eat well and treat his wounds. By the time he had spent a year in China his weight was 76 kg, and scars healed and he spoke basic Chinese. In S Korea when he was no longer compelled to work, he had time to think and this was when his most severe mental symptoms began to appear, some of which are present to date.

Present Health

Mr Shin's main complaint is of insomnia. He can only get to sleep if he is really exhausted with physical activity. Up to a month ago he was suffering nightmares. In these bad dreams he was always back in the prison camp with its terrifying regime and all powerful guards chasing him. There was much fear and he would awaken in a panic, screaming, thinking he was really back in the camp. His mouth and jaw were in pain, his teeth felt as if they were being pulled and his heart was pounding fiercely. These nightmares became so frightening that he tried not to sleep, and was consequently very fatigued during the day. Mr Shin has received some medication for these in S

Korea and they have lessened in frequency and severity. He is no longer taking medication.

He finds it hard to get to sleep even when he is tired, because as soon as he lies down his mind seems to become overactive, memories of all he has been through going round and round in his head.

Since he left China and has been in S Korea his weight has fallen to 61kg. Mr Shin has no appetite. He will eat what is put in front of him, but has no anticipation or desire for a meal. He has no symptoms of gastrointestinal disease. He has had some dental treatment and his teeth are satisfactory. His bowels are normal.

Mr Shin has no urinary tract problems, no respiratory complaints and does not complain of any musculo-skeletal disorder.

Mr Shin mentioned his mental state many times. He suffers frequent flashbacks of frightening events in the camp. During these episodes he finds his heart beating fast and he feels great fear. He needs to look around for a familiar object in his new life to reassure himself. He sometimes feels blank in the head. His interpreter who knows him well reported that Mr Shin often gazes blankly ahead, appearing oblivious to his surroundings, deaf to conversation around him.

He says he becomes filled with anger at what has happened to him and has a great hunger for what he has now learned that he has missed out on. He describes very up-and-down mood swings, with tearfulness, despair, anger and relief taking him over in ways which make him feel out of control.

On Examination

Mr Shin is a lean man, weighing 61kg. His cardiovascular and respiratory systems are normal. He has no abdominal masses. His vision and hearing are normal. His teeth are satisfactory and his skin is clear.

He has no evidence of neurological damage or deficit.

I did not test his urine but he reports no problems with his genitourinary system.

He has full movements of his musculoskeletal system.

Both arms show a curious abnormality. When they are fully extended laterally from the shoulder, the lower arms bend downwards from the elbow about 20degrees from the horizontal. Mr Shin says he was unaware of this being different, until one day after he had escaped he and his interpreter met a former prison guard, who recognised him. 'Look at his arms' he pointed out. 'It is not that uncommon in the camps. We think it is caused by the extremes of hard physical labour.' It is symmetrical, painless, and does not interfere with his strength or dexterity. I have not seen this before and an orthopaedic opinion would be interesting, but not essential for his wellbeing. It may be congenital, or related to vitamin and mineral deficiencies in early childhood, coupled with physical hardship.

Mr Shin has a concave area at the back of his head. He has never been aware of it. There are no scars on this area and his hair grows just as well in this part. It is most likely to be congenital. He says he was hit on his head countless times during his life in the camp. In my opinion the types of beatings he describes are not likely to be the cause of this skull variation.

Scars

Mr Shin has a number of scars resulting from his injuries sustained in the camp.

1. He has a 1.5cm diagonal linear scar at the outer aspect of his left eye. He says he was hit with a stone when he was aged 11 years. The appearance is consistent with this history.
2. He has a 3 cm well-defined vertical linear scar with 6 suture marks on his left shoulder. This was an injury sustained during childhood but he cannot recall the incident.

3. Across his lower back he has an extensive diamond shaped area of scarring, measuring 40 cm horizontally by 20 cm vertically. Within this scarred area are patches of much more severe skin damage. The scarring is highly consistent with Mr Shin's history of being suspended over a fire by his arms and legs. It is also consistent with the length of time the burns took to heal, and the development of secondary infection of his burns.
4. Mr Shin has an oval scar 6 cm by 4 cm on his right side which he attributes to a burn sustained in the same incident. The scar is consistent with this history.
5. Within his pubic hairline Mr Shin has two small round raised keloid scars, 0.75 cm in diameter, about 5 cm apart horizontally. These have been attributed to injuries caused by a hook which was inserted into Mr Shin's flesh and held rigidly in place. This was to stop him moving his body to avoid being burned by the fire in the incident cited above. These scars are consistent with this history.
6. His right middle finger is very slightly shorter than the left one. The nail is absent, apart from a small, 0.5cm bit of nail growing from a bed on the palmar surface of his finger tip. There is also scarring at the tip. This is consistent with his history of the tip of his finger being cut off.
7. On his right shin there is an area of severe scarring, 15 cm vertically by 9 cm across. This is related to wounds sustained when Mr Shin broke through the barbed and electrified wire surrounding the camp, during his escape. Mr Shin says that the original wounds were smaller, but they became infected and further damaged by his rough living and lack of medical treatment. They took many months to heal.
8. On his left shin is an area of scarring 9 cm by 6 cm. This was sustained at the same time and in the same way

as above. These two areas of scarring are consistent with Mr Shin's history of escape, and his way of life in his first year of freedom, as described in his statement.

9. Mr Shin has 3 small irregular discreet areas of scarring around his right ankle. At the medial aspect the scar is 2.5cm by 1cm. Laterally he has 2 smaller, slightly keloid 1 cm scars.
10. Mr Shin has similar but smaller scars around his left ankle. He relates both sets of ankle scars to the chains used to suspend him over the fire when he was aged 14 years. The scars are highly consistent with this history.
11. On his right instep he has a diagonal well-defined 2 cm linear scar. He relates this to a wound caused by the barbed wire when he escaped, and this is possible.

Mental State

Mr Shin was alert and responsive throughout our meeting. He answered appropriately and there was no evidence of thought disorder. He was orientated in time and space, He understood the purpose of the consultation. He made eye contact with both the interpreter and myself. He did not volunteer information except when we were looking at his scars, and then he was more forthcoming and was able to give a very clear picture of how he was assaulted and tortured. About other aspects of his health he preferred to be questioned so I endeavoured to make questions as open ended as possible

The emotion he spoke about the most was fear of ever being recaptured. He fears all men in uniform and as he spoke about this he looked around fearfully. There were a few flashes of anger about his deprived life. He showed no grief when he spoke about the killing of his mother and brother, or the death of his fellow prisoner when he escaped.

Mr Shin showed very little curiosity, and in conversation about this he volunteered that wanting to know is a dangerous

mindset in the prison camp. He does not have any ideas about the rest of his life. He did not express thoughts or ideas that would suggest a clinical depression. He had an air of passivity about him.

Summary

Mr Shin is a 26 year old man, who was born in a prison camp in N Korea and who lived under harsh prison conditions until he was aged 24 years. He was emotionally physically and materially deprived from birth. He was physically abused all his prison life and tortured on at least three occasions. He made a successful escape and is now a citizen of S Korea. He has scars which are consistent with his history of torture and escape. He has suffered many of the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, especially panic attacks, nightmares and flashbacks. He has had treatment for this in Seoul, and these are lessening but still dominate his day-to-day existence. He is frequently in the grip of the emotions of fear and anger. He has a flat and a small allowance. He is in touch with a Human Rights Institute caring for defectors from N Korea. This is a research organisation and Mr Shin assists and spends much of his time in the company of a colleague there. He does not like to be alone for long periods because his thoughts trouble him.

Mr Shin did not give a history of sexual abuse, but it is unusual for this to be volunteered. This is something I would have liked to have explored in a second interview. He says that he has had no relationships with women, and when I wondered if he had them with men the subject was changed with a *non-sequitur* which I decided not to challenge, in a one-off interview using an interpreter with whom I had not discussed the issue before.

Mr Shin has no plans for the future. He is concerned primarily about safety.

Gill Hinshelwood MB BS
9 July 2007

22nd Mar '06

Strategy Recommendation for
Achieving Chinese Government Action on Refugees and North Korean Crimes Against Humanity
By Kato Hiroshi/ Life Funds for North Korean Refugees

Early this month, the mother of 5-year-old Kim Yong-soon was arrested and repatriated to North Korea. Six years ago, the mother was sold into a forced marriage to a Chinese man, quickly became pregnant and gave birth to daughter Kim Yong-soon. This daughter, Yong-soon is being supported under LFNKR' s foster parent program.

The mother was arrested by a Chinese police raid squad at 11:30pm on Feb. 25 and handed over to the North Korean security police 3 days later. She had already been repatriated twice before but had managed to escape and return to her family in China.

The LFNKR local staff in China reported to us that it will be impossible for her to return again, since this is her third repatriation.

LFNKR questions why Chinese government policies show no mercy, callously tearing apart families, separating mothers and children with no regard to human feeling.

In cities near the border, including Yanji and Longjin, under the joint intensified crackdown, North Korean authorities provide Chinese security police with information on North Korean defectors. Chinese police are motivated by the high bounties being paid by the government. For each arrest, they are paid 2,000 RMB, a sum that equals the monthly salary of most university graduates in China.

Over the years, human rights NGOs, International organizations and foreign government have made a number of appeals and asked the questions to the Government of China on the issue of North Korean defectors in China.

The Chinese government has ignored these appeals, not bothered even to respond and continued to forcibly return North Korean Refugees to their most atrocious persecution in North Korea. This is unquestionably a clear case of blunt defiance of humanitarianism and of the international community by the Chinese government.

UNHCR has made appeals to the government of China were also ignored. Beijing also ignored the appeals of the South Korean government made on behalf of aid-workers arrested for helping North

Korean refugees.

The lesson to be learned through the past incidents is that China responds only to a strong show of force and the last thing to do with Chinese government is to appeal for humanitarian consideration. China is submissive to the stronger, but shows no mercy to the weaker.

The North Korean defectors are strong when they are in the custody of foreign embassies and weak if they are outside the custody of strong power.

I am now calling upon the South Korean activists and North Korean defectors to set up their efforts to collect evidence, testimonies and information with full details for international community in general and the UN Special Rapporteur, in particular.

On the other hand, it is also noted the prospect of the South Korean government raising the issue would run the risk of perception that harkens back to previous decades and the recent reconcilable propaganda characterized the North - South dialogue, thereby reducing the credibility of the human right issue. Thus, in reality the merit of South Korean government raising the North Korean human rights is highly negative at this stage.

As being said, I wish to suggest today that a strong and clear message be given to the South Korean government that it must not and cannot hinder the international efforts to help the innocent victims of the North Korean crimes against humanity.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge, with profound thanks, all the efforts and success in the past years disclosing the North Korean Crimes against Humanity in North Korea and take a great pride in the international justice that have been demonstrated by the passage of North Koreans Human Rights Acts in the US House of Congress, the series of resolutions adopted by UN among many others and the passage of resolution on the situation of human rights in DPRK at UN General Assembly last Dec.

As a next step, I would like to see that the issue is tabled for UN Security Council for the creation of an International human rights investigation team to be fielded into North Korea. However, I see the chance would be quite slim in the reality of Russia and China on the Council that would most likely block such efforts.

In view of most serious nature of the North Korean crimes, we just cannot sit down and stop here. I wish to suggest that we try the access to the International Criminal Court by presenting proof, evidence and verified information. Obtaining such evidence and proof from inside North Korea is absolutely realistic in recent years in the face of North Korean officials who have been increasingly demoralized and hazarded

in power struggle.

Greater efforts should now be made in the direction of obtaining undeniable and credible information from inside North Korea that will sufficiently warrant taking the issue International Criminal Court.

Before closing my speech today and with your permission, I wish to call on the international community to decisively intervene in the North Korean situation as a matter of international responsibility.

Let us make a living reality that innocent North Koreans prisoners, South Korean and Japanese abductees some day realize that they have not been forgotten by the people of the world. Thank you.

Curriculum Vitae

Personal Background

Name and Surname: Assistant Professor Surat Horachaikul
Date of Birth: 2nd October 1970
Address: Department of International Relations, Faculty of Political Science,
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Telephone (office): 00 66 (0) 2218 7286;
Telephone (mobile): 00 66 (0) 1613 1414;
Facsimile: (Office): 00 66 (0) 2218 7308;
E-mail: surat247@hotmail.com

Education and Qualification

Year of Completion

1995 M.A. in Politics and Contemporary History, London Guildhall University
1993 MSc. in Industrial Relations and Personnel Management (Econs), London School of
Economics and Political Science
1992 B.A. in Humanities (English literature and linguistics), Payap University, Chiang Mai

Employment

2000-present Lecturer, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Political Science,
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok
1996-1999 Manager, Rasa Company Ltd., London
1995-1996 Temporary Lecturer, Huron University, London

Employment Detail

2004-present Deputy Director for International Affairs,
Center for Social Development Studies, Chulalongkorn University
2005-present Member of Faculty of Political Science Committee, Chulalongkorn University
2005-present Director, Center for South Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University
2006-present Deputy Director, M.A. in European Studies, Chulalongkorn University
2003-2005 Deputy Director for Publication Affairs, Center for European Studies, Chulalongkorn
University

Subjects under responsibility

Undergraduate Level

1. Politics and Government of Major Powers
2. Readings in International Relations III (with a special reference to ethnicity)
3. Readings in International Relations IV
4. Politics and Government of Thailand

Post-Graduate Level

1. Globalization and Its Critiques
2. Global Political Economy
3. European Union and Its Integration
4. Research Methodology

Part-time Lecturer (other than Chulalongkorn University)

2000-present Royal Thai Army Institute of Civil Affairs
2001-present Royal Thai Air Force Air Command and Staff College
2001-present Royal Thai Air Force Senior Official School
2002-present Applied Psychology Institute, Supreme Command Headquarters
2004-present Royal Thai Army War College
2004-present Royal Thai Navy Command and Staff College
2004-present Royal Thai Navy War College
2004-present Southeast Asian Politics, (Northwestern Uni. Summer Abroad Program)
2005-present Royal Thai Air Force War College
2005-present Ramkhamhaeng University (M.P.A. Program)

Publication

1. “The Johnson’s Great Society: Lesson for Thailand in Alleviating Poverty” (in Thai), *Journal of Social Science*, Chulalongkorn University, 2003.
2. “The far south of Thailand in the era of the American empire, 9/11 version, and Thaksin’s “cash and gung-ho premiership” (*Asian Review*, 2003, Chulalongkorn University) reprinted as “Thailand” in Wilson John and Swati Parashar (eds), *Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Implications for South Asia* (Singapore: Longman, 2005).
3. “How Successful Was the ‘Great Society’?,” Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2004.
4. “Political Significance of Joseph McCarthy,” Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2005.
5. “Global Political Economy since WWII” (in Thai) Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2006.
6. “The status of American Women in the US in the 1950s,” Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2006.
7. “BIMSTEC-Japan Comprehensive Economic Cooperation in Transport Sector” (Chapter 14) in *Towards BIMSTEC-Japan: Comprehensive Economic Cooperation*, (London: Anthem Press, 2006), 338-373.
8. “Explaining and Understanding the Civil Rights Movement in US in the Context of Cold War,” (in Thai), Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2007.
9. “The Rise and Decline of the Black Power” (in Thai), Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2007.
10. “Is Common Agricultural Policy Efficient?,” Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University, 2007.
11. Editor and contributor for “Editorial Chapter” in *Tamta Lokaphiwat* (translated from *Questioning Globalization* by Kawaljit Singh) (Bangkok: Fah Deo Kan, 2007)
12. “The Joint Study on the Feasibility of the Free Trade Agreement between Thailand and Pakistan,” Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 2007)

Publication (forthcoming 2007 and 2008)

1. “Ratsawatdikarn phasi kaona lae thangluek nai karnpattana kab panha kaomyakchon shueng kongsang (nai prathet Thai) paitai rabob seriniyommai (“Welfare State, Progressive Tax, Alternative Development to Structural Poverty (in Thailand) under Neo-liberalism”), (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Thailand)
2. “Risk Society and National Security” (Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University)
3. International Relations and Risk Society,” (Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University)
4. “Global Political Economy of Food” (Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University)

Rewards

1. Awarded for “Best Alumni Award” from Payap University in 2003
2. Awarded for “‘Napapiwuthi’ Badge” from Senior Air Force Officer School in 2006
3. Awarded for “Expert Honorary Diploma” from Applied Psychology Institute, Thai National Defence Studies Institute in 2007

The Secret Concentration Camps in North Korea Must Be Dismantled Immediately in the Name of Humanity

Kwon Hyok
Former State Security Agency Chief
Concentration Camp No. 22 in North Korea

I was a state security officer in the 5454 Unit of the North Korean People's Army for seven years and a secret agent, then a full colonel, of the Intelligence Section of the North Hamkyong Provincial State Security Agency for seven years. I defected to South Korea in 1999 for freedom and democracy. My name is Kwon Hyok. On behalf of over 11,000 North Korean defectors now settling in South Korea, please allow me to thank the international human rights activists, representatives of human rights NGOs and organizations, and the Japanese citizens and organizations attending this international conference for their deep and sincere concern over the ongoing human rights violations in North Korea today.

In 1998, I was assigned to Concentration Camp No. 22 as a chief of the State Security Agency under the direct command of the Camp Superintendent. For a period of six months, my main duty was to supervise the dismantling of all the production facilities in mines, food factories, furniture factories and orchid farms, and then take inventory of all the materials involved in the process of reducing the size of the camp. (It was later learned that the political prisoners were all relocated elsewhere with the exception of those in the Haeng-yon headquarters area. All mines were transferred to the United National Mine Operation Corporation and the territory to the tobacco farm of the People's Army.) Thus, I am one of the few people outside of North Korea who has first-hand experience with the control of a state-run North Korean concentration camp.

Today, I wish to give you a picture of the terrible reality of Concentration Camp No. 22. North Korea, the world's only legacy left from the Cold War, is obstructing the peaceful development of Northeast Asia. Of the 4 nations involved, Japan is a potential direct target of North Korean attack, as is South Korea. Under these circumstances, we human rights activists have an important job before us, that is to inform the world of the stark plight of the poor victims of the North Korean concentration camps, camps in which they are treated as worthless flies and slowly perish under forced hard labor until their deaths. Today, I wish to tell you about the horrendous reality of the crimes against humanity perpetuated in North Korean concentration camps that I have never told anyone about since August 1999 when I arrived in South Korea.

I am one of the few people who was on duty at Concentration Camp No. 22 in Hweryong, North Hamkyong Province in North Korea. Camp No. 22 was the largest North Korean concentration camp and was located in an area of roughly 28 kilometers, adjacent to concentration camps No. 13 and 12. The area shares boundaries with Hweryong city, Saebyol district and Onsong district. The entire

area is surrounded by steep mountains over 1000 km above sea level. Mountainous conditions, gentle winds in winter and mild temperatures in summer have made the area ideal for farming and, at the same time, a fortress to imprison political prisoners.

This is a living hell no one can leave, dead or alive, a most dreaded hell where the prisoners include men, women, children and babies who are 2nd and 3rd generation, or sometimes even 4th generation offspring of the original offenders. There are over 35,000 miners in 3 mines. The prisoners also include other non-North Korean Asians who made unsuccessful attempts to defect from North Korea. It is my understanding that there are some Japanese prisoners who had been abducted from Japan that are in the camp.

A battalion force of 1,200 are on guard duty, and some 300 state security agency officers conduct the day-to-day operations of the camp, a total of 1,500 guards and security officers. They are fully armed as if they are at combat, with 7.62 mm automatic rifles and 1,200 bullets each. Previously, the guards were each given 20 bullets, but that increased to 1,200 bullets in 1985 on instructions from Kim Il-sung to kill prisoners on the spot for any insubordination in the wake of repeated riots by prisoners in the camps. There is electrified barbed wire of 3,300 volts as well as traps, 4 meters high and 3 meters wide, all around the camp. There is also a sand corridor so that anyone who crosses the fence would leave footprints. At the bottom of the traps are large and strong sharp nails. The prisoners are divided into family battalions, companies and platoons and also bachelors' battalions, companies, etc.

It must be shocking to you that all prisoners in the camps are detained there without judicial review or due process procedures such as arrest, prosecution and trial. They have never had any opportunity to defend themselves. They were taken to an unknown location and tortured to confess before they were brought there. Their families were also taken to this camp without any knowledge of any of the charges against them. They have to carry out hard labor under horrendous conditions. The food supplied is the bare minimum required for survival. They are obliged to eat wild animals, even snakes, as well as plants, the bark of trees and the like at any opportunity. The prisoners are put to work in mines for coal, iron or gold, in forests for logging, and in farms during spring and autumn. They work for more than 12 hours daily, without any holidays except on New Year's Day and the birthdays of the two North Korean leaders.

The camp's annual assignment of agricultural production includes 400 tons of corn, 200,000 tons of potatoes, 50,000 tons of beans, 10,000 tons of peppers in addition to other vegetables such as cabbages, radishes, cucumbers and eggplants. There is a brewery for the production of whisky, soy sauce and the like. The coal from the mines is supplied to a power plant in Chongjin and steel factories in Chongjin and Kimchaek. Please allow me to give you more details about life in the camp.

The camp is literally hell on earth. The prisoners' life in the camp starts with the sound of a siren at 5 o'clock in the morning and the appearance of a mounted woman, a prisoner herself but selected to be merciless to prisoners at roll call (she is called a she-devil by prisoners), and their work continues until 8 o'clock in the evening while they suffer like beasts from all kinds of hard labor followed by mind-numbing classes for the study of revolution every day. Men and their wives are separated into different shifts so that they cannot see each other. For example, if a husband starts work at 7 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock in the evening, his wife starts work 6 o'clock in the evening returning home the following morning after her husband has left already for work. The schedule is an effort to prevent conception. If a woman becomes pregnant, she is isolated, treated harshly and often badly beaten. If a child is born nonetheless, it is quite common that the baby is stillborn, or that the parents kill and bury the dead baby in the dirt kitchen floor. During the process of the hand-over of the mines from the camp authority to the National United Mine Corporation, the workers of the corporation were shocked to find a baby's bones buried by parents underneath the dirt in the kitchen floor at one of the former political prisoner's houses. This is what I have actually witnessed, but I had heard about similar cases previously and so I was not surprised. Thus, it is inconceivable to think of a child being born at Camp No. 22.

Prisoners' work quotas and rations are determined on an individual basis. Prisoners are forced to fulfill the work quota of an additional person from the moment a child is born. Who could possibly do that, complete the amount of work of two people in one day? The prisoners' houses are made of red brick with dirt floors covered by straw mats. To put it simply, it is like a cow barn. The pigpens in South Korea are better than the prisoners' houses in the Camp No. 22. The camp regulations stipulate that the chimney must not be over the height of the prisoners' house. Farmers live in grass huts.

The wells in the camp are supposed to be cleaned once a month or so. I know for a fact that some chemicals are added to the wells to reduce the sexual capability of prisoners. This is why all camp officers and guards carry water bottles with them. This grotesque practice should give you some idea of what life is really like for the victims in the camp.

Camp No. 22 practices a collective escape prevention system by forming teams of 7 each. The camp's rules dictates that if any one of the 7 prisoners in the same team should attempt to flee from the camp or commit any other acts of insubordination, all of the prisoners in the same team, including their families, will be shot to death. In August 1999, a man named Kim, a former South Korean POW and a tractor operator from Sasu-ri, Kyongwon district, North Hamkyong province, who was about 60 to 63 years old at that time (I cannot remember his name but his son's name was Kim Jong-nam) was the team leader of his group of miners. He was publicly executed, together with 18 others including his team members and their families, for possessing a blind shell.

This type of public execution is so common in Camp No. 22 that no one is surprised at such executions. Many prisoners are killed almost daily for one reason or another. There are two brick houses in the area of mine tunnel 1 on the way to Hyangyon village. These buildings are used for the purpose of storing dead prisoners, who are removed about once a month or so. They are loaded on a coal wagon, under and mixed with the coal, and sent to power plants and steel plants to perish like smoke when they are burned in the furnace with the coal. How can any human being commit such a barbaric crime against another human being?

In the camp, there is an execution site, a 4 meters high, 5 meters wide and 15 meters long man-made platform, about 1 kilometer from the center of the camp. Countless numbers of prisoners waiting for your rescue have perished there. The site was always wet with blood and the screaming hardly ever ceased.

There was a large-scale prisoners' riot in May or June of 1987. Over 1,000 prisoners were executed at this site, according to proud remarks by Kim Hochol, a state security agency officer who was about 50 to 53 years old at that time. In the aftermath of the riot, the camp authorities concluded that it was the easy and idle life of the prisoners in the camp that had caused such a disturbance. They ordered all prisoners and their children, including toddlers, to dig a canal, 5 meters high, 13 meters wide and 23 kilometers long, in addition to the routine work. The canal was completed in 3 months, which shows how hard the prisoners were forced to work. You can easily imagine how many prisoners, including small children, perished during the course of work! Stones were collected by small children from the river bed and from the farm. As a result, today you do not see any stones in the camp. Could you sleep if you knew that the victims were your parents, sisters, brothers and children?

Let me tell you about another appalling and ghastly mechanism in the camp at its railway entrance. All cargo trains are checked and searched by guards with dogs before exit. Then, the wagons must pass through a gate where a metal plank, the size of the wagons and fitted with countless sharp spikes, is pressed into the coal so that any prisoners who may be hiding under the coal are killed.

In the camp, prisoners are not treated as human beings but as disposable machinery. They are driven to hard labor for at least 12 hours daily if they are over 6 years old. In any house on the farm, you almost always find a small size A-frame for a small child. You can find a 4 year old helping his parents at a roof tile making factory. The small toddlers are driven up the hills to collect mushrooms in autumn.

In the Hyangyon valley, Yonsan-ni, Saebjol District, North Hamkyong province, about 2 kilometers from the village headquarters of the camp, you will find 3 red-brick buildings in a strictly off-limits area. The buildings look like single story buildings from outside, but the buildings actually have basements that are in fact the site of biological experimentation on humans. This area is so strictly off

limits that no one can enter the area without the authorization of the Central Committee of the Party.

One day, I saw Sohn Jung-son, a former South Korean POW, his wife, his son, who was about 15 years old, and his 10 year old daughter here because of political remarks Sohn had made. Obviously, they did not know that they were going to be killed as they talked and laughed in the beginning. I was there with guards. I was able to watch the whole process of human biological experimentation from the start, over the shoulders of the fully armed guards. The family sat on stools in a glass chamber. They reminded me of specimen in an alcohol bottle. I saw gas flowing into the glass chamber from the ceiling. As the gas touched the skin of the young ones, they said something to their parents as the pain obviously began to intensify. They began to beat their hearts, struggling and banging the glass wall for help. The scene is still so vivid to me today- up to the last moment, the parents embraced their children to protect them from the gas and tried to supply oxygen into the mouths of their children with their own breathe, all while in such excruciating pain themselves. This is what I saw personally with my own two eyes as a witness of history to the human biological experimentation in North Korea. Shamefully, I thought at the time that anti-revolutionary and anti-party elements deserve such a death. Today, I am doomed to remember the scene for the rest of my life with a horribly guilty conscience, pain in my heart and feelings of deep remorse for them.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you cannot find anywhere in the world today any government as criminal as North Korea. Even today and at this moment, the most shocking crimes against humanity are perpetrated in North Korea.

There has been an abundance of first-hand accounts, testimonies and reports about the North Korean crimes against humanity by so many North Korean defectors in South Korea. It is so saddening that South Koreans refuse to trust them and believe their reports to be grossly emotional, biased and overstated. Rather, they want to believe what the North Korean regime says, arguing that as a legitimate government, they could never commit such atrocities. Human rights are the core of democracy. Accepting human rights is a poison for dictatorship.

Defense of human rights in North Korea is much more important than preventing the development of nuclear weapons and missiles. Let us try to inform the world of the most hideous crimes against humanity in North Korea. Please help us until the day when the secret concentrations camps are dismantled and there are no more political prisoners in North Korea. Thank you.

Thailand and refugees to and through Thailand

We all have heard how different nationals have sought to use Thailand for destination and/or a formal route to 'third' countries. For a few decades until now, Thailand has dealt with refugees coming to Thailand in different ways. From the 'Cambodian refugee crisis' in 1979 until now, Thailand has used several measures in dealing with different nationals fleeing to and through Thailand both formally and informally. Today, this issue has become much more complex than ever. On one hand, it is of moral obligation that the country needs to help those fleeing from totalitarian regimes. On the other hand, apart from national security and 'national sentiment' reason much politicized through the Burmese illegal immigrant issue, the country is being forced to rethink the issue in the context of human racketeering. Additionally, the high level authorities are seriously thinking how Thailand is becoming a safe haven for refugees. According to an immigration officer working in Mae Sod area (of Tak Province), "there is no such an end of coming of these refugees." Many also see that being a safe haven would harm the international tie between Thailand and the countries of origin where people are fleeing from. Thailand has diplomatic ties with almost every country including the totalitarian regime like the Burma and North Korea. Some officials and scholars fear that if Thailand provides safe haven for people fleeing these totalitarian regimes, then Thailand will be helping these regimes in getting rid of people the regimes no longer want. This may sound as an excuse, but it is necessarily true in the case of the Hmongs from Laos and the Rohingyas from Arakan (Burma) mostly coming through Bangladesh. Laos and Burma had refused to take these people back. In some cases, raising their own national procedures like checking and rechecking to confirm individual citizenship before receiving them back "became a bitter experience for us [Thailand], and we need to be tough with 'immigrants' so that these countries don't take advantage from us", said a Thai senior official. We must also admit that Thai officials have turned blind eyes and let certain people stay in Thailand, fearing that these certain people when sent back may be killed or tortured.

This generalized perception toward refugees is one of the main problems concerning Thailand's treatments of illegal immigrants. Often, one working in the field can see that there is no proper national official policy toward people illegally entering the country. What is proper and clear for the officers to deal with people fleeing from other countries is that they are to be treated as illegal immigrants not refugees or victims of human trafficking as such. But again this is not to generalize and forget that there are camps of refugees who are waiting to go to 'third' countries and there are cases where victims of human trafficking were treated as victims. In legal consideration, the broad standard of practices for Thai officials is very much the same but the details of practices may vary from time to time and place to place. Importantly, when officials could not argue with NGOs concerning the their treatment of refugees, then the reason of national security overrules everything else. What's more, the lack of 'checks and balances' or practices in accordance with good governance had, as some claim, allowed the authorities to mistreat and abuse the victims. The accusation on certain officials has been increasingly heard especially in the case of Burmese and also of Russian and Uzbekistan women working as prostitutes in Bangkok.

The only recommendation is that UN, NGOs and other countries including the 'third' countries and others at stake should urgently do a consultation with Thailand for a reform so that Thailand will have an internationally accepted standard and at the same time will benefit the welfare of the refugees. Here the consultation must be holistic in nature so that it leads to a clear categorization of cases. A Bangladeshi who illegally entered the country for the sake of economic reason will be categorized differently from a North Korean fleeing

from the totalitarian regime of Kim Jong Il. The categorization will lead to the clear standard of practice. Currently, the detention center is not only terrible but also totally inappropriate for many victims. What one can also expect from the consultation is the standard and quality of officers dealing with refugees. There are certain qualities that are seriously wanting in these officers. Above all, officers working in this field must be the ones who cherish human rights. The training of officers or perhaps a change from immigration department to Ministry of Human Security to handle the issue would be a better start. All of the change will not come easily because this is a highly sensitive issue. Thailand must see that it is benefiting from it without harming its national security. Thailand must not be the only country being held financially responsible either. The overall economic status of the country does not permit it to do so either. If Thailand is increasingly pushed to be financially responsible, then there is a high proclivity that the issue will provoke anger among Thai public who could claim that their government neglect to look after them and instead protect the other nationals. The consultation can lead to good governance practices and reduce the malpractices and abuses.

For the time being, South Korea must take the initiative if it sees North Korean refugees as Koreans or South Koreans. The formal agreement may not be easy for two principle reasons. First, the agreement would jeopardize the (un)desirable relations between Thailand and North Korea. Having a formal agreement on the issue could mean, in the eyes of North Korea, Thailand is colluding with South Korea. Second, the formal agreement is infeasible as it would contradict the national law and it is perhaps undesirable as it will go against the standardization that we all long for. The agreement in the short run could be in the format MOU between Thailand and South Korea in the context of protecting human rights of the refugees in accordance with international standard with respect to applying for citizenship or asylum seekers in 'third' countries.