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NORTH KOREA Human rights coalition delivers letter to Kim Jong-Il in Global Day of Action to Stop Crimes Against Humanity

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) will join Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) and other members of the International Coalition to Stop Crimes against Humanity (ICNK) in a Global Day of Action tomorrow, to deliver a letter to North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-il. The letter, signed by over forty members of the ICNK from around the world, will be delivered tomorrow at North Korea's embassies and diplomatic missions in cities including London, Paris, Geneva, New York, Bangkok and Hong Kong, and at the de facto North Korean embassy, the Chosen Soren, in Tokyo. A protest will also be held in Seoul.

The ICNK's letter calls on North Korea's regime to end the widespread violation of human rights. "We appeal to you to end all executions, stop the deliberate and systematic use of torture, close the kwan-li-so, and immediately end the practice of forced labor in penal institutions," the ICNK states.

The ICNK urges North Korea to grant access to the country for the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in North Korea and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and in particular to open up its prison camps for international inspection.

The ICNK also calls on North Korea to adhere to the principles of international human rights instruments to which it is a party, particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It urges North Korea to join the International Labor Organization (ILO), and to provide international humanitarian organizations unrestricted access to assess reported chronic food shortages, monitor food distribution and address the country's growing humanitarian crisis.

CSW's East Asia Team Leader, Benedict Rogers, who helped establish the ICNK, says: "This global day of action, in which the letter will be delivered in several cities in different continents around the world, in English, French, Spanish, Korean and Chinese languages, is a significant statement of our deep and profound concern about the suffering of the people of North Korea. The time to end the crimes against humanity in North Korea is long overdue. The time to end the culture of impunity in North Korea is now. More than forty human rights organizations from across Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America, joined by survivors of North Korea's prison camps, are speaking with one voice and calling on Kim Jong-il to stop the torture, stop the executions, open up the prison camps to international inspection, and end the barbaric and inhumane system of terror he has inflicted on his people for too long."

Notes to Editors:

1. CSW's Advocacy Director, Andrew Johnston, will deliver the letter to the North Korean Embassy in London at 15:00 tomorrow, at 73 Gunnersbury Avenue. A protest will be held from 15:00 to 16:00 outside the Embassy.
2. The signatories to the letter, and members of the ICNK, include:
 - Advocates International Global Council

- Amnesty International
- Asia Justice and Rights
- Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances
- Asian Human Rights & Humanity Association of Japan
- Burma Partnership (Thailand)
- Christian Lawyers Association for Paraguay
- Christian Solidarity Worldwide
- Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (USA)
- Conectas (Brazil)
- Council for Human Rights in North Korea (Canada)
- Freedom House (USA)
- Free NK Gulag (ROK)
- Free North Korea Radio (ROK)
- Han Voice (Canada)
- HH Katakomb (ROK)
- Human Rights in Asia (Japan)
- Human Rights Watch
- Human Rights Without Frontiers (Belgium)
- Inter-American Federation of Christian Lawyers
- International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
- COMJAN (Investigation Commission on Missing Japanese Probably Related to North Korea)(Japan)
- Japanese Lawyers Association for Abduction and Other Human Rights Issues in North Korea
- Jubilee Campaign (USA)
- Justice for North Korea (ROK)
- Kontras (Indonesia)
- Liberty in North Korea - LiNK (USA)
- Life Funds for North Korean Refugees (Japan)
- Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights (ROK)
- NK Intellectual Solidarity (ROK)
- No Fence (Japan)
- North Korea Freedom Coalition
- Odhikar (Bangladesh)
- Open North Korea (ROK)
- People In Need (Czech Republic)
- PSALT NK (Prayer Service Action Love Truth for North Korea)
- The Simon Wiesenthal Center (USA)
- The Society to Help Returnees to North Korea (Japan)
- Students Alliance for Human Rights in North Korea (ROK)
- Young Defectors' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (ROK)
- Tomoharu Ebihara