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NORTH KOREA | Defectors Forcibly Repatriated

Ten North Korean defectors, who were arrested Nov. 4 after police raided the house where they were sheltering in Shenyang, northeast China, have been forcibly repatriated to North Korea.

The group, whose ages range from a four year-old child to adults in their 40s, was reportedly repatriated a few days ago, according to the father of the four year-old child. He had appealed to the Chinese authorities not to return his wife and child to North Korea.

Benedict Rogers, East Asia Team Leader at Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), said, "This is an absolutely inhumane decision by China and a gross violation of the international principle of non-refoulement. We call on the international community to take steps to convey its outrage to China over this extreme cruelty, and to ensure that North Korea refrains from any repercussions against these ten individuals. We urge China to urgently review how it came to this decision and to stop further violations of international norms. China's decision in this and previous cases make it an accomplice to North Korea's crimes against humanity."

In 2014, The UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in North Korea found that "the gravity, scale and nature" of human rights violations in North Korea "reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world."

The Chinese government has a policy of forcibly repatriating North Korean defectors within its borders, despite the fact that this puts the returnees at risk of death or imprisonment in the country's network of brutal prison camps.