



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
GENEVA

The 19th Session of the Human Rights Council
*Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the
Human Rights Situation in the DPRK*

<Check against delivery>

Geneva, 12 March, 2012

Statement of the Republic of Korea

First of all, the Republic of Korea would like to express its appreciation for the report by the Special Rapporteur that addresses persistent concerns on the human rights situation in the DPRK. We note with serious concern that the report summarizes continued deterioration of the human rights and humanitarian situation in the DPRK.

Among others, the risk of forced repatriation of the asylum seekers and refugees from the DPRK deserves our special attention. We support the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur that the neighboring countries shall protect and treat all people fleeing the DPRK humanely and respect the principle of non-refoulement. In this regard, we would like to listen to the view of the Special Rapporteur as to how we can address this issue effectively to yield desirable results.

It is indeed a matter of urgency to resume the reunion of family members separated by the Korean War. The Republic of Korea agrees with the Special Rapporteur that tracing all separated families and notifying their counterparts is the first step to be taken, and thus calls on the DPRK to respond positively to the recent request by the Red Cross Society of ROK in this regard. Those abducted by the DPRK and prisoners of the Korean War are growing old, making their repatriation another urgent issue. The case of Mr. Oh Kil-nam and his family, described by the Special Rapporteur in his report, also demonstrates the grievance of separation. The DPRK is strongly urged to promptly take measures to resolve these issues.

As the dire situation of food shortage in the DPRK persists, the Republic of Korea would like to repeat its call for rectification of flaws in the production and distribution system and adequate allocation of resources to the agricultural sector. As the Special Rapporteur emphasizes, the primary responsibility to feed its people lies with the DPRK while the international community is responsible for providing humanitarian assistance. A visit by the Special Rapporteur on Right to Food to DPRK would help the DPRK to address this issue, as suggested by Mr. Darusman.

The Republic of Korea also welcomes the issue of the due process of law raised by the Special Rapporteur and urges the DPRK to implement his recommendations in this regard.

The Republic of Korea expects the mandate of the Special Rapporteur to be renewed and will continue to support his efforts to discharge his responsibility. /End//