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January 4, 2021

**Submission by the Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights to assist the
formulation of the List of Issues on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)
by the UN Human Rights Committee
(131st Session 2021)**

The Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (Citizens' Alliance) would like to draw the Human Rights Committee's attention to two issues related to enforced disappearance and arbitrary detention of South Korean civilians abducted by the DPRK (North Korea) and Korean population forcibly displaced from Japan to North Korea. While enforced disappearance of Korean civilian population during Korean War and in the post-War period was well documented by the UN Commission of Inquiry on the DPRK and the consecutive UN Special Rapporteurs on the Situation of Human Rights in the DPRK; the issue of Koreans displaced from Japan, many of whom have also been arbitrarily detained in mental institutions and vast prison camps system of the DPRK has not been previously well investigated. This submission draws on the recent two-year investigation by the Citizens' Alliance that revealed new evidence about the situation of this population in North Korea.

The Citizens' Alliance would also like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the State's sponsored discrimination system songbun and the vast system of detentions of North Korea are inter-linked and are primarily reinforcing enslavement practices and forced labor in the mining industry that enriches the North Korean system and sponsors further crimes against humanity. The primary victims' of such discrimination and enslavement practices are three generations of civilian South Korean population abducted during and after the Korean War, unreturned Prisoners of War and Korean citizens and their Japanese spouses displaced from Japan.

In the second part of this submission, the Citizens' Alliance discusses the issue of discrimination against women and the related State's policies of extortion of resources from women and children that sponsor militarization and criminal activities of the State and its Leadership while depriving citizens from hard-earned resources that would otherwise support their survival.

In the Appendix section, the Committee will find a list of the legislation referred to the DPRK in its State Party Report that is available in English, translated by the Legal Consultant of the Citizens Alliance.

Section I: Enforced Disappearance Committed by the North Korean government

Since 1950, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has engaged in the systematic abduction, denial of repatriation and subsequent enforced disappearance of persons from other countries on a large scale. 100,000 South Korean civilians were abducted by the North Korean government during the Korean War alone. Since the signing of the Korean War ceasefire agreement on July 27, 1953, at least 3,835 persons were abducted and taken to the North. Of the post-war abductees, 3,310 persons were returned to the South within one year of abduction, and nine abductees escaped and returned to the South as of 2014. The South Korean government acknowledges that at least 516 abductees remain in North Korea.

Regarding the enforced disappearance committed by the North Korean government, the Citizens Alliance for North Korean Human Rights has submitted a total of 105 cases to the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID). Among the 95 submitted cases about the post-war abductees, 21 cases have not yet been considered by WGEID. NKHR also has reported new findings about the abductees' whereabouts such as Mr. Hong Geon-pyo (WGEID Case # 10006848), a South Korean high school student who was abducted to North Korea in 1978. It was revealed that Mr. Hong was last seen in the spring of 1988 working as an instructor at a spy training school located in Pyongyang through an interview in 2019 with Mr. In-soo Kwak, a former secret agent of the Korean Workers' Party's Liaison Office. However, the North Korean government refuses to provide information about the fate or whereabouts of the victims. Moreover, the Government categorically denies its involvement in the crime of enforced disappearance although the petitions are based on thorough investigation and testimonies of victims' family members.

The direct attention of the Committee is especially required to the specific group of North Korean abduction victims, 93,340 Zainichi Koreans (ethnic Koreans in Japan) who were forcefully displaced from Japan to the DPRK from 1959 to 1984 under the "Paradise on Earth" operation. The displacement operation was commonly known as a purely humanitarian repatriation to allow the Korean diaspora to return to their home country after war, according to their own free will. However, in reality, the operation amounted to forced displacement, enslavement, and/or human trafficking planned by the North Korean government and executed by its state organ in Japan, Chongryon (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan). After the displacement, many among the forcefully displaced resettlers ultimately became the victims of enforced disappearance, and are still currently unaccounted for in North Korea and searched for by their families in Japan.

The 2014 report of the COI on Human Rights in the DPRK recognized that "the vast majority of abductions and enforced disappearances are linked to the Korean War and the organized movement of ethnic Koreans from Japan that started in 1959." Nevertheless, the enforced disappearance of Zainichi Korean resettlers were conveniently neglected and absent in further investigation by the UN bodies or report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the DPRK. Many victims are resigned to the fact that they are

unable to seek justice through the international human rights system and have turned to the domestic courts of Japan to file suits against the DPRK.

To shine light on the issue, NKHR has submitted 10 individual cases of the disappeared Zainichi Korean resettlers to the UN WGEID by 2020 and published a report *What Happened to Ethnic Koreans Displaced from Japan to North Korea? - Deception of "Paradise on Earth" and Enforced Disappearance*¹ to examine the systemic engagement of the North Korean government in organizing the 'Paradise on Earth' operation and subsequent human right violations and enforced disappearance against the resettlers. The report is an accumulation of the thorough investigation including two trips to Japan, interviews with family members of disappeared resettlers, escaped resettlers and other relevant witnesses (Chongryon officers or former guards and detainees of political prison camps), and two years of work invested to collect and analyze relevant documents. In the report, NKHR analyzed a total of 102 identifiable enforced disappearance cases collected from interviews, and some of the major findings requiring the Committee's direct attention are as follows.

1. Mass Forced Displacement Operation with the Purpose of Enslavement

According to Japanese Red Cross Society statistics, a total of 93,340 were transported from Japan to North Korea until the whole operation officially ended in 1984. Most of them were Zainichi Koreans, and many of them were originally from the south of the 38th parallel at the time of the division of the Korean peninsula. Amongst a total of 93,340 resettlers, 6,730 were Japanese nationals who were the spouses or children of Zainichi Koreans; 1,831 were Japanese women married to Korean men. The 93,340 resettlers left Japan full of the hope of contributing to the development of their father country and starting a new life in the promising land. The 93,340 resettlers left Japan full of the hope of contributing to the development of their father country and starting a new life in the promising land. However, in reality, they were mostly just victims subject to duress, oppression, abuse of power, and their "consent" was not genuine nor informed. They were coerced by sustained disinformation, deception, emotional blackmail and social pressure, and did not genuinely consent.

The purpose of conducting mass displacement of Zainichi Korean was to serve the North Korean state for political, diplomatic and economic benefits as the North Korean leader Kim Il-sung revealed in his talk with V. Pelisenko, then Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Pyongyang in 1958. Within the Cold War context, the mass displacement operation presented an opportunity for North Korea to boast about the regime's supposed superiority to South Korea and highlight the humanitarian side of the regime internationally, thereby gaining legitimacy as a nascent state. Furthermore, North Korea could find the capital, funding, technical expertise, and large labor force which it required for the postwar reconstruction. The forcibly displaced resettlers were viewed as free labour and valuable assets which could contribute to the economic and political influence of the state. This intent of the North Korean government is

¹ http://eng.nkhumanrights.or.kr/data/n_r_reports/20201109171126.pdf

starkly portrayed where it ordered Chongryon to target engineers, intellectuals, and businessmen with the technical expertise, capital, and funds to replenish those classes lost to the war.

To realize the displacement operation, the North Korean government actively communicated with its Communist allies and pursued assistance for the displacement operation. The Soviet Union provided extensive diplomatic and material support including displacement operation ships, naval escorts for the operation, and even the travel expenses for North Korean Red Cross delegations' visit to Geneva.

Various intelligence units within the Workers' Party of North Korea, such as Liaison Office, Culture Department and United Front Department, played leading roles in planning and executing the forced displacement operation. The Liaison Department guided Chongryon to mobilize ethnic Koreans in Japan to deceive the public and make the operation seem like genuine grassroots movement. Receiving orders from the North Korean government, Chongryon extended the mass displacement operation in Japan by promoting the movement, recruiting applicants and even managing the embarkation process. On the surface, Chongryon is an ethnic minority interests organization but actually it was a vanguard of the North Korean government. When it was established in 1955, ethnic Koreans were suffering from insecure legal status, discrimination, and lack of educational and financial opportunities in Japan. And these circumstances naturally created a situation where many of them became loyal to Chongryon as their only stable source of income, education and a sense of communal belonging. Also, Chongryon had a very well-developed regional network to convey top orders from North Korea to the whole region in Japan. Using its network, Chongryon also conducted recruitment activities targeting both the entire Zainichi Korean population and the selected elites. Chongryon's village units had low-level propaganda agents who were canvassing door-to-door and promoted North Korean propaganda. They also organized village level presentations using projector and handed out copies of North Korean magazines featuring colorful photographs of North Korea to sell a dream of 'earthly paradise.' Chongryon utilized its local branches and began to approach targets directly and lured promising intellectuals to move to the DPRK with false job offers and false promises of studying abroad. To that end, Chongryon organized groups of prospective 'returning' technicians and displaced them to the DPRK. Chongryon utilized its Chosun schools and targeted teenagers for propaganda. The schools' curriculum promoted the displacement operation, and the Student Repatriation Groups were organized to recruit applicants more systematically. Once, over 200 students were sent to North Korea as birthday gifts for Kim Il-sung.

Taking orders from North Korea, Chongryon carried out the coercion campaign and boarding processes. Chongryon even staged a boycott to push for more favorable terms in the "Repatriation Guide," which stipulated the rules and procedures regarding the "repatriation." As the result, the Guide was amended to compromise resettlers' ability to freely express their opinions. In the revised version, applicants would be interviewed in a family unit while originally, each individual applicant was supposed to enter a special private room for the final

confirmation process. Also, there were many cases where Chongryon officials filled out the application since many ethnic Koreans were illiterate.

Chongryon also supervised the Japanese Red Cross's Niigata Center where the applicants stayed for three nights before boarding the ship to the DPRK. Here, Chongryon reportedly boarded some applicants by coercion or physical force if they changed their decision to move to the DPRK at the last minute. These behaviours together show evidence of the North Korean government's engagement in the slave trade through abrogation of fundamental rights and coercion of consent.

To sum, victims' choices were compromised by sustained disinformation, deception, emotional blackmail and social pressure, manufactured consent, and lack of due diligence in the context of entrenched discrimination within Japan. This operation amounted to forced displacement, enslavement, and/or human trafficking as we understand it today.

2. Systemic Human Right Violation against the Resettlers from Japan

After the forced mass displacement, pursuing the large labor force, technical expertise and assets that the Zainichi Koreans brought, the North Korean government exercised ownership over the displaced resettlers. The resettlers were not allowed to choose where to work and where to live but had to follow the government's order. The government assigned rural areas and occupations requiring hard labor to most resettlers. Working for mining, agriculture or construction, they were exploited through multiple generations for little to no compensation. Such discrimination was rooted from the resettlers' inherent capitalist experience in Japan and South Korean origins. Most of them were destined to be classified as a hostile class and exploited under the North Korean *Songbun* system. They also faced severe restrictions in getting quality education and joining the army or the Worker's Party of Korea, which are essential steps to build a career for success in the DPRK.

3. Enforced Disappearance of Resettlers from Japan

Anyone who tried to raise complaints about poor living conditions and systemic discrimination, became victims of enforced disappearance. Knowing that resettlers could disturb the North Korean social order and the Kim family's dictatorship, the North Korean government prepared an overlapping, multi-level intelligence surveillance structure and conveniently eliminated possibly problematic individuals.

Being ignorant of the surveillance and punishment system and what constitutes punishable acts, resettlers committed many so-called political crimes. From the usual activities in Japan such as discussing the social issues or consuming foreign media to the attempts to escape the DPRK were also punished as political crimes. Moreover, their mail to family in Japan was monitored by the government. Unable to raise complaints, escape and communicate their situations, resettlers were totally deprived of their freedom and trapped in the DPRK.

The prevalent discrimination and persecution policies and enforced disappearances of resettlers became more systematic as the *Songbun* (background) and detention systems developed in the process of strengthening the Kim family's dictatorship. After 1967, several

‘privileged returnees’ associated with Chongryon officials and intellectuals were often framed and persecuted as suspected spies and began to disappear. The fact that Ko Young Hee, the mother of the current Leader Kim Jong Un, was a half-Japanese returnee created problems for North Korean anti-Japanese propaganda. With time, even this knowledge resulted in persecution. Also, resettlers’s hostile background became more official and more intense monitoring was applied. Making it even worse, “bad” Songbun became a legitimate reason for harsher punishment when resettlers were accused of committing political crimes.

As the Ministry of Social Security (MSS) was established in 1973 and became a primary investigative authority over anti state crimes, the structure of political prison camps (*Kwalliso*) was developed and systematized. In the early 1960s when such a system was not fully developed yet, the enforced disappearance against resettlers happened in ad hoc circumstances and a facility called psychiatric hospital “Ward 49” was used as prisoner’s camps. It was reported that a teenage boy who was taken by soldiers in 1963 after refusing to get off the displacement ship to return back to Japan was last seen at Ward 49. Systematic disappearances were more frequently reported in the 1970s, including disappearances of whole families of resettlers depending on the seriousness of alleged crimes. It was reported that the Revolutionizing Zone of Yodok political prison camp (Kwalliso No. 15) was expanding in 1977. According to the witness, out of the total of 30,000 prisoners, around 4,000 were resettlers, and a third of them were jailed due to the ‘guilt-by-association.’ Other witnesses also reported sightings of resettlers in other political prison camps such as Camp 13, 18 and 22 and Sungho political prison camp near Pyongyang.

Disappearances of whole ‘returning’ families seem to continue, and Yodok political prison camp is still used to detain them. It was reported that nearly 15 wealthy Zainichi Korean families in Wonsan, disappeared in the late 1990s, and the purpose of the arrests could be confiscation of assets according to a witness. Some of them were last seen at the political prison camp No. 15 located in Yodeok in 2010.

The findings of NKHR’s research indicate an operation sustained over 25 years, amounting to crimes against humanity as it’s a widespread and systematic attack on the civilian population of Zainichi Koreans, constituted by multiple commission of acts of enslavement, deportation, persecution, imprisonment, and enforced disappearance. There is therefore a need for further investigation into the mass displacement operation and the following disappearances of the resettlers to restore justice and end the chain of enslavement.

4. The Connection between Systematic Discrimination, Enslavement practices and Forced labor that Sponsors Criminal Activities of the State and Further Crimes against Humanity

It is in the government’s interests to detain a certain number of people at any given time, no matter the arbitrariness of that detention, so that they can provide forced labour or slave labour in mineral mining and other undesirable occupations that generate revenue. It is a prison industrial complex that serves the dual role of silencing potential political threats and bolstering free labour.

It has been long established that North Koreans who are alleged to have committed political or economic crimes are detained, mostly arbitrarily, in detention facilities that have a labour component. These include the physically most demanding occupations such as non-mechanized coal mining, non-mechanized farming over huge tracts of land, and so on.

This is a primary reason why such a large number of people classified as the lowest categories of the *Songbun* caste system has been relocated to secluded mining areas or various detentions and political prison camps. Among them are unreturned South Korean Prisoners of War, civilians abducted by North Korea during Korean War and after, and persons forcibly displaced from Japan. This discrimination affects three generations of their families bonded to slave and forced labor without any possibility to change the residence, choose occupation, further education or decide about their lives. This is also no coincidence that most women repatriated from China are detained in kyohwaso prisons with a large production for export of textiles, cosmetics and other products; including lumbering and mining.

The labor component is not a typical work opportunity available to prisoners; it is a long-hours forced labor with minimum conditions of subsistence, lack of healthcare, hygiene, and proper protection against hazardous environments. Through an interlinked system of the highest bodies of the State and its Leadership and the companies owned by the Ministry of State Security and Ministry of People's Safety the output is exported to earn the foreign currency revenues for the State and for the operation of these law enforcement agencies. The Ministry of State Security operates the de facto hunting mechanism for prisoners, constantly analyzing the *songbun* data of its citizens and adding to their crimes in order to make the arbitrary detention justifiable under the North Korean Law. The North Korean Criminal Code identifies charges and possible sentences of crimes against the state and the nation. In cases of anti-state "crimes," both guilt and sentence are often pre-determined by arbitrary decisions of the secret police, and detainees are kept in secret detention facilities operated by the secret police. North Korea operates various interrogation and detention facilities run by the Ministry of Public Safety (MPS, or police) or the Ministry of State Security (MSS, or secret police). Ordinary social crimes such as theft, rape, murder and fraud are under the jurisdiction of the MPS. However, the secret police (MSS) has a primary investigative authority over so-called "crimes against the national interest." The Ministry of State Security has de facto authority to arbitrarily decide the type and length of punishments without due process of law. Since its interrogation-detention facilities are kept secret, the power of the MSS is unmonitored and unchecked.

It is not only those in detention facilities who are subject to slavery and forced labour. Those with hostile *songbun* are allocated jobs involving heavy and dangerous labour, occasionally the same kind of work to which detainees are put. Former soldiers who fought on the South Korean side of the Korean War and were captured as prisoners of war were largely put to work in coal mining complexes in the north of North Korea. Their descendants, who were also assigned a hostile *songbun*, continue in those occupations today. So, too, do ethnic Koreans from Japan who were trafficked to North Korea, who were considered a political threat

and allocated to menial and manual labour without access to political influence. As well as being a tool to control so-called undesirable segments of society, this allocation of work assures free and low-cost labour to extract resources and create goods for the government.

Questions to the DPRK Government (in relation to Section I)

- Please clarify the fates and whereabouts of the resettlers who lost contact with their family members in Japan and South Korea and report which department was in charge of the resettlement arrangement and communication between them and their relatives in Japan. How did the relevant department assist the resettlers' adjustment in the North Korean society? Please specify the law, policy or programs.
- Please provide a line of communication between the separated families, and kindly clarify if there is any program currently planned to reconnect the resettlers and their family members in Japan
- Please provide demographic information (age groups, gender ratio, and etc.) on ethnic Koreans from Japan who moved to the DPRK throughout the entirety of the Paradise on Earth operation as well as on the rationale behind assignment of residence and occupation for these people, and comment on allegations of discrimination against ethnic Koreans from Japan specifically in terms of education and social mobility.
- Please provide available statistics on ethnic Korean representation in office, in the military and within the Workers' Party of Korea, also provide available data on crime rates and charging rates for ethnic Koreans from Japan.
- Please disclose the list of disappeared resettlers who were taken by the MSS and detained in the political prison camps and identify their charges.
- Please provide its plans with specific timelines to allow an independent assessment to determine whether the displaced resettlers and their descendants still willingly choose to remain in the DPRK and allow their free movement within the DPRK and across countries.
- Please explain what happens if a resettler expresses his/her wish to return to Japan or to go to their original hometowns in South Korea. How many of the resettlers were allowed to do so? What were the procedures for repatriation?
- Please provide if there are any cases that Japanese spouses of the resettlers or their offspring were allowed to return or visit Japan after their displacement to the DPRK. How many cases were there? Please specify the year and number of cases, if possible their names and ages. What were the procedures?
- Provide information about disappeared resettlers when their relatives look for more information
- Please provide full cooperation to a relevant investigation authority, such as the UN Field Office in Seoul and the Special Rapporteur, to uncover the human rights violations related to the displacement operation

- Please cooperate with the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and provide a sincere and substantive response to the inquiries from the family members of the disappeared resettlers

Section II. Discrimination and exploitation of women by the State

1. Discrimination against women, lack of freedom of expression and assembly, and participation in public life

The collapse of the state-run Public Distribution System during the Great Famine of the 1990s brought with it a wave of survivalist entrepreneurship in the form of private markets. It was women, who were mostly excluded from government positions and directed by the North Korean government to find resources to feed their families as the State's public distribution system collapsed. Men were tied to their government-assigned jobs and their attendance marked off every day, despite the government's inability to provide rations in exchange for that labour. Some individual women were liberated from the control of their husbands because of their private market activities, but the gender role imposed on women only expanded from mother and homemaker to include breadwinner. This results in secondary discrimination against women as they are expected to quit their state jobs at a certain age or after marriage, to turn to private trade and financially support their families. Similarly, a growing number of interviewees confirm that families do not invest in their daughters' education, as it is considered that private market operations do not require skills or education. These families require female children to start market operations early on in order to provide for the family's subsistence without pursuing further education or other types of employment.

Such a situation naturally limits the number of women continuing to work at state enterprises, in government or at Korea Workers' Party posts. Even in workplaces where women constitute the majority, such as primary and secondary schools or some medical specializations such as nursing, gynecology and pediatrics, interviewees continue to report that women are mostly subordinate to men and that women cannot expect to climb the employment ladder. In an interview with a male former high-ranking official, he reported that women in the Party are usually delegated to secretary and note-taking positions. He also claimed that while women are successful in private trade, they lack the skills and ability to be able to succeed in the Party, revealing deeply ingrained patriarchal attitudes toward women in North Korea.

Furthermore, there is no voluntary independent organization in the DPRK to which women could turn to address women's problems. This further limits the participation of women in decision-making and policy-making processes in the country, as women cannot advocate, or unite as a group to resolve their problems, nor do they expect to be able to do so. The state-operated Korea Democratic Women's Union (KDWU, or Women's Union) mentioned by DPRK in their official reports to the UN, is the largest women's association, but by no means does it improve women's lives, advocate for their rights, or address complaints. Nor is the Women's Union a labor union, commonly understood as a collective, conducting bargaining

activities to negotiate favorable working conditions. During the CEDAW Review, the DPRK delegation failed to provide a response to repeated questions from experts about the activities of independent women's organizations other than few comments about the Women's Union. This indicates that autonomous groups for women's interests are obsolete or very ineffective within the country, and this fact has also been substantiated by North Korean interviewees.

According to the DPRK's official reports, the Women's Union was tasked with responsibility of gathering feedback, education on domestic laws and human rights treaties, monitoring of women's rights and administering a complaint mechanism. However, the reports from female defectors who attended Women's Union activities contradict the North Korean government's claims about the Union's role as a human rights monitoring mechanism as well as a complaint mechanism. Interviewed defector women in fact did not understand the term "complaint" as the possibility of raising or resolving pressing issues that women face in their social and economic lives. Instead, they understood complaints as criticism routinely performed during Life Review Sessions of the Women's Union where women were singled out and harshly criticized for underperforming in assigned quotas. Defector women also reported that they could not raise such issues as improvement of health services, school infrastructure or child-care services, as such statements would be viewed as political criticism against the government and result in reprisals. All interviewees consistently report since 2010 that Women's Union has never educated them on their rights, or on the Women's Law in contradiction of the government's claim.²

2. Corrupt System of the State and Link to Exploitation of Women and Deprivation of Citizens

Over the last 50 years, the North Korean government has perfected its economic system based on extortion of quotas of goods from its citizens that are then exported to earn foreign currency. In addition to normal industrial or agricultural output, each citizen is required to provide unpaid compulsory labor and quotas of goods from private income. This system is a heavy burden on the informal grassroots economy driven primarily by women as was described in the previous section. As the breadwinner in many families, one woman is required to submit goods and perform forced labor several times by different government entities. A woman who trades on the black market to provide daily subsistence to her family as the state rationing system completely collapsed in the 1990s pays daily taxes at the market. She must donate quotas of goods through the Women's Union, again through the Neighborhood Watch Unit, which is the smallest surveillance unit of the government administered across approximately

² Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, "They only claim that things have changed...NKHR Briefing Report No.8", Seoul, 2018 http://eng.nkhumanrights.or.kr/data/n_r_reports/20181101101122.pdf

Citizen's Alliance for North Korean Human Rights, "Status of Women's Rights in the Context of Socio-Economic Changes" with the Analysis and Text of the DPRK Women's Law, Seoul, 2013 http://eng.nkhumanrights.or.kr/data/n_r_reports/20180129110114.pdf

30-40 families. If she has children at school, she must submit money and goods through her children at schools.

Women's Unions coerce goods and mobilize free forced labor throughout the country. Each unit has been reported to be assigned tons of beans, berries, mushrooms, silk for export and bricks, gloves for military and government constructions (such as apartments in Pyongyang for the elites). Children who attend schools provide wires, copper, iron utensils as metal for building army tanks and rabbit skins for production of soldiers' uniforms and gloves. As was explained in Section I, the quotas of products for export are also met through the enslaved labor of men, women and children in detention camps operated by MSS and MPS.

Everything that is valuable is exported causing constant shortages in the country. In addition, the revenue that is contributed by citizens, especially women is not re-invested in outdated education and medical facilities outside Pyongyang to the detriment of the citizens. The question also remains how this corrupted economic system that heavily invests in military developments and that is based on extortion of quota of goods and dependent on slave and forced labor contributed to mass starvation and deprivation of the citizens, including continued food and healthcare insecurities having impact on the citizens' right to life.

There is no transparency or scrutiny over the state's revenue and expenditure. The leadership monopolizes all political and economic institutions and receives large profits from their trading companies while the citizens remain underserved by state infrastructure and constantly being chased for submission of quotas of goods and forced labor. As such, the North Korean system of exploitation is a modernized form of feudalistic slavery.

3. Health issues including the reproductive and sexual rights

The Citizens' Alliance has conducted research on women's rights for more than a decade, but the reported situation related to medical care has hardly seen any improvements. Average North Koreans resort to medical care only in serious instances. In other cases, they rely on opiates, herbal products and self-administered medication bought on the black markets. The treatment of complicated medical problems, including terminal diseases is often postponed until escape from the country and receiving secret medical assistance in China or until arrival in South Korea.

The interviewed North Korean women in both 2013 and 2017 reported that they received little institutional support from the state on all health issues from breast cancer to contraception or childbirth. Even though North Korea has adopted Guidelines on Early Detection and Management of Cervical Cancer and Breast Cancer 2009, women are not experiencing the benefit of these guidelines in practice. 95% of interviewed women did not receive preventive screening for gynecological issues; the only two cases known to us who reported receiving them were both medical personnel in Pyongyang hospitals. No interviewee had received screening for breast cancer. This is despite the fact that over 90% of interviewees reported having a medical facility nearby. Over 80% of women reported receiving no counselling on birth control methods and sexually transmitted diseases from medical personnel and over 70% did not receive any education on HIV-AIDS in recent years. In fact, North Korea

reported no cases of HIV-AIDS in 2017 during CEDAW Review, but this was contradicted by the doctor from Pyongyang who reported that incidents of HIV-AIDS are on the rise, but they are reported as other diseases because of the fear of reprisals.

Lack of access to modern contraception and poor reproductive health education creates a situation where women undergo repeated abortions to prevent births. Abortion is used as a method of birth control in North Korea: 78% of women surveyed in 2017 considered abortion to be a normal form of contraception, similarly to the findings of our 2013 report. For the question: “Which methods of birth control have you used in North Korea?” 40% replied “abortion” and half of these women reported to have had an abortion more than once. Over 70% of women surveyed in 2017 considered contraception to be a duty of a woman only, as admitted by the North Korean government in 2005. Our 2013 research also recorded similarly high responses, indicating unchanging perceptions around reproductive health. Half of the interviewed women continue to report that the abortion is illegal, punishable if discovered and performed secretly at a fee at homes, or doctor’s houses in highly risky, non-medical settings and without anaesthesia.

Despite the recommendations accepted by the government on maternal health, many women continue to report to only visit a doctor if the pregnancy causes health issues, as they otherwise do not see the need to make the trip to the hospital. Only a third of all interviewees who gave birth in North Korea reported that they went regularly to the hospital during the pregnancy.

Questions to the DPRK Government (in relation to Section II):

- Please provide the statistics on female representation in national parliaments, ministerial-level positions, and key positions within the Workers’ Party of Korea as well as the responsibilities of those positions. Comment on whether the State party has measures in place to ensure equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes in the country.
- Please provide its view on introduction of fair and independent complaint mechanisms to address complaints that pertain to women’s rights violations specifically. If there already is a mechanism to that effect, comment on its roles, membership requirements and scope of responsibilities.
- Please describe in detail specific programs that were implemented in workplaces, schools and through Women’s League around the country to protect the rights and interests of women specifically as a result of the 2010 Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women.
- In relation to the State party’s statement from the previous state party report that the Women’s Union is one of the most important social organizations that work to implement the State policy on human rights, please describe in detail any notable progress or improvement made in the area of human rights via the work of the Women’s Union.

- Please describe the content of sexual education that young people receive, especially with regard to sexually transmitted diseases. Since which grade such education begins to be provided, during which classes and in which textbooks the content is available.
- Please provide information on the statistics on the number of persons infected with HIV and AIDS patients. What types of medical services are being offered to HIV infected persons and AIDS patients? Comment on how HIV infection is screened for, and how many labs the State party operates nationwide that are capable of screening for HIV infection.
- Please provide information on types of medical services being offered to women to prevent breast cancer/ovarian cancer in the country. Comment on how many women and which age groups receive them as well as on the number of medical facilities in the country that are capable of providing such screening tests.
- Please describe what type of policies were undertaken in consultations with women NGOs to end discriminatory practices pressuring women into private economic activities to take care of the well-being of the family that result in growing disproportions of women unable to continue tertiary education or sustain state jobs.
- What are the legal grounds for the exploitative practices that require women who support families through private economy to contribute seat taxes from their market operations, quota of goods, money and unpaid forced labor for the government and military investments through the Korea Democratic Women's Union and Neighbourhood Watch Units (Inminban).
- Please provide detailed information on how these women's goods and monetary contributions were invested in proportionate geographic distribution of medical and school investments outside Pyongyang, in particular in the most impoverished and outdated Provinces bordering with China.

Appendix

The State Party Report refers to several pieces of legislation which may not have been provided in English to the Committee. The Citizens' Alliance provides the web resource links below that may assist in the Committee's deliberations:

[20]-[35] and [40] of the State Party Report refers to Articles of the most recent version of the Constitution available at: <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/socialist-constitution-2019>

The complaints mechanism referred to at [47] is available at:
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/complaints-and-petitions-law-2010>

The damage compensation mechanism referred to at [48] is available at:
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/damage-compensation-law-2005>

The list below sets out English translations of the Laws mentioned at [42] of the State Party Report, where available:

1. Criminal Law <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/criminal-law-2015>
2. Criminal Procedure Law on December 19, 1974,
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/criminal-procedure-law-2012>
3. Civil Procedure Law in 1976 <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/civil-procedure-law-2015>
4. Civil Law in 1990 <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/civil-law-2007>
5. Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children (1976) - 어린이보육교양법, not translated yet
6. Socialist Labour Law (1978) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/socialist-labour-law-2015>
7. Public Health Law (1980) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/peoples-public-health-law-2012>
8. Law on the Protection of the Environment (1986)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/environmental-protection-law-2014>
9. Family Law (1990) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/family-law-2009>
10. Law on Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at All Levels (1992)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/deputy-elections-for-peoples-assemblies-at-each-level-law-2010>
11. Nationality Law (1995) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/citizenship-law-1999>
12. Law on Complaints and Petitions (1998)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/complaints-and-petitions-law-2010>
13. Law on External Civil Relations (1995) - 대외민사관계법, not translated yet
14. Law on Composition of the Court (1998)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/court-composition-law-2011>
15. Law on Lawyers (1993) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/lawyers-law-1993>
16. Notary Public Law (1995)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/notarization-law-2004>
17. Education Law(1999) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/education-law-2015>
18. Law on Prevention of Epidemics (1997) - 전염병예방법 not translated yet

19. Insurance Law(1995) - 보험법 not translated yet
20. Law on Compensation for Damage (2001)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/damage-compensation-law-2005>
21. Law on Succession (2002) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/inheritance-law-2002>
22. Foreign Trade Law (1997) - 무역법 not translated yet
23. Law on the DPRK Red Cross Society(2007) - 적십자회법 not translated yet
24. Social Security Law (2008) <https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/social-security-law-2012>
25. Law on the Care of the Elderly (2007) - 노인자보호법 not translated yet
26. Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2003)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/persons-with-disability-protection-law-2013>
27. Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children (2010)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/childrens-rights-protection-law-2014>
28. Law on the Protection of the Rights of Women (2010)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/womens-rights-protection-law-2015>
29. Law on Labour Protection (2010)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/labour-protection-law-2014>
30. Law on Higher Education (2011)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/higher-education-law-2015>
31. Law on General Education (2011)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/common-education-law-2015>
32. Law on Libraries (1998) - 도서관법 not translated yet
33. Law on Sports (1997) - 체육법 not translated yet
34. Law on Tobacco Control (2005) - 담배통제법 not translated yet
35. Law on Public Hygiene (1998) - 공중위생법 not translated yet
36. Law on Foodstuff Hygiene (1998) - 식료품위생법 not translated yet
37. Law on Dwelling Houses (2009)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/homes-law-2014>
38. Law on Economic Development Zones (2013)
<https://www.lawandnorthkorea.com/laws/economic-development-complex-law-2013>
39. Law on Disaster Prevention, Relief and Recovery (2014) - 재해방지 및 구조, 복구법 not translated yet