

Save North Koreans Day 2016 Report

Worldwide Call to Xi Jinping:

Stop Repatriating North Korean Refugees and Work for Peaceful Unification

Organized by the North Korea Freedom Coalition

Report prepared by Nicole Martin

On Friday, September 23, the North Korea Freedom Coalition, joined by hundreds of activists and non-governmental organization leaders in 24 cities, organized the annual **Save North Koreans Day** to call upon Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, with two specific requests: *stop repatriating North Koreans to face torture, imprisonment and execution and work with South Korea to bring about peaceful unification by ending China's support for Kim Jong Un.* Activists delivered petitions to Chinese embassies and consulates worldwide and many organized additional events from vigils to demonstrations. The following is a report on actions taken worldwide.



Above: Banner above used at Washington D.C. Protest

In September UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon [stated he has never seen tensions as high on the Korean peninsula](#) as now. With North Korea's repeated missile tests, South Korea's decision to deploy THAAD, and the ongoing reign of terror in North Korea, it is increasingly clear that peace and a nuclear free Korean peninsula can only be achieved when the Kim Jong Un regime is gone.

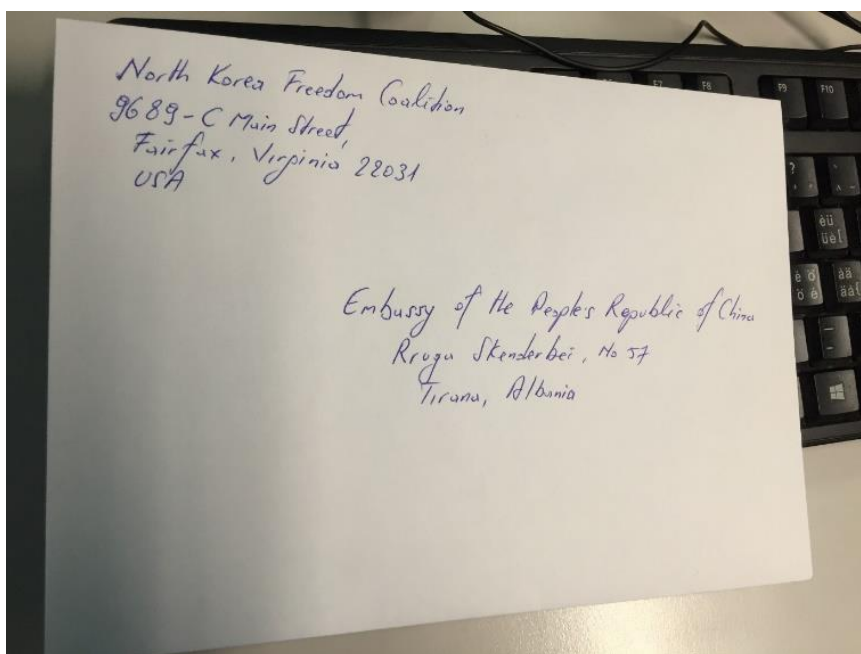
"The ongoing defections of North Koreans ranging from high ranking officials to restaurant workers is an indication of just how much the people of North Korea are suffering," said Suzanne Scholte, Chair of Save North Koreans Day. "All we are asking is that China abide by its international treaty obligations and end its brutal repatriation policy and stop aiding and abetting the crimes against humanity that the Kim regime is committing."

Petition deliveries occurred in cities throughout the world including: Albania (Tirana), Canada (Toronto, Ottawa), Finland (Helsinki), France (Paris), Germany (Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt A.M., Hamburg, Munich), Mexico (Mexico City), Netherlands (The Hague), New Zealand (Auckland, Wellington), Peru (Lima), Republic of Korea (Seoul), South Africa (Pretoria), United Kingdom (London), United States of America (Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco and Washington. D.C.). Some cities such as London, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seoul, San Francisco, Washington. D.C. and Mexico City also planned additional activities from demonstrations to vigils to releasing new reports on the suffering in North Korea.

Below you can see reports and photographs showing some of the individuals and organizations that participated in Save North Korean Refugees Day. We thank everyone who was involved on this special day, and we want to especially thank all the coordinators who delivered the petition for Xi Jinping.

Tirana, Albania

Bled Hodobashi delivered the letter below to the Chinese Embassy in Tirana, Albania. Below is the picture of the letter he delivered successfully.



Toronto, Canada

Kyung B Lee of the Council for Human Rights in North Korea delivered the petition to the Chinese consulate in Toronto. Lee joined by Mr. Ha had recently concluded a 400km Unification Walk from Toronto to Ottawa to make appeals to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for Canada to pass a North Korea human rights act in the Canadian Parliament.

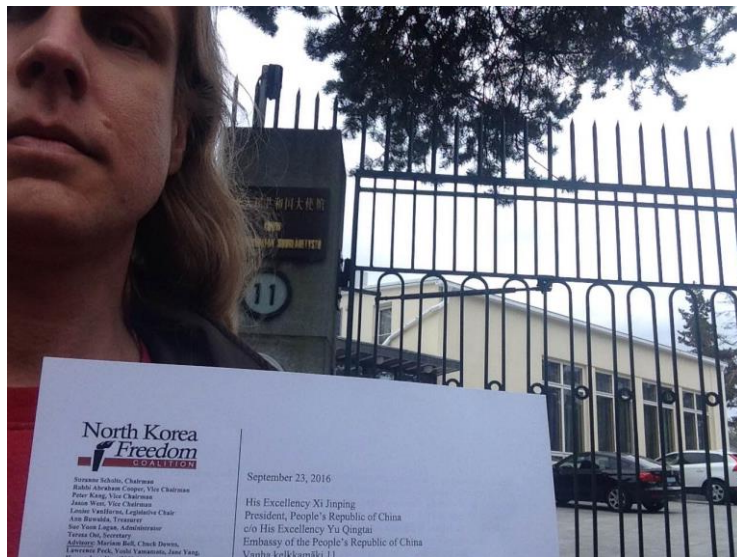
Ottawa, Canada

Alain Dione of the Council for Human Rights in North Korea successfully delivered the petition to the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa.



Helsinki, Finland

Mikko Heikkonen delivered the Petition to the Chinese Embassy in Helsinki and took a selfie!



Paris, France

Pierre Rigoulet and **Robert Peppin** of the French Committee to Help the North Korean People delivered the Petition to the Chinese Embassy in Paris.

Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany

Markus Martin ensured that the petition was received at the Chinese Embassy in Berlin and at the Chinese Consulate in Frankfurt.

Dusseldorf, Germany

Two volunteers in Germany delivered the petition to the Chinese Consulate in Dusseldorf. Due to their work they have to stay anonymous, but it is really encouraging to see what great risk people are taking to help those who are in need.

Hamburg, Germany

Jost Funk successfully delivered the petition to the Chinese Consulate in Hamburg.

Munich, Germany

Thomas Bathel successfully delivered the petition to the Chinese Consulate in Munich.

Mexico City, Mexico

Teresa Ost, of the North Korea Freedom Coalition in Mexico, not only delivered the petition to the Chinese Embassy in Mexico City, but also released 100 helium balloons which included the names of those North Koreans who had disappeared in China. Using a megaphone, NKFC-Mexico members also read names from THE LIST of those North Koreans arrested in China aloud as examples of innocent people who had been forcefully repatriated. Both *Yonhap News* and the Mexican newspaper “*Reforma*” covered the events in Mexico.

Nathaniel Ost, 2 years of age, was likely the youngest Save North Koreans Day participant! In their special outreach to the Spanish speaking world, NKFC Mexico also collected hundreds of signatures from 16 countries including Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, England, Germany, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Spain, United States, and Venezuela.



Mexico City: Petition Delivery, Demonstration and Nathaniel Ost holding balloons for the launch.

The Hague, Netherlands

Arienne Moser of the Jubilee Campaign once again helped in the Netherlands successfully ensuring that the petition to Xi Jinping was received by the Chinese Embassy in Hague.

Auckland, New Zealand

Antony Bridle was the city coordinator for Auckland, New Zealand and attempted delivery to the Chinese embassy but was turned away. Although Antony did not succeed delivering the Petition, we are really thankful that he tried to help and hope he inspired more to get involved in New Zealand!

Wellington, New Zealand

Although **Steve A.** made some jokes that something might happen to him, he straight away agreed to deliver the petition to the Chinese Embassy in Wellington. The following photo is from successful delivery in Wellington.



Lima, Peru

Hans Götz and his daughter delivered the letter to the Chinese Embassy in Tirana. They arrived during the lunch-break, so had to wait for a while, before they were able to actually deliver the petition. Hans felt good to help for something so meaningful. His daughter felt the same way and said: *“You feel joy in your heart, when you are able to be part of something good. This way we didn’t just help, we were given a nice present.”*



Seoul, Republic of Korea

Kim Seong Min, director of the Free North Korea Radio, **Lee So-Yeon** and Members of **New Korea Women's Alliance** and **Hannah Cole** of the Defense Forum Foundation delivered the letter in Seoul to the Embassy of China. They were honored to help with this delivery. The following photos are from Seoul.



Pretoria, South Africa

The first petition to be delivered on Save North Koreans Day was by **Atabongwong (Ata) Gallous** and **Mr. Tim** in Pretoria, South Africa, despite a lot of difficulties. After explaining and presenting their IDs at security, they were scanned and then went through detector machines in the Chinese embassy. They were told to not take any photos. When they entered the embassy, they went to the counter and said that they had an appeal letter addressed to the PRC President. A Chinese officer took the letter and after reading it a few seconds the officer said they must go and send it by post. Ata said: “No. We are supposed to deliver it in person. That is why we came to the Embassy!” They said the letter must be delivered to the Chinese Ambassador and the President. Finally, a lady came and took the petition. After asking if they could get a photo, they were told “NO” and sent away.

It was very meaningful that the first petition was delivered in Pretoria, South Africa, because the persecuted people of South Africa probably never believed that Apartheid would ever end in South Africa - but it did. The North Korean People believe that the Kim regime will never end - but it will. As Ata commented: *If Apartheid can end, I confidently believe the Kim regime will end...*



London, United Kingdom

Ben Rogers and CSW-UK not only delivered a petition to the PRC embassy in London that day but also released their latest report *Total Denial: Violations of Freedom of Religion or Belief in North Korea* on Save North Koreans Day. The full report can be seen here:

<http://www.csw.org.uk/2016/09/22/report/3263/article.htm>



CSW-UK Released their latest report on religious persecution in North Korea on Save North Koreans Day.

Chicago, United States of America

Sunghan Kim, Advisor for the National Unification Advisory Council and Chair of the North Korean Human Rights Committee (Chicago) successfully delivered the letter to the Chinese Consulate General in Chicago. It was delivered under the name of the North Korea Freedom Network. Kim also organized a major demonstration in Chicago in front of the Wrigley Building on behalf of the refugees which was featured on the evening news in Chicago.



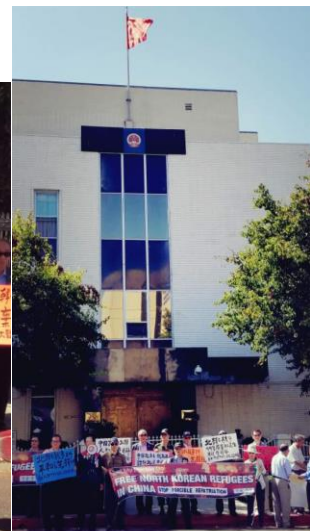
Houston, United States of America

Erik Kim and Gail Bielitz and others delivered the petition to the Chinese consulate in Houston.



Los Angeles, United States of America

Dr. Paul K. Jhin and the North Korean Associates in the USA delivered the Petition to the Chinese Consulate in Los Angeles and also held a demonstration that was featured on the evening news.



New York City, United States of America

Sharon Stratton of the North Korea Strategy Center was joined by a representative of the Human Rights Foundation and **Zeba Gill** of Global Christian Voice to successfully deliver their appeal to the Chinese Consulate in New York City. NKSC also participated in an event on Information Flow into North Korea organized by the State Department and held in New York City on that same day.



San Francisco, United States of America

Pastor Wally and **Christians Crisis** delivered the Petition to the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco. They also coordinated a peaceful rally in front of the Chinese Consulate on behalf of the oppressed people of North Korea. This was a partnership effort between Christians in Crisis Ministry (CIC) and the NKFC. They also collected more signatures for the Appeal Letter for a greater impact. Pastor Wally, who had been imprisoned for his faith, wrote: "I am indebted to all who prayed, advocated, and appealed for my life and to our loving God." He said speaking out on behalf of the suffering people of North Korea was "payback time" for him.



Washington, D.C., United States of America

In Washington, D.C., the North Korea Freedom Coalition organized a petition delivery that was successfully accomplished followed by a peaceful march and demonstration and a candlelight vigil. George Washington THiNK helped design new signs reflecting the themes for this year's Save North Koreans Day. Speakers at the protest included **Peter Kang** of the Korea Freedom Alliance and **Dr. Jai Poong Ryu** of the One Korea Foundation. NKFC was very grateful to be joined by **William Hwang** and **Steve Lee** in their individual capacity as their participation drew many in support from the National Unification Advisory Council.



A comment from Nicole Martin, this report's author: The 3rd of October is the National Day of Germany to celebrate its reunification 16 years ago. Berlin was divided by a wall and two different political systems existed. Nobody thought this would ever end. Families thought they would never be able to see each other again. I am a German and I remember my father telling me, that when he and his friends heard that the wall is open – that you can go to the “east” now – they thought it was a joke. They didn't believe it. This separation was within one country. North Korea and South Korea are now two separate countries. But South Korea is ready for reunification. One day it will be reunited. But until that day, we have to fight for the rights of those who can't help themselves. Just as the allied forces helped Germany in it hardest times, we must now stand together and fight for North Korea—*Nicole Martin*.

Some examples of Press Coverage of Save North Koreans Day:

Mexico City:

- http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/people/2016/09/178_214933.html

Chicago:

- <http://www.progressillinois.com/quick-hits/content/2016/09/23/chicagos-korean-american-community-rallies-condemn-north-koreas>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xM0TF0Cut1s&feature=youtu.be>

South Korea:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=huQkGpDQ2Jc>
- <https://www.facebook.com/sbsinteveningnews/?fref=nf>

Free North Korea Radio:

- <http://www.fnkradio.com/board.php?board=newfnkb101&config=&command=body&no=14949&>

Washington:

- <http://www.christianpost.com/news/save-north-korean-refugees-day-24-chinese-embassies-face-protests-for-repatriating-defectors-to-their-death-170014/>
- Peter Kang (Vice Chair of NKFC) authored the articles below

London:

- <https://forbinfull.org/2016/09/23/north-korea-and-human-rights-a-state-of-denial/>
- <http://www.csw.org.uk/2016/09/22/report/3263/article.htm>
- <http://www.csw.org.uk/2016/09/23/press/3265/article.htm>
- http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben/north-korea-human-rights_b_12142096.html

“김정은 아니라 북한주민 도우라”

North Korea human rights organizations demonstrate at...
 탈북인권단체들, 북한난민 구제의 날 맞아 중국대사관서 시위
 ...China Embassy on 'Save North Koreans Day'

북한의 핵과 미사일로 위협받고 있는 한반도의 평화를 지키기 위해 워싱턴 지역 북한인권 및 안보단체들이 거리로 나섰다.
 북한자유연합(NKFC·대표 수산 솔디), 워싱턴 평통(외장 황원근), 재향군인회 메달랜드분회(분회장 김용하 등) 등의 단체들은 23일 워싱턴 DC 소재 중국대사관 앞에서 더 이상 김정은을 돕지 말라라는 내용의 메시지를 제막하고 북한 정권을 규탄하는 시위를 벌였다.

북한자유연합은 2009년부터 9월 24일 '북한난민구제의 날'로 정하고 9월 중 하루를 선택해 중국 정부의 탈북자 강제 복송을 반대하는 시위 및 행사를 매년 갖고 있다.
 이날은 1951년 국제난민들의 자유와 인권 보호를 위해 UN 난민지위협약이 체결된 날로, 올해가 65주년이 된다.

중국 대사관 앞 광장에서 열린 시위에서 수산 솔디 대표는 "난민협약에 서명한 나라도 중국은 탈북자들이 복송되면 고문과 강제 노동에 시달리고 심지어 공개 처형을 당하는 현실을 잘 알면서도 이를 멈추지 않고 있



워싱턴 지역 인권단체 관계자들이 중국대사관 앞에서 시위를 벌이고 있다.

다며 "국제기구와 상의해 탈북자들이 원하는 곳으로 갈 수 있도록 해야 한다"고 주장했다.
 또 한미자유연합의 강원일 총재는 "한반도 평화통일은 중국의 국익에도 부합한다는 중국 정부가 알아야 한다"며 "결국 북한 독재의 무력 도발을 내버려 두면 중국에 가장 위험한 적이 될 것"이라고 경고했다.
 일리노이재단의 류재홍 대표도 "남한이 주도하는 한반도 통일이

세계가 받아들이는 대세"라며 탈북자 강제 복송을 중단해 진정한 세계 대국임을 증명하라고 중국 정부에 촉구했다.
 이후 시위 참가자들은 "김정은을 돕지 말고 북한 주민을 도우라" 탈북자들을 사방으로 뿔뿔히 날려 "한국과 함께 평화통일을 위해 일하라"는 등의 구호를 외치며 행진을 한 뒤 시진핑 주석에게 보내는 메시지를 중국대사관에 전달했다.

이와 함께 참가자들은 촛불을 켜고 근래에 강제 복송된 탈북자들의 이름을 열거하며 국제사회가 이들을 기억해주길 호소했다.
 북한난민구제의 날(Save North Korean Refugees Day) 행사에는 김수환연맹(회장 안미경), 한미자유연맹 유홍주 이사장, 서울자유한국자조장기회 워싱턴 지회장 등이 참석했다.

이병한 기자

한국일보 The Korea Times
 "Stop forcible repatriation of North Korean refugees immediately!"
“탈북자 강제 복송 즉각 중단하라”
 On 9-23 North Korea Freedom Coalition leads demonstration at Chinese embassy
 북한자유연합, 북 난민구제의 날 맞아 중국대사관 앞서 시위 marking Save North Koreans Day

북한자유연합은 이날 DC 소재 중국대사관 앞에서 평안군 해운도 탈북자 강제복송 중단과 난민지위협약에 서명한 나라도 중국은 탈북자들이 복송되면 고문과 강제 노동에 시달리고 심지어 공개 처형을 당하는 현실을 잘 알면서도 이를 멈추지 않고 있는 사실을 폭로했다.
 북한자유연합은 2009년부터 9월 중 하루를 북한난민구제의 날로 정하고 9월 24일 '북한난민구제의 날'로 정하고 9월 중 하루를 선택해 중국 정부의 탈북자 강제 복송을 반대하는 시위 및 행사를 매년 갖고 있다.
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Korea Daily 2016년 9월 27일 (월요일) Category A
 At China embassy, members of NKFC and Korean-American organizations are chanting slogans.
“탈북자 강제복송 중단하라”
 북한자유연합, 중국대사관 앞서 북한인권 시위행사로
 “탈북자 강제복송 중단하라”
 북한자유연합(NKFC) 회장 수산 솔디는 지난 23일 워싱턴 DC 소재 중국 대사관 앞에서 “북한인 구제를 위한 행진”을 벌였다.
 시위 참가자들은 중국 정부에게 탈북자 강제복송을 중단하라고 권고하고 미사일 노획을 지속하는 김정은 정권에 대한 단결된 한반도의 평화 통일을 위한 노력을 촉구했다.
 수산 솔디 회장은 “탈북자들이 강제복송 되면 고문과 강제노동, 정치범수용소 수감, 심지어는 공개 처형에 당하는 것을 잘 알고 있다. 이와 함께 참가자들은 촛불을 켜고 근래에 강제 복송된 탈북자들의 이름을 열거하며 국제사회가 이들을 기억해주길 호소했다.
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 이병한 기자

Background: Save North Korean Refugees Day (SNKRD) was established in 2009 by the North Korea Freedom Coalition to raise attention of the inhumane and illegal repatriation policy of the People’s Republic of China. It has been held during the third week of September to recognize the date of September 24, 1982 when China became a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol. China violates this international agreement each time it forcefully repatriates a North Korean citizen back to North Korea, knowing that these North Koreans will be subjected to certain torture, imprisonment and public execution.

NGOs joining the North Korea Freedom Coalition as coordinators and/or organizing events included: The French Committee to Help the North Korea Population, Council for Human Rights in North Korea Canada, CSW-UK, Free North Korea Radio, North Korea Strategy Center, Jubilee Campaign Netherlands, Christians in Crisis, Korea Freedom Alliance, NKFC-Mexico, Africa Solidarity for Sahrawi and North Korean Associates in the USA.

The North Korea Freedom Coalition is a nonpartisan coalition founded in 2003 to work for the freedom, human rights, and dignity of the North Korea people. The Coalition has over 70 public member organizations representing millions of American, South and North Korean, and Japanese citizens as well as other nations. Additionally, private members provide humanitarian relief inside North Korea and members in China and other nations that feed, shelter, and rescue North Korean refugees. To learn more about NKFC, please visit www.nkfreedom.org.