

# Report on International Protest to Save North Korean Refugees: **Thousands Participate in Events Worldwide To Call on China to End Illegal, Brutal Repatriation of North Korean Refugees**

On Saturday, September 22, 2012\*, a date that marks the 30th anniversary of China becoming a signatory to the Refugee Convention, the North Korea Freedom Coalition asked citizens around the world to deliver petitions to Chinese embassies and consulates calling upon China to end their illegal and brutal repatriation of North Korean Refugees. Thousands participated in protest, vigils, film screenings, and events around the world in seventeen cities, ten countries.

For example, Teresa Ost in Mexico City gathered 1,388 petitions from Mexicans and other Spanish speaking countries, while in Hong Kong, James Lung petitioned in solidarity and posted a special message of hope to North Koreans that morning will come after a long dark night! Andrew Hong led fellow North Korea Freedom Riders in a two hour march of Chicago's Magnificent Mile to raise awareness of the plight of North Korean refugees, while Orson Maazel proved the power of one as he not only hand delivered a petition to the consulate in New York City, but also sent one by UPS and email. As our lone voice in New York City, his actions led to a direct response from the First Secretary of the Chinese Embassy in the United States of America!

The following is a report highlighting some of the events as well as recognizing the city and country coordinators.

\*The People's Republic of China became a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol on September 22, 1982. This is the agreement they are violating every time they force a North Korean back to North Korea.

## Here are some highlights from our city and country coordinators

### CANADA

**Toronto:** Kyung B. Lee of the Council for Human Rights in North Korea spoke before a special event entitled: "Behind Closed Doors: The Human Rights Crisis in North Korea" at the Center for International Governance Innovation, a prestigious research center in Ontario. The event was attended by over 200 students and members of the public but was also webcast and included commentary by David Hawk via webcast. In addition, the Council organized a demonstration and petition delivery in Toronto.



**Ottawa:** Alain Dionne organized a demonstration and petition delivery as well as a film screening at Carleton College of *Crossing*.

**PHOTOS from CANADA: Program Featuring Kyung B. Lee; Protest at PRC Embassy Toronto**

**FORERUNNER**  
**BEHIND CLOSED DOORS:  
THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS IN  
NORTH KOREA**  
**PRESIDENT, THE COUNCIL FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS IN NORTH KOREA  
MR. KYUNG B. LEE**  
Also featuring  
Dr. Rhoda Howard-Hassmann,  
Canada Research Chair in International Human Rights,  
Department of Global Studies, Balsillie School of International Affairs  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 7-9PM  
CIGI CAMPUS AUDITORIUM  
67 ERB ST. WEST, WATERLOO  
RSVP: [HTTP://BEHINDCLOSEDDOORSNORTHKOREA.EVENTBRITE.COM](http://behindcloseddoorsnorthkorea.eventbrite.com)  
FREE PUBLIC EVENT CIGIONLINE.ORG/WEBCAST  
#CIGILIVE SPONSORED BY CIGI



## CHINA

**Hong Kong:** James Lung of the Southern Democratic Alliance, organized a demonstration and petition delivery in Hong Kong and sent a special message via Youtube regarding North Korea: Morning will Come After a Long Dark Night.



**PHOTO from Hong Kong of James Lung.**

## FINLAND

**Helsinki** Mikko Heikkonen successfully delivered a petition to the PRC Embassy in Helsinki in solidarity.

## JAPAN

**Tokyo:** Kan Ando and Southern Democratic Alliance delivered a petition and staged a demonstration in front of the Chinese embassy in Tokyo. Japanese Congressmen Nakatsugawa Hiroshiro and Congressmen Yoshida Koichiro sent congratulatory messages of support, while Paul Purvis joined the protest bringing a journalist friend who covered the event for the *Seoul Times*.

## MEXICO:

Teresa Ost of the North Korea Freedom Coalition-Mexico turned in 1,388 signatures to the PRC embassy in Mexico calling for the end of China's repatriation policy. Participants in the protest also read the names of those who had disappeared or been repatriated and prayed at the embassy. During the day, Ost also organized an exhibit and day long film festival to educate citizens about the North Korea human rights situation and refugee crisis. Films included *Kimjongilia*, *On the Border*, *Seoul Train* and *Crossing*.

**PHOTOS from MEXICO CITY: Nearly 1,400 Citizens of Mexico and other Spanish speaking nations signed the petition to end China's forceful repatriation of North Korean Refugees**



## SOUTH KOREA

**Seoul:** Peter Jung, who has been a tireless and nonstop leader advocating for the North Korean refugees, continued his efforts in Seoul with Breda Lund and colleagues at his NGO, Justice for North Korea and joined the International Protest in solidarity.

**Busan:** Pastor Changho Lim and the Jangdaehyun Church, a North Korean defector church in Busan, delivered a petition and hosted a prayer vigil for the refugees.

## SPAIN

**Madrid and Barcelona:** Alex Stanley organized efforts in Spain for petition deliveries in Madrid and Barcelona and organized a special prayer service. His special message from Spain for the North Korea defectors was read at the Washington, D.C. Protest.

## SWITZERLAND

**Zurich and Bern:** Alexandre Romoscanu organized efforts in Switzerland and petition deliveries at the Chinese embassy and consulate in Zurich and Bern.

## UNITED KINGDOM

**London:** Despite having a previously scheduled weekend event that same time, Ben Rogers, East Asia Team Leader of CSW-UK initiated a prayer campaign for the weekend for the refugees and arranged for a petition to be sent to the PRC Embassy in London.

## USA

**Chicago:** North Korea Freedom Riders led by Andrew Hong and ENok (Emancipate North Koreans) delivered a petition to the PRC consulate in Chicago and then led a two hour march across Chicago's Magnificent Mile to raise awareness of the plight facing North Korean refugees. Bok Lee, who participated in the events wrote: "There were so many people at every corner. When we chanted, they followed our chanting with thumbs up."

Earlier in the month the group arranged for North Korean defector, Soongshil Lee, to speak at Moody Church. Lee gave powerful testimony about the reality of North Korea's human rights conditions as well as what happens to those who flee to China.

**PHOTOS from CHICAGO** After delivering their petition, North Korea Freedom Riders March the Magnificent Mile to raise awareness of the plight of North Korean Refugees



**Los Angeles:** Pastor Peter Sohn, Sam Kim and the Korean American Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom led events in Los Angeles delivering a petition but also leading a demonstration. The KCC is also leading efforts worldwide for the refugees as part of their Until the Day Pastors efforts to Let My People Go!

**PHOTOS from LOS ANGELES where KCC led events at the PRC Consulate:**



**New York:** Proving in the POWER OF ONE, Orson Maazel was the lone participant in New York City but he actually got a response from the Chinese Embassy's First Secretary at the USA Embassy. Maazel not only sent a petition by UPS and via email, but also taped the petition to the outside wall of the Chinese consulate in New York City on September 22nd. Lijian Zhao, First Secretary of the Chinese Embassy in the USA responded to Maazel: *China has been carefully handling with the illegal border-crossing issue based on domestic law, international law and humanitarian grounds. Those people you mentioned entered China illegally. There is no(t) enough ground to define them as refugees. China cannot allow its territory to become the passage for illegal immigrants. It is a usual practice that illegal immigrants are dealt with according to law. The US also repatriates illegal immigrants from other countries. China's practice is beyond reproach and in accordance with international practice.*

**Washington, D.C:** Because of other events requiring security in Washington, D.C. that day (an Islamic related protest) the North Korea Freedom Coalition had the ability to deliver their petition right to the door of the embassy, as well as gather immediately in front of the embassy. (Security at past protests has restricted NKFC's ability to get that close.) At their demonstration, NKFC read THE LIST while members of Alpha Community Church carried a coffin to symbolize the thousands of North Koreans who have been killed by Chinese policies. Nancy Purcell, Jinhee Kim and Hyun Song dramatized the treatment of North Korean refugees as they marched with demonstrators seven times in front of the Embassy. That evening Pastor Hyongshik Sohn and Pilgrim Church hosted a special screening of *48M* with the visiting North Korean defector delegation.

**PHOTOS from WASHINGTON DC of events led by the North Korea Freedom Coalition: Petition delivery and protest.**

