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Korean War POW Affairs
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ThINK (There is Hope in North Korea)
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September 22, 2026

His Excellency Xi Jinping
President, People's Republic of China
c/o Embassy of the People's Republic of China

Dear Mr. President:

Forty-four years ago this month, the People's Republic of China acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. By acceding to these agreements on September 24, 1982, the PRC agreed to international protocols for refugees. As you know, the Korean family remains divided and those living under the Kim Jong Un regime suffer crimes against humanity which have led to well over 33,000 to flee the country. Tragically, the PRC has adopted a policy that is ongoing of forcibly repatriating North Koreans back to North Korea when they are caught in China while trying in many cases to be reunited with their families in South Korea. In a highly reported incident that occurred in August 2024, two North Korean women were tried and later executed while nine others were sent to slower deaths in North Korea's political prison camps to serve life sentences after being forcefully repatriated by the PRC. These women were part of a group of 600 North Korean refugees that were repatriated late at night on October 9, 2023.

We appeal to you as China's leader: please allow safe passage to these North Korean refugees and stop returning them to North Korea to face certain torture and imprisonment and even execution for simply trying to flee to South Korea. The international community is watching closely.

We respect China's concerns about refugees crossing its border when fleeing oppression and deprivation in North Korea. We ask that your government resolve this refugee crisis in a way that fulfills the goals of the Convention and Protocol. Unlike any other refugee crisis in the world, North Korean refugees have a place to go for immediate resettlement as citizens of South Korea under Articles 2 and 3 of the Republic of Korea Constitution. In addition to South Korea, many other countries have willingly resettled these refugees.

North Korean refugees need not be a burden for China since the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will help China resettle these refugees safely according to international law.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response to our request.

Sincerely,