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Letter: Please Join in This Petition for Human Rights in North Korea

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Categories : [Letters to the Editor](#)

Tagged as : [North Korea](#)

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To the editor:

This letter for all the townspeople of Darien. For those of you who do not know me, I am a local naturopathic physician and attorney and have lived in Darien for 32 years.

The letter I am writing you today is of urgent importance. It has come to my attention that there are up to 120,000 men, women and children being held prisoners in concentration camps in North Korea.

Since 1986, I have been an active member of Amnesty International, the organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize for its human rights work.

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In that capacity, I contacted AIUSA's North Korean Country Specialist in Minnesota and a member of the Board of Directors in Wisconsin, the latter of whom I have successfully worked with before on other matters.

They have both agreed to collaborate with me on a campaign to free these North Koreans from the concentration camps in which they are imprisoned. As we speak, petitions are circulating worldwide to free these people, most particularly via Rhythm 'n Rights' concert tours.

I am asking the townspeople of Darien to sign the following letter and send it to P.O. Box 134, from where it will be forwarded to Kim Jong Un.

P.O. Box 134 Darien, CT 06820 USA

Honorable Kim Jong Un General Secretary of the Korean Workers' Party
Chairman of the National Defense Commission
Care of H.E. Mr. Ja Song Nam, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to the United Nations Permanent Mission of North Korea, UN Consular Office
820 Second Avenue New York, NY 10017
United States of America

Honorable Chairman Kim Jong Un:

This letter is to urge you to address the situation of the up to 120,000 people confined to kwan-li-so (political penal-labor camps), Kyo-hwa-so (correctional or re-education centers, jip-kyul-so (collection centers for low level criminals) and ro-dong-dan-ryeon-dae (labor training centers).

International investigation and scrutiny have revealed that these people are being incarcerated in violation of international law, as well as the laws of the DPRK, and held without trial. Furthermore, according to the latest international information available (since the DPRK refuses access to these camps by international officials), the people there are being beaten, tortured, raped, starved, killed and/or otherwise mistreated.

Please stop this situation immediately, grant these people refugee status, and allow them to leave your country and go to the European nations that have offered to take them.

While you are implementing this action, please also do the following:

- Allow the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the DPRK and the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture into these camps/centers to independently assess their conditions inside;
- End your practice of collective punishment, wherein entire families, including children, are imprisoned when one member of the family is accused of a crime, a practice which has been extended up to three generations;

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• Cooperate with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees or other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees, returning refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons. Thank you.

If there are any teachers or religious clergy out there who would like to make this a class/group project, please contact me (mrague@optonline.net).

Please reach into your heart, sign this petition, and help us free these people from the concentration camps. Thank you.

Margaret Rague, JD, ND