



**FREE NK GULAG**  
Love & Freedom to the Imprisoned



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**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. **Free the North Korean Gulag (FNKG)** was founded in 2003 by ex-political prisoners from prison camp Yodok 15 in North Korea. Its main objective is to dismantle political prison camps. FNKG works to enlighten the international community about public executions, ruthless torture and beatings, sexual violence, famine and diseases, and forced labor that have become common place in political prison camps. FNKG relies on an extensive network of defectors from different backgrounds living in South Korea and China for interviews and in-depth investigations.
2. **North Korea Strategy Center (NKSC)** is a defector-based non-profit organization in Seoul, South Korea, that works for the democratization and peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula. It was founded in 2008 by defector and ex-political prisoner Kang Cheol-Hwan and other elite members of the defector community. NKSC's primary activities include: strategic fact-finding research and missions, defector empowerment and training, international and local awareness activities, and the dissemination of information from the outside world into North Korea.
3. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), has the highest number of human rights violations in the world. In particular, its strict penal, criminal, and national security systems infringe on the standard civil and prisoners' rights set by international conventions. This report refers to specific human rights violations within different detention facilities to be advocated in the next Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of North Korea, as well as the placement of international standards and regulations in detention facilities and the dismantling of political prison camps.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The narrated evidence used for this report comes from FNKG's Report, '2011 Research on Punishment of North Korean Defectors', and was based on the participation of 213 defectors in South Korea and China. Supplementary information was provided through personal knowledge gathered from NKSC and FNKG staff and additional research.

**Keywords:** *Detention facilities, political prison camps, arbitrary arrest, minimum standards for prisoners, torture, ill-treatment of women and children, public executions, forced labor*

## **II. Background and Framework of the DPRK**

1. The DPRK is legally bound to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant of Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which were both signed on September 14, 1981; the Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed on February 23, 2000, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) signed on February 27, 2001. Recently, North Korea also signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on July 3, 2013.
2. Since its review on December 7, 2009, North Korea did not respond to 117 recommendations and rejected 50. It is the first state not to have accepted any recommendation or made any efforts towards establishing a human rights mechanism and conducting in-depth investigations in this regard.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, it has taken steps to implement some human rights regulations, such as Law and Labor Protection signed on July 8, 2010, and Laws that Protect Children and Women's Rights signed in December 2010. Nevertheless, these regulations do not seem to have been applied at detention facilities.
3. The UN Special Rapporteur on North Korea has identified nine key inter-linked issues and patterns of violations of human rights. Five of these nine components are associated with the brutal human rights abuses occurring in North Korea's criminal and penal systems, particularly in the usage of various detention facilities. These are:
  - a. Torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment, including inhumane conditions of detention
  - b. Arbitrary detention as a form of persecution, the criminalization of any behavior deemed threatening to the official ideology of the Government, the lack of rule of law and the absence of due process or an independent judiciary.
  - c. Violations of human rights associated with prison camps.
  - d. Discrimination and the disproportionate or specific effect of human rights violations on vulnerable groups.
  - e. Violation of the right to life, in particular the abusive application of the death penalty and usage of public executions.<sup>3</sup>

## **III. Categories of North Korea's Detention Facilities**

1. The usage of detention facilities was first implemented by Kim Il-Sung and his compatriots to ensure security and control citizens. Despite the new leader, Kim Jong-Un, the treatment of

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<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/13/13 pg. 11

<sup>3</sup> A/HRC/22/57 pg. 65

prisoners and the conditions of detention facilities have not improved. In fact, the situation has become worse. The amount of defectors coming from North Korea has decreased by more than 50%, reflecting the stricter security measures and violence used to deter North Koreans from leaving.<sup>4</sup> People are faced with humiliation, forced labor, torture, and death. Below is a description of the different categories of detention facilities operated by the North Korean regime:

a. *Jip-Kyul-So* (Police Holding Facility/ **PHF**)

The PHF is a temporary detention facility that is not listed in North Korea's Penal Code. Each provincial government operates a PHF, which are also referred to as "traveler holding camps," as they hold people travelling without a permit. Consequently, when more North Koreans began defecting in 2000, the government placed more PHFs on the border of North Korea and China. Thus many repatriated persons have passed through the PHFs, where they are held prisoner anywhere from two months to two years.

b. *Gyo-yang-so* (Labor Reform Center/ **LRC**)

People who commit smaller crimes that deserve harsh punishments are sent here for "anti-socialist behavior" and "insubordination." Prisoners are only held temporarily in LRCs; however, everyone is forced to do hard labor such as farming and construction work. This center is also not listed in the North Korean Penal Code. It is estimated that there are more than 200 LRCs in North Korea, 51 of which are sites of reported human rights abuse. Some camps are also being operated independently by large-scale business operations.<sup>5</sup>

c. *Gyo-hwa-so* (Correctional Center or prisons/**CC**):

There are currently more than 10 CCs operating in North Korea; at least one located in each province. It is a detention facility for re-education and is similar to the systems of jails and prisons of other countries. In general, economic criminals or those who have committed a felony are sent here.

d. *No-dong Dan-Ryeon-Dae* (Corrective Labor Camps/ **CLC**)

The Korean translation of this detention facility is "Labor-Training Center." These were established in the 1990s by the order of Kim Jong-Il, who sought to address the need to provide local education at the county level for those who committed minor offenses. Forms of labor are most intensified in the CLCs.

e. *Gwan-li-so* (Political Prison Camps/ **PPC**):

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<sup>4</sup> From 2009 to 2011, an average of 2,679 defectors came to South Korea. In 2012, only 1,509 defectors came to South Korea. This information was obtained from the Ministry of Unification statistics website.

<sup>5</sup> NKDB, Prisoners in North Korea Today, 2011

The PPCs, or the North Korean gulags, have been virtually unknown to the general public of North Korea. The basic purposes of PPCs are to persecute and oppress any political enemies against the Kim regime and to keep the public submissive and fearful by rooting out any individual who poses a potential threat to the regime. At first a suspect is taken without trial or warning. Then all members within three generations of the suspect's family are forcibly taken in the middle of the night to be moved to the camps.

#### **IV. Continued Human Rights Violations in North Korean Detention Facilities**

##### **A. ARBITRARY ARREST**

1. The North Korean government continues to arbitrarily arrest anyone that is considered disloyal to the government. All laws of regulation and control are focused on the superiority of their leader Kim Jong-Un. Consequently, there is a lack of rule of law and judiciary system that would ensure suspects receive a fair trial. Article 79 of the North Korean Constitution stipulates that "Citizens are guaranteed inviolability of the person and the home and privacy of correspondence and no citizens can be placed under control or be arrested, nor can their homes be searched, without a legal warrant." Nonetheless, that does not seem to be the case for most of the arrests carried out by the National Security Agency (NSA). While the North Korean court system is based on the Constitution and Court Composition law, people are not given a fair and independent trial.
2. The penal and criminal system allows the North Korean people to be subjected to forced detention according to Chapter III of the Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). However, prisoners are considered to be "people who have committed anti-state crimes, as well as those who have participated in a conspiracy to overthrow the Republic." Through a minimal amount of suspicion, a person having watched external media, having had contact with a South Korean or missionaries, or having shown discontent with the regime, can be targeted for condemnation.
3. Many of the prisoners detained by the North Korean government claim that in the beginning they had no notion or understanding of why they were being taken. Ex-prisoner of Yoduk political prison camp, Mr. Chung Kwang-Il (Chief of the Research Department in FNKG), said he was taken by NSA agents without a warrant or explanation of why he was being detained. Believing he had done nothing wrong he followed the agents without hesitation, where he was then forced to admit that he had had contact with South Koreans, and sent to Yoduk for three years.
4. Many defectors claim that there was no fair justification given when they were being detained. For example, IN-01 claims that it had only been rumored that he had sold girls into China. The interviewee was arrested on charges of guilt-by-association and was then tortured to confess his business activities, which involved bringing antiques from North Korea to China. However, although this person was never actually involved in human trafficking, he was still placed in a labor center for over two years. In addition, there are cases where overseas labor workers sent by the North Korean government who have had access to external media of the

country they work in are sent to political prison camps in order to prevent information dissemination inside the country.<sup>6</sup>

## 5. Recommendation for Fair Trial:

- a. **Implementation of the obligations of Article 14 of the ICCPR assuring that everyone with no distinction is entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal established by law.**
- b. **Modernization of the constitution needs to be carried out abiding to the standards of the ICCPR and ICESCR. In addition, the prisoners detained for reasons related to their opinion should be released and the people that have disappeared in the process should have their whereabouts made known to their families.**
- c. **Cease to detain repatriated people and start guaranteeing personal security and freedom for its citizens.**

*“I asked them why they came for us when they had never even seen us before, and they answered that they just had a few things to ask so please follow them. So we followed them until we saw three guards and two cars waiting for us. They put us each into our own car and then I knew we were in trouble...We ended up going into the Onseong agency and there we were severely beaten up. I was hit so much that my whole body was swollen like a pig.” [IN-01]*

## B. IMPRISONMENT THROUGH GUILT-BY-ASSOCIATION

1. Up to three generations of entire families continue to be imprisoned on the mere suspicion or accusation of one member’s opposition to the government. These family members are taken to the PPTs (*Gwan-li-so*) under the principle of “collective punishment” called *Yeon-jwa-je*. According to former prisoners, this practice has complied with the 1972 statement by Kim Il Sung, “Factionalists or enemies of class, whoever they are; their seed must be eliminated through three generations.”
2. Imprisonment through guilt-by-association is specifically implemented by political prison camps. It is estimated that there are now 50,000 – 200,000 political prisoners living under slave-like conditions. It can be assumed that at least 70% of those prisoners are innocent civilians that have been charged of guilt-by-association for collective punishment including children, women, and elders.
3. Ex-political prisoner from political prison camp Yoduk 15, and executive director of NKSC, Kang Cheol-Hwan petitioned to the United Nations to request the location of his sister who had disappeared in North Korea in 2011 with her young 11-year old son. It is thought that she was sent to a political prison camp. Kang Cheol-Hwan is a high-profile activist in the South

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<sup>6</sup> Il, Lim ‘Human Rights Suppression of North Korean Overseas Labor Workers’, Monthly North Korea, October, 2012

Korean and international community. It is presumed that due to the nature of his work, his sister has been imprisoned without trial or justification. Additionally, because of the information released about political prison camps, the government has changed its laws that will not allow the release of prisoners.

4. A few modifications of the political prison camps have taken place due to the international awareness of their usage by the North Korean regime. While Camp 25 has been dismantled, its 30,000 to 50,000 prisoners have been distributed to other facilities such as Camp 15, Camp 16, and Camp 14. Another reason for the dismantling of Camp 25 was due to the exhaustion of resources from the mines in which prisoners were forced to work in. Thus the dismantling of Camp 25 was not carried out by any human rights incentives.
5. “Crimes against humanity” are identified when they are “committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population with knowledge of attack,” according to the Rome Statute. According to David Hawk, the case of North Korea and its penal system reflect on the ‘widespread’ and ‘systematic’ approach it is implementing in sending innocent civilians to political prison camps.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the security mechanisms enforced for protection of the authoritarian regime can be defined as ‘crimes against humanity’ and must be acknowledged by the government and taken into further consideration by international society and mechanisms.

#### 6. **Recommendation to End of Implementation of Collective Punishment**

- a. **Abolish the system of collective punishment, particularly for the remaining family members of defectors.**
- b. **Release all innocent people that have been held under “guilt-by-association,” including all women, children, and elderly persons.**
- c. **Dismantle all political prison camps. The North Korean government should prove “the term ‘political prisoner’ does not exist in the DPRK’s vocabulary and therefore the so-called political prisoners’ camps do not exist,”<sup>8</sup> and give access to international institutions, particularly the UN, to guarantee their non-existence and/or closure.**
- d. **Begin placing more emphasis on individual rights, such as social and civil rights, rather than placing a collective priority on the state, and adjust their legal system to meet international human rights standards.**

### C. FORCED LABOR

1. Article 62 of the Criminal Law of DPRK “Treason against the Fatherland,” states, “A citizen of the Republic who commits treason against the Fatherland by defection, surrender, betrayal, or disclosure of secrets, shall be punished by reform through labor for more than five years. In

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<sup>7</sup> Hawk, David ‘ The Hidden Gulag’, 2nd Edition 2012

<sup>8</sup> A/HRC/13/13 # 45

cases where the person commits a grave offense, he or she shall be punished by reform through labor for more than five years and less than ten years.” Forced labor is thus used as a form of punishment and is intentionally conducted in detention facilities.

2. Labor camps oblige prisoners to work under straining conditions. Most of the mine work is done through prisoners in CCs, particularly in CC 25 and CC 12. Dong-gwang-san is a mine that is used for copper extraction. According to Ahn Myeong Chul, a former guard of a political prison camp, prisoners are forced to work in nuclear facilities, dangerous mine tunnels, and secret tunnels. The CLCs force their prisoners to carry out heavy construction work. Each district in North Korea has a CLC and therefore it is easy to dispatch labor where work is needed. Many prisoners are made to believe that if they work hard they will obtain their freedom. While working hard does help some obtain certain status in the detention facilities, they are rarely released, and their lives and safety become more at risk. PPC’s labor consists of agricultural farming in very difficult land or looking for food in the nearby mountains.
3. Prisoners are thus left working under very difficult conditions and receiving no payment. Such legal framework does not amend to Article 23 of allowing work by “free choice” and Article 24 of the right to “rest and leisure, including reasonable working hours” of the Universal Human Rights or Article 8 prohibiting “slavery and enforced servitude” of the ICCPR.
4. The working hours in detention facilities are excessive, usually lasting for more than 12 hours a day, which does not compare to the average citizen’s working hours. Prisoners are forced to wake up at five in the morning to start work immediately and continue to work all the way through the night even after dinner. In addition, there are penalties or additional working hours prescribed if the work quota designated to each individual is not fulfilled; an example would be a reduction in the amount of food a prisoner receives. This system subjects prisoners to severely damaging psychological and physical pressure. Children under 10 years of age are allowed to attend school; however, the extent of their education is heavily circumscribed, and they are still forced to work before and after their classes. Many people today are being starved and beaten and ultimately die as a result of North Korea’s use of forced labor.
5. The poor working conditions prisoners endure make them vulnerable to accidents that could otherwise be easily prevented. There is an overall lack of protective gear and other safety measures at work sites. As a result, many people die because of accidents that occur while at work. In addition, people with physical disabilities are forced to work because there is no policy that excuses a person with physical disability or injury from work.
6. **Recommendation to abolish the re-education-through-labor system:**

- a. **Apply minimum standards of labor requirements with ethical working hours for prisoners and provide adequate security measures to protect workers from preventable accidents.**
- b. **Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and abolish the re-education-through-labor system implemented by the government.**
- c. **Apply the national Law and Labor Protection rule in detention facilities.**

*“Yes, there are incidents of being beaten to death. If someone can’t work because they are tired, they tell your family that you died while working so they don’t ask how they die. And then they burn all the dead bodies. There is an area where they burn about twenty people at a time... On average about one person will die every three days.”*

**[IN-01]**

*“I chopped trees and made fire from them for three years. I chopped oak trees of which the diameter of the upper end of the timber was 20 cm. I carried the chopped trees on a mountain which was 2000 m high. I cut the trees into 2 or 3 meters long segments and put them on my back by slightly kicking the bottom ends of the trees.”***[IN-05]**

#### **D. ILL-TREATMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

1. Women are the most vulnerable for mistreatment in confinement facilities. There are numerous accounts of rape and sexual abuse sustained during their stay in confinement facilities. Many defectors have reported that beautiful women would become sexual slaves for SSA officers and policemen.
2. In addition, repatriated women that are held at GFS or PHFs that have become pregnant from relations with Chinese men are forced to abort their child in inhumanly brutal ways. These activities involve having a women being kicked in her womb and stomach until the baby dies, or killing a baby by choking it with a plastic bag. Some women may also be shot in the stomach directly into their baby. There have been cases where prison guards also force women to kill their new born babies themselves. Moreover, if women become pregnant because of a police or security agent, then they are forced to terminate their pregnancy using old remedies which cause serious injuries.
3. Women that are caught smuggling or working in any commercial activity are also placed under intense physical and psychological surveillance in detention facilities such as the GFS, PHFs, and CCs. The most common torture applied to women is called ‘pumping,’ where they are stripped naked and told to stand up and sit down very fast to see if any money comes out from inside their genitals. If there is nothing, a man or woman can inspect them directly in their genitals.
4. While children are allowed to receive some education during the early stages of childhood; they are still forced to work in harsh conditions just like adults. They have to participate in compulsory circumstances with unbearable conditions and with very little food.



## 5. Recommendations for Women and Children's Rights:

- a. **Establish an institution or system that can prevent sexual violence against female prisoners. Apply a standard of action in detention facilities that ensures the Laws that Protect Children and Women's Rights.**
- b. **Conduct fair trials for the victims of sexual abuse and torture.**
- c. **Abide by the Universal Human Rights Article 25 where "mothers and children are entitled to special care and assistance. All children whether born in or out of wedlock shall enjoy the same social protection".**

*"There was also a woman who was pregnant for 9 months. They took her somewhere and she bore her baby. They made her wrap the baby with a plastic bag. After two to three days, the baby started to make a noise like that of an animal, and eventually died. There were four other pregnant women, but all of them eventually died. It was because they did not receive good postnatal care and were malnourished."* [IN-04]

*"They looked at us taking our clothes off through a hole in the door. We were standing naked in front of the guards. We tried to cover ourselves with blankets, but they forced us not to. Then female guards came along and searched for money in our bodies. They told us to sit down and stand up repeatedly to see if money would come out of our wombs..."*[IN-02]

## E. INHUMANE STANDARDS FOR PRISONERS

1. Sanitation is an important issue within political prison camps. Prisoners are forced to wash their bodies with the same water they wash their clothes and other utensils. The living areas of prisoners are infested with rats, parasites, and insects. The smell inside prisons is identical to trash bins and is unbearable. Prisoners are rarely allowed to wash or use the bathroom of their own free will.
2. Detention facilities vary in size and space. Nonetheless, it has been recorded that most detention rooms are filled beyond their capacity. More than 50 people can be placed in a room of 2.5 square meters. Ex-prisoners and defectors have claimed that it was so cramped that they couldn't stretch out their feet while sleeping.
3. Prisoners are malnourished due to the lack of nutrients. The rations of food can amount to one or two cups of corn per day. If work quotas are not met, food rations may be withheld as punishment. This method of starving prisoners allows them to be controlled like animals.
4. There are no health centers in detention facilities. There is no medicine or vaccines for sick prisoners. If a person is found to be sick, many times they are forced to continue working or

are left without treatment. Many of them die of diarrhea as they are made to eat dirt when they are caught stealing food. There have been many narrations where people claim bodies would be piled and burned together as they accumulated on a daily basis.

5. It has been revealed from a CC named Jung-San, located in Hamgyong province, that twenty bodies would be buried at once due to the high rate of deaths provoked by malnutrition and severe work conditions. Similarly, many defectors report on having seen large quantities of bodies that would be buried in one location. They were buried in such a careless manner that dogs would come and dig out their bodies to eat.

#### 6. **Recommendations for Minimum Standards of Prisoners:**

- a. **Comply with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners adopted by the First United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held at Geneva in 1955, and approved by the Economic and Social Council by its resolutions 663 C (XXIV) on July 31, 1957 and 2076 (LXII) of May 13, 1977. Abide by Article 10 of the ICCPR which states, “all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person.”**

*“Our faces turned dark and we became extremely skinny as we had no food. One girl died from malnutrition. An old lady passed away after a horrible bout of diarrhea. A week after her, another elderly woman died. She was almost 56 years old. One day she suddenly became ill, but instead of treating the illness, she was kicked. She was kicked and beaten by the guards, and to make matters worse, she was still sent out for labor. She died from dehydration. [IN-09]*

## **F. PUBLIC EXECUTIONS**

1. As signed by the ICCPR, North Korea has pledged to respect, protect and fulfill all citizens’ right to life. Article 6 of the ICCPR prohibits arbitrary deprivation of life and mandates that the death penalty can only be applied in the most serious of crimes. Nonetheless, North Korea continues to implement this method with no reliable justification. Although there have been a decreasing number of public executions in North Korea, it does not necessarily mean they are completely non-existent.
2. According to the Korean Institute of National Unification (KINU) White Paper on North Korean Human Rights 2013, there are four reasons why public executions are thought to be on the rise: 1) the addition of ordinary crimes to the penal code in 2007; 2) revision of the penal code in 2009; 3) the appointment of Kim Jung-Un and his stricter measures of control from September 2010 onward; and 4) the changes in leadership with Kim Jong-Un.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> KINU, White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea 2013

3. Other prisoners and civilians are forced to watch public executions. This is done to maintain social control and ensure loyalty to the government. By publicly executing civilians, the North Korean government is suppressing freedom of thought and political ideology.
4. **Recommendation for Right to Life:**
  - a. **Implement laws that abide to international standards and support the right to life. Such is the ICCPR Article 6 that supports the “inherent right to life” of all people.**
  - b. **Completely cease to apply the death penalty.**

*“She told me that there would be a public execution the next day. Four women in their thirties were to be publicly executed. They were said to have hidden children and kimchi jars filled with candy and snacks, and were going to sell them off to China at night. Therefore, those four were shot dead.” [IN-08]:*

## **G. TORTURE**

1. The DPRK has not responded to Austria’s recommendation to “sign and ratify the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel Degrading Treatment or Punishment, establish judicial oversight over all prison facilities, and take immediate action with a view to the elimination of all forms of torture by the security forces and prison personnel.” Despite the claim that “The Criminal Procedures Law prohibits forcing a person to admit an offense by coercive and conciliatory methods such as torture or other illegal methods and exaggerating or fabricating cases,” torture is used as a medium to maintain control and force detainees to admit to crimes they have not committed.
2. In addition, Article 7 of the ICCPR states that it is a non-derogable right for a person to be free from torture. The DPRK, despite having ratified it, is not abiding by the standards of the convention. North Korea has continuously stated that it does not torture any of its prisoners, but first-hand accounts from defectors suggest the opposite.
3. It is very difficult for a person not to experience torture when they are in a detention facility. The number of cases on record are endless and describe violence and practices such as ‘pigeon torture’ (holding a prisoner by the feet and arms like a pigeon for days), the ‘needle torture’ (surrounding the prisoner with needles so that they are unable to move), and ‘pumping torture’ (mostly used on women requiring them to stand up and sit down at a very fast pace to see if anything comes out of their genitals). These exercises are extremely offensive, inhumane, and go against the very core of human rights.
4. **Recommendation for the Abolition of Crimes Against Humanity:**
  - a. **Sign and ratify the Convention against Torture (CAT) to eliminate all forms of torture carried out by the security agency and prison personnel.**

- b. **Implement an educational and institutional system that embraces human rights, particularly in the DPRK's police and security apparatuses.**

*“Not only was I verbally abused, but also I was whipped after having been tempted by food. Warders attempted to take off my clothes and kicked my shins. I was not allowed to sleep at all because of interrogation...I was starved and tortured in so many different ways. For example, there was something called ‘Needle torture’ in which I sat surrounded by so many needles. If I had moved a bit, I would have been poked. Another way of torturing me was called ‘water drop torture’ in which water fell on my forehead drop by drop. It was so painful...”[IN-04]*

*“They tortured me while sitting me down on a key-like chair. Two persons took turns beating me while I was stripped down to my underwear. [IN-07]*

*“While sleeping we would be ordered to get into the push-up position, and if our knees or bellies touched the ground, they beat our backs with the rulers and kicked us. If you faint after being beaten too much, you are taken to the clinic to receive sedatives. We were beaten so much that our bodies were bruised all over.”[IN-08]*

## **V. Concluding Recommendations**

1. The North Korean government continues to claim that the North Korean people enjoy their economic, social, and cultural rights to the fullest according to the ICESCR entry on September 14, 1981. However, continuous interviews with defectors suggest this is not the case.
2. The DPRK should collaborate with human rights mechanisms such as the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the former Commission on Human Rights, and the Human Rights Council, and grant the Special Rapporteur access to evaluate and analyze the human rights situation in the DPRK's detention facilities.

In addition, the DPRK should collaborate and give access to detention facilities in order to provide proof of the improved conditions, particularly at political prison camps. Despite evidence provided by various South Korean and international sources, North Korea continues to deny the existence of political prison camps. North Korea has continuously rejected all resolutions and human rights recommendations given by different UN mechanisms and other human rights organizations. The North Korean government replies that these are forms of terrorism against North Korea and that they have created pressure and disruption on the country's internal socialist system, thus demanding no further interference into its internal situation. Nonetheless, the DPRK should abide by international human rights standards and make their detention facilities and practices transparent.