**Speakers:**

Ms. KIM Young Soon (political prison camps and related violations)

Mr. KIM Eun Cheol / Mr. Jeong Kwang-il (Political prison camps and related violations)

Dr. KIM Young Hoon (Korea Rural Economic Institute – Right to food)

***Ms. KIM Young Soon (political prison camps and related violations)***

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Good morning everyone. We are going to start the second session of this public hearing in Seoul, Korea and I would call forward Mrs. Kim.

[0:01:00] Thank you very much for coming today to assist us. And I understand that you are prepared to have your full name go on the record and that you have spoken about that with the members of the secretariat. Is that correct?

[0:02:00] Yes, are you happy for us to use your name on the record?

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And the testimony that you are going to give us today will be the truth.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes, I do agree to have my name, my full name, to be left in the record. And I do pledge to tell the truth in this testimony.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Kim Young Soon, [00:03:00] you hold the office of female vice president of the Committee for the Democratization of North Korea.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes, that’s true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

You have come along today to give a testimony to this Commission of Inquiry of the United Nations, which is investing human rights abuses in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, North Korea.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes, that’s true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Born in North Korea, and at that stage, part of…

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

No, actually, I was born in China.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And that was I think, in 1937. Is that correct?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

[0:04:00] I was born in the city of Shenyang in China in 1937.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When did you come to Korea? Where did you come to?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I came to Korea on the 25th of November 2003.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you come to North Korea before then?

**Ms. Kim Young Soon:**

I went to Pyongyang in October of 1945. I went to Pyongyang because of the liberation of Korea and also my older brother went to Pyongyang first.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And I think you became connected with the leading members of the Worker’s Party and the Communist Party in North Korea. [0:05:00] Is that correct?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes, that’s quite true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

You were at one stage, engaged in activities that involved friendship with a person who was later to be a significant person in North Korea.

**Ms. Kim Young Soon:**

Yes, yes, that is true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

A friend of yours, and I think, she was a dancer and...

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well actually, my friend was an actress.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Are you willing to mention her name?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

[0:06:00] Her name is Song Hae-rim [ph] (6:04). She is the third wife of Kim Jong-il. Her name was Song Hae-rim.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And she was the mother of the first son of Kim Jong-il, is that correct?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

She is the mother of Kim Jong-nam, the first son of Kim Jong-il.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was the nature of your friendship with her?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well when we were reverting back, drawing back, in 1950, that is during the Korean War, so we went to same school. [0:07:00] That is, we were in Pyongyang art school. There was a Pyongyang art school. When I was studying dancing, and Song Hae-rim, she studied acting and I was actually a student of Choi Seunghee [ph] (7:16), a very famous dancer in Korea. So we went to same school.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When did she become associated with Kim Jong-il?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I think it was around 1969, or was it 1967 or 69? I think she actually became a part of the family in 1969, but I think she knew him since 1967.

Song Hae-rim, she, to one of the photographers, lived upstairs, and I was living in the first floor downstairs.

[0:08:00] Hae-rim came to my house, and she told me that she is going to live with the relatives, the families of Kim Jong-il, and that’s when I knew that was going to be the last time that I was going to meet her. And in 2002, I came to China, and I learned through the Korean broadcasting system that Song Hae-rim had passed away.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you yourself meet Kim Jong-il at that time or was he not to be seen?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Kim Jong-il; I was a dancer of the dancing company in North Korea, [0:09:00] and I was able to meet with Kim Il-sung. I actually shook hands with him and in 1959, there was an honorable nation and so that was one of the productions that we had put on and Kim Jong-il came to our performance quite a few times, so I was able to see him.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was your attitude to the Kim family at that time?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well in North Korea, Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il, and now Kim Jong-un, were actually, I don’t really know about Kim Jong-un. [0:10:00] Well, about the Kim Jong-il, they were the elite of the elites in North Korea and they were the top of the Kim Il-sung of state. So they weren’t names that we could not even talk about; I never really talked about or mentioned their names or Kim Gyung-ee or Jang Sung-tae [ph] (10:24).

When I went with them to Russia, and I however, I never said aloud the names of Kim Il-sung or his immediate family. That’s because in North Korea, there are 10 principles and we are not to damage the reputation and we are only to live in loyalty to Kim Il-sung and his family. [0:11:00] That is the principle 1. And, we only had loyalty for these great leaders, and the Labor Party. And only the great leader would be responsible for the life of the people of North Korea. That is why I had such allegiance, loyalty, to the Kim family.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What happened in 1970, which changed your life in respect of your ordinary day-to-day activities? What was that?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

In 1970, I think it was first of August. My husband told me not to dance because I would go on a trip so many times. [0:12:00] And I started working for a shop for foreigners. Only the privileged would be able to shop in that shop so I was working in that shop so I was able to eat good food and I was able to have a very good life. And in 1970, the party secretary told me to go to Sinuiju. But I had a baby that was breastfeeding. But this was instruction from the party so I decided to go to Sinuiju. And I had to take a train 34. [0:13:00] And half an hour later, there was this general with two stars, asked me for my identification and business travel permit. And then he asked me to come outside and there was a jeep, a car that was waiting for me.

So on the jeep, they took me somewhere. There was an acrylic window and I looked outside and there was an apartment building and at that time, I was really lost. I didn’t know what to do because this had never happened to me before. Anyway I was going up the stairs. I don’t know at what floor I was taken to in that apartment building. Anyway I went into a room and they asked me to take off my clothes so I took off my clothes and they gave me this patient’s clothing. [0:14:00] And then they told me to stay in the room and there were two members of the Bowibu that were standing guard. And there was a place where I could wash, there was a toilet. And anyway, in that room, they told me to go to sleep so I was trying to sleep but I couldn’t sleep so I got up. That was the longest night of my life. For about a week, there was nobody coming to see me. I didn’t know what was happening; I didn’t know where I was. And it was just an unbelievable of a situation. The next day I looked outside. The two Bowibu, the two national security agents, told me not to look outside. Anyway, one week later, they came in with papers and pen and they asked me to write down who I met, [0:15:00] who I talked to, what I talked about, what kind of officials that I knew for the past 34 years of my life. So I was actually in the room of three-twelfth of the pre-board room and I was investigated for two months. And then the 5 Bowibu came in and said that what I said had been transmitted to South Korea and then they told me that I had to accept all the measures that has been taken by the Labor Party. So and then I was taken to… the seven members of my family were taken to Kwan-li-so number 15.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[0:16:00] This was in North Korea, is that correct?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

This Bowibu, three-twelfth, is not even known to the officials. It looks like every normal house, a normal flat, but it’s actually a very high level security. And there were my Mum with my baby were asking around, where I was, and my Mom was not able to find out where I was. So when I came back home after two months; I came back after two months and I was going to go on a business trip and I came back after two months. And the national security agent told us not to cry because nobody was dying. [0:17:00] Anyway, we were taken to Yodok camp, and because I was the criminal, my parents and my children and we all seven us, were taken to Yodok camp.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Had they done any offence or had they committed any crimes?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

No, they did not commit any crime.

So there are many ways you could be taken to Bowibu. When I learned at Yodok camp, we, sometimes the whole family is taken to the camp; sometimes there are cases only the person that has committed the crime is taken to the camp. [0:18:00] So Yodok camp, so there are different three ri, and they are broken into ten different groups. So there are groups where only single persons live or are kept and then in the other groups where there are families. And there is a guard post at the central gate. There are, I understand now, they have a large guard post, but when I was there, there was a small guard post. There are two guards that are standing guard. And, they had a very transparent, they had two lights and then the barbed wire was there and there was a Ryonghung River and our family was taken on a truck. So it was first of October in 1970. [0:19:00] The road was not paved; it was a very rough road. Anyway, we were taken on this truck and we came to the central gate and then we were waiting and then the guard from the camp came to take me over. The Bowibu, from Bowibu handed over, really thick documents. So I asked the Bowibu where they were taking me and the Bowibu agent told me that there is no place in North Korea where there is no light that came out of the Kim family. So that as long as I was obedient, then I would be able to be released. And then I was taken to the camp anyways. 0:20:00] They told me to get off the truck and my mom, my parents, who were over 70 years old, and then there were babies. They were getting off but they told us to rush. And then they took us to this small house and at that house, the leader of the camp came and told us that we were allowed to come here at the consideration of the great leader. And they told us to go to a cafeteria and in that cafeteria, they gave us a corn and a salted cabbage. In Pyongyang, we were eating meat, beef, we were eating really well. But all of a sudden, they were giving us this corn and cabbage. And my mom was carrying the baby [0:21:00] and my father was holding the hands of my children. Anyway, we walked 2~3 hours to walk to the third group and then we went to sleep and then the next morning when I woke up, they told me that let’s go to your new house. And the seven family had to live in a really, really small house. And there was a really small kitchen. And then they told us to get into this house , we did that.

We lived in that house for about a month. We were only eating off, living off corn. And there were a lot of dirt and I asked one of the people from the camp what are we going to do? Because the floor was all breaking, and so a lot of dirt. [0:22:00] And they told us to get clay from the mountain in order to lay the floor again and so I did that. And that became the clay floor. Then when I came to Korea, what it’s really popular is the clay mat. That was quite ironic. I lived on that clay floor for about nine years. That is why I think I am quite healthy. Anyway, my father starved to death the next year and there was no coffin for my dad. We were only able to bury him, wrapped around in a rug. One of my sons, he was crossing the river, he slipped and he died. When he died, he was nine years old. So in 1975 I thought I was going to be released. [0:23:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I am going to ask you a question: did you ever come to understand why you had been taken to this camp? Did the questions you were asked indicate to you why you were suffering this fate?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

When I was questioned, I wrote down everything about Song Hae-rim. But if I knew that I was going to be taken to Yodok camp, I would have not written down about Song Hae-rim. So that’s why I wrote down everything about Song Hae-rim and her coming to my house and about her going to live with the immediate family of Kim Il-sung. The people who are taken to Yodok camp, [0:24:00] I mean I was taken to the camp without trial and I didn’t even know what crime I had committed. And, maybe Kim Jong-il asked Song Hae-rim whom she has talked to about her going to, and maybe Hae-rim told Kim Jong- il that she told me that she was going to Kim Jong-il’s family.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you tell anybody anything?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

[0:25:00] No I’ve never done that. I only knew of them. Song Hae-rim was wife of E-Pyong [ph] (25:22) and then she has gone to live with Kim Jong-il. I understand that that was a secret, even to Kim Il-sung. And according to Hwang Jang-yup [pH] (25:33) in 1970, anybody who said that Song Hae-rim has gone to live with Kim Jong-il was shot to death.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Why would that be?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well, as a North Korean, it is quite difficult to answer that question because in North Korea we are not to say anything about family life of Kim family if we [0:26:00] cannot.. somebody... I understand that a person talked about Kim Jong- il’s women, and that person I understand was shot to death. So this Kim royal family and we were living in the dictatorship, so it was almost like a kingdom where you were not able to say anything critical about the royal family.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And how long did you remain in the Yodok political prison camp?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I was there for nine years. I was in a place that was completely controlled, restricted and I was in a different place in the fields over five years. In total I spent nine years there. [0:27:00] It was in a completely restricted zone and when I was taken there, I thought it was the end of the world. In 1975, they had a policy in North Korea to end the generation of families that had betrayed, committed treason to the state and I was taken there also. I spent five years there.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Where was that? Was that part of the Yodok camp or another camp?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes, yes they were both inside the Yodok camp. The Yodok camp was divided by a mountain but both places were inside the Yodok camp.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What did you think about the way in which you and your family were being treated at the time? [0:28:00]

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I had no idea why I was there but because maybe I got a hint, maybe it was because I was associated with Song Hae-rim but I never spoke it about it to anyone. When my parents passed away, I did not, I could not complain but I was determined to perform well and to get out of there. It was the only hope I had. For nine years, I had to sew up the uniform that gone worn and torn. I did everything and I also tied my hair. I spent 9 years doing everything I could, determined, with a strong will to get out of there. I was determined to do my best to end and be released from the camp. [0:29:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was the working regime in the camp? How many hours a day did you work?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

In the political camp in Yodok, from daybreak to dawn, we had to work. There was no time said. We got up at 3:30, we had corn for breakfast and for several days. We went to work by 4:30. Famers had to go to where they worked. I was sent to a Gongupdae [pH] (29:43), an industrial related work. I was the only one who worked in my family. I had to run for 10ri, because if I got late, if I was late, they cut our food for the day. [0:30:00 Even if my bone was broken, I had to get up and run and get to my work on time. But even if I did my best, they were still very cruel. At the Yodok prison camp, I was ordered to cut 800kg of grass in August. There were so many snakes in Yodok camp and so while I was trying to weed, I came across a lot of snakes. It was very scary. And these snakes would not just die. I tried to kill them, but they would not go away. And even I survived. I even ate snakes alive, I skinned them alive and there were other people who did. [0:31:00] And these people, after eating the snakes alive, they died from getting sick from it. And there were a lot of people who died because of hard work and there were also people who died from getting this African disease. Their skin turned blue, and their anus became opened and you can see the corn that they eat come right through the anus. And you see babies with bloated stomachs. And we also cooked the snakes [0:32:00] and the mouse to feed these babies and if there was a day that we were able to have mouse, there was a special diet for us. And so we had to eat everything alive, every type of meat that we could find, everything that flew, that crawled on the ground. Any grass that grew in the field, we had to eat. That’s the reality of the prison camp.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What food did you get from the prison camp authorities for yourself and your family?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

There was no food, it was just corn. Just corn and salt. No oil.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you have anybody to complain to? [0:33:00] Did you ever complain about your predicament?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

There was no way I could complain. In North Korea, you don’t complain because we were going to die. But they saved us at least from death because the dear leader took pity on us. We were just laborers, just workers. We could not complain a single word. And everyday we were instructed about the ideology. Quarterly and two times a year. And at the end of the year, we had to be instructed about the ideology. Anybody who contravened to this ideology was chained and was never to be seen.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How long did you spend in ideology training? [0:34:00]

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

We spent, after work, we spent 2-3 hours and we were gathered to this minju sunjeon room [ph] (34:19) Once the meeting began, everyone dozed off. In this winter, we were trembling from the cold and when we dozed off, we were ordered to run outside to take a run for 10 times around the field and wash our faces. And so we did and came back to the meeting room and continued the ideology meeting but people who were chained away, they never came back. [0:35:00] People in the Yodok suyongso, we asked each other why we were there and sometimes there were people who were arrested because they broke or damaged the portrait of Kim Il-sung or sculpture of Kim Il-sung or because they saw a south Korean drama broadcasting or people who knew about the private life of the Kim family or someone like me who was associated with Song Hae-rim. There was also a woman who helped Song Hae-rim give birth and she told everybody when she came home that Song Hae-rim had given birth to a boy. And the word got out. She was imprisoned in 1973 because she told people about the birth of Song Hae-rim’s son and word got out. [0:36:00] The person was chained away and so the man Kim Ha-Chan [pH] (36: 09), who spread the words about the birth of the son Kim Hae-rim, was also arrested at this camp.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

You told us of your ideology training. I think you had training in the Juche agriculture ideology. What was your understanding of the Juche agriculture ideology?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

The Juche ideology in North Korea means that we have to be self-reliant. We made our fate, we determined our fate. That’s the Juche ideology. The Juche ideology was reiterated every time. I don’t think it is wrong, a bad ideology. [0:37:00] We are responsible for our own life and we have to drive our own life. It’s a very good idea. But after I was released from the Yodok camp, I thought that the Juche ideology was created to uphold the dictatorship, the allegiance to the supreme leader of Kim Jong-il and that’s why the Juche ideology no longer makes sense to me. After I came out of the Yodok camp, I lost the Juche ideology, lost credibility, and that was from 1989.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And when were you finally released from the camp? Was it in 1989?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I was released in 1979. I went in there in 1970, got out in 1979. [0:38:00] And in 1989, from Pyongyang, National Security Agency summoned me. At that time, when I was arrested, they put me in a Mercedes Benz. I did not have to walk, so I took the Mercedes Benz with the national security agents to the NSA building in Hamgyong Nam-do, South Hamgyong province. I took the stairs upstairs and I met this director. I was very pale because after 9 years of Yodok camp, I did not understand why the NSA would want to see me. They told me not to be surprised. They just wanted to ask me some questions. They told me that Song Hae-rim was not the wife of Kim Jong-il and that she did not give birth to a son. [0:39:00] And that any word that was saying otherwise was a complete lie; this is what was told to me. I returned home. For the following week, I was very unstable; I was always on alert, scared that they would come for me again. And so that is why I became strongly determined to come to South Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And when did you take the steps to come to South Korea? How long after that event?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

It took me 19 years after the event, it took me 19 years under the surveillance of the National Security Agency, I lived 31 years of my life, from 1970 to 2001.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[0:40:00] And how did you escape the surveillance in order to come to the Republic of Korea?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

My husband went to Pyongyang in 1990. Shin Gwang-soo [ph] (40:35) was a spy. He reported about my husband and my husband was arrested away and I have no idea where he is right now. I had nobody to ask about his whereabouts. I knew that I wasn’t going to get any questions. My husband disappeared on the 4th of July 1970. [0:40:00] I was investigated on August 1st 1970 by the National Security Agents after I was released from Yodok. I was given amnesty; I was pardoned by a supervisor at Yodok. The supervisor at Yodok, I went down on my knees and I told him that I was the sister of Kim Sok-cheon [ph] (41:38) and I told him that I had no idea why I was there and that my family had died. I begged him and he pardoned me and I was released. If this is known inside North Korea, he is going to get into trouble but he passed away so that is why I can share this story with you. After I came out of Yodok, I attempted to escape from 1989 but I knew nobody around the border and it was very difficult to [0:42:00] get out from Hamhung. After I was released from Yodok, we were collectively relocated to a coalmine. But every single thing even the gold mine in Korea, belongs to the Kim Il-sung family so this gold mine was also belonged to Kim Il-sung. After I lived in Hamhung city, I met this supervisor who once blew the clarinet in the military band. [0:39:00] I was not to talk about my experience in the camp. However in my history, in the resume, it says that I worked at the labor camp at Yodok for ten years. But I told his man that my husband has become an engineer but he passed away so it is quite difficult for me to make a living. So let me live in Hamhung. So he helped me to get residence in Hamhung. So in July of 1981, I was able to live in Hamhung. But since 1990, there was no ration given to us. So there was a bit of confusion in North Korea, so I decided to cross the border. [0:42:00] So I went to go to the border and because I was an inmate at Yodok camp, if I was caught, I would have been shot to death so I paid 1000won to get a military identification and then I escaped in 2002. So at that time there were a lot of corruption in North Korea at that time so I was able to buy fake travel permit and things like this. So it was actually on the 1st of February 2001 that I escaped from North Korea and I actually paid 500won and I also provided a meal to one of the national security agents. I told him that I would make a lot of money in China that I would come back and make the payment to him. Anyway, I escaped to China and I was looking for a broker. In Yeongyung I was trying to find, I went to a church and try to find a broker and I was trying to get a job and I worked in restaurants and I worked as a maid for about 2 years and 6 months. And finally I found a broker who would be able to take me to South Korea through several cities in china and Cambodia and Vietnam. So I was able to come to South Korea in 2003.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What are the lessons that you draw from the experiences that you have taught us?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

In North Korea, [0:46:00] I lived as a high-class elite until I became 34. It was a fabulous life; I was an actress. That life ended. My brother also served in the military and he worked with this prominent commander who did very well in the Korean War. He was promoted in his army and so but he died; he was shot. [0:47:00] And after the liberation, and he was an advisor to the military leaders. And so he was also a close neighbor to one of the current military leaders. So my brother was really high in the military so we were a family of patriots; we were receiving presents from the Kim Il- sung family and then we were sent to Yodok camp. And my parents originally come from Gyeongsang province and that is why I’ve decided to come to South Korea. It’s been about 10 years since I came to South Korea and I’m here living in Korea. I’m very grateful. [0:48:00] And if I have not gone through Yodok camp, then I would not have decided to come to South Korea and I think that at the camp I was able to learn so many things. I was able to have experiences that many people cannot even imagine and because I’ve gone through so many pains, so many difficulties and hardships, that is why here I am in living in Korea without complaining. So North Korean governments, they have imposed on me unspeakable difficulties and hardships, but I think those hardships actually prepared me to live more diligently here in Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How many of the seven members of your family survived the nine years that you’ve spent in Yodok camp? [0:49:00]

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Four survived the Yodok camp. My daughter, I adopted her. She got married to a farmer. She is 53 now. I don’t know about her whereabouts. My son attempted to escape from North Korea in 1989 but he was arrested. He was shot to death at 23. Another son is here in Korea, but he was forcefully returned to North Korea. He is disabled today because when he was forcefully returned, his lungs got damaged. He has only 1/3 of his lungs right now. He is 43 right now. So my parents passed away, my one son got shot, my daughter was given away. She was adopted by another person. [0:50:00] So I have nothing left with me right now.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Do you feel bitter against the regime of the Kim’s in North Korea?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

The North Korean regime, within the title of the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea, has the responsibility to feed and protect its people. In North Korea, we are instructed to embrace the sadness and the happiness of the supreme leaders. They were the sons of the 21st century, and we were instructed, we were brainwashed to live a happy life under their regime. I thought that it was the [0:51:00] greatest honor to shake hands with Kim Il-sung and attending the banquets provided by Kim Il-sung was the highest privilege I was given to. But the freedom that I have tasted in the Republic of Korea, 50million people in the Republic of Korea, every single one of them are happy with them; they are proud of themselves and I am grateful that I am able to live in this country. North Korea needs to address this problem; they will need to adopt the market system. They have to give freedom to their people and people everywhere in the post-war era, the focus now is on the individual happiness to give freedom and the sunshine to the people of North Korea. North Korea has to adopt liberal democracy [0:52:00] and we need to reunify so that people in North Korea can live a happy life.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Thank you very much Mrs. Kim. Do you have any questions, Commissioner Darusman?

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Mrs. Kim, when you were in Yodok in the prison, there were also persons of high-ranking positions. Could you tell us something about that?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes I can. In North Korea, there was [pH] (52.53) Won Hyo-son, Jong Sa-chun, were some of the high level supervisors. Jong Sa-chun supervisor [0:53:00] ...we were forced to work in front of guns and knives in the early days of Yodok. And there was a couple whose son has been imprisoned in Yodok because he saw a…

The grandfather of Choi Minsoo [ph] (53:41) was also imprisoned in Yodok. He died after one year there. And Choi Seunghee died in another prison camp. And soccer player, I think his name is Park Young-Il but I’m not sure, but he played soccer. He was also imprisoned in Yodok. Jong sunghee [ph], an eye doctor, was also there. [0:54:00] Kim Dongkyu [ph], an international spy, was also in Yodok. Choi Seunghee student, Hyung Jongsook [ph], she was a very good student of Choi Seunghee, she was also in Yodok. In Yodok there was a person who was very articulate. He was imprisoned in 1973, he was imprisoned when he was 73, but he passed away in Yodok.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Would you able to write down all these names later?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes I can do that for you. [0:55:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

And that, would you know whether they have been released or are still there in the camps? Those who did not die.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well, I know some people who have been released. For instance, Kang Hosik’s [ph] 55:38) son, I know he has been released. And there is a producer called Ik Joonggu [ph] (55:43) and Ik Joonggu has asked Kim Jong-il to have him released. So that is why he has been released from the Yodok camp. I think he was released in 1975. So, he is the son of Kang Hongsik. And, Kang Hyojae [ph] and Kang Hyosung [ph], [0:56:00] I understand that they are working as directors and producers at a play company, a movie company. And I understand that they have been in movies as well. So there have been some people who have been reinstated in the society, but most people die in the camp.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

But some of them escape from North Korea and come down to South Korea?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well, I’m one of the early inmates of Yodok camp because the camp was established in 1969 and Kim Byongha [ph] (57:06) established Yodok camp through his allegiance. However in 1984, [0:57:00] Kim Byongha was purged. Anyway, I was the early inmates of Yodok camp but I don’t know any other early inmates of Yodok camp who are in South Korea. And, I have heard some people who have come from other camps, Kim Taejin [ph] (57:29), or Ahn-hyok [ph]. I know they have been in Yodok camp, but I haven’t actually met them when I was in Yodok camp because I was really one of the early inmates. And I think of those who have been stamped as anti-revolutionary, I think not many of them have come to South Korea; I’m one of the very few people

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

They were released when you were still in North Korea after you were released. [0:58:00]

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I’m sure, yes. I understand the stay or the imprisonment period has become shortened afterwards. And when I was living in the city of Hamhung, I met one of the guards, one of the officials. And they asked me is it good to live back in society and I said yes, it is good to be back in the society. And they also told me that Yodok camp was changed to imprison people who have received bribery or people have problems with ideology because they have been sent to foreign missions.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Did you have any occasion to meet with these people who are released after a while? Did you meet some of them? [0:59:00]

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I met a repatriated person. I think her name is Choi Seunghee [ph] (59.22), she is another dancer and her husband was taken to Yodok camp and her family was also taken to Yodok camp. So, I met her. That lady, or that woman, actually ran a restaurant in North Korea, and so she is one of the people I met who used to live in Yodok camp. And there is also an actress called Baek Seunghae [ph] (59.58). Her husband was an actor in one of the famous programs in North Korean TV. Baek Seunghae, we use to go to the same school. [1:00:00] She was quite pretty and she also sang quite well. Anyway her husband was a Chaemoo [ph] 1:00:16). He lived in the Yodok camp for 10 years. Anyway, they were released and they lived in Hamhung and Baek Seunghae had relatives in South Korea so she was able to get money from her relatives in South Korea through people in China.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

The people that were supervising the prison camps, if we had photographs about all these people, would you be able to recognize these people who were guards and supervising the prison?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

I think that would be quite difficult. I only know the people or guards in my group [1:01:00] because we were not moved to another class or groups. So, it was quite difficult. In North Korea, there was public execution. The people would have gags in their mouths and they would be blinded as well. And then they would be executed in public for they have tried to escape. And our inmate would go there. We would gather there and we were not able to express any sympathies. So that was the case in the situation in the camp.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Thank you. [1:02:00]

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

Thank you Mrs. Kim Young Soon for everything you have said. I have noted that you have pointed out several times the responsibility of the regime to feed its people. You have told us much about the prison conditions. But would you be able to describe how you managed your food after you were released from the prison? It was exactly the times the famine was hitting hard in North Korea. And whether you were supported by the state in supplies of the food in this difficult time.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

After I left the camp, I was working as a miner. I used to work in the mine [1:03:00] and I would load the coal or gold onto the truck. I was working as hard as I was in the camp as I could. I was given rations; I was paid salaries. And then I move to Hamhung, as I said. In order to make livelihood, I did a lot of sewing, so I made clothing. Actually, I learned from somebody how to make clothing so I did the sewing for 19years and I was also a community leader for about 7 years. And I think they made me a community leader because they were concerned that I would escape and after I retired, I also did sewing. In Hamhung city, no ration was provided since 1990. [1:04:00] After 1993, we had to have markets and one kilogram of rice was about 120won. 120won is a large sum of money. We had to buy the rice in the market so nobody could buy the rice in the market. I was doing the sewing and, I was making clothing for the people, especially the people from who have moved to North Korea from other countries. I was able to buy rice and noodles. I was not able to get employed because in North Korea, what is more important than money is trust. Anyway, from 1989 to 2001, I did sewing and I worked as a community leader. That was the money I had in order to buy food. [1:05:00]

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

You managed to keep your family supplied in a more or less appropriate way. Have you been aware of the international assistance to North Korea at the time? The food that has been sent to North Korea, whether you heard about it and has anything going in reached your family and your friend’s family?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Well in North Korea, we have a lot of rice, international UN rice. But I understand that North Korea is registered as a country without food problem at the world food plan so the food that come into North Korea are for the animals and then they had that rice for the livestock. They would give us the rice [1:06:00] only give food on special days, on holidays. They would give the rations like that. I would get 300grams or 400 grams. So I would take a paper bag so that I would get the rice, the rations. There was also second rate rice. There is rice that would be sent to the Kim family. And then there is also a second rate of rice that would be sent to the military. There would be rice in case of contingency. I don’t know why such a rice is needed. And so they would open the doors of the warehouses. [1:07:00] They could give out that rice to the people. About 10,000 rice a day would be needed for North Koreans and now North Korea wants to become a militarily strong country and the Kim family, to protect the family itself, they are building nuclear weapons. If they did not build nuclear weapons, they would be able to provide rice to the people of North Korea. Instead, when they get this aid or this rice, [1:08:00] they say that this is food that is destined for the animals but they are getting this rice. And there are some people who are just standing in line to get the rations. Some people say that they get old just standing in line for the rations.

So people are just waiting for the ration days. And I think that this should be a story that should be told to everyone and in 1997, about out of 850 000 people, about 50 000 people have died of starvation. There were so many corpses, dead bodies around on the city. There were beggars; there were people who have died of this starvation. They are on the streets and they would take them, carry them on trucks and then bury them in a collective burying spot. [1:09:00] So there was no respect for the people and this shows that the Kim family has no respect for the humanity. And they said that they only need the core, the loyal people, to have the reunification of the Korean peninsula and I think that this should be told to international community and I believe that the people should be fed first before increasing the military capabilities. I hope that you will provide assistance to the people of North Korea. [1:10:00]

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

Was there some official explanation why at that time why so many people died, why so many corpses were found on the streets?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

No there was no official explanation. We say that people died because for Kim Il-sung. When North Korean athlete ran in a marathon and he won first place, a South Korean reporter asked him how he could win and this marathon runner said that he was able to win because he was running for the supreme leader. We are brainwashed, we are like robots; we make one voice. We speak what is written in the script, that’s the North Korean society. So there is no explanation. North Korea people speak what is written in the transcript. [1:11:00] In 2002, the National Security Agency ordered everyone who spoke against the regime and when the rations stopped in 1990, 1992, people stopped having babies. By 2017, they will have no people to send to the military so in order to be registered as a government servant; you need to have at least three people. If the government decides, if they are determined, people act upon it. That’s just North Korean society. The world will not understand this type of society; they will not be able to do so and what happens, everything that happens within the borders of the DPRK, is a closed society. Nobody will understand it. One ideology, one regime. [1:12:00] That’s North Korea. In South Korea, there are so many debates going around because so many different ideologies exist. In North Korea we have one ideology plus dictatorship plus one regime. You have to know this.

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

Mrs. Kim Young Soon, thank you.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Just one last question, Mrs. Kim. I understand that the government of North Korea denies that there are any camps of the kind that you have been describing today for political prisoners. What is your answer to that denial?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

In North Korea, after the war ended, everyone who was against the regime, [1:13:00] who are impediments to the Kim regime, were sent to the political prisons. Anybody who believed in democracy or for the purpose of ending the subsequent generations of people, anti-government people were imprisoned in these political prisons. There are 5 Hwasong, Gochong Kaechon, Bukchang, Dukchon, [ph] (1:13:33) including Yodok. There are 5. In Bukchang Kwanliso, we imprisoned higher-class government servants. Jong Byung-gap [ph] (1:13:43) was in Bukchang. He died there. And Kim Il-sung instructed to make the body wear the military uniform when he was buried. The Auschwitz is better than the political prisons in North Korea. [1:14:00] Being associated with somebody of a higher class like the president in Korea is a privilege, but in Korea if you were associated or if you were aware of anybody that was related to the Kim Il- sung/Kim Jong-il/ Kim Jong-un family, you are guilty. The succession of this leadership is very endemic to North Korea so political prisoners, if the regime changes in North Korea, they will speak about their experiences. If the political prisoners go free, they will cause chaos in North Korea and it will not sustain the regime. So within the people’s title of People’s Democratic Korea, the government cannot just shoot these political treasoners, so that’s why they have these political prison camps. They are considered as impediments to the regime. [1:15:00] But in an emergency, the contingency plan is to bury them, to bury the political prisoners in the ground. They will not accept, admit that they have these political camps. We are brainwashed. We have to close our eyes, close our ears and not speak a word. I realized what was happening in North Korea, the reality of North Korea when I arrived in South Korea. Human rights, the word does not exist in North Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

If you were able to describe exactly where the camp was that you were detained in, could you do that with sufficient detail and particularity [1:16:00] so that if they were permitted, an independent and impartial group could go on behalf of the United Nations to inspect the place that you described. Could you do that?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Excluding the Yodok suyongso, I know that there is one in Kaechon. Hwasong.

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

Yes I can. Yes. I know the location of the Yodok suyongso and I can talk about.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Thank you

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Just one last question, Madame. When you were released, and went back into society, [1:17:00] you lived a ‘normal life’ again. Now, when you meet people, you would not know whether he or she was in fact, at one point, in the camps and released. Would you know, have you met someone that person may have been in the camps in the prison before then?

**Ms. KIM Young Soon:**

No. I had relatives living in Pyongyang. In the 1980’s, in 1979 I went to Pyongyang. My relatives living in Pyongyang, I told her that I have been to Yodok. So unless I disclose this information, no one would ever find out. [1:18:00] My relatives in Pyongyang thought that I was living a very comfortable life as an actress, as a wife of a good soldier. In outside Pyongyang, ‘political prisoners’ is like carrying a scarlet letter in your chest; it’s a shame to be a political prisoner in North Korea.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Thank you

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Thank you very much Mrs. Kim for coming along to give your testimony. We are most appreciative and we will record it and bring it to the notice of the international community and of the world so that they will know of what you have told us. Thank you. You may step down now.

***Mr. KIM Eun Cheol /Mr. JEONG Kwang-il (Political prison camps and related violations)***

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[1:19:00] I want to thank both of you for coming along today and assisting the Commission of Inquiry of the United Nations. I think both of you have discussed with members of the secretariat whether you should disclose your name and you are happy to disclose your names. Is that correct?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol /Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, we did agree. Yes we agree.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

One of you is Mr. Jeong Kwang-il. Who is that? [1:20:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

That’s me.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And the other is Mr. Kim Eun Cheol. That is you. Do you declare that the evidence that you will give is the truth?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol /Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, we do.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[Unclear] (1:20:30) …and Mr. Kim Eun Cheol, would you tell us first, of your experience in North Korea before you went to another country?

(Technical difficulties)

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

[1:21:00] I was born from the middle class. I graduated from school and I was one of the shortest kids in the class. So I was not admitted in the military. So I worked as a miner, a worker in the mining. At that time, there was a food shortage crisis in North Korea. So a lot of people were dying of starvation. There were so many of them. And just to make ends meet, I decided, just to survive, I decided to come to China. And once I came to china, there was a very straight inspection by the security agency of china. [1:22:00] And there was a lot of oppression against North Koreans, so I could not stay in china for a long time. So I decided that I needed to come to South Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How did you plan to get to South Korea.

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Well, when I was in China, there was a church called Yeon-gil church and with the help of South Korean, he told me I could go to South Korea through Russia. And Lee Dong-myung, Jang Ho-young, Choi Gang-ho, Park Myung-shil, Huh Young-il, Choi Seung-il, [pH] so these are the people that I moved together. We went to Russia first. [1:23:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

So we crossed the border to Russia, and we went to this rural town, a rural community and we were so hungry. So we came to this house, but the owner of that house reported us, so we were caught by the border guards of Russia.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How did they treat you?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

This border guards, they had this detention center. The detention houses were really terrible and we were caught in the winter, so it was really really cold. They gave us bread, [1:24:00] but we were still going very hungry and we were really tired.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What did they eventually do? Did they eventually do? Did they send you back to china?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When I was caught, I asked them to arrange for a translator, a Korean translator. So we were able to have an interview. So when I was caught, I knew that they would be sending us back to China, so we have asked to meet with the human rights committee, or the human rights group in Russia. [1:25:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were they able to help you, or did they…

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

We were able to meet with this human rights group people and we told them that we wanted to go to South Korea. We asked them to send us to South Korea and we asked, we sought an asylum, exile, and we took pictures for the registry.

And since we asked for asylum, that everything would work out fine. And then all of a sudden, the people from Russia, said that the North Korean ambassador is here to meet with us, that if we wanted to meet with the ambassador, and we said no. We did not want with the North Korean Ambassador and they said why and we said if we are brought back to North Korea, we would all die. [1:26:00] That’s what we said to them. And so, then write down in the paper, and sign your names on the paper that you would not meet with the North Korean ambassador. So we did that. And that document I understand was given to the North Korean embassy in Russia.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What happened to you after that?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Well, we were refused because the next day, the North Korean ambassador came to us and we had to meet with him. And, he said that, did you receive education thanks to the kindness of the general and we would forgive you, so come back to North Korea. But we said no, no we don’t want to go back to North Korea. We were very firm in our stance. [1:27:00] And at that time, because we were acknowledged as refugees by the United Nations Human Rights Committee, North Korea could not, we thought they would not be able to forcefully repatriate us to North Korea.

But, things did not work out the way we wanted them to. So it was 1999, the last day of December 1999. We were repatriated back to North Korea through China. We were investigated or questioned at guard posts, border posts in China. The seven of us, [1:28:00] actually we were not repatriated back to North Korea; we were going to. So we escaped from the border posts in China. But we were caught thirty minutes after we escape. I was the only one that wasn’t caught; the rest of my group was caught 30 minutes after the escape. And they were, I understand there was a plane that came from North Korea to catch us. I understand that North Korea actually sent, dispatched people to investigate and our escape and to see if I really escaped.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

They investigated into to you, personally? [1:29:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

After I escaped, I went back to Yeon-gil church where I met South Korean who helped me go to Russia. This priest, reverend in the church, said that I saw on TV that you were acknowledged as a refugee by the United Nations. Why did you come back to China? He told me that 40 policemen from North Korea came to find me and the priest told me that I would be caught if I were in Yeon-gil and he asked me to go somewhere else. But it was winter, it was really cold. But I missed my dad and everything, so I decided to come back to North Korea. [1:30:00] So I went to North Korea, but frankly speaking, North Korea was expecting me. They were hiding around my house. I was hiding in a friend’s house. But I wanted to see my Dad. I was going to see my Dad and then go back to china, so I tried to sneak in to my house but I was caught; I was arrested by the national police around my house, my home.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Where did they take you then?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

So I was arrested, I was caught by the police. I was questioned for about a week. And they decided that I should be investigated by Bowibu, not Anjunbu. So I was taken to one of the detention houses of Bowibu. [1:31:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Tell us about the differences between Bowibu and Anjunbu?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Well, Anjunbu, they usually deals with economic related criminals and Bowibu deals with political criminals and people who are related to political crimes. And I was young, and I did not have social experience and I did not know at the time about the legal procedures or the legal status of these two organizations at that time.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was the nature of the interrogation by the Bowibu? What did they do to you?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Bowibu, once you get caught, you are treated like a dog. [1:32:00] I was interrogated, was investigated for about 6 months, I was tortured, I was beaten.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What happened to your teeth?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I was beaten so badly, that 6 of my teeth, my upper teeth and lower teeth, were broken. And they had be kneeled, so my knees are all scratched and hurt.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What did they do to your body? [1:33:00] Were there any acts of torture that you suffered?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

For instance, because they gave me this incredible, emotional, and physical pain because they said I was not talking straight. It would be quite difficult for you to understand, but North Korea had really short, there was no food. The family would come to see you every 3 months, and my Dad came. He brought food for me because he knew that I would be in a very difficult situation. [1:34:00] He sold things that he had and be brought food for me to eat. But the Bowibu agents, they gave the food that my father brought, to other inmates. I was hungry, but what hurt more was that my Dad, my father had sold things that he had to get that food to feed me.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Where there any consequences in your body from the treatment that you received from the Bowibu, today?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, I do. I have a lot of them. [1:35:00]

Well, on my knees, it’s been 10 years; I have scars on and my teeth. Since I came to South Korea, the South Korean government has given me artificial teeth, but at that time, my teeth were not there. And if you look at my ear, it’s been 10 years but still, my ear hurts. And on my head, because I was hurt with the wooden clubs, I still have scars; I think about 10 scars in all on my head.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Where the acts done in a Bowibu investigation facility or were they in the Yodok camp? [1:36:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Bowibu facility.

It was a Moonsangoon [ph] (1:36:32) of North Hamgyong province.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Is that where you grew up or a different province?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, yes, I was born in north Hamgyong province.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How long did this treatment last?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

6 months.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Where you aware why they were doing this to you? [1:37:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

At that time, because I knew I was being tortured because I attempted to escape to South Korea. And I knew that I was going to die. I had given up and because I heard that in North Korea, if you ever tried to go to South Korea, you would be killed no matter what. So I knew the reasons for being questioned.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I think that subsequently, after you got to South Korea, you sent some money to your brothers, is that correct?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, since I came to South Korea, for about the first 2 years, I was able to send some money to my brothers in North Korea. [1:38:00] And my brothers would spend the money and I thought that they may be caught or become suspicious, so I stopped sending money because there is only one bank in North Korea. And so even if you have money in North Korea, you cannot keep the money in the bank; you have to hide the money in the house. You have to dig the ground so that you could hide the money; that’s the case in North Korea. And there is something called in the community, a group, and the people in the same community group would be watching us. So that house is eating rice and meat soup and they would report them to the social security team. [1:39:00] So even if you have money, you have to be careful about spending it because your neighbors would become suspicious and report you.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did this happen to your brother, as you understand?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes. Since I came to South Korea, and since I became famous and my face was known to other countries, my older brother, I understand that last December, was executed. And my second older brother, because the oldest brother was executed, he committed suicide. My second older brother committed suicide by hanging himself.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you have a sister?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I had an older sister and an older brother. [1:40:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Who committed suicide?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

My older sister committed suicide.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I want to be sure because it was translated as your older brother committed suicide, but it was your older brother who was executed and your sister who committed suicide. Is that correct?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, that’s correct.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

That happened much more recently. But I want to take you back to the conclusion of the events of the Bowibu camp and what happened to you after that. Is it then that you were taken to Yodok camp?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, that is correct.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What occurred in Yodok camp? [1:41:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Before I went to Yodok, I had bought blankets and a bed mat, so I had no idea that I was going to Yodok. I thought I was going to die. But when I arrived, I realized I was at the post in Yodok, at the front post and then my life at Yodok camp began.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was the period you were there? Can you identify the years that you were held in Yodok camp?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

From June 2002 to 2003, I was in Yodok.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[Unclear] (1:42:10) …you were there. [1:42:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

At Yodok, when you first are admitted at Yodok, there’s a place that you go that they put people who are physically weak before they start the investigation. They prep you to begin physical labor. I was very young at the time, so I was put there. And I was able to meet people, older people who had come before me. I was physically okay, so I was dispatched right away to build things.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And I think you were building farmhouses for pigs and chicken.

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, that is correct. [1:43:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you ever eat pigs and chicken when you were at Yodok? Pig or chicken meat?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No chicken, but pigs. Sometimes they gave us pig on special days, but only one or two pieces of meat in a soup was given, so we did not get enough pig meat.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was your diet in Yodok prison? What did you eat? How much food did they give you?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

At Yodok, [1:44:00] we ate corn rice like a corn porridge; we called it gadabab [pH] (1:44:24). For each person, we were given 120 grams of gadabab and a soup, that was it.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

That’s a daily allowance?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No, 120 grams per meal, but if you did not perform well, they were cut in half. So 120grams was cut in half if we did not perform well.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Was that three meals a day?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, three meals a day.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Was that enough for you? Did you feel that was sufficient to keep you going?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were you sometimes hungry [1:45:00] and did they do anything to deal with your hunger?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I was always hungry so we traded things. I traded clothes, or between inmates, we exchanged things like clothes, or we traded food so that we can keep ourselves just a little bit more full but it was not enough. It was never enough. We just had to comfort ourselves with what we had.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

You said that you were not able to do military service because of your size. Were your brothers similarly short as you are or were they of full size? [1:46:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

My brother, when I was in Yodok, my brother was serving in the army.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Why do you think you are of shorter size? Can you explain that or is that just a feature of your family?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

My father was tall, but my mother was short.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Do you think it was related to the amount of food you received as a baby and young child? [1:47:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

To some extent, I think, because in 1990, because of the food shortage crisis, I heard that an anchovy soup would make me grow.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you get that soup?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No I have never had that soup.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And when you were in Yodok, did you see any punishment of other prisoners?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, I have. Many times!

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What kind of punishment?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

For example, [1:48:00] if you were hungry, sometimes we stole what was left over from the food of the guards. So some people were detained because of stealing leftover food; they were put in a solitary cell. They are supposed to stay there from 1 week to 15days, but once you are in there, not a lot of people made it out.

Once you are in the solitary cell, you are beaten up and they give you 30grams per meal and you get cold, so that leads to immediate weakness. [1:49:00] Somebody who weighs 50kg, when they come out, their weight is reduced 20kg.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you ever have solitary punishment of that kind?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No, I did not.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you see any public execution whilst you were in Yodok?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, twice.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were you told of what the executions were for?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes I have.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What were the offenses?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

[1:50:00] One person, Kim Moon-sul [ph] (1:50:17), was executed because he was hungry and he went to the potato field to steal potato. He was called a thief and that was why he was publicly executed. And the other person was executed. He tried to get herbs to eat and that’s why he was executed.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Who were present at the time of the execution?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

In the part of the Yodok that I was there, there were two squads. All of the inmates were there, present at the site. [1:51:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And how was the execution performed?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Well the inmates, when they are arrested, they are put into solitary for like a week. And we have wooden woods and the inmates who are to be executed are transferred to the site by trucks. You could see that they were already on the verge of dying.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were they strangled or shot or killed in some other way?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

They were shot. Because they were as good as already dead but they shoot 6-9 bullets to kill them.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What did you feel about this punishment or the crimes that were read out? [1:52:00]

**Mr. Kim Eun Cheol:**

I felt fear. I thought that I could be also publicly executed if I behaved in the wrong way.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were you aware of any other matter that was suggested as the basis of your treatment by Bowibu and at Yodok, except trying to escape to South Korea? Was anything else suggested that you had done?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No, nothing else!

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How do you feel of the way in which you were treated for seeking to go to South Korea? [1:53:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I wanted to go to South Korea because I wanted to survive, that’s it. I didn’t feel I deserved beings sentenced to six months. I was physically damaged and I had to stay there for 3 years. In North Korea, even if you are in trouble, you cannot share your experiences with other people. You’re alone.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What do you mean by that?

**Mr. Kim Eun Cheol:**

The North Korean society itself, even if you are a family, you cannot disclose, [1:54:00] you cannot tell openly to your father. You cannot criticize the North Korean society to even members of your family because even family members don’t trust each other; there is surveillance within family.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were you told that you would have to serve a period of three years or were you unaware of how long you would be in Yodok?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When I was admitted, I was no idea; I was not told.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Were you told that you would be allowed to go out in three years? [1:55:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

At first they said three years, but I didn’t believe it because at the time I was imprisoned, it was a new district and so I had not seen anybody who had been released; that’s why I didn’t trust their words.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

But eventually you were eventually released after three years?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, I was released.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And you were subject to re-revolutionary process in Yodok.

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

No, I did not go back to Yodok.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

But when you were in Yodok, did you have some instruction to try to make you a better citizen in North Korea? [1:59:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When I was released from Yodok, I had to sign a letter to not disclose that I had been in Yodok. I was not to disclose that I was in Yodok and that I did know anything about it. If I were found out to be talking about Yodok, I would be penalized for it.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When did you come to South Korea?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I came to South Korea in 2006.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And have you been able to get work here and make a new life?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes. I received government assistance. [1:57:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And were you given a good welcome by people in South Korea or not?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

In the beginning, I thought the prejudice was very intact. For the first two months I had difficulty adjusting. But as time went, we learned more about each other and I adjusted and now it’s okay.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Is there anything else you want to tell us about your experience? [1:58:00]

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

My brother was executed just because I went to South Korea and my older sister committed suicide just because of that. I don’t want anything like that to be repeated; I don’t think that should happen in our society. I hope that you do your most endeavors to address this issue. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Yes, thank you very much Mr. Kim. Now Mr. Jeong Kwang-il, you were a person with a privileged background in North Korea, I think.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, that is true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How would you describe that?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

[1:59:00] I was born in Jilin, Yanji May 13, 1963. In 1969, my parents relocated to North Korea and so I spent my childhood in North Korea. At the time, the reason for this relocation I understood, because during that time, China was going through the Cultural Revolution. It was a turbulent time and there was a lot of repression, oppression against the ethnic Koreans so I spent childhood in North Korea. In 1979, on the 11th of April, I was enlisted to the army. I served for a decade in the army. After that I was released, I became a civilian and after that I was admitted to the Worker’s Party and I served there for about 9 years. In the late 1990 onwards, in order to earn foreign currency, they set up trading companies in the 824 post stations, I worked there as part of this program. [2:00:00] In December of 1997, I was released from this job. I was relocated to a trading company in Pyongyang. I was engaged in the trading business and at the time, trading in North Korea in the mid 1990s or early 1990s, we traded with Russia and Japan. But afterwards, because of the economic sanctions against with North Korea, we only traded mostly with China.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[2:01:00] What happened to lead you to be discontented with this life, privileged?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

At the time I was not discontent. But since 1998, I started to do in the trading business in china, and I was doing business with Chinese people. The business was un-profitable. It was difficult to make any sort of profit margin. For instance, frozen fish. If we provide them 1 ton, they would only give us $300 per ton of fish. And they would not pay cash; they would give us in corn in return. And the corn that they give us was not edible; it was feed for the animals. And I found out that the fish that we sold to Chinese were sold to Koreans and they were getting $1000 per ton. [2:02:00] So I decided to do business directly with South Koreans, not going through the Chinese. But I was taught in North Korea that we should not come into direct contact with South Korea. But I thought about this and I thought it would be better to do business directly with South Koreans so I doing trading business with South Koreans and I came to know South Koreans. And that became I think one of the reasons. [2:03:00] And I think it was July 1999, I think it was 9oclock at night. I was sleeping at a friend’s house and I was arrested at night. And I was arrested and taken. The person that arrested me was Ji Young-soo [ph] (2:03:48) who was the head of Bowibu in that neighborhood and there were 5 NSA agents, Bowibu agents, with the wooden clubs. As soon as I was in the room they started beating me. And there were, I remember the names: Hong Jung-hwan [ph] (2:04:08) was one of them. And then there was Park Won-soo [ph] (2: 04:11), he was also with the Bowibu. These people were beating me with the clubs. [2:04:00] And they said that I should acknowledge, that I should confess that I am a spy. But I told them I’m not a spy but they kept beating me. For two weeks, I was beaten with clubs and they had what’s called “pigeon of torture” where they would hang me upside-down. I kept saying that I’m not a spy.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Can you explain this pigeon procedure.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

This pigeon torture, so you are hand-cuffed behind your back and then they hang you so that you would not be able to stand or sit and you would look like pigeon, the pigeon with their chest pushed out; you would sort of look like a pigeon. [2:05:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Would you be able to show us a picture of this.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, there is a picture of this, yes.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Do you know whether this torture had been a feature of early regimes in Korea during the colonial period?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I saw this book about torture and I understand that torture was conducted during the colonial times and in North Korea, the criminals are kept at the detention houses and the detention houses are in North Korea are copied after the detention houses that were built during the Japanese colonial role.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[2:06:00] Tell us about the torture you received from the Bowibu and then your detention at Yodok, because that is where you were ultimately taken.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes. I was tortured at the detention houses. The pigeon torture, it is difficult because, they beat you with the clubs. My knees, I had a joint surgery on my knees because they would have the clubs behind your knees and make you squat. And while you are sitting, you’re kneeling, they would hit you on your thighs. They would beat you, kick you on the thighs. But there are people around there. But with the pigeon torture, there are no people watching you [2:07:00]; there is nobody. You can’t stand, you can’t sleep. And if you are hanged like for 3, 4 days. You urinate, you defecate, you are totally dehydrated. I think for 3 weeks, I lied that I never met with South Koreans, but they were actually tailing me, meeting with South Koreans. There was Park Gun-soo [ph] (2:07:51), and others that had kidnapped a South Korean priests. So these people were tailing me in China and they had photographs of me meeting with South Koreans so I could no longer lie. So I told them that I have actually met with South Koreans and I have done some trading business with them. But because I lied in the beginning that I have never met with South Koreas, [2:08:00] they said that they would not believe any of your lies, they said and they started torturing me. There were so many different tortures. The most difficult the most torture was the pigeon torture. I received pigeon torture for ten months. And I was about 75kg before the arrest, but after ten months, I was down to 36kg. I could not endure this anymore so I confessed that I was given a spy’s job from South Korea. I had given up and

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Did you have spy’s job from South Korea? [2:09:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, no, I have not.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

So why did you admit to having a sp’s job.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Because it was so painful. I decided it would be better to die so that’s why I confessed. It was so painful.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

So because of the torture you confessed.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Once I confessed, I know there are formal procedures. I think they have a prosecutor from Bowibu and this person asked me, you are not a spy. So I said yes, yes I am not a spy. This is so unfair. I confessed because it was so painful. That’s what I told the prosecutor. I thought the prosecutor was going to help me. But the prosecutor left and then the investigator came back in and started hitting me, started assaulting me, hanging me upside down. They had this scenario that they had worked up. And the next day, the prosecutor came back and said can you talk honestly. And I said yes, yes, I am a spy, that I confessed. [2:10:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Ultimately, I think you suffered breaking of your fingers. Are they still broken or are they re-set?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

My fingers did not break. During the questioning, with pins, they would put the pins between my fingers so I had scars. There was inflammation, so they did an operation on me, but it’s not exactly an operation. But the fingers did not really break. But it was quite painful. So they would have the pins between my fingers and they would twist it to give me maximum pain.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When were you taken to Yodok? Was that after you confessed to being a spy?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

After I made the confession, 10 days after the confession, [2:11:00] they took me some place and once I got there, I realized that was the Yodok camp. It was, I think the 6th of April 2000 that was when I was sent to Yodok.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I understand that the government of North Korea denies that there are any political camps but can you describe your…

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I learned about that in South Korea. I learned that in South Korea that the North Korean government is denying the existence of the political camp. And I went to ICC in the Netherlands to sue Kim Jong-il and that’s when I learned that North Korean government is in denial of such an existence.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Could you describe exactly where the Yodok camp [2:12:00] is for an independent international investigation if that were permitted access?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes I can. This is a satellite picture and this is where I was.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

With the cursor you are showing a place numbered 1 in the image and do you say where you were received when you arrived at Yodok?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, no! This is where the Bowibu resided. This is actually housing for the Bowibu.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[2:13:00] So that is housing. Number 1 represents the housing. Number 4 and number 3…

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Number 4 is the cafeteria.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, yes. Because I was there for three years, I know the buildings.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Is the image sufficiently clear that you can identify the buildings as the buildings in the Yodok camp?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, yes, I can.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

This is the camp popularly known as number 15?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I got there in 2000 and there is a facility for the new recruits or the new inmates. So there was that housing. [2:14:00] They put us there and the Bowibu agents told us there in the past, this was the revolutionary district and this was for the political prisoners. There were only holding the inmates for a short time. And this revolutionary district, the location name is Yodok Daesungri [ph](2:14:52), was the center of Yodok. And Mr. Ahn Hyuk [ph](2:14:57) and Kang Chul-hwan [ph](2:14:59), exposed this to the international community so that’s why they changed the location. So when I went to Yodok, the buildings were new and all the buildings were new when I got to Yodok camp. And so the buildings in Daesungri had moved to Guyongri, [2:15:00] that’s the new Yodok camp that I was moved to.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When you were there, did you see the Reverend Kim Dong-sik [ph](2:15:32)?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, I did not meet the reverend there. In Hoeryong, I was caught in Hoeryong, that’s the city. There was a basement cell in Hoeryong police. That’s where I saw Reverend Kim.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And before that?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, no. I did not. At the time, I did not know he was a reverend. I thought he was a South Korea with a crutch. [2:16:00] And, we called old people “a-ba-ee” [ph] (2:16:17) that’s the dialect of Hamgyong province. He was in the next cell and I asked him where are you from? And he said I’m from South Korea. So then there was another person, Kim Chul [ph](2:16:37), I think he was a, he came in and he was in my cell and he told me who Reverend Kim was how Reverend Kim came to be abducted to North Korea. And then I came back to South Korea and I learned that the gentleman I was talking to in the next cell was Reverend Kim Dong-shik.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was your understanding of his offence?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I don’t know what his offences were, [2:17:00] but I learned in South Korea that there were people, have this decision about the people who have helped to abduct reverend Kim, and according to this decision paper, he was abducted because he was helping the North Korean defectors. So this bailiff, in cooperation with the Bowibu, abducted Reverend Kim Dong-shik and then he came to South Korea and then he was arrested and in violations of national security agency law, he has been sentenced to ten years. I understand that he will be released next year.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What was his actual offence that he was trying to help people in North Korea leave and go to South Korea. Is that what his offence was?

**Mr. Jeong Kwang-il:**

[2:18:00] Actually, I learned about this later. But at the time, I did not have any details about Reverend Kim but I later I learned that he helped people to go to Mongolia to come to South Korea. He helped people come to South Korea and that is why he was abducted.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When approximately was he abducted?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

In the proceeding weeks year 2000,

**Mr. JEONGKwang-il:**

These proceedings are from the trial of the person who abducted Reverend Kim. I knew this man. I had known of him before. He was reported and arrested. He is imprisoned. And this proceeding is based on the confessions of that man. [2:19:00]

**Michael Kirby:**

This proceeding in the Republic of Korea, in South Korea.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, that is correct.

**Michael Kirby:**

The abduction, how was that carried out?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

It was not Reverend Kim they abducted. 16 different people in different ways. The dates, the method of abduction, are all detailed in this document.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How was Reverend Kim abducted at another time? Was he abducted and taken to the north? [2:20:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Hold on a second, please.

On the 16th of January 2000, around 2 in the afternoon, Reverend Kim was in a restaurant in Yenji, eating bulgogi. When he stepped out of this restaurant, Kim Chul, and other people and there were people in the ambush. There were Han, Chinese Han, outside the restaurant. [2:21:00] And he got into a taxi, a Chinese taxi next to the driver. The driver was a Chinese woman. I am reading exactly as exactly it is written in these proceedings. Park Gu-chun, Kim Song-sam, Nam Su, Park Moon-il, Choi Yeung-chul, and other people jumped at Reverend Kim. They tied him, they pressed him down, they pulled him out of the taxi, put him in a van, a small van. They told him the taxi driver to go and they left the place by a small van. [2:22:00] They went via Yenji, tried to force him, to send him to North Korea. But it was during the daytime, it was around 2 in the afternoon, so they could not return him to North Korea. Around 3, they handcuffed Reverend Kim. Around 4pm, on the same day, via Gilimsung, they, Kim Nam-su, Kim Nam-su carried, helped reverend walk. They crossed the Tumen River. And on the North Korean side, there was the border guard head, Ji Yong-su, and the reverend Kim was passed to this border guard. [2:23:00] This is what is written in these proceedings.

**Michael Kirby:**

This was organizing an escape line, is that correct? He was helping people who were wishing to leave North Korea to come to South Korea.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I don’t know about the specific details, but once the people who wanted to defect, once they met Reverend Kim, they asked for a place to stay and I think he was involved in helping them escape North Korea and come to South Korea via Mongolia.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I see, but that didn’t happen in your case.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, that did not happen to me. [2:24:00] I did not come here with the help of Reverend Kim. I left North Korea in2003.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How did you leave North Korea?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

After three years in Yodok, I was there with Mr. Kim sitting next to me, we were there at the same time. After 3 years at Yodok camp, I was released. When I was released, I didn’t know about the whereabouts of my family or what had happened in the society.

I went to where I used to live, in North Hamgyong, Chongjin city. My family had scattered all over the country. I could not find any of them. [2:25:00] My house was gone. I had two daughters. My younger daughter was living with my mother in law. There was no way I could live in North Korea. In the past I thought that I had committed myself, I had done things for the country. But I felt betrayed so I decided that I was done in North Korea. After I left the camp, within 20 days, I decided to defect. I went to China, went through Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand. I went through 4 countries. It took me 1 year to go through these countries. In 2004 I arrived in the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And looking back, what do you think is the main lesson that you draw from the way you were treated. [2:26:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

In what sense?

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Would you feel comfortable to return to NK in current conditions? If not, why not?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Currently, when I left North Korea, I swore that I would never return to that land. I don’t know. If the regime changes, and if people can live in freedom, I may reconsider, but currently, no, absolutely no. I detest that land; I would not want to go back again. [2:27:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What is the essential reason that you detest the land?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Once in North Korea, I did a lot of things for the regime. I served in the army for 15years. In the communication post at the party I worked, and I worked in the trading company and burnt exploited money. In 2008, 14th of august, that was when the communication office of the trading company opened. On that day, we earned 700 000 dollars for the regime. So in North Korea, in some ways, I had a status. But I was condemned as a spy; I was put in a political camp. [2:28:00] Mr. Kim was there but we had to go through so many things in the political camp. I think Mr. Kim lost his words when he was trying to give his testimony, but because I sympathized with someone, I was beaten up so bad. I was beaten up so bad that for a week, I could not stand up and walk in that camp, just because I sympathized, I sympathized, I related to someone, I was punished. If you think about that my teeth tremble, I have to bite my teeth even at the thought of it. Even if they give me a lot of money, I will not go back to that country.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

When you came to the Republic of Korea, were you given a friendly welcome or did you find prejudice and discrimination against you as a returnee from the north? [2:29:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Of course there were some, there may have been some level of discrimination and prejudice, but I was thinking positively. I did not come here for a friendly welcome. But because I was welcomed, I did not expect, but I was welcomed, so it may things easier, but I don’t believe I was discriminated harshly.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Yes, thank you thank you very much Mr. Jeong.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Yes, to both Mr. Kim and Mr. Jeong. [2:30:00] You eventually came out of the prison camps and returned to society. Is that the case?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol /Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, that is correct.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Now when you returned to society, you met with people that you knew before and maybe new people. Would they recognize that you were different because having gone through the camps and the prison physically and, well primarily physically? Would they have known that you had just gotten out of those camps?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Well in fact, [2:31:00] everybody who lived in my district, I think they knew that I was in the camp and that I had been treated badly by the Bowibu. Before I went to this camp, I knew that somebody close me, people close to me had been there. The people at the higher position, because I was in trading, I knew a lot of people in the higher position. When I came out of the camp, I tried to reach them, but they did not want to see me anymore. And that’s why I hated North Korea more. This is, nobody can survive here, that is what I felt.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Mr. Kim?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When I went to the society, [2:32:00] people were surprised because they thought I had died in the camp. But I was released alive, but I did not tell that I was in the prisoner camp, but instead I used the name, the number of the army and said that I worked there. The village that I lived, people living there did not know very well, but they were surveillance people in my neighborhood who were monitoring me. Well in general, I talked to the people in the neighborhood, but people thought that I had worked in the army, not did my sentence in the prison camp.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

So when you were released, this was notified to you without any information before? [2:33:00] It was a sudden notification that you were going to be released?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When you are out of Yodok, the Bowibu agent that is in charge of you, transfers you to your neighborhood. The documents are signed in this transferring process and you are relocated to a new job. If I was in a pretty good position before I went to Yodok, but later I was transferred, [2:34:00] relocated to work in this rural village.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I would like to add to his comments. In the Yodok camp, the Bowibu agents have no authority releasing the inmates. But you know that you are going to be released 2 months ahead. The leader at division 7 of Bowibu interviews you, and this is what he said:

“You are going to be released in two months. Do you believe that you can function well in the society?”

Yes of course you say yes, you say yes, I can perform well. And they make you swear that you are going to function well and they promise that you will be released in two months. After that interview, you can’t even sleep because you are waiting for that day. You are waiting for those two months to pass. Exactly after two months, you are released. So prior to your release, two months prior, you learn that you are going to get out of that place. [2:35:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

And that was also the case with you, Mr. Kim?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

I think some people go through the interview, some don’t. As for me, I knew 11days prior that I was going to be released.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

So you were prepared to be released and you were allowed to gain weight, eat more food, so that you can get back into society without being recognized. Is that...

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

I don’t think you can really call it a “prep” to return to the society but if you are able to walk out of the camp physically, [2:36:00] it means that you have survived physically. You are in one piece. Otherwise, you’re as good as dead. So there’s no really prep going on to return to the society. As for clothes, it’s really, we always get new people in the camps. And sometimes, these newcomers give up their clothes for you to wear when you return to society.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

I’m just curious Mr. Jeong. You said that you were 75kg, and then you came down to 36 exactly. How did you know that?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Before I was arrested in China, [2:37:00] in the sauna, I weighed myself. So I knew that I weighed 75kg. After I was arrested, I was also weighed again. When we arrive at the Yodok camp, I was weighed and that’s when I learned that weighed 36kg.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Just another question here, I think this is Mr. Kim. You really wanted to go to South Korea. How did you know about the conditions in South Korea? Were there any discussion, any information?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

When I was in North Korea, [2:38:00] we were instructed by the government, the regime, that South Korea was very poor. But in China, when was in the church, I met a lot of reverends, South Korean reverends, and I watched South Korean dramas, and that’s how I learned, bit by bit, about the South Korean society. And the motivation behind coming to South Korea, the impetus came from a South Korean and so that’s how I learned about South Korea.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Thank you, and just last question, Mr. Kim. You said that family members are suspicious with each other. Are they required to report on each other?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

We don’t actually report each other. But, from at a very age, [2:39:00]we are taught not to talk badly about the Kim family. And whenever we are given gifts on special days, we have to be grateful of Kim Il-sung/ Kim Jong-il. I think deep inside our hearts, I think we have to keep the bad thoughts about the regime. If we share this with our families verbally, I think my father would have slapped my cheeks. So we have to keep these thoughts inside. After the food crisis occurred and you have troubles in the household, you are tempted to steal food. For example, you would talk to each other about stealing corn from other fields. You can share that much information but you can’t really talk about the regime with your family members. [2:40:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Just one final question, again, to both Mr. Jeong and Mr. Kim, if you meet people after you are released, and you integrate again, you mix again with society. Would you know whether or not other people were or were not in the camps, would you be able to know that anyone you meet may have been in those camps at some time in their lives, or not?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No we could not. It’s difficult to recognize people. It doesn’t really show that you have been in camps. [2:41:00] But there are rumors. So there would be rumors or stories of people having received interrogation or questioning from Bowibu or having received they have been with the pre-trial board. But appearance wise, unless…it’s really difficult to tell if people have been in the camps. So appearance wise, it doesn’t really show whether a person has been to a camp or not.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Mr Jung, you have a photographic memory, we are informed. Would you recognize these people again, the guards and the people that were torturing you and abusing you?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, I remember all of them. I remember their names and I also remember their ages at the time. [2:42:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Would you be prepared to write them down? How many were there?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

When I was arrested, the person who arrested me has passed away. His name is Ji Hyung-su. He at that time, was 54, 54, when he arrested me. And there is Hong Jung-hwan, he was the same age, he was born in 1963, Hong Jung-hwan. And then there was Park Won-soon, he was born in 1969. So that’s what I know. When I was in the camp, there were so called managers. [2:43:00] So they are from the Bowibu, I knew their last names, but I don’t know their names. But so in case of the Bowi, except for the one who was responsible for me, his name was Lee Yong-nam because he was responsible for our working group. I remember the last names, the family names, not the first names.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Do you remember their faces?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, I remember their exactly what their faces looked like and related to North Korean human rights I’ve been working with, and so I have been collecting some information on the perpetrators. And my organization has a lot of such information. I brought some of them here with me. And I also brought the warrant for arrest, which is used in North Korea. [2:44:00] But if you read this warrant for arrest, they don’t have dates. So, I was also arrested with a warrant without dates and they have tortured me to make confessions. That’s when they write down the dates on the warrant. So nobody knew that I was arrested but I learned about this existence of the warrant afterwards, not at the time of my arrest.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

And you Mr. Kim, do you remember anyone?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Just like Mr. Jeong, I know the last names, only the family names of the guards; I don’t know their full names.

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes, I do.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Have the South Korean authorities asked you about this? [2:45:00]

**Mr. Jeong Kwang-il:**

No they haven’t. The South Korean government, I don’t think has even held a conference to talk about North Korean human rights. There are so many unfair things that have been endured in North Korea. So I have made my organization and we have urged the South Korean government to do something about the human rights in North Korea, but it seems that no attempt is really being made here.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Is that the same case with you, Mr. Kim?

**Mr. KIM Eun Cheol:**

Yes.

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

[2:46:00] I’ll just say one short question. Having in mind what you have said about your family relations and generally about your neighborhood and their reactions to your positions, could we conclude that the entire society lives in some kind of fear and paranoia? Is this something, because we have heard from others before, the same kind of testimonies, could we conclude this?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

It’s just the regime itself. In North Korea, you begin I guess, your societal life, when you are 7years old. And they teach you how to do a surveillance of others. That’s the first thing you are taught. So at least once a week on Saturdays, they do what is called the weekly instructions: you do some self-criticism, but you also criticize others. If you don’t criticize others, it’s going to be quite tough. You will be attacked so every week you should be able to criticize other people. So if you are forced to do that every week since you are seven years old, you just get accustomed to surveying and watching others. And in North Korea, the food leftovers, you have to really watch what you do with them. For instance, you had meat and then you had the fats of the meat, and if you threw it away, then your neighbors would report you, and say, “Where would they get the money to buy meat because I saw the meat fat?” [2:48:00] So the North Korean families, sometimes they get the money from the defectors to South Korea, so if they are really hungry, they would send the money that has been sent to them from South Korea and then they would be caught and they would go through all this hardships. So this surveillance or inspection, I think this sort of thing is trained when the kids are very young.

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

How do you send money or any help to your families to North Korea? What are the channels?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Well, when I came to South Korea in 2004, it was quite difficult to remit any money to North Korea, but now the remittance speed, [2:49:00] frankly speaking, it’s only 15minutes. It only takes 15minutes to send remittance to North Korea. Of course, the procedure, the process, is illegal.

Ethnic Koreans in China, they would come to Korea to work and then they have routes by which to send money to North Korea because they have families in North Korea. So they have this money exchanger. So they would send the money to the account of a money exchanger and that money exchanger would call a Chinese person living in North Korea and of course there would be commission. The commission is like 30%. So if I sent 1 million, then about 700 000 won would be given to my family. [2:59:00] So I would send this money to this account and once the money is there, then the broker in China would call the Chinese in North Korea and this Chinese in North Korea would give the money to the family in North Korea. So it takes not much time; it’s really quick. I think 15 minutes is enough to send money; the latest is half an hour. And to get a confirmation call is only about an hour or so.

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

[Unclear] (2:52:03)…to the north? Is it more relaxed, easily, because they need this money? It’s going to give because they take such high commission? [2:51:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

No, no! It’s not relaxed. We have this remittance broker; the North Korean government is cracking down on these brokers. And in Wonsan of Gangwon, Gangwon-do, there was a Chinese person living in North Korea because he was giving money, he was tortured by the North Korean government and he had to be institutionalized afterward because of the torture. So all of that, this money exchange and sending the money, has to be done very secretly.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Just two very short questions; first of all, you mentioned an organization that you are a member of. I don’t know what that organization is. Would you tell us what the organization is Mr. Jeong, and what it does?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

[2:52:00] My organization is called the Free the NK Gulag. We are an organization to free political prisoners because the members of my organization are related to political prisoner camp or have been inmates at the prison camp. And we believe that the democratization is not taking place in North Korea because of the political prison camps. So the political prison camps are objects of fear for North Koreans. So that is why North Koreans do not want to become involved in politics. If you become a political prisoner, your children will not be able to get married. [2:53:00] One of the reasons that I’ve decided to come to Korea is because of my two daughters. They would not be able to get married in North Korea because I was a political prisoner, because I was what in the North Korean society’s eyes, a South Korean spy. That was one of the reasons that I decided to come to South Korea. And so the people in my group are thinking.

But we are doing all these different activities, but we have nothing to show for it, unfortunately. The organization’s mission is to disintegrate the political prisons in North Korea.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

I know that the North Korean authorities apparently deny the existence of the political prisons, but can you identify clearly the political prison that is shown in the image that is before us? And would you tell us what those numbers mean that are associated with that image? [2:54:00]

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

This is a satellite picture. This is the Yodok-gun Gu-oon-Mi, Seorim chul, it’s a district. Here, you see number 1, that’s Bunjuso,that is the housing for the guards, (Bowi-won). And number 2 is an orchard, for the apples. They have peaches and of course the inmates are not allowed to touch them. If you steal a fruit, then you will be sent to solitary confinement. And number 3 is a fence, I think it looks like a fence; [2:55:00] it’s an electrical wire fence. So the inmates, it’s about 2m with the electrical barbed wire. There is electricity that is going on. When it rains, and then there will be sometimes flash lights, or sparks, and when the insects go nearby, they would burn, so we know there is electricity going through the wire. Number 4 is the cafeteria. So we called it command 1 or command 2. So this is the cafeteria for one army unit. And number 5 is where the troops sleep. [2:56:00] Number 7 is the assembly hall, when they talk about the ideologies and things like that. Number 8, I think is the toilet, restrooms. And number 9 is a hospital. Number10 is a warehouse where they keep the agriculture tools. Number 11 is called what we called Gwaliwiwon. This is a person who is one of the inmates, but this inmate has been chosen among the inmates to become a manager. So that’s where that person lives. Number 12 is also a warehouse. Number 14 is a pigpen. [2:57:00] Number 15 is where the goats are kept.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Number 5, number 3.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

What town is closest to this camp. What is the town in North Korea that is closest to it?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Well, a type that you may know, the closest to the camp would be Hamhung. Because when I was in the camp, when I left the camp, [2:58:00] it took me, the road was really bad, but it took me about 6 hours to get to Hamhung. So it’s southern province of Hamgyong province. Yodok-gun is part of the south Hamgyong province.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

If the government of North Korea would permit access to its territory; you would be able to give an independent inspection, a very thorough and detailed description of how they can find these camps.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes I can, I can give you the exact directions.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

By foot or by transport?

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

To Hamhung, once you leave the camp, [2:59:00] there’s one thing different from other prisons. Other prisons, they give you a permit that’s end of it. The prison camp, in order to ensure secrecy, they gave me a new identification card that I use to work as a laborer in the military. Except for the people who are very close to me, except for my close family, everyone would think that I used to for the military. So once I was released, this one person with the Bowibu would provide me transportation vehicle. It’s not a passenger car, it’s more of a truck.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[3:00:00] You used the truck to get to Hamhong.

**Mr. JEONG Kwang-il:**

Yes, yes.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Both of you have given us a lot of assistance. And you have also made statements to the Secretariat and we are grateful to you for your help to the United Nations and we will report on the matters that you have put before us. Thank you very much. You may step down.

 ***Dr. KIM Young Hoon (Korea Rural Economic Institute – Right to food)***

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

We reconvene the Commissioner of Inquiry and we have present, Dr. Kim Young Hoon who is a senior fellow at the Korean Rural Economic Institute in the Republic of Korea and an expert in the food situation in the Korean peninsula, in particular, in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea with a focus on the agriculture sector in that country. [3:01:00] Dr. Kim, may I thank you for coming along today, and will you affirm that the evidence you give to us will be the truth?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Yes I will. Can we load my presentation?

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

We are ready for you to start. Is the presentation ready?

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Give us your presentation and then maybe we will have some questions. [3:02:00] You are going to address us on the issue of the failure of the agricultural sector in North Korea and its humanitarian consequences and whether there have been any improvements in recent years to that situation.

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Yes. As I was on my way here today, I was expecting to give a presentation. I was requested this. But as I took my seat, I realized that I am sitting in the seat that the North Korean defectors gave testimonies from. I’m not sure if my presentation befits the nature of this hearing, but I will do my best to assist you. What I would like to talk about today is about the agriculture situation and the food supply and demand in North Korea. [3:03:00] I am an expert on North Korean food situation in South Korea. There are a lot of data in my presentation. The evidence is taken the information disclosed by international organizations. In terms of credibility, I have several reservations but because the information contains a lot of information, I choose to use it. Briefly, I am not going to give a testimony, but my presentation is more of an academic nature; it’s a research presentation.

There are four parts in my presentation. The first part is about the North Korean agriculture sector, what was its strategy and why it failed and the food supply and demand situation right now. And secondly, about the food supply, [3:04:00] I would like to talk about the human rights situation and would like to talk about the agriculture policy of the new regime and its future prospects. So these will be the four parts of my presentation.

First of all, in 1994, Kim Il-sung passed away. When he died, Kim Il-sung passed some property to his successor. There were three things. The first one was from 1996-1998, was the economic backwardness. He left economic backwardness to deal for his successor to deal with. And second, is about agriculture. In terms of agriculture, the productivity was very low. If you compare to that of South Korea, productivity remained at 55~60% percent at best. From 1995-1998, a severe food crisis occurred so this was what Kim Il-sung left. This information is from the UNDP’s report, which was published in 1998. After Kim Il-sung died, Kim Jong-il took over the regime. Kim Jong-il’s government put forth a new strategy in the agriculture sector. The purpose, what was the purpose? The purpose was to increase productivity in agriculture and to revitalize the agriculture of North Korea so there were a lot of strategies [0:06:00] being put into place and they needed two fundamental factors.

One was internal factor and another one was external factor. Internally was to reform, to carry out an overhaul to increase productivity. So internally, what they wanted to do was to do a remodeling of the system. In the cooperative farms, they wanted to overhaul the incentive system; another thing was to do was officially announced in 2002, which was to reform the structure of the economic system. So these were the two reforms that were pursued internally. Externally, because of the shortage of capital, they could not procure capital within North Korea, so they wanted to get from outside they had requested for external international assistance from 1998-2002 through the UNDP. [3:07:00] North Korea came up with this agricultural recovery program and they requested international assistance for execution. And on multilateral divisions they received international assistance. But the internal attempts did not go well and the external international assistance was not enough. So Kim Jong-il’s agriculture policy and strategy were not successful.

Consequently, as you can see in this table, the productivity of grains at the end of 2002, as of 2002, if you see here, in the very beginning of the right hand corner, compared to South Korea, the potential productivity of North Korea right now, is merely at 55% level. [3:08:00] So North’s Korea capability, they have 100% capability, but they are really using only 55% of the potential. Ultimately what this means is that a lot of agricultural policies have been carried out, however, this is the result.

Now why? We take a look at the reasons. One is that until now, the collective system still exists and is inefficient. So systematic reform was not successful. Second reason is related to capital. In order to for agriculture production to be successful, you need capital. And you need chemical feed. You need machines and you need chemicals for the weeds, you need good sources for grains. [3:09:00] But for a long time, there has been an economic downturn, so all of these factors were not there and the agriculture basis was also problematic. The water draining system, the dams, the reservoirs, all of this infrastructure, like warehouse that must be there for agriculture production, you need continuous investment. But they did not have continuing investment in North Korea and that’s why the agricultural basis to infrastructure deteriorated, leading to falling production. [3:10:00]

The peninsula is, there is a lot of flash floods and typhoon in the summer, and in these seasons, the farmers and the agricultural infrastructure, if they are not well equipped, they can be severely damaged by this seasonal typhoons and monsoons. So when we get these flashfloods in the summer, the agricultural infrastructure is damaged, you get a lot of damage to the farms and that leads to the downfall productivity. And so for all these reasons, despite all this new attempt and strategies laid out, North Korea could not see that productivity go up. Recently, [3:11:00] 2002 onwards, until 2007, if you look at the food supply and demand in North Korea, from 2002-2007 the international community gave a lot of assistance. Of course, South Korea was also part of that. From 2002-2007 if you look at this period, 7.76 million tons were contributed and to help increase agricultural productivity, we gave a lot of chemical feed and that led to a slight increase in agricultural productivity. In this time period you see the food situation alleviated a little bit, but after 2007, all of the assistance from the international community dropped dramatically. [3:12:00] 2008 onwards, that’s why North Korea was again put in a very difficult situation. If you look at this, please look at this table in front of you, please look at the one that is at the very bottom. This is about the food situation. From 2002-2007, we did not have serious food shortage. In some years, of course we are talking about minimal supply, from 2001-2005, we even had some food to go around, more food to go around but because the international assistance reduced, we saw some gaps in the supply and demand but you see that the supply and demand picks up again after 2007. The black and the blue, the [3:13:00] black is about the imports; they represent international assistance. This data is from FAO. From 2008-2011, in blue, you can see the reduction in international assistance so most of the blue letters represent commercial imports. So far we have quantified the supply food and demand in North Korea.

But what about the market price of the food? If you look at this data, you can get a little bit of a hint of what’s going on in terms of food shortage. There are three lines. The line at the very bottom is the price of rice, one kilogram of rice in North Korean currency. The one in the middle is the currency in the North Korean market [3:14:00] and the bold line on the very top is the price of rice in dollars. In North Korean currency, in a very rapid pace, the food price jumped over 3 years. But from this situation, you cannot say that the food situation deteriorated dramatically because the dollar value went up as well. So, you have to convert that to US dollar to accurately get a sense of what is happening. If you look at the bold line, the price did not really go up very steeply.

Now let’s take a look at the picture behind. The blue line on the top is the price movement of the rice in Chinese market in China. In the past three years. The movement of price of rice in China and the red one is the price movement of rice in North Korea. Over the three year period, the movement in price in China and North Korea are, they move along the same lines. So depending on the harvest situation or international assistance, I think that they did not interfere with the movement of the rice price but you can see that the rice price movement in North Korea went along with the changes in the international market. [3:15:00] So recent in the past three years, the rice price situation in North Korea was not too bad.

But can we conclude that the food shortage situation in North Korea over the past three years did not deteriorate? Well actually, no. If you look at this picture here, in the very bottom is the movement of the price of rice in 2011 and then the next line shows the movement in 2002. The blue line shows the movement in 2012. [3:16:00] Within the same year, the price fluctuates very seriously. The worst one shows that the price of rice fluctuated 60%. The lowest and the highest price, the gap was 60%. In most countries, the price of rice can change within 5%. For example, when between the harvest season and whether or not harvesting. So the price gap moves within the 5% range. In South Korea, it’s not evening this 5% range. In countries where rice supply and [3:17:00] demand is stable, the consumer price moves pretty stably within one year. But in North Korea, the price gap reaches as high as 60% from which we can conclude the food shortage situation is severe. Well of course, even if we say that it had not deteriorated over the past three years, we can still conclude that the food shortage situation is serious and this pattern is still going on. So in the long term, the food shortage situation in North Korea is going to go on and is going to be problematic.

Now let’s take a look at how individual North Korean residents are experiencing associated with this rice food shortage situation. [3:18:00] The North Korean regime, the goal to give out rations everyday in one year is 213 grams. The target is to give 213 grams of rations in an individual. But they are not meeting their target. In one year, they are giving out 136grams with discrepancy across regions. For one year, an individual will get 213grams but actually they are getting 136 grams, which is only about 27% of the calories an individual needs for one day. So it means that the individuals will need to get food from other channels. And North Korean individuals [3:19:00] address this issue in various ways. They do small lot farming to raise grain and get food for themselves or they are engaged in market activities where they can get their hands on food. This particularly occurs in cities but even residents in cities they get food, they get grains from relatives living in rural areas. In rural areas, people go to the mountains to get grass or vegetables that they can eat. In addition, sometimes, even with all these endeavors, sometimes you just need to cut down your daily intake. Now what’s the most problematic part [3:20:00] of this scenario is the marginalized people, people who cannot live without the rations. Because they have no access to the market activities, these marginalized people are exposed to 100% to the food shortage situation so WFP and FAO have given recommendations to the international community to provide assistance to this marginalized class. If you look at the data published in 2011, you have 15 million marginalized people living in North Korea who need international assistance. So this is the situation.

And what about the Kim Jong-un regime doing? How are they responding to this situation? What is their agriculture policy? [3:21:00] Economic growth and the growth of agricultural sector growth requires two factors. As I’ve mentioned, you need capital; that is to be fed into the agriculture sector. And on the hand you need a system reform. And during the Kim Jong-il regime, it did not work; they did not get enough assistance for capital. And internally, the internal reform did not work. What about Kim Jong-Un’s regime? As my guessing is that Kim Jong-un regime will also experience the same kind of capital shortage and their system reform will not go forward and from this I am guessing, I am predicting, that the situation will not get any better. [3:22:00]

The new agriculture strategy has not been laid. A policy has not been laid out but they have officially enough direction. On 28th of June 2012, they have announced a 6-8 policy and how is that going to be applied to the agricultural sector? We estimate, we guess that there are three key points in the 6-8 guideline. The government will provide the cost for agriculture production. 2nd, the government and the collective farms will divide the output of 60 to 70 to 30 and the collective farms will be made up of different divisions and each division will further be divided into sub-groups and they are planning to turn these sub-groups into individual farms. 3:23:00] We analyzed each three points and the conclusion is not so hopeful. One is that the government said that they will provide the cost for agricultural production. This is socialist. It’s not a reform. What does that mean?

From the past, if the government, when they subsidized reduction, they must be able to buy back from the farms. But they have not been able to provide enough subsidies. This is what we learn from history. [2:24:00] And second, if the government provides subsidies, in the past, they used to give in commodities but the regime is going to subsidize to make up for the market price but when there is inflation, this plan is not going to work. And about the decreasing the size of the subgroups to turn them into individual farms, in the past, there used to be 10-20 subgroups but they are going to reduce that number to 1 or 2 families. Now they have already attempted this in the past. From North Korean defectors, [3:25:00] we hear that they are not aware whether the government has reduced the subgroups into smaller sizes. So this attempt, we believe, has not been realized. So ultimately, the 6-8 guidelines, even if it has reforming attempts, because the current situation is so terrible, it’s a new attempt, it could be a new attempt that requires more cost burden on the government.

Now in conclusion, under the Kim Jong-un regime, a new agriculture strategy doesn’t have a chance. I think we can ask this question on two levels. One, economically, can they give up equality? Another thing to ask is, [3:26:00] when you push to reform, is there a chance that the regime can put up with the change in the government. But so far, Kim Jong-un has not given up on the socialist structure, so they will not go for equality. And when they push for reform, I don’t think they are prepared to take risks in terms of having an absolute control over the politics. So, all of the economic problems and the food shortage problem will be ongoing. But the problems that exist today, I think that it may not be aggravated in a very short period of time, I can say this because from beginning last year, [3:27:00] they have pursued stronger relationship, cooperation with China, in north western, north eastern region, for example like in shinwitsu [ph] (3:27:41) there has been a lot of economic cooperation between China and North Korea. They have established a lot of economic plans. And in the course of doing this, China has given a lot of economic pipelines to North Korea in addition to the new ones and so with these assistance, cooperation pipelines, I think for the time being, North Korea can endure, it can, it may alleviate the situation a little bit. This is the end of my presentation.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Thank you very much Dr. Kim. [3:28:00] Don’t be concerned that your testimony is less important to us than that of the people that have suffered more direct human rights complaints because the issue that you have been dealing with is one within one in our mandate and we have to deal with it, so it’s extremely important for the work of the Commission of Inquiry. I have five questions and because we will have to leave in about ten minutes, I’d be very grateful if you could answer as shortly and briefly as possible.

Number 1, and I will give you number 1 and number 2 together. Number 1 is, would you please describe the work of the Korean Rural Economic Institute? Can it be said that your evidence is from a source, which is hostile to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea? [3:29:00] Is it as it were, funded and supported by the government of Republic of Korea or is it an independent academic institution.

Number 2, what does 6 point to 8 actually stand for? Could you answer those two first, please?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

The information that I got, I haven’t got from hostile sources. I have gotten the information from the organizations that have access to North Korea. The organizations that are neutral. And my institute, whether this is an independent institute, we are not exactly independent from the Korean government but we are not a government agency, that is what I can tell you. Because we are an institute, or a research institution, [3:30:00] that provides information so that the government can make policies. But we do have independence from the government.

As for in 2012, they have released a document called 6-8. And this 6-8 document, we don’t know the specifics of document. We know the document has been released and we know what sort of information is contained in the document. We have gotten that information from the media as well as from the press release. So Kim Jong-un regime economic reform study, that document is the major reference document. That is why we are analyzing that document. And we have looked at 3 key points in this 6-8 document. [3:31:00] And we have looked at these 3 points and we have come to the conclusion that the measures that are taken by the North Korea government is not a reform but simply a means to overcome the current economic difficulties.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

And this is expressed in terms of the relevant international law that is applicable to North Korea as to all countries. In your opinion, according to your studies, have the authorities in the DPRK taken, in line with their international obligations, all possible steps within the maximum available resources to ensure their citizens are not hungry? All possible steps within maximum available resources to ensure their citizens are not hungry. [3:32:00]

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Well the North Korean authorities, I don’t know how much importance that the North Korean government places on the international responsibilities. If you look at the international economy, it’s the capitalist economies. There are few socialist economies. So it would be quite difficult for North Korea to abide by international norms. But I think that North Korean government, under the socialist economic regime, it is maintaining its food sourcing and food rationing system, so it is doing what it can. But the problem is this. The problem that the North Korean government faces is this. With this disintegration of the international socialist block, North Korean government, or the North Korea has become isolated economically, and the North Korean government has failed in overcoming that isolation. [3:33:00] That is why internally, the market economy is being born and because of that, the authority of those in government is being reduced. And if the North Korean government, because the North Korean government was not able to secure the food, was not able to provide rations to the people of North Korea, the North Korean people faced many difficulties because of that. Because of the consequence of the policy failures, the North Korean people are suffering; their human rights are being violated.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Fourth question, is requesting international aid when a state is unable to adequately feed its population, is an international immediate obligation of the state, [3:34:00] because the world community, through the WFP and AFO, can normally provide emergency assistance. Do you think that over the period that you have analyzed in your data, that North Korea has taken adequate actions in this regard to seek international food aid in order to feed vulnerable members of its population?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Well, I agree with you. Because, North Korea has not, there are only a few times that North Korea has asked for international food aid. And particularly, North Korean government has not disclosed food shortage to the South Korea government. [3:35:00] It has not explicitly or officially asked for the food aid from the South Korean government. So the North Korean government, I believe the North Korean government, if the people are going country, they should ask explicitly and officially for food aid from international community and from South Korean government. That is my wish.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

[Unclear] (3:35:55) …for which there may be political and emotional explanations for not wishing to go and ask but is it your analysis that sufficient request has been made through the international agencies of the United Nations, the World Food Program and the FAO to have supplementary provision of food [3:36:00] aid in order to make sure that vulnerable members of the population can be satisfied and not go to bed hungry.

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Before mid 1990’s, North Korea whether it is the economic difficulties or the food shortage, they never disclosed that to the international community. But with the food crisis, after the mid 1990’s and late 1990’s, North Korea disclosed to international organizations, the agencies, of the difficulties. So they have asked for the aid. And that’s why the international agencies began to provide a food aid to North Korea. [3:37:00] So I believe that the North Korean government has made efforts to get food aid. For instance, North Korea in 1998, told the circumstances in North Korea, and every 8 year, WFP and FAO agricultural experts were dispatched to North Korea to conduct investigation and I think that’s one of the positive steps that North Korea has taken. But the North Korea has not officially asked the international community and has not disclosed the data to international communities. So therefore, the North government was not able to satisfy the international conditions of the requirements.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Given that there are some reports which suggest that there has been a neglect of particular sections of the community, and I think one of your slides showed the particularly vulnerable groups in the community, pregnant women and children and so on. [3:38:00] And they have not been given access to food aid and adequate food. Do you believe that there has been discrimination in the provision of food by the government that has been systematic and deliberate? Systematic in the sense that it is part of an overall approach to the problem. Deliberate in the sense that the government must know the consequences of the way in which it distributes the food within its own country. Do you think that this has been systematic and deliberate? If so, can you estimate roughly how many have been affected by this strategy?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

The vulnerable class. [3:39:00] I don’t think there was intentional discrimination. As I said, in my presentation, about 27-52% of the food that is needed by the North Korean people is supplied to North Korean people through rationing. So whether a person is within the vulnerable people or not, the people would suffer. Those who are not in the vulnerable groups, through the relatives or through the market activities, whether they could or go to the mountain or the fields to get complementary or supplementary food. But the people in the vulnerable people are not able to do that. That is why they are exposed to more difficulties but I don’t think that is the intention of the North Korean government. [3:34:00] However, the North Korean government is not able to provide sufficient care to these vulnerable people so the international organizations I understand, have said in their reports, that their needs to be special supply of food for the vulnerable people in the north Korean society.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

A WHO report about malnutrition persistent, almost apparently endemic malnutrition amongst young neonates. And to such an extent, that they are not receiving enough nutrition and will be on our stunted, and that will affect their development, their brain development and so on. Is this one of the consequences of one of the failure of the government to address the endemic problems in its economy that you have been describing to us? [3:41:00]

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Yes, it’s true.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Does the government have to go on knowing that it is going to have endemic consequence for malnourished babies and young infants before what it is doing can be said to be deliberate in the sense not that they actually wish the child to be malnourished, but that they recognize that that is a consequence, an inevitable, practical consequence of the way in which they are organizing the provision of food aid and the organization of the economy there and their agricultural economy. [3:42:00]

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

I think that North Korean government, this is an issue of the regime of North Korea. So it is quite difficult to answer your question.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

How long have the problems identified in WHO reports concerning neonates been present and is there any other regime in the world that has had those evidence and has failed to seek assistance from the international community that you know of. 3:43:00] To provide food aid, to secure a rapid solution to the problem of gross underweight neonates and stunted babies who will go on to be stunted babies. Is there any other country that is in the same position that you know of?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

I do not know but I think in most countries, if their people are malnourished and are exposed to severe food shortage, I’m sure that those countries would ask for international aid and make efforts to deal with the problem.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Do you have any connection with the food aid or do you know of the arrangements of food aid in the international community? [3:44:00] Was there any particular problem of getting food aid to the North Korean administration both during the famine in the 1990’s and since? Is there anything that is not apparent as to why they could not have sought international food aid? To deal with this endemic problem of stunted neonates and infants which seems to be endemic.

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

The point of your question, I don’t think I understand. For international food aid, are you asking whether the problems are in terms of providing food aid to North Korea? I think there has to be sufficient monitoring; there has to be more closer monitoring and international society as well as the international organization. And North Korean government must deal with this monitoring issue problem first. [3:45:00]

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

It is my understanding that the North Korean government is unwilling to submit to the normal arrangements of monitoring our food aid that other countries in receipt of food aid will undertake. That is to say, access to different communities to make sure that the most vulnerable are not disadvantaged in the supply of food aid. Do you know anything about that?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Well I do know about those. WFP and when we provide international aid through international organizations such as WFP, I understand that there is an agreement for monitoring. [3:46:00] However, that monitoring process, when I look at the monitoring process and monitoring reports, the North Korean government, there is not sufficient monitoring that is in line with the international standards. That’s the kind of monitoring that’s in North Korean. And because there is no sufficient monitoring that is occurring in North Korea that is why the international community is not able to obtain documents to see whether North Korea is providing the food to the people that actually need it. [3:47:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

I have one request and one question. The request is would you have access to North Korean data on this food situation in North Korea.

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Because we are research institute, we do not create data. So we get the data from UNDP, WFP, FAO, WHO, and UNICEF. So these international organizations are active in North Korea and they have data and that’s the kind of data that we base our study on. So the data on the agriculture and the harvest, most of the data are provided to us from international organizations.

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

So you don’t have any North Korean sources?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Yes, we don’t have any direct source in North Korea. [3:48:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

The question that I would like propose to you is as follows: there is this argument that North Korea is able to cope with its shortages if it were to shift its budget allocation from military purposes to agriculture. How would you describe that correlation? The argument there is that it is possible for North Korea; if they reduce their military budget to overcome the shortages because of investments and etc., is that a valid assumption and attached to this in fact, this is the question that was written by Mr. Chairman. [3:49:00] The intentionality of causing these situation, would it be a true statement that you said that it was not the intention of the North Korean government to create discriminatory treatment to its citizens, but the consequences are that primacy is given to the elite, to the party, to the military. In fact, there may be argument that from testimonies from witnesses, that certain parts of the armed forces are also suffering from food shortages. And therefore it might be the case that they will also need food aid just to ease the tension within the peninsula. Is that something that could be looked at in that way?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Well the North Korean government, when providing a supply of food, [3:50:00] whether there is intentional discrimination or not, I don’t know, I think the right statement for me would be I do not know whether there is intentional discrimination against in terms of food supply. About the shifting the budget from the military to spending to agriculture, to food, well whether that would solve the food shortage problem, I don’t know if I could answer that question. Because this is a question that would not just apply to North Korea, but also to other countries. So, if they could, I think all the countries would be able to overcome food shortage problem if they could reduce the military budget and use that money to buy food from outside. [3:51:00]

**Mr. Marzuki Darusman:**

Thank you

**Ms. Sonja Biserko:**

I have one question. Many countries depend on food imports and they can compensate that with the exchange rate with another product. Does the situation in North Korea indicate that there is a much larger picture that we should talk about, the failure of the economy or the failed state. How would you describe that, because food shortage is just one signal?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

Yes, that’s true. So same with household economy as well as the nation’s economy. [3:52:00] I think the most important thing is to provide the basic necessities to the members of the country or the household. That’s the basic and if that basic is not satisfied, I believe that economy of that state or that household is in severe problem.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

Thank you very much for assisting us today, Dr. Kim. And we are very grateful to you and we’ve asked all our questions. Is there anything else you wish to say to us?

**Dr. KIM Young Hoon:**

I do not have any additional comments, thank you.

**Mr. Michael Kirby:**

You can leave now, and we will take a note of your record and it will be made available to the international community. Thank you

The Commission of Inquiry will now adjourn until 2:30 this afternoon.