



A NEW CHAPTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

A handbook on issues of transition
from the Commission on Human Rights
to the Human Rights Council



Annex 3.1

Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

Current mandate holder: Vitit Muntarbhorn
Mandate started: 2004

Term of mandate holder: 2004
Mandate up for renewal: 2006

Background and areas of focus

- Established in 2004, following the Commission's concern at the precarious humanitarian situation in the country and continuing reports of systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights;
- Establish direct contact with the Government and with the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including through visits to the country;
- Seek and receive credible and reliable information, including through visits to the country, from all relevant actors, including Governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and any other parties who have knowledge of these matters;
- Investigate and report on the situation of human rights in the DPRK and on the Government's compliance with its obligations under international human rights instruments.

Cooperation with the Government

- The Government of the DPRK does not recognise the mandate of the Special Rapporteur;
- The DPRK has declined to invite the Special Rapporteur to the country.

Key developments

- The DPRK is a party to four key human rights treaties and has engaged with their monitoring bodies;
- There are ongoing general issues with the right to food and life; the right to security of the person, human treatment, non-discrimination and access to justice; the freedom to movement, asylum and refugee protection; and the right to self-determination, political participation, access to information, freedom of expression/belief/opinion, association, conscience and religion;
- Concern remain around the rights of particular groups, particularly those of women, children, older persons, and those with disabilities.

Country visits

Japan (February – March 2005)

Mongolia (March 2005)

North Korea (November 2005)

Pending reports

Annual report (E/CN.4/2006/35).

Communications to the Government of the DPRK (2005)

- One communication concerning DPRK nationals deported back to their country against their will; the Government replied that it does not recognise the Special Rapporteur's mandate;
- One joint communication concerning a range of human rights concerns including punishment of those who have left the DPRK without permission, treatment of prisoners, and absence of judicial process. Information regarding an answer will be included in Special Rapporteur's next report.