

Attention:  
**Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary  
Disappearances (WGEID)**

From:  
**Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR)**  
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Email: [citizens.nkhr3@gmail.com](mailto:citizens.nkhr3@gmail.com); [nkhr@naver.com](mailto:nkhr@naver.com)  
Address: Gyemyeong Bldg 3F, 186 Migeun-dong,  
Seodaemun-gu, Seoul 120-020  
Republic of Korea

Re:  
**The 1977 abduction of Mr. Seung-min Choi**

Submitted: 26 November 2012



## **FORM TO SUBMIT A COMMUNICATION ON AN ALLEGED ENFORCED OR INVOLUNTARY DISAPPEARANCE**

### **IMPORTANT PRELIMINARY NOTICE**

#### **INSTRUCTIONS RELEVANT TO ALL COMMUNICATIONS**

- There are **6 required elements, indicated with \***without which the communication cannot be processed.

These are:

- 1) **Identity** of the disappeared person (full name);
- 2) **Date** on which the disappearance occurred (at least month and year);
- 3) **Place** of arrest or abduction, or where the disappeared person was last seen;
- 4) **Forces** (State or State-supported) believed to be responsible for the disappearance;
- 5) **Action taken** by the relatives or others to locate the person. If action was not possible, explain why;
- 6) **Identity of the person or organization submitting the report.**

Please, make sure, before sending the communication form, that all the above mentioned required elements are included. This will allow for a smoother consideration of the case.

- If submitting a handwritten communication, please use capital letters.
- Please provide names in full of institutions (security forces, governmental bodies or others). Please, do not use abbreviated forms.
- Describe facts in a clear and concise fashion, providing as much details as possible.
- Submit one form per disappeared person.
- If you would like particular information to be kept confidential please indicate this.

#### **INSTRUCTIONS RELEVANT TO COMMUNICATIONS SUBMITTED BY NGOs**

- It is necessary for your organization:

- a) to have the consent of the family of the disappeared, and;
- b) to be able to carry out follow-up, by conveying Government information to the family sent from the Working Group, and from the family to the Working Group until the fate or whereabouts of the person are determined.

- Therefore, **please answer to the following mandatory questions:**

\*Does your organization have direct consent from the family of the disappeared to submit this communication form to the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on their behalf? Yes  X  No

\* Will your organization be able to provide follow up by conveying information between the family and the Working Group: Yes  X  No

#### **ADDRESS TO SUBMIT A COMMUNICATION**

**E-mail:** [wgeid@ohchr.org](mailto:wgeid@ohchr.org) **Fax:** +41 22 917 9006 (please, indicate: "For the attention of: WGEID").

**Post:** Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations, 8-14 Avenue de la Paix  
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland



## WORKING GROUP ON ENFORCED OR INVOLUNTARY DISAPPEARANCES

### COMMUNICATION FORM

#### 1. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DISAPPEARED PERSON

(a) \* **Family name(s):** Choi (최)

(b) \* **Given names(s):** Seung-min (승민)

(c) **Pseudonyms or other forms besides given name, by which he or she may be known:** N/A

(d) **Sex:** Male

(e) **Occupation/profession:** Student at Pyeongtaek Taekwang High School

(f) **Father's name:** Jun-hwa Choi (최준화)                      **Mother's name:** Dong-geum Lee (이동금)

(g) **Date of birth:** 25 November 1960

(h) **Place and country of birth:** Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi Province, Republic of Korea

(i) **Was the person below 18 years-old at the moment of the disappearance?** Yes

(j) **Identity document(passport, national identity card, voter's card or any other relevant national identity card)**

**Type:** Family registry

**Resident registration number:** N/A

**Date of issue:** N/A

**Place and country of issue:** Republic of Korea

(k) **Nationality or nationalities:** Republic of Korea

(l) **Address of usual residence:** Milwol-dong, Songtan, Pyeongtaek, Republic of Korea

(m) **Any other place of residence at the moment of the disappearance:** No

(n) **Marital status:** Not married

(o) **Indigenous:** No

(p) **Pregnant:** No

## 2. INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FACTS

(a) \* **Date of arrest, abduction or disappearance (at least month and year)**

August 1977 (then 17 years old)

(b) \* **Place of arrest, abduction or where the disappearance occurred (be as precise as possible. Indicate street, city, province or any other relevant information)**

A beach on Hongdo Island, an island in the Yellow Sea, located 115 km from the southwest coast of Mokpo port, South Jeolla Province, South Korea.<sup>1</sup>

(c) \* **Date when the person was last seen (at least month and year), if different from date of arrest or abduction (for example: if seen in a prison months after the initial arrest or abduction)**

Most recently, in 2011, Mr. Choi was verified as having been alive in North Korea in 2005. This verification came in the form of a 2005 Pyongyang Census that the South Korean media outlet *Chosun Weekly* obtained. The Census listed the names and personal information of over 2 million citizens, 18 and older living in Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea. Within this list, the names of 21 South Koreans who had been abducted were found. One of these 21 abductees was Seung-min Choi. It stated his name, birthday, profession, blood type, place of birth, home address, date of marriage, and the name of his spouse.<sup>2</sup> Experts on North Korea verified the 2005 Pyongyang Census as authentic.

(d) \* **Place where the person was last seen (if different from place of arrest or abduction. For example: if seen in a prison months after the initial arrest or abduction. Please, be as precise as possible. Indicate street, city, province or any other relevant information)**

We know from the aforementioned Census that, as of at least 2005, Mr. Choi and his wife Hye-gyeong Ryu were living in Palgol 2-dong, Mangyondae district in Pyongyang. Mr. Choi was working as an instructor at Liaison Office 112 of the Korean Workers' Party.

(e) **Please, provide a full description of how the disappearance took place (attach one page if necessary. Please note that, although this is not a required element, providing a description as detailed as possible of the circumstances of the disappearance will enhance the possibilities to find the person)**

In 1977, Mr. Seung-min Choi and his friend Mr. Min-kyo Lee were students at Pyeongtaek Taekwang High School and went to Hongdo Beach for a short trip during their summer vacation. They were on the beach when a North Korean espionage agent on his way back to

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Attachment 1: Map

<sup>2</sup> Please see Attachment 2: Mr. Lee's personal information as stated in the 2005 Pyongyang Census

North Korea kidnapped Mr. Choi and Mr. Lee. This information was discovered during an interrogation process of North Korean spy agents in 1997.<sup>3</sup>

**(f) \* State or State-supported forces believed to be responsible for the disappearance. If the perpetrators are believed to be State agents, please specify and indicate who and why they are believed to be responsible. Be as precise as possible (military, police, persons in uniform or civilian clothes, agents of security services, unit to which they belong, rank and functions, identifications presented, etc.)...**

North Korea is responsible for the disappearances of these two high school students, as demonstrated in the responses above and below.

**(g) If identification as State agents is not possible, please indicate why you believe that Government authorities, or persons linked to them, may be responsible for the incident**

N/A

**(h) If there are witnesses to the incident, please provide their names and relation to the victim. If they wish to remain anonymous, indicate if they are relatives, by-standers, or others. If there is evidence, please specify.**

N/A

**(i) Additional Information on the case. Please indicate any other relevant information that could be useful to find the person**

In 1997, South Korea's Agency for National Security Planning (NSP) found out for the first time that Mr. Choi had, in fact, been abducted to North Korea. Previously, Mr. Choi had been believed to have disappeared within South Korea. NSP made this discovery after investigating several North Korean agents who had been caught in South Korea. After seeing photos of Mr. Choi, they confirmed that they had seen him over the years in Pyongyang.

Mr. Choi, presumably because of his youth and South Korean heritage, had been selected to train future North Korean spies. He worked in the suburbs of Pyongyang, where the government had built sets imitating South Korean shops for simulation purposes. Mr. Choi was identified as having been a teacher in a South Korea-style clothes and sports retail shop.

For two decades, the parents of Mr. Seung-min Choi believed that their son was still in South Korea and traveled across the country looking for him. After NSP's interrogation of several North Korean espionage agents revealed that they had abducted young South Koreans, the agency called to ask the families for photos of their disappeared sons. When the photos were shown to the North Korean agents, more than one agent confirmed that Mr. Choi and Mr. Lee were both living in Pyongyang and had been recruited to teach North Koreans in espionage training.

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<sup>3</sup> Korea Institute for National Unification. (2012). *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea 2012*. Seoul, Korea: Kim, K., Chon, H., Lee, K., Lim, S., Lee, K., & Hong, W.

### **3. INFORMATION CONCERNING ACTIONS TAKEN AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE**

**\* Indicate any action taken (police inquiries, jail, human rights commission, habeas corpus petition etc.)**

**taken by the relatives or others to locate the person. You are required to state the following: *when*, by *whom*, and before *which organ* the actions were taken.**

**(a) Complaints (*when*, by *whom*, and before *which organ/s*)**

The families of Mr. Choi and Mr. Lee did not know that their sons had been kidnapped to North Korea. Therefore, they made dozens of inquiries to police stations around South Korea for many years, but not in regards to North Korea.

Mr. Choi's and Mr. Lee's parents were domestically active in searching for their son. Now, Mr. Choi's parents have died, and his siblings are continuing the search.

**(b) Other steps taken (*when*, by *whom*, and before *which organ/s*)**

N/A

**(c) If no action was not taken, please explain why**

N/A

#### 4. PERSON OR ORGANIZATION SUBMITTING THE COMMUNICATION

**\* Person submitting the communication**

(a) **Family name:** Yoon

(b) **First name:** Benjamin

(c) **Relationship with the disappeared person:** Founder and chairperson of the entrusted organization

(d) **Contact details (address, telephone, fax, email):** Please see below.

**\* Organization submitting the communication (if applicable)**

(e) **Contact details (address, telephone, fax, email):**

[**Organization**] Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights

[**Address**] 3F, Gyemyeong Building, 186 Migeun-dong, Seodamun-gu, Seoul, 120-020, Republic of Korea

[**Telephone** ] +82-2-723-1672

[**Fax**] +82-2-723-1671

[**Email**] [citizens.nkhr3@gmail.com](mailto:citizens.nkhr3@gmail.com)

#### 5. CONFIDENTIALITY REQUEST

Please state whether you would like your identity to be kept confidential

Yes, keep my identity confidential: \_\_\_\_\_ No request for confidentiality: \_\_\_X\_\_\_

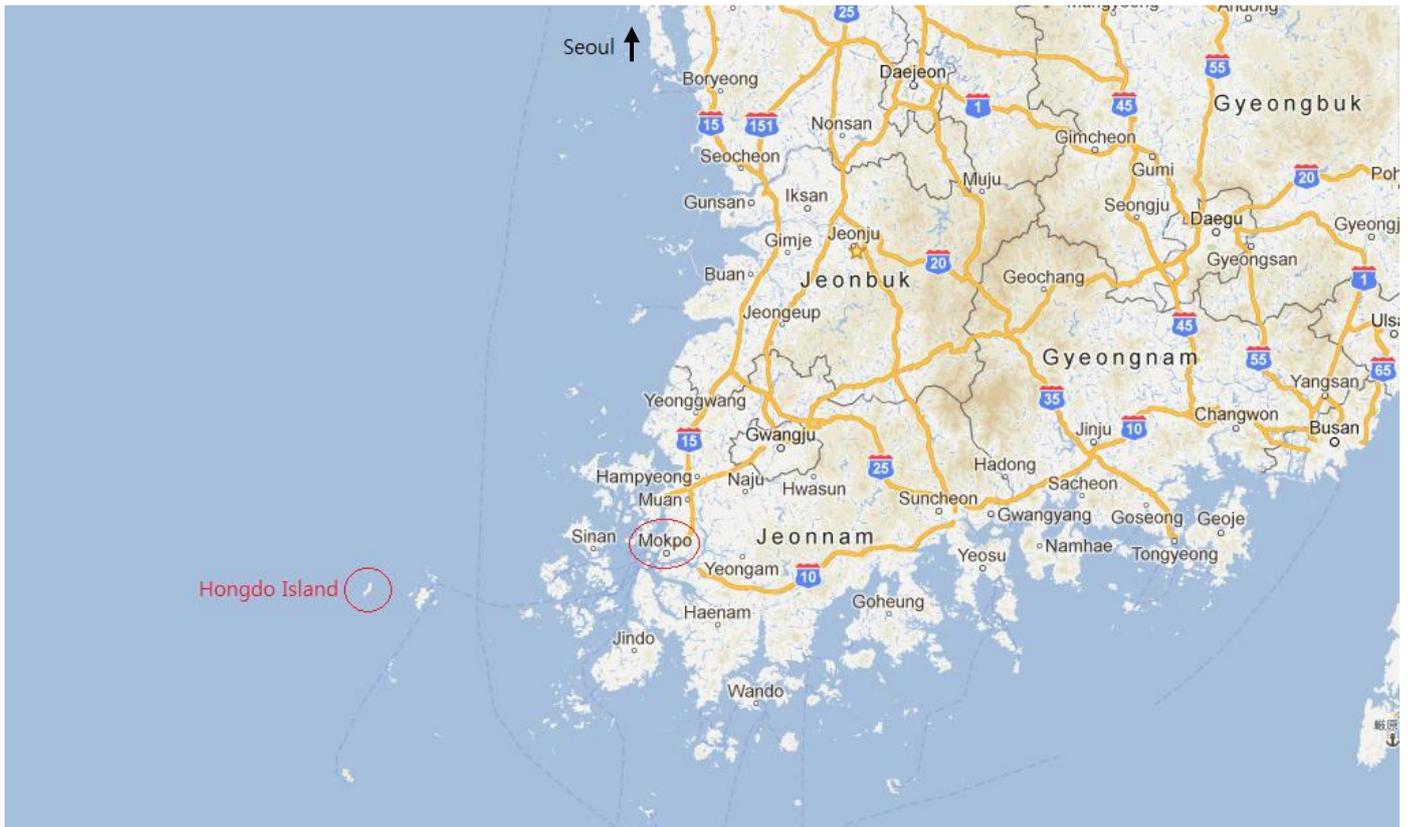
\* **Signature of author:** Lilian Lee, Program Officer, International Campaign and Cooperation Team

\* **Date:** 26 November 2012

\* **Place:** Seoul, South Korea

Attachment 1: Map

Mr. Choi and his friend Mr. Lee took a ferry from Mokpo to Hongdo Island, where they were abducted by a North Korean espionage agent.



Attachment 2: List of 21 abductees and their personal information as stated in the 2005 Pyongyang Census obtained by *Weekly Chosun*. Mr. Choi's information is highlighted and translated into English below. From *Weekly Chosun*, 24 October 2011.

평양에 살아있는 납북 피해자 21명 신상자료

이름	성별	생년월일	고향	거주지(동)	직장 배치 시기	직장직위	결혼시기	배우자	결혼여부	혈액형
김명일 (몽산2호 선원, 1970년 납북)	남	1940. 11. 5	충청남도 당진군 고대면 당진포리	보통강구역 서장동 37번	1995. 7. 20	조선로동당 26련락소	1974. 5. 4	박옥희	결혼	O
고성문 (전 수도여고교사, 1979년 납북)	남	1948. 12. 13	서울시 중구 을지로 초동	봉상구역 창계동 4번	1994. 11. 15	농업과학연구원 도서관 사무원	1995. 3. 20	류인수	결혼	A
권용만 (천왕호 선원, 1975년 납북)	남	1935. 5. 30	경상북도 대구시 수성구 빽어동	봉상구역 봉수동 105번	1995. 1. 1	부양	1979. 4. 17	리복성	결혼	A
김영희 (금용호 선원, 1968년 납북)	남	1955. 3. 13	강원도 고성군 원내면 대진리	만경대구역 팔골2동 38번	1989. 3. 21	조선로동당 12련락소 사무원	1984. 6. 12	전명희	결혼	O
로성호 (동진2호 선원, 1987년 납북)	남	1961. 12. 25	충청북도 청주시 북대동	보통강구역 서장동 37번	2005. 4. 21	금성정치대학 학생	1987. 12. 3	윤성화	결혼	A
리광원 (홍익호 선원, 1969년 납북)	남	1949. 4. 26	전라남도 무안군 흑산면 신리	대동강구역 문수1동 59번	1995. 9. 1	조선로동당 12련락소 지도원	1979. 11. 27	박복순	결혼	O
리영우 (고교생, 1978년 납북)	남	1960. 9. 21	충청남도 천안군 도원리	봉상구역 봉상동 62번	1993. 4. 21	인민경제대학 학생	1987. 12. 13	김경숙	결혼	O
리민교 (고교생, 1977년 납북)	남	1959. 2. 20	경기도 평택군 서탄면	만경대구역 팔골2동 37번	1989. 6. 17	조선로동당 12련락소 지도원	1984. 6. 23	김진숙	결혼	A
윤경식 (홍복호 선원, 1967년 납북)	남	1951. 3. 10	전라북도 군산시 조촌동	만경대구역 팔골2동 37번	1989. 3. 21	조선로동당 12련락소 지도원	1977. 10. 8	김순란	결혼	A
신태용 (안영35호 선원, 1972년 납북)	남	1943. 8. 23	전라남도 보성군 법교읍 장암리	만경대구역 팔골2동 37번	1980. 9. 1	130련락소 부원	1974. 9. 25	김현숙	결혼	O
유경희 (독일, 1971년 납북)	여	1964. 2. 01	서울시 용문구 영훈동	오란봉구역 개신동 2번		사회과학원세계경제연구소 연구사	1993. 12. 12	김영남	결혼	A
유성근 (독일, 1971년 납북)	남	1933. 4. 02	충청남도 연기군 병유리	보통강구역 서장동 14번		서울대학교 졸업	2001. 6. 12	김광숙	결혼	A
유진희 (독일, 1971년 납북)	여	1970. 10. 30	평안시 중구역 의성동	봉상구역 봉북동 44번	2001. 10. 18	김일성종합대학 박사원생	2000. 12. 12	김유희	결혼	AB
장진구 (만복호 선원, 1968년 납북)	남	1955. 5. 01	전라북도 김제군 부령면 신명리	오란봉구역 흥부동 59번	1984. 5. 1	조선로동당 26련락소 부원	1984. 10. 14	리경란	결혼	O
조규명 (천왕호 선원, 1968년 납북)	남	1955. 5. 07	강원도 영주군 주문진읍	만경대구역 팔골2동 37번	1989. 3. 1	조선로동당 130련락소 지도원	1984. 12. 27	리성화	결혼	A
조석원	남	1953. 2. 27	전라북도 김제군	오란봉구역	1984. 5. 10	조선로동당 26련락소 부원	1981. 7. 20	전영미	결혼	B
최승민 (고교생, 1977년 납북)	남	1958. 11. 25	경기도 평택군 현대면 도대리	만경대구역 팔골2동 38번	1989. 3. 1	조선로동당 12련락소 지도원	1984. 1. 22	류혜경	결혼	O
(고교생, 1978년 납북)	남	1960. 10. 27	충청남도 천안군 합성면 도원리	팔골2동 38번	1989. 4. 1	조선로동당 12련락소 지도원	1987. 12. 5	박애경	결혼	O
성경희 (KAL 승무원, 1969년 납북)	여	1949. 9. 17	함경남도 함흥시 시포구역 시포1동	오란봉구역 흥부동 4번	1970. 8. 1	조선로동당 26련락소 부원	1973. 12. 16	림영일	결혼	O
정경숙 (KAL 승무원, 1969년 납북)	여	1946. 9. 5	함경남도 흥원군 학산리	오란봉구역 흥부동 59번	1992. 10. 7	조선로동당 26련락소 부원	1972. 7. 16	오용길	결혼	B
최석만 (KAL 부기장, 1969년 납북)	남	1932. 12. 21	경기도 포항시 광덕동	사동구역 송화동 12번	1982. 11. 5	687련락소 직원	1979. 2. 19	최유옥	결혼	O



Name	Sex	Date of birth	Place of birth	Current Address	Date of Job Posting	Profession	Date of Marriage	Spouse	Status	Blood type
Seung-min Choi	M	1958.11.25	Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi province	38 Palgol 2-dong, Mangyondae district	1989.3.1	Instructor at Liaison Office 112 of the Korean Workers' Party	1984.1.22	Hye-gyeong Ryu	Married	O

Attachment 3: Photos

Mr. Choi (left) with his friend Mr. Lee (right), who was abducted at the same time.

