1. SEOUL – December 5, 2017 – Today at the Franciscan Education Center, joined by more than 50 persons from various civil rights movements, Free Prisoner of Conscience, Korea announced it has gone with declaring “Free All the Prisoners of Conscience for cleaning up deep-rooted evils and recovering human rights” on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, December 10th, 2017. Until December 5, more than 3,000 people from all walks of life have participated in the declaration.

2. Thank you.
   Sincerely,

Free Prisoners of Conscience, Korea

To: Foreign Media
From: Free Prisoners of Conscience, Korea
Date: December 5th, 2017
Subject: Request for press release
“Free All the Prisoners of Conscience for cleaning up deep-rooted evils and recovering human rights”

As the government of Korea was established by the power of people’s candlelight movement, it should decide to release prisoners of conscience in Korea! Justice has not come back yet!

It has been 6 months since the new government came to power by the historic candlelight movement. Now it is in the middle of winter. It feels as if the waves of 16 million candles wave in last winter happened yesterday. That’s why we feel so excited as we celebrate this winter.

Last winter, many people held the candlelight to defeat the injustice and set the justice right. Additionally they raised the candlelight to punish he sinner and make the unjust stand. Nevertheless, the true justice still hasn’t come back. That’s because prisoners of conscience, those who were unjustly imprisoned, are still in prison.

The first step of eradicating political corruption is the release of prisoners of conscience!

Currently, there are 19 prisoners who were arrested for political activities, labor movements and ideology, including Han Sang-gyun (Chairperson of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions) and Lee Seok-ki (Former Lawmaker of the Unified Progressive Party). Most of them were imprisoned by political oppression of the Park Geun-hye regime. Thus, they are the biggest victims of Park Geun-hye.

The process of liquidating the past has never been separated from recovering and relieving victims of the past. Rather, recovering victims was the first step toward liquidation of the past. Freeing prisoners of conscience should not be neglected. If the government promises liquidation of the deep-rooted evils, the release of prisoners of conscience should not be turned into a later task.
We should not ignore domestic and international appeals anymore.

The leaders of the 6 religious groups appealed the release of all the prisoners of conscience before the Chuseok. In addition, the civil society groups followed after them. It clearly indicated where the will of people, who held candlelight, is.

Before their statement, Amnesty International sent an open letter to the President urging the release of prisoners of conscience and submitted a report to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review. The International Labor Organization (ILO) also recommended the release of Han Sang-gyun. In the UN UPR, which was held last month in Geneva, UN member states, including Germany, brought up the problem of prisoners of conscience in Korea. It is a strong demand that Korea should keep the international human rights standards.

The government must make a decision within this year!

Most of the actions that they have violated are the results of either opposing against the past regime or suppression of the past regime. Therefore, all the results are wounds that our society should embrace. Furthermore, it was confirmed that the application of the Act was not in line with the international standards. It’s time to set it right.

Concerns over the abuse of amnesty are reasonable. But this is not about prisoners of conscience but about power-released and greedy criminals. There is no reason to delay anymore. The government should not be irresolute but decide to release prisoners of conscience.
Appendix. 2. Participants of the Declaration

Religious Community

**Catholicism** (227): Ham Se-woong (Advisor of Catholic Justice Implementation National Brotherhood), Kim In-kook (Chief of the Catholic Priests' Association for Justice), Na Seung-gu (Former Chief of the Catholic Priests' Association for Justice), Moon Jung-hyun (Priest), Moon Gyu-hyun (Standing Representative of Solidarity for Peace and Reunification of Korea) and etc.

**Buddhism** (34): Do Beop (Director of The Council of Reconciliation, Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism), Ven. Beop An (Former Vice-president of the Central Assembly, the Korean Buddhist Jogye Order), Toe Hyu (Former head of the Committee for Education, the Korean Buddhist Jogye Order), Il Moon (Former Member of the Central Assembly, the Korean Buddhist Jogye Order), Si Gong (Standing representative of Silchun Buddhism) and etc.

**Won Buddhism** (43): Kim Sun-myung (Chairperson of the emergency response office in the shrine of Sung-ju, Korea), Kim Sung-geun (Won Buddhism Sanggye Temple), Oh Gwang-seon (Won Buddhism Goongdong Temple), and etc.

**Christianity** (41): Reverend Kim Young-ju (Former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Korea), Reverend Lee Hae-dong (Former Chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in the Ministry of National Defense), Reverend Lee Hae-hak, Reverend Kim Sung-bok (Director of the Human Rights Center of the National Council of Churches in Korea), Reverend Park Seung-ryeol (Chief of the Human Rights Center of the National Council of Churches in Korea), Reverend Jung Jin-woo (Former Chief of the Human Rights Center of the National Council of Churches in Korea), Father Yu Si-kyung (Provincial General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Korea), Park Chul (Chairman of the Council of Pastors for Justice and Peace), Choi Heon-kook (Manager of With Jesus Organization), Reverend Kim Kyung Ho and etc.

**Academic Community** (113)

Hong Sung-hak (Chairperson of the Korea Professor Union and Professor of Chungbuk Provincial College), Kim Han-sung (Director of the Education of South-side Committee for practicing the June
15th North-South Joint Declaration 615 and Emeritus Professor of Yonsei University, Kim Se-gyun (Emeritus Professor of Seoul National University), Kim Min-woong (Professor of Sungkong-hoe University), Kim Kwi-ok (Professor of Hansung University), Park Bae-kyun (Professor of Seoul National University), Cho Seung-rae Cho (Professor of Cheongju University), No Bong-nam (Professor of Chonnam National University) and etc.

**Legal Community (25)**

Jung Yeon-sun (Chairperson of MINBYUN - Lawyers for a Democratic Society), Kang Moon-dae (Secretary General of MINBYUN - Lawyers for a Democratic Society), Choi Byung-mo (Lawyer), Back Seung-heon (Lawyer) and etc.

**Civil Community (59)**

Beop In (Co-representative of People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy), Park Rae-gun (Manager of the Human Rights Fund ‘SARAM’), Lee Tae-ho (Operation Director of Joint Conference of Civil Rights Groups), Jo Yeong-geon (President of the Association for supporting imprisoned workers), Cho Soon-duck (Representative of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Kim Hye-soon (Honorary President of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Park Jin (Standing activist at Dasan Human Rights Center), Kim Duck-jin (Catholic Human Rights Committee), Myung Sook (Standing Activist of Sarangbang Group for Human Rights), Ahn Jin-gul (Secretary General of People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy), Lee Jung-i (Standing representative, Busan regional headquarter, South-side Committee for practicing the June 15th North–South Joint Declaration 615), Jang Gun (Standing Co-representative of Seongnam Democratic Action), Kim Jung-sook (Audit Commission of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Lee Ho-yoon (Standing representative of the National Democratic Alumni Association), and etc.

**Women’s Group (58)**

Kwon Oh-hee (Standing Representative of Women’s headquarter, South-side Committee for practicing the June 15th North–South Joint Declaration 615), Kim Young-Soon (Representative of Korea Women's Organizations Coalition), Ahn Kim Jung-ae (Standing Representative of Women's Com-
mittee for Peace), Choi Jin-mi (Standing Representative of the National Women’s Solidarity) and etc.

Artistic Community (11)
Im Jin-taek (Director), Park Jae-dong (Painter), Kim Jo-gwang-su (Movie Director), Ahn Chi-
hwan (Singer), Lee Jung-ryeol (Singer), Son Byung-hwi (Singer), Yun Min-seok (singer-songwriter),
Song Kyung-dong (Poet), Shin Hak-chul (Painter), Won Yong-jin (Co-representative of Cultural Solid-
arity), Lim Jung-hee (Co-representative of Cultural Solidarity) and etc.

Health and Medical Service Personnel (4)
Choi Mi-hee (Representative of Neulpum Pharmaceutical Association), Kim Jung-hyun (Representa-
tive of the Association of Korean Medicine - Gilbut) and etc.

Senior Member (36)
Baek Ki-wan (Chairperson of Research Institute for Unification of Korea), Park Soon-kyung (Standing Advis-
er of South-side Committee for practicing the June 15th North–South Joint Declaration 615), Im Ki-ran (Rep-
resentative of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Gwon O-heon (Hon-
orary President of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Oh Jong-
ryeol (Chairperson of the Board 5.18 School for reunification of Korea), Lee Soo-ho (Chairperson of the
Board of Chuntaeil Organization), Im Hun-young (Chief of the Center for Historical Truth and Justice)

Youth and Student (30)
Jung Jong-sung (Standing Representative of the Korea Youth Solidarity) and etc.

Public Group (111)
Jung Dong-ik (Standing Representative of April Revolution Society), Kim Hye-soon (Honorary Pres-
ident of the Union of families for the Promotion of Democracy ‘MINKAHYUP’), Moon Gyeongsik
(Standing Representative of the Korean Alliance of Progressive Movements), Han Chung-mok
(Standing Representative of the Korean Alliance of Progressive Movements), Park Seokun (Stand-
ing representative of the Korean Alliance of Progressive Movements), Jang Nam-su (Chairperson of
the Korea Association of Bereaved Families for Democracy) and etc.

**Labor Group (383)**
Choi Jong-jin (Acting president of The Korean Confederation of Trade Unions), Kim Ju-young (Chairperson of the Federation of Korean Trade Unions) and etc.

**Farmer Group (137)**
Kim Young-ho(President of Korean Peasants Association), Kim Sun-ae(President of Korean Peasant Women Association), Jung Hyun-chan(President of Catholic Peasant Association) and etc.

**The Poor (36)**
Jo Chun-joon(President of the Poor Association), Kim Young-pyo(Co-representative of the Solidarity for Relieving the Poor) and etc.

**Regional Group(997)**
Yun Jang-hyun(Mayor of Gwang-ju) and etc.

**On-line Submission(848)**