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Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

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I. Land and people

A. Land

1. Situated in the north-eastern part of the Asian continent, Korea consists of the Korean peninsula and 3,644 islands around it. It is surrounded by seas on three sides. Its total area is 224,252 km², of which mountains occupy almost 80 per cent.
2. Korea was liberated from the Japanese colonial rule on August 15, 1945. Soon after the liberation it was divided into the north and the south at the 38th parallel of north latitude and then after the Korean War at the military demarcation line defined as boundary in the Armistice Agreement. The area of the country over which the DPRK exercises its sovereignty is 123,214 km².

B. People, Language and Religion

3. The DPRK is a homogeneous nation State. As of 2017, the population of the DPRK is 2,528,7 000. Pyongyang, the capital, has a population of 3.16 million.
4. The national language is Korean.
5. Buddhism, Christianity, Roman Catholicism and Chondoism are practiced in the DPRK. It has no State religion.

II. General political structure

A. Brief Overview of Political History

6. Korea was formed as a State before the 30th century B.C and followed its own course of development.
7. Korea was reduced to a Japanese colony in the early 20th century on the basis of the Ulsa five-point Treaty 1905, the Jongmi seven-point Treaty 1907 and the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty 1910, all of which were forcibly and illegally passed by Japan.
8. The Korean people waged a vigorous armed struggle against Japanese imperialist aggressors for over 20 years under the leadership of President Kim Il Sung and achieved the historic cause of national liberation on August 15, 1945.
9. After the liberation, Korea was divided into the north and the south owing to the foreign interference, which led to the establishment of diametrically different systems: socialism in the north and capitalism in the south.
10. In the north, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea was established on February 8, 1946, based on the local power organs set up in different parts of the country on the initiative of people. Under the guidance of this Committee, democratic reforms were carried out to set up a genuine people's democratic system. By the first democratic elections of historic significance, the People's Committee of North Korea was established in February 1947 and the transition to socialism began.
11. To cope with the crisis of national division, general elections for a united central Government were held in the whole territory of the north and south of Korea in August 1948, and finally on September 9 1948, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was founded representing the interests of all the Korean people. The founding of the DPRK meant the advent of an independent people's power of a new type, and was a historic proclamation of the birth of Juche Korea.
12. The Korean people won the Fatherland Liberation War (1950-1953) against the US and its satellite countries and defended the country with honour. They completed the socialist transformation of the relations of production in urban and rural areas within only

four to five years after the war and established a socialist system free from exploitation and oppression of man by man.

13. The DPRK, in the course of carrying out the tasks of socialist construction of various stages, made the people's power and the socialist system invincible by relying on the single-minded unity and patriotic efforts of the people who are the masters of the State and the society, and realized socialist industrialization, laying the foundation of an independent national economy. The DPRK built the socialist culture that contributes to enhancing the creativity of the working people and satisfying their healthy cultural and emotional needs and strengthened the national self-defence capability based on the all-people, nationwide defence system.

14. Overcoming ordeals of history upholding the banner of the Juche idea, the DPRK developed into a people-centred socialist State under the outstanding leadership of the great leaders Comrade Kim Il Sung and Comrade Kim Jong Il.

15. Today, the Korean people, led by Comrade Kim Jong Un, Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK, who realizes the politics of prioritizing, respecting and loving people, are channeling all their efforts into economic construction, making a vigorous onward march towards a prosperous and powerful socialist country in which people's ideal and desire will become a reality.

B. General Political Structure

16. The political system of the DPRK is socialist democratic republicanism.

17. The sovereignty of the DPRK resides in the workers, peasants, soldiers, working intellectuals and all other working people. The working people exercise power through their representative organs – the Supreme People's Assembly and local people's assemblies at all levels.

18. The DPRK is administratively divided into 12 provinces (or municipalities directly under central authority), 210 cities (or districts) and counties, and more than 4 000 ris (or ups, gus, dong)s).

19. The State Organs are composed of the system of power organs, of administrative organs and of judicial and procuratorial organs.

20. The system of power organs consists of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (PSPA), local people's assemblies and local people's committees.

21. The SPA is the highest power organ of the DPRK. The SPA is composed of deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. Its term is five years. The SPA exercises the legislative power, organizes major State organs such as the State Affairs Commission (SAC), the PSPA and the Cabinet, establishes basic principles of domestic and foreign policies of the State, deliberates and approves the national economic plan, the State budget and the result of implementation thereof, and discusses and makes decisions on other important and principled political issues of the State.

22. The SAC is the highest political guidance organ of State power, which discusses and makes decisions on important policies of the State, and is accountable to the SPA for its work.

23. The Chairman of the SAC is the supreme leader of the DPRK.

24. The PSPA is the highest organ of State power when the SPA is not in session. It deliberates and adopts new draft bills and regulations, and amendments and supplements to the current laws and regulations raised in the intervals between the SPA sessions, and obtains the approval of the next session of the SPA for major laws which are adopted and enforced, supervises law observance by the State organs and takes relevant measures, discusses and decides important issues for the exercise of the State power. The President of the PSPA represents the State. The PSPA is accountable to the SPA.

25. The People's Assembly of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county is the local organs of State power. The local People's Assembly consists of deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot, and its term of office is four years. The local People's Assembly is the representative organ of the people in the area concerned and exercises such authority as deliberating and approving the local plan for the development of the national economy, local budget and the reports on their implementation, adopting measures to observe State laws in the area concerned, electing or recalling members of the People's Committees at the corresponding level, electing or recalling the Judges and People's Assessors of the Court at the corresponding level, etc. The local power organs when the local People's Assemblies are not in session are the People's Committees of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county. The local People's Committee is also the administrative and executive organ of State power at the corresponding level. The local People's Committee consists of the chairman, vice-chairmen, secretary and members, and its term of office is the same as that of the corresponding People's Assembly. The local People's Committee exercises the function of the local organ of State power when the corresponding People's Assembly is not in session and exercises such authority as convening sessions of the People's Assembly, organizing the election of deputies, working with the deputies, etc. The local People's Committee is accountable to the corresponding People's Assembly and is subordinate to the People's Committees at higher levels, the Cabinet and the PSPA.

26. The system of administrative organs consists of the Cabinet and the local People's Committees.

27. The Cabinet is the administrative and executive body of the highest State power and the organ of overall State administration. The Cabinet consists of the Premier, Vice-Premiers, chairpersons, ministers and other members as may be required, and its term of office is the same as that of the SPA. The Cabinet takes measures for the implementation of the State policies and laws, adopts or amends the regulations on State administration on the basis of the Constitution and the laws, drafts the State plan for the development of the national economy and the State budget, adopts measures for their implementation, organizes and executes the overall administrative and economic activities of the State such as industries, agriculture, education, science, culture, public health, external affairs, etc. The Cabinet is accountable to the SPA, and, when it is not in session, to the PSPA.

28. The People's Committee of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county exercises the function of the local organ of State power when the People's Assembly at the corresponding level is not in session, as well as the administrative and executive organ of State power at the corresponding level. The local People's Committee organizes and carries out all administrative and economic work in the area concerned, is accountable to the corresponding People's Assembly for its work and is subordinate to the People's Committees at higher levels, the Cabinet and the PSPA.

29. The system of judicial and procuratorial organs consists of courts and public prosecutors offices.

30. The system of procuratorial organs consists of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, the public prosecutors offices of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county and the Special Public Prosecutors Office. The Prosecutor-General of the Central Public Prosecutors Office is appointed or removed by the SPA, and public prosecutors by the Central Public Prosecutors Office. The prosecutors offices ensure the observance of State laws by institutions, enterprises, organizations and citizens, and identify and institute legal proceedings against offenders. Investigation and prosecution are conducted under the unified direction of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, and all public prosecutors offices are subordinate to their higher offices and the Central Public Prosecutor's Office. The Central Public Prosecutor's Office is accountable to the SPA, and the PSPA when the SPA is not in session.

31. The system of judicial organs is composed of the Central Court, the court of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), the People's Court and the Special Court. The President of the Central Court is elected or recalled by the SPA, and its

Judges and People's Assessors by the PSPA, while the Judges and People's Assessors of local courts are elected or recalled by the corresponding People's Assembly. Judges of the Special Court are appointed or removed by the Central Court and its People's Assessors elected by the soldiers of the unit concerned or by employees at their meetings. The courts protect, through judicial procedure, the State power and the socialist system established in the DPRK, the property of the State and social, cooperative organizations, personal rights as guaranteed by the Constitution, and the lives and property of citizens, as well as combating law-breakers. The Central Court is the highest judicial organ of the DPRK and is accountable to the SPA and to the PSPA when the SPA is not in session.

III. General legal framework for the protection of human rights

A. Legislative Measures Taken for Human Rights Protection

32. The social system of the DPRK is a people-centred socialist system that embodies the Juche idea. In the DPRK people are the masters of society and everything in the society serves them.

33. The DPRK regards human rights as the rights of independence which people, as social beings, are entitled to enjoy in political, economic, cultural and all other fields and makes strenuous efforts for the protection and promotion thereof.

34. Having authored the Juche idea that elucidates the new philosophical principle that people as the most precious beings in the world are the masters of everything and decide everything, and that people should be placed at the centre of all considerations and everything made to serve them, the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung opened a new era of the history in which our people could enjoy independent and creative life to the full extent, free from all social subjugation and inequalities.

35. The basis of policy on the protection and promotion of human rights was first laid down in the Ten-Point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland published in May 1936, during the anti-Japanese armed struggle. This Programme stipulated that freedom of speech, the press, assembly and association should be realized, the Japanese reign of terror and the remnants of feudal ideas opposed and all political prisoners released. It also provided that discriminatory status systems and other inequalities should be abolished, human equality irrespective of sex, race, religion, etc. guaranteed, social position of women improved and their dignity respected. The Programme called for the adoption of popular and democratic policies of economy and culture, abolition of slave labour and education, enforcement of free compulsory education and eight-hour working day, as well as for improvement of working conditions, raise of wage and relief of the unemployed.

36. In March, 1946 after the liberation of the country from the Japanese colonial rule, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea proclaimed the Twenty-Point Platform to be implemented by the democratic government that was to be set up and took legislative measures for defending people's rights and interests.

37. For the democratic socio-political reform and the democratization of the judicature, the Committee formulated in 1946 and carried into effect the Rules of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea, the Basic Principles of the Composition and Functions of the Judicial Organs, the Court and the Public Prosecutors Office of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea, the Rules of the Criminal Justice of the North Korean Judicial Organs and the Law on the Criminal Hearing by the Public Prosecutors Office and the Preliminary Examination of Security Organs of North Korea. For democratic socio-economic reform the Law on the Agrarian Reform in North Korea, the Law on Nationalization of Industries, Transport, Communications and Banks in North Korea, the Labour Law for the Factory and Office Workers in North Korea and the Law on Equality of the Sexes were proclaimed and implemented. In order to secure the democratization of social and cultural life, the Committee enacted the Law on the Protection of Life, Health, Freedom and Honour, the Law on the Abolition of the Remnants of Feudal Customs, the

Law on the Protection of Private Property and the Law on Crimes against Public Health, etc.

38. The democratic laws and new regulations adopted after the establishment of the People's Committee of North Korea in February, 1947 consolidated by law the achievements of democratic reform.

39. The DPRK which was founded on September 9, 1948 adopted its first Constitution to legally consolidate the achievements it gained and reaffirm the democratic rights of its citizens in all spheres of social life such as politics, the economy, culture, etc. The DPRK took legislative and practical measures to protect the human rights of citizens by enacting the Law on Composition of the Court (March, 1950), the Criminal Law (March, 1950), the Criminal Procedure Law (March, 1950) and other related laws.

40. The DPRK adopted the Socialist Constitution on December 27, 1972 in line with the established socialist system and amended and supplemented it in April 1992, October 1998, April 2009, April 2010, April 2012, April 2013 and in June 2016 to consolidate the achievements of the socialist construction and to better protect the genuine democratic freedom and rights of the citizens. In particular, by providing in Article 8 that the State shall respect and protect human rights of its citizens, the DPRK declared its commitment to ensuring enjoyment by its citizens of their human rights on a high level.

41. On the basis of the Socialist Constitution, the DPRK adopted hundreds of laws and Regulations for the protection and promotion of human rights as required by the developing realities.

42. The DPRK enacted a new Criminal Law and the Criminal Procedure Law on December 19, 1974, Civil Procedure Law in 1976 and Civil Law in 1990. It also enacted the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children (1976), Socialist Labour Law (1978), Public Health Law (1980), Law on the Protection of the Environment (1986), Family Law (1990), Law on Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at All Levels (1992), Nationality Law (1995), Law on Complaints and Petitions (1998), Law on External Civil Relations (1995), Law on Composition of the Court (1998), Law on Lawyers (1993), Notary Public Law (1995), Education Law(1999), Law on Prevention of Epidemics (1997), Insurance Law(1995), Law on Compensation for Damage (2001), Law on Succession (2002), Foreign Trade Law (1997), Law on the DPRK Red Cross Society(2007), Social Security Law (2008), Law on the Care of the Elderly (2007), Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (2003), Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children (2010), Law on the Protection of the Rights of Women (2010), Law on Labour Protection (2010), Law on Higher Education (2011), Law on General Education (2011), Law on Libraries (1998), Law on Sports (1997), Law on Tobacco Control (2005), Law on Public Hygiene (1998), Law on Foodstuff Hygiene (1998), Law on Dwelling Houses (2009) and Law on Economic Development Zones (2013), Law on Disaster Prevention, Relief and Recovery (2014) so that all the citizens may better enjoy their rights and freedom in all spheres of the society, leading a happy material and cultural life to their full.

B. General Legal Structure for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights

43. People's committees at all levels are the executive organs directly responsible for the implementation of the State policy on the protection of human rights. These committees take practical measures for the protection and promotion of human rights of the citizens in such fields as public health, education, labour, commerce, provision of foodstuff and daily necessities, food administration, sports, environmental protection, complaints and petitions, etc.

44. Judicial, procuratorial and people's security organs also perform important mission and functions in protecting human rights. These organs safeguard and protect the security of the State, and life and property of citizens by preventing violations of law through education of people in law observance, regulating, investigating and detecting crimes and illegal acts, conducting surveillance of law observance by institutions, enterprises,

organizations and individual citizens and imposing corresponding legal sanctions on violations of human rights of citizens.

45. Social organizations also play an important role in the implementation of the State policy on human rights. The Association for Human Rights Studies, the Democratic Lawyers' Association, the Bar Association, the Youth League, the Trade Union, the Women's Union, the Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities, the Korean Federation for the Care of the Elderly, Red Cross Society, Korean Association for Supporting the Children, the Korean Association for Family Planning, Maternal and Infant Health, the Korea Education Fund, etc. are rendering proactive cooperation to the State in its efforts for the implementation of the policy for the protection and promotion of human rights in the relevant sectors.

46. The National Committee for the Implementation of the International Human Rights Instruments was organized for the coordination of the implementation of international human rights treaties to which the DPRK is a State Party. This Committee meets regularly to discuss measures for the implementation of the international human rights conventions to which the DPRK is a State Party, as well as to disseminate conventions, submit reports on the implementation thereof and to distribute the concluding observations adopted at the consideration of reports. It also carries out investigation about the implementation of the conventions and relevant domestic laws by institutions, enterprises and organizations, and submits its recommendations to the PSPA, Cabinet and other competent institutions.

47. A well-developed complaints mechanism from the central down to the grassroots level was put in place for the investigating and settling of complaints and petitions lodged by citizens. All State institutions have departments or sections specialized in handling complaints and petitions, while other enterprises and organizations have full- or part-time officials for that purpose. Central institutions, provincial People's Committees and other provincial-level institutions meet once a month, while people's committees at city and county level, and other institutions and enterprises three times a month to settle case by case the complaints and petitions on the Day of Settlement of Complaints or at the consultative meeting of the leading officials of the institutions concerned. Central institutions and people's committees at provincial, city and county levels sum up the results of settlement of complaints and petitions once a quarter, while departments or sections of institutions and enterprises every month. Citizens have, provided they have justifiable reasons to do so, the right to lodge complaints and petitions to institutions, enterprises, organizations including the highest organ of State power and individual officials, requesting for the prevention of infringement on their rights and interests or for the rehabilitation of the infringed rights, as well as making suggestions for the improved work of the institutions, enterprises, organizations or individuals concerned.

48. There is a system of compensation for damage for the citizens who claim that their rights are violated, which are civil compensation and criminal compensation. Citizens may bring an action before the State organs, or judicial or other competent State organs when they deem that their rights are violated. The State organs investigate the case in accordance with the prescribed procedures and have the victim properly rehabilitated or compensated if the communication or appeal proves to be reasonable. Compensation is made in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Law, Civil Procedure Law and the Law on Compensation for Damage.

IV. Information and publicity

49. The DPRK is a State Party to several international human rights treaties: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the four Geneva Conventions and three Protocols Additional thereto. It is also a State party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the International Convention on Suppression of Financing of Terrorism.

50. The DPRK makes every effort to faithfully implement the international human rights conventions to which it is a State Party. It has incorporated the principles and requirements of the conventions in its Constitution, sector-specific laws and regulations, and has taken practical measures to bring them into effect. The DPRK submitted several periodic reports on the implementation of international human rights instruments to which it is a State party. It took part in the first and second cycle of the Universal Periodic Reviews under the HRC. The recommendations received from the treaty bodies and the UPR were informed to the People's Committee at all levels, the commissions and ministries concerned, law enforcement organs and social organizations concerned with a view to following them up.

51. Efforts were also made to disseminate the principles and requirements of the international human rights instruments to the State institutions, social organizations and the general public. On the occasion of the Human Rights Day and other international and national anniversaries in particular, the State informs, through mass media, about the status of its accession to the international conventions, explaining their principles, requirements and contents. Especially, it organizes lectures, workshops and seminars for the officials of power organs and law enforcement organs on a periodic basis. Universities and institutions for training law officers give specialized education on international human rights instruments, while secondary schools also teach international conventions and related domestic laws in an age- and psychology appropriate manner. The texts of the international human rights instruments have been translated into Korean language to publish *Compilation of International Human Rights Instruments (Vols. I and II)*. Thousands of copies of booklets on conventions on the rights of the child, women and persons with disabilities were published in both English and Korean to be distributed to the people's power organs, law enforcement organs and social organizations. In addition to these human rights-related books such as *Understanding of International Human Rights Instruments*, *Human Rights and People*, etc., were published to enable the general public to have a full understanding of international human rights treaties and human rights.

Annex

Table 1
General Background

<i>Population</i>	<i>1,000 head</i>	25,287
Birth rate	Per 1 000 head	13.4
Mortality rate	Per 1 000 head	8.3
Average lifespan	years	73.3
GDP per capita in 2018	US\$	1 214

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018.

Table 2
Yearly population and its growth rate (%)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (1,000 head)</i>	<i>Growth rate (%)</i>
2008	24 052	-
2012	24 625	102.4
2014	24 895	101.1
2017	25 287	101.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.

Table 3
Proportion according to residence (%)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
2013	61.2	38.8
2017	60.9	39.1

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.

Table 4
Number and composition of population by age group (1 000 head)

<i>Ages</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2017</i>
Total	24 052	24 625	24 895	25 287
0–14	5 578(23.2 %)	5 286(21.5%)	5 187(20.8%)	5 080(20.1%)
15–59	15 319(63.7%)	16 046(65.2%)	16 369(65.8%)	16 605(65.7%)
60+	3 155(13.1%)	3 293(13.4%)	3 340(13.4%)	3 602(14.2%)

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.

Table 5
Proportion of children by sex (%)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
0–4	7.0	7.5	6.5
5–9	7.0	7.6	6.5
10–14	7.2	7.7	6.8
15–17	4.3	4.5	4.2
Total	25.5	27.2	24.0

Source: DPRK MICS Report 2017.

Table 6
Proportion of persons with disabilities (%)

Age	2014			2016		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Proportion	6.2	5.9	6.5	5.5	5.1	5.9
0–4	-	-	-	0.3	0.4	0.2
5–6	-	-	-	0.5	0.6	0.4
7–16	1	1.1	0.8	1.0	1.2	0.8
17–59	5.4	6.1	4.7	4.8	5.4	4.2
60-	18.5	15.1	20.5	16.9	13.3	19.1

Source: 2014 Disability Sample Survey, Central Bureau of Statistics 2017.

Table 7
Proportion of expenditure for public health and education (%)

Year	Public health	Education
2011	6.1	8.3
2013	6.4	8.4
2016	6.6	8.6

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.

Table 8
Results of nutrition and health survey (%)

Category	Year	Chronic malnutrition	Acute malnutrition	Wasting
MICS	2009	32.4	5.2	18.8
Nutritional survey	2012	27.9	4.0	15.2
MICS	2017	19.1	2.5	9.3

Source: Final report on 2012 DPRK National Nutritional Survey. DPRK MICS Report 2017.

Table 9
Child and maternal mortality

Year	Neonatal and infant mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)	Under-5 mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)	Maternal mortality rate (per 100 000 live births)
2008	19.3	26.7	85.1
2010	18.8	25.7	76.0
2012	16.7	22.7	68.1
2014	14.2	20.0	62.7
2017	12.3	17.2	53.2

Source: DPRK MICS Report 2017, Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.

Table 10
Number of students per teacher by education levels and areas (person)

<i>Area</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	<i>Secondary school</i>
Urban	21.9	19.5
Rural	20.1	16.5
Total	21	18

Source: DPRK MICS Report 2017, Central Bureau of Statistics 2018.