

**Individual Complaint to:**

- **the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders;**
- **the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; and**
- **the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression**
- **the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention**

**Name of Defender:** Rev. Yeon-gil Jeong

**Country:** Republic of Korea

**Incident / Violation:** Human rights defender and peace activist is arrested and harassed by the police for his actions related to protect environmental rights, right to peace, freedom of expression and opinion, and freedom of peaceful assembly.

**Date of Fact Sheet:** 11 December 2012

<b><i>A Essential Information</i></b>	<b><i>B Useful information</i></b>
<b>1. Name of alleged victim/s</b> Mr. Yeon-gil Jeong	<b>Nationality:</b> Republic of Korea <b>Occupation:</b> Reverend
<b>2. Status of the victim as a human rights defender</b>  Rev. Jeong is a human rights defender and a peace activist who has been campaigning and struggling against jeju naval base construction. During the World Conservation Congress (WCC) which was held in Jeju on 6-15 September 2012, he climbed caisson barge 'SFD 2000' to address negative environmental impact of Jeju naval base construction by putting up a banner. Due to this activity, he was arrested and has detained since 6 September 2012.	<p>Jeju Island is located at the southern part of the Republic of Korea. Jeju, the Island of Peace appointed by the Government, is experiencing harsh conflicts because the Ministry of Defence and the Navy of the Republic of Korea are enforcing the construction of a naval base at Gangjeong village. The naval base construction at Gangjeong is being pushed under the name of "national project" in the absence of justification while human rights violence is frequently employed. People in Gangjeong village have been fighting since May 2007 against government's attempts to construct the naval base.</p> <p><b>Problems of constructing naval base in Gangjeong</b> <u>1. Ongoing human rights violation against villagers, peace activist, and environmental defenders</u> According to the information submitted by the Police Agency during parliamentary inspection of the administration in October 2012, 512</p>



*This is how Mr. Park was protesting against construction of the naval base, by putting up a banner.*

people were arrested for their participation in peaceful demonstration against the naval base construction from 2010 to June 2012. The arrestees include catholic priest, protestant pastor, human rights defenders and foreign activists from other countries like the UK and France as well as Korean human rights defenders, and most of all, villagers of Gangjeong.

## 2. No proper consultation with villagers

In April 2007, only 87 out of 1,900 villagers participated in a town meeting that decided to host the naval base in Gangjeong village. The announcement was made only four days before the meeting was held. In August 2007, a referendum on the naval base proposal held in the Gangjeong village resulted in an overwhelming opposition by 94% of the villagers. Despite this, the government has continued with the project. This is indeed an affront to the rights of the people of Gangjeong village, particularly their right to take part in the decision-making process affecting their community.

## 3. Environmental destruction

The seashore of Gangjeong village, where the naval base is to be constructed, is classified as a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO. The construction of a naval base will give negative impact to the seashore, which is inhabited several endangered marine species, bringing long-lasting negative impact to the environment and ecology. It is also close to the Natural Memorial No. 421, 442, Ecological Landscape Preservation Area, Seogwipo Municipal Marine Park and the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

## **3. Alleged violation/s committed against the victim**

### **6 September 2012**

That day was the first day of the World Conservation Conference (WCC) organized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN) which was held from 6 to 15 September at Jeju Island. Many peace activists, environment defenders

<p>and Gangjeong villagers have argued that the WCC should take into consideration of negative environmental impact of naval base construction in Jeju Island. To deliver this message, five activists including Rev. Jeong climbed caisson barge around dawn and putting up a banner written “No Naval Base in Jeju!”, “Peace to Gangjeong, Love to Gurumbi bedrock”, “Stop constructing Jeju Naval Base that destroy nature and peace!”. It was a 10 meter high, 8,800 ton caisson in Hwasoon Port, which is about 40 minutes car ride from Gangjeong village. Samsung is making these massive concrete caissons there and shipping them to Gangjeong to build naval base.</p> <p>At around 7:30am, construction workers destroyed banners and climbed up caisson barge, dragged three out of five protesters (Father Sung-hwan Kim, Mr. Young-jae Kim, Mr. Yong-eun Lee) down to the caisson barge. During this process, some people said that they witnessed they were beaten by these workers. Later, two other activists (Mr. Suk-jin Park, Mr. Yeon-gil Jeong) were arrested by the police.</p> <p>It was almost 40m high which was a dangerous situation, but there were no minimum safety measures such as a net were provided. It is also worrisome that it was mainly untrained private security workers who arrested human rights defenders, not police officers. When police dragged his body, Mr. Park felt his body was floating in the air for a moment. These workers also do not have any experience in dealing with human rights defenders nor arresting people at the high altitude. The police officers did not show any efforts to resolve the situation but just let workers and private guards to deal with these activists.</p> <p>Currently, Rev. Jeong was prosecuted under various charges including violation of the Punishment of Violence, Etc. Act, damaging public buildings, and obstructing official businesses. Rev. Jeong has been detained since 6 September 2012 and</p>	
<p><b>4. Alleged Perpetrators</b></p> <p>Ministry of Defense, Navy of the Republic of Korea, The National Police Agency</p>	<p><b>Witnesses</b></p> <p>N/A</p>

(Seogwipo Police Station and Seogwipo Cost Guard), Responsible person from Samsung C&T	
<p><b>5. Action by authorities</b> N/A</p>	<p><b>Action taken by the victim or by human rights organizations</b></p> <p>One hundred and twenty-five Korean organisations including peace organisations, environmental organisations, and religious organisations established a National Network of Korean Civil Society for Opposing to the Naval Base in Jeju Island. Since May 2011, the network has showed its solidarity to Gangjeong villagers and raised problems of constructing naval base in Gangjeong village.</p> <p>Internationally, several NGOs and individuals sent solidarity message to villagers of Gangjeong, Jeju. Also, the Special Rapporteurs sent a joint allegation letter to the Government regarding human rights violations in Gangjeong. These messages include below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, human rights defenders and freedom of peaceful assembly and of association sent a joint allegation letter on human rights violations in Gangjeong village on <b>30 May 2012</b>. Unfortunately, as of 7 December 2012, the government of Republic of Korea did not give response to the Special Rapporteurs.</li> <li>- Statement of Support by the Right Livelihood Award Laureates for the Non-violent Struggle against the construction of the Korean/USA Naval Base in Gangjeong (<b>27 March 2012</b>)</li> <li>- Joint Open letter to President of South Korea on Construction of Naval Base and Arrest of Demonstrators in Jeju Island (FORUM-ASIA, FIDH, OMCT and 28 other Asian NGOs, <b>21 March 2012</b>)</li> <li>- Statement of Gwangju Prize Laureates Against Navy Base on World Peace Island Jeju (<b>16 March 2012</b>)</li> <li>- Noam Chomsky, Professor Emeritus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), sent a solidarity message to Gangjeong villagers (<b>30 September 2011</b>)</li> <li>- International Statement in support of Gangjeong Village (Global</li> </ul>

	Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, <b>8 June 2011</b> )
<p><b>6. Link between the violation and human rights work</b></p> <p>Rev. Yeon-gil Jeong was arrested and harassed by the police because of his work as a peace activist. He has been defending Gangjeong villager's right to peace, freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly.</p>	<p><b>Previous incidents</b></p> <p>From July 2009 to August 2012, <b>586 people</b> were arrested and/or detained related to their activities to stop naval base construction in Gangjeong.</p> <p>Samsung C&amp;T and Daerim, two construction companies claimed for damage against 10 villagers including Village President Gang and they are now facing around <b>289,780,000KRW (around 263,000 USD)</b>. The case is still in process at the court.</p> <p>Below is major human rights violations happened in Gangjeong in the past:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>16 April 2012:</b> Some human rights defenders connected their arms with PVC pipes and made a human wall to prevent a construction vehicle from entering the construction site. The police used <b>electronic saw</b> to cut that PVC pipes which had attached to human rights defenders arms. The police continued to use the saw to cut it even though human rights defenders were screaming out of fear. There was no safety measures were made during this process.</li> <li>- <b>15 March 2012:</b> Mr. Benjamin Monnet, a French activist, while Ms. Angie Zelter, a peace activist and 2012 Nobel Peace Prize nominee from the UK was asked to leave the country. Both of them were actively participated in the peace movement in Gangjeong.</li> <li>- <b>19 May 2011:</b> Nine people including villagers and human rights defenders who were peacefully protesting were taken to police station.</li> <li>- <b>14 March 2012:</b> Three Veterans For Peace members from the US who came to Republic of Korea to support peace movement in Jeju, Gangjeong was denied to enter the country at the airport without notifying ground reason.</li> </ul>

	<p>- <b>30 September 2011:</b> Three religious pastors were arrested while they were having a mass at the navy base construction site. They were arrested under the charge of interfering businesses.</p> <p>- <b>24 August 2011:</b> The police arrested and detained Village President Dong-kyun Kang under the charge of interfering businesses.</p> <p>- <b>7 July 2011:</b> The police applied for an injunction to 76 people including Mr. Dong-kyun Kang, under the charge of obstructing businesses.</p>
<p><b>7. Who is submitting this information?</b></p> <p>This letter is submitted by:  Mr. Taeho Lee  Co-convenor, National Network of Korean Civil Society for Opposing to the Naval Base in Jeju Island  Secretary General, People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)  Tel. +82 2 723-7250, Fax: +82 2 6919 2004  Email: peace@pspd.org, www.peoplepower21.org</p>	<p>For further inquiries or clarification, please kindly contact to:  Ms. Gayoon Baek  Coordinator, People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy  Email: pspdint@pspd.org, Phone: +82 (0)2-723-5051  Ms. Sooyoung  Gangjeong Human Rights Violations Investigation Team  Email: ifis32@gmail.com, Phone: +82 2 6407 0366</p>