

SARAM
FOR THE PEOPLE OF
NORTH KOREA

APPROPRIATE EXCHANGE OR PLAYING DOWN CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY?

GERMAN ENGAGEMENT WITH NORTH KOREA



TRANSLATED BY MARKUS RIEXINGER

8 DECEMBER 2020

CONTENTS

Preface	3
What do we know about North Korea?	4
Speculating instead of gaining information	5
“Government advisors” and exertion of influence	7
A public stage for relativizing crimes against humanity	8
The opposite of “well-done” is „well-intentioned”	9
The perpetrators’ economic reality	10
Living up to one’s responsibility	11
Annotations	13

ABBREVIATIONS

- Col - Commission of Inquiry
- DPRK - Democratic People’s Republic of Korea („North Korea“)
- CCP - Chinese Communist Party
- NGO - Non-governmental organization
- OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- ROK - Republic of Korea („South Korea)
- UN - United Nations
- PRC - People’s Republic of China

PREFACE

Scientific and cultural exchange, diplomatic relations and humanitarian aid¹: Germany and North Korea are bound up together in many ways - invisible to the general public. Interacting with an inhumane dictatorship like North Korea should, however, not work behind the scenes, but be embedded in transparent discourse. Especially when it comes from Germany, the country which emphasizes its historical responsibility for human rights for good reasons.

An honest debate, however, is facing considerable problems: it is very difficult to make indisputable statements about a topic as complex as North Korea without devoting oneself to it for an extended period of time. The information available can be evaluated and classified only with great efforts. Considering this, striving for a scientific approach focused on critical, rational and fact-based recon will be all the more important. It is essential to use all sources of information available to us: it really is the only way of coming close to a realistic assessment about the situation the country is in, and how its people are enduring the terror of a totalitarian dictatorship. Under these conditions, we will be able to choose the right strategies for the international community of states to employ to face Pyongyang's gestures of nuclear threat and to improve the local human rights situation in an effective way. Not least, the stability of the international security architecture is tied up with this, while being in a momentous upheaval due to political changes in the People's

Republic of China and the U.S.A., and due to changes in international relations and alliances resulting from these. But even „renowned experts“ are repeating the same technical errors over and over again, or are biased by particular interests: their approach is to be invited by the Pyongyang regime to attend propagandistic stagings, and then sell these impressions as a rare, exclusive insight into the „most sealed off country in the world“. Instead of factual information, what really counts is the „expert's“ reputation; an approach which, in this case, annihilates impartial judgement.

In our report, we want to point to the deficits occurring in the actual engagement with the North Korean regime, and make clear which actors are responsible for them. At the end, we are presenting recommendations for actions which guarantee a conscientious and objective handling of the crisis.

SARAM
FOR THE PEOPLE OF
NORTH KOREA



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT NORTH KOREA?

A lot of the things we believe to know about North Korea are not corresponding to reality, or turn out to be a very selective cutout. The country, with all its peculiarities and contradictions, has become a mirror of ideological conflicts. This is mainly due to the state propaganda by the Kim dynasty, which is conveying an intentionally distorted picture of domestic affairs and the regime's foreign policy.

If we want to know something about life in North Korea, the only way is to ask North Koreans who are able to speak freely without having to fear reprisals, and who don't speak on behalf of the regime. You won't find these people within the country, but more than 32.000 of them have arrived in South Korea by now. Most of them fled during the last 20 years, and they come from all different classes (3)² and professional fields. Given the sheer number of them, it is possible to record, compare and evaluate their statements on a scientific and independent basis. Exactly this has been done various times: the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK, for example, has been consulting more than 300 witnesses over the span of one year, and collected the shocking result in an extensive final report³. The commission concluded that North Korea has and continues to commit crimes against humanity; these are not, as the commission claims, „mere excesses of the state; they are essential components of a political system that has moved far from the ideals on which it claims to be founded.“ Michael Kirby, head of the commission, made the dimension of these crimes very clear by stating: „At the end of the Second World War so many people said: ‚If only we had known... if only we had known the wrongs that were done in the countries of the hostile forces. Well, now the international community does know. There will be no excusing of failure of action because we didn't know.“

What is for sure: „The gravity, scale and nature of these violations have no parallel in the contemporary world.“ North Korea annually ends up ranking among the last internationally concerning freedom of speech and expression, freedom of movement and travel, press freedom, freedom of religion, the right to education and many more. Regarding this, North Korea is in sad competition only with the state of Eritrea. Systematic and wide-spread crimes against humanity like forced labor, torture, murder, enslavement, collective punishment and starving the population occur on a regular basis. The regime seeks to dominate every single aspect of its citizens' lives, and it demands unrestricted loyalty. Any opinion diverging from state ideology is suppressed in the most violent ways: people get deported into labor-, internment-, and concentration camps for „political prisoners“ or get executed – sometimes publicly. Approximately 120,000 people are being held in these camps, whose existence has been clearly documented by satellite images and witness reports from both victims and culprits, matching in content. Life expectancy of the prisoners on average is between six and seven years. A large part of the inmates dies from exhaustion and illness resulting from malnutrition and forced labor. More than a few get tortured to death or shot when trying to escape. North Korean refugees forcefully deported from China to North Korea often become victims of torture, arbitrary arrest or martial law executions. Also, forced abortion and systematic sexual violence have been reported⁴.

We want to reject common descriptions of North Korea being „the last socialist dictatorship“, as they are misleading: the term does not refer to racial theory, collective punishment, clan dynasty and a caste system. It is plain wrong to use the term „so-

cialist“ for North Korea. Elements of other socialist systems can be found in the social, political and artistic realm, but only in small doses. We also find aspects of fascist ideology and reinterpreted ideological aspects from Christianity in this theocratic clan dynasty.

SPECULATING INSTEAD OF GATHERING INFORMATION

„You are one of the leading experts on North Korea in the world“, or: „You are one of the very few authorities on the topic of North Korea“: that’s the way German „experts on North Korea“ like to be addressed in interviews. One may question this assertion, for example at the Korean National Institute for Unification (ROK), Nankai University (PRC), Vistula University (Poland), the Centre for Fundamental Rights (Hungary), Tokyo University (Japan) and numerous other institutions. And, without doubt, much more professional competence can be found among experts working on any topic related to North Korea in international NGOs (for example Korean ones) and news portals focusing on North Korea. Not least 32,000 refugees from North Korea should, in our opinion, have more solid knowledge about the culture, education, economy, trade and many other areas of their country of origin. In addition, by accepting quite imaginative titles accentuating their only alleged knowledge, these talk show guests and interviewees are placing their knowledge above the knowledge of people who actually fled the country. Furthermore, this action is demeaning real experts like the representatives and employees of the United Nations, the OHCHR Seoul, and of other diplomatic representatives.

At least since Theodor W. Adorno’s and Max Horkheimer’s essay „The culture industry - enlightenment as mass deception“, some may have developed a sense of critical consciousness regarding the use of superlatives in talk shows to legitimize its guests. But it is very problematic when actors in the political arena, like members of the German Bundestag, are impressed by these „experts“ and their rather limited understanding of the situation and give them a stage – or when they make political decisions based on these „experts“ shallow impressions (for further elaborations, please consult section 4).

To stress this, we provide the following two examples, which have occurred during public events on North Korea, and which can be testified by several members of our foundation: economist Rüdiger Frank, considered by many media outlets as a renowned expert on the country, referred to North Korea’s political prison camps as „villages with a fence“, which could be compared in no way to gulags or concentration camps. Rather, these camps would simply constitute the North Korean prison system interning „criminals“ (this view remained unchallenged by the organizers of the event). These statements were made on 12th December during a discussion with former German Federal Minister for the Economy Philipp Rösler at the invitation of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation⁵, and repeated at several promotional events, including those for his books, and also for the travel agency „Pyongyang Travel“ in Berlin in October 2018⁶.

The second example constitutes a request of the head of the German-Korean society Uwe Schmelter, expressed at an event at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20th August 2019⁷. During the event’s discussion following a lecture held by Pit Heltmann, Germany’s ambassador in Pyongyang, Schmelter asked for understanding of forced labor in North Korea. Schmelter argued that patriotic fulfillment and happiness, allegedly experienced by the la-

borers when working for their country, ought to be taken into account. In this sense, he pointed out that empathizing with such patriotic feelings may be impossible in Western countries, but in Schmelter's view, an understanding should be developed for it.

At least since the UN Commission of Inquiry's report, for which more than 300 witnesses of the human rights situation in North Korea were interrogated, nobody internationally doubts the commitment of numerous crimes against humanity by the regime. Succeeding (and preceding) reports from various Korean NGOs or from, for example, the American NGO Human Rights Watch, provide an insight into many more aspects of daily life, demonstrating the disastrous state of human rights in North Korea. The UN Commission of Inquiry had decided to concentrate on some main aspects of the state of affairs due to a lack of time and the sheer masses of witnesses and evidence; many aspects were just hinted at. However, no doubts remain with regards to the situation in the political prison camps or gross violations of human rights due to forced labor under the threat of deportation.

As part of our work, our foundation is cooperating with numerous NGOs, political organizations and scientists from different countries (for example the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Korea or Japan). We have gained the subjective impression that playing down the human rights situation in North Korea seems to be a rather German phenomenon, which, in our view, is irritating and sad in light of German history.

Even though it is exceptionally difficult to verify information from and about North Korea, the degree of self-confidence that such „North Korea experts“ – particularly in the German-speaking area – put forth in their statements is astonishing. A distinct interpretation about North Korea's economic state and future, about Kim Jong Un's personal life and

North Korea's political ambitions is laid out in lectures, public appearances, books or interviews – allegedly without any room for disagreement. Things only get blurred when questions are raised about short-term predictions, which could be verified within a few weeks or months. In contrary, there is much less reluctance when it comes to long-term forecasts. Let's take some of the self-assured statements after Kim Jong Un's takeover as an example: While nobody had any information about Kim Jong Un's character, his political ambitions or even his exact age, many „North Korean experts“ painted the very young dictator as “putative grand reformer” due to his extended stay in Switzerland in his early youth, who would push forward economic reforms and open up the country within the next years. Such prophecies were utterly dubious and did, of course, not come true. North Korea, as the „experts“ further prognosticated, was about to „follow the Chinese way, opening up to the outside world step-by-step“. None of this has happened in the end. The dictatorship further intensified its efforts to build nuclear weapons and long-range missiles. Economically, the regime continues to be dysfunctional while another famine may be lurking in the background. Even though the corona pandemic had clearly an effect on North Korea's economic and political state, this is not the reason why North Korea does not follow the „Chinese way“, as was to be expected.

“GOVERNMENT ADVISORS” AND EXERTION OF INFLUENCE

As already mentioned, it is a huge challenge to assess North Korea’s strategic behavior, its diplomatic ambitions and the current situation within its borders. The language barrier plays a large role in this. Most of North Korean defectors neither speak German nor English. However, most crucially, they do not like to talk about their lives in and their knowledge about North Korea. A wide range of reasons exists for this, starting with psychological stress due to persecution and flight, prioritizing building up a new life up to a sense of wanting to avoid getting their credibility discredited from various actors.

Furthermore, it is difficult to filter out information that is objective or, to the contrary, politically slanted, from a torrent of publications, interviews, presentations and statements put forth by people who are concerned with North Korea in any way. Many statements that were uttered confidently by a plethora of such actors outrightly contradict each other depending on the topic or source. Some of the so-called “North Korea experts” seem to use this uncertainty to their benefit to boost the credibility of their ways of acquiring information. Two strategies tend to be particularly popular, which lead to problematic distortions of reports and research on North Korea:

1. “Special access” to officials in North Korea

On the one hand, the problem is that such “special access” tends to be both fairly unproductive and easily susceptible to influence by the North Korean regime for its own interests. On the other hand, such access is tied to conditions, which renders all statements by such as person incomplete if not completely unreliable. “Special access” (and potentially the opportunity to acquire a visa for the DPRK)

is revoked for those who either talks too critically about North Korea or who meet with defectors and refugees. Those who play this game and consider themselves as scientific experts have lost their credibility.

2. “Special influence” on decision makers in Germany

Journalists cannot find a better expert for an interview or a talk show appearance on North Korea than someone who conducts research about the country, who advises the federal government and who even participates in mysterious secret negotiations with North Korea. This might explain why the Institute of Korean Studies’ website at the Free University of Berlin includes the following description of its academic employee Eric Ballbach:

“The political scientist is an absolute expert on North Korea. After all, he does not only advise the German federal government but also participates regularly in semi-official diplomatic talks with North Korean officials.”⁸

Our request to the federal government about the applicability of this statement was answered in the following way:

“The federal government is unaware of any advisory work. In addition, Dr. Ballbach has not participated in any talks between the federal government and North Koreans to our knowledge.”⁹

For years, trips to North Korea that are inevitably supervised by the regime, have been considered as special qualifications by the German media to provide assessments about life in North Korea and the regime’s domestic and foreign ambitions. Various

well-informed sources testify that assertions about partially unaccompanied and unguarded trips to Pyongyang and Wonsan are factually incorrect. This is particularly the case outside of the capital and has been verified by North Korean defectors, who either came across “Western visitors” or rehearsed for dance performances or other artistic events that are staged for them.

Ask yourself when an invited visitor of North Korea reports about “happy North Koreans” in the city center of Pyongyang “who have sold self-made lemonade and ice cream at food stands”. What should this tell us about the country’s situation? It is conceivable that this assessment is factually correct in this case. But how does this statement measure up to 120,000 inmates of political prison camps? Even today, most of North Korea’s population is faced with a precarious food situation, not to speak of medical care. And please keep in mind: Most North Korean regions have been out of bounds for foreign visitors of all sorts for decades.

as well as crimes against the North Korean people committed by the North Korean regime, this does not justify why such organizations help to disrupt the objectivity of the debate by uncritically putting forth such opinions.

Shouldn’t we be much more prudent when we engage with such opinions that are uncritical of the North Korean regime – particularly in light of Germany’s past and the current rise of right-wing populism and conspiracy theories? Even though it might be unpleasant to listen to unopposed utterances professing the alleged harmlessness of crimes against the North Korean people, for example during public events by several party foundations: isn’t it much more worrisome that Germany appears to signal to the international community that this country declares persons as “experts” and “authorities”, who systematically trivialize¹⁰ North Korean camps for political prisoners? How credible is the federal government’s criticism of the CCP’s treatment of Uyghurs while crimes against humanity in North Korea are played down or even outrightly denied without opposition on the floors of the German Bundestag or at events of the foreign ministry? An immediate change of thinking is absolutely imperative here.

A PUBLIC STAGE FOR RELATIVIZING CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

These previously outlined issues with regards to reporting on North Korea beg the question of why such questionable persons, who are at best uncritical towards the North Korean regime, are frequently given a forum, either by charitable organizations, (political) foundations, or repeated invitations by political institutions such as parliamentary groups, the foreign ministry, or even the federal government. Even though freedom of speech does legally protect statements which trivialize crimes against humanity

THE OPPOSITE OF “WELL-DONE” IS “WELL-INTENTIONED”

Over the last years, members of our team have regularly experienced the following scene: Uwe Schmelter (President of the German-Korean Society) makes a case for the “Goethe Reading Room” in Pyongyang, having been a grandiose and promissory exchange project between Germany and the DPRK. Indeed, our team might have never noticed this project without his repeated and dedicated interventions, but luckily things turned out differently. In reality, no other project is as suitable to outline the obstacles and traps brought up by the North Korean regime when setting up well-intended exchange projects.

The main idea behind Pyongyang’s “Goethe Reading Room”, as also communicated by the initiator, was to grant access to German books and magazines to the entire North Korean population (all strata of society or members of castes). However, problems emerged in the aftermath of the project’s inauguration (the reading room was located in the “Great Study Hall of the People”):

1. Representatives of the regime had censored everything that might have been considered as being in opposition to North Korean propaganda and indoctrination. Each critical passage or article, most photos, any ads – everything fell victim to the censors. Purporting that more than half of the content was missing in many magazines is no exaggeration.

2. The regime’s representatives came up with another measure to hedge their bets: The reading room remained closed permanently at day and night and therefore out of bounds for everyone¹¹. Even the starkly censored remains of German literature and magazines were inaccessible for everyone.

Beyond doubt, North Korea makes particular intellectual demands and requires a high degree of imagination and political understanding of those who want to initiate exchange programs. Some knowledge of historical and political aspects of numerous dictatorships from the most recent past is also necessary to ensure that mistakes in dealing with other dictatorships are not repeated when dealing with North Korea.

However, this negative example should not be interpreted as discouraging: Dialogue and exchange is necessary – even with the most inhuman dictatorship. In this light, Thae Yong Ho (former deputy manager at the North Korean foreign ministry and deputy ambassador of the DPRK to the United Kingdom) said: “I have nothing against dialogue. I am simply against stupid dialogue.”

Exchange programs with inhumane dictatorships have to aim at improving local societies. With regards to North Korea, the federal government’s representative for human rights policy and humanitarian aid, Bärbel Kofler notes:

“Besides this, the human rights situation in North Korea has to remain on the agenda when it comes to all political contacts with the regime. We will particularly spell this out during our 2019 universal periodic review for North Korea. Germany is especially beholden to this aim. The Federal Republic of Germany has been the first country worldwide that has incorporated dialogue about human rights into the protocol for establishing diplomatic relations with North Korea.”¹²

Approximately at the same time, the Free University of Berlin's Institute of Korean Studies concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Kim-Il-Sung University, aiming at taking up a joint research cooperation in the areas of humanities and sociology¹³.

It seems unthinkable that human rights will play any role in this collaboration with Kim-Il-Sung University given the institute's political work and public positioning of its representatives.

Neither the Institute of Korean Studies' website nor the German media have provided any information on this front.

THE PERPETRATORS' ECONOMIC REALITY

Those who aspire for dialogue with North Korea are confined to the very upper class. That's the group that is, according to the United Nations, solely responsible for the country's various crimes – not just crimes against humanity. The upper class appears to have two overarching aims: first, the preservation of its own humble wealth and privileges and, second, that the regime remains stable. Obviously, who does want to end up on trial for North Korea's crimes? Although joint projects with persons from this group have to be considered with utmost caution, it is imperative they do not undermine the international community's endeavors to improve human rights. To illustrate the precariousness of this situation, we cite political scientist Stephan Blancke:

"In 2010, it was difficult to find professional smugglers for a job in favor of North Korea. Why was this the case? Sanctions against North Korea at that time

were – compared to today – relatively weak and not as comprehensive while penalties were high. This implies a risk for a high penalty compared to relatively small gains. It is known that the market sets a product's value and this market has evolved in favor of criminal networks: sanctions against North Korea are markedly tougher today and is has gotten more effortful to transport sanctioned goods to North Korea. Ergo: Such criminal transactions are more lucrative today because they are better paid. However, better pay also means that North Korea's customers have to come up with adequate financial resources.

Today's depressing insight – in the aftermath of many years of sanction politics against North Korea, but also against other states – is that sanctions yield little and essentially provoke the opposite of what was initially intended! Goods that are desired and paid for can be obtained. Taking a look at videos or photos recorded in North Korea suffices: luxury goods of all sorts, albeit bottles of Champaign, Maybach luxury cars or expensive CNC machines – all of this is heavily sanctioned and still, it does exist in North Korea. Why? Because the interest to make money has the upper hand and because dubious businessmen, brokers, money couriers, but also medium-sized companies and global players exist, who either act deliberately or who do not or do not sufficiently do their due diligence, which they are bound to by law. It is very questionable to get involved with North Korean entities that are reasonably sanctioned: One example is the prominent Kim Il Sung University in Pyongyang. Not just German classics are read there and – according to its website – credit points awarded for "juche philosophy", but also comprehensive military research is conducted there. In December 2018, a detailed study by the renowned Middlebury Institute for International Studies at Monterey, called "North Korea's International Scientific Collaborations: Their Scope, Scale, and Potential Dual-Use and Military Significance", explicitly names KISU as one of the main actors.

Among other things, the study points out:

“In October (2018) [...] KISU signed an »exchange and cooperation agreement« in the humanities and sociology with Germany’s Berlin Free University.”

Both Humboldt-University and Free University are listed on KISU’s website as sister universities. What does this mean for human rights?

One has to state clearly that there is no institution in North Korea that can follow autonomous politics, that is independent of other areas. Cooperating with KISU, no matter in what form – or with any other North Korean institution for that matter – is synonymous with cooperating with a regime that massively oppresses its population. A regime of injustice that tramples on human rights can only survive when it receives direct or indirect recognition. This can happen on the basis of festive dinners and lofty speeches at the regime’s token places. This can also happen with unscrupulous businessmen who smuggle military technology or cash to North Korea. Both receive a reward for it from the regime, such as money! The regime receives needed goods, lenient reports and academic recognition in return. However, the last years have shown that a country’s reputation can get tarnished with both questionable science diplomacy and a rolling luxury symbol on the streets of Pyongyang.”

LIVING UP TO ONE’S RESPONSIBILITY

North Korea’s totalitarian regime under the Kim clan commits crimes against humanity and severe crimes against its people in plain view. The amount of systematic human rights violations vastly exceeds our faculty of imagination. Therefore, we are urgently responsible to speak plainly to one another instead of giving a forum to the regime without opposition. Inaction is an option that is tenable under no circumstances in light of colossal dread and horror. In contrast, such inaction would express cynical ignorance, creating historic guilt and contempt by future generations.

Who if not us, the country of Holocaust culprits, may have the moral duty to stand side by side the oppressed, the chased and the bullied? The situation in North Korean prison camps, where the corps of the dead are burned and the remains are used as manure, is reminiscent of the egregious atrocities committed during World War II. Particularly Germany should know how easily civilization can perish and how important it is to stand against the accomplices of inhumanity. Those who cannot stand against injustice on-site should oppose apologists and accomplices of the criminals in their own country! However, when it comes to human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, many renowned institutions, organizations and persons have lost their sense of commensurability.

We would like to stress: We do not intend to allege willful misconduct to any particular individual by any chance. In contrast, we think that the problem is related to the complexity of the situation on the Korean peninsula in conjunction with bad advice by so-called Korea “experts”. However, it should be clear: Those who do not oppose the General Declaration of Human Rights, the Federal Republic of Germany’s interpretation of the rule of law, and its historic responsibility will find such activities scandalous!

We therefore urge all political actors and civic institutions:

- 1.** From now on, not to support any activities, either financially or in any other form, that ignore, trivialize or qualify crimes against humanity and against the North Korean people committed by the North Korean regime.
- 2.** From now on, not to give a public forum to any organization or individual that ignores, trivializes or qualifies crimes against humanity and against the North Korean people committed by the North Korean regime.
- 3.** From now on, not to take or fund any policy recommendations and/or consultations from organizations or individuals who exclusively obtain their information through dialogue with representatives of the North Korean regime and who blind themselves to dialogue with the about 32,000 North Korean defectors. This is tendentious and intellectually disingenuous.
- 4.** To live up to international and particularly to Germany's responsibility for defending human rights, also when it comes to North Korea. This means to obligatorily link dialogue and exchange between the Federal Republic of Germany and North Korea's regime in any form to improvements in human rights.
- 5.** To ensure that any form of aid sent to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea benefits the local population. Aid should not be provided when this is not guaranteed – the federal government should under no circumstances support regime-sustaining measures against the local population.
- 6.** To keep in mind that one's own credibility to criticize crimes against humanity is tarnished when some crimes against humanity are markedly criticized (e. g. the treatment of Uyghurs by the People's Republic of China) while North Korea's crimes against its own people are overlooked or even encountered with understanding and tolerance.
- 7.** To support scientific research on North Korea in Germany, especially on the basis of interdisciplinary exchange between Korean Studies and political science, history and sociology. This explicitly excludes scientific cooperation with Kim-Il-Sung University, the cadre factory of the criminal regime in Pyongyang! Unbelievable that this has to be stressed!
- 9.** To clearly call out the political identity of the Kim regime; a fascistic, theocratic dictatorship under the guise of communism. This does not only imply Germany's particular historic responsibility but may even make it easier for the CCP to weaken its support for the regime, to more strictly enforce sanctions and to stop sending refugees back to North Korea.

ANNOTATIONS

¹ This term is often used relating to the DPRK; but it is wrong in content. Humanitarian aid is just quick short-term aid, for example when providing help after natural disasters. It would be correct to use the term Development Assistance when talking about assistance to North Korea.

² The population of the DPRK is divided up into a rigid class (or even caste) system: „songbun“. One's affiliation to it is inherited. This is justified ideologically with blood inheritance, which is one aspect of North Korea's own version of a racial theory. One's occupation, penalty, place of residence, access to food/health care etc is determined by one's affiliation to a certain class/caste.

³ A/HRC/25/CRP.1 (Englisch) und A/HRC/25/63, ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIDPRK/Pages/ReportoftheCommissionofInquiryDPRK.aspx

⁴ The wide-spread and systematic cases of sexually motivated violence have been explained in a report by Human Rights Watch: [hrw.org/report/2018/11/02/you-cry-nightdont-know-why/sexual-violence-against-women-north-korea](https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/11/02/you-cry-nightdont-know-why/sexual-violence-against-women-north-korea).

⁵ <https://www.liberale.de/content/podiumsdiskussionnordkorea-innenansichten-eines-totalen-staates-mit-ruediger-frank-und>

⁶ All information related to the event have been erased from Facebook and the website of „Pyongyang Travel“. The statements have been identical at all stated events, testified by several event guests.

⁷ Event report by the German-Korean Society, Regionalverband Berlin: <https://korea-dkg.de/category/regionalverband-berlin/>

⁸ <https://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/oas/korea-studien/publikationen/Medienbeitraege/2019-ballbach-kbsworldradio/index.html>

⁹ Mail by the German federal government.

¹⁰ The Commission Of Inquiry did not use the term „concentration camp“ in a frivolous way. It is worth noting that this is no comparison to Auschwitz or other extermination camps during the so-called „Third Reich“.

¹¹ This was confirmed to us by several persons from well-informed circles.

¹² <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/newsroom/koflernordkorea/2169014>

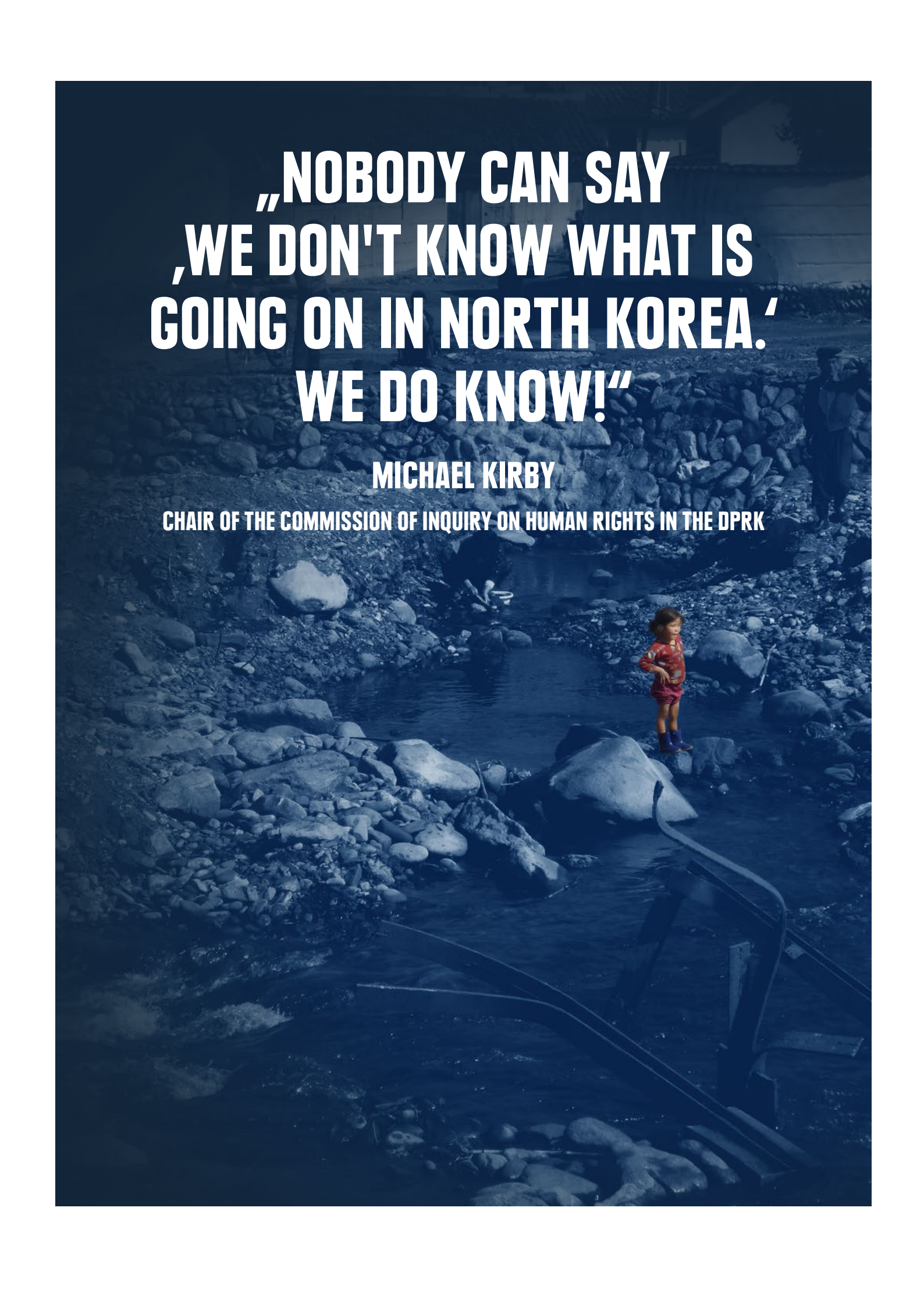
¹³ cf. <https://tinyurl.com/y3k5up9s>
<https://www.masterstudies.com/news/german-and-northkorean-universities-commit-to-exchange/-3089/>
<http://universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=2018100607142383>

Imprint:

SARAM –
Stiftung für Menschenrechte
in Nordkorea

Hohenzollerndamm 120
14199 Berlin - Germany

Phone: +49 30 55 60 01 85
E-Mail: info@saram-nk.org
saram-nk.org

A blue-tinted photograph of a rocky stream. A young child in a red patterned shirt and shorts stands on a large rock in the middle of the stream. The stream is surrounded by many smaller rocks and some debris. In the background, there are some buildings and a person walking. The overall scene is somewhat desolate and suggests a rural or developing area.

**„NOBODY CAN SAY
,WE DON'T KNOW WHAT IS
GOING ON IN NORTH KOREA.'
WE DO KNOW!“**

MICHAEL KIRBY

CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DPRK