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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DENIES NORTH KOREAN CLAIMS THAT ITS REPORTS
ARE BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SOUTH KOREANS

Amnesty International today strongly denied an allegation made by a representative of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) that Amnesty International's reports on human rights violations in North Korea "are not valid" because the organization's information "was provided by the South Korean Government".

This statement, made at that the United Nations General Assembly on 28 September 1995, was in reply to allegations of North Korean human rights abuses by the representative of the Republic of Korea (South Korea).

"Amnesty International's work is guided by principles of independence and impartiality," the human rights organization said.

"In accordance with these principles and considering the tense situation on the Korean Peninsula, Amnesty International has adopted a policy not to use any information provided by the South about the human rights situation in the North and vice versa. We have informed the North Korean Government of this policy on numerous occasions in the past."

Amnesty International has expressed its concern about the selective use of its reports by the governments of both North and South Korea for political purposes before. In late 1994 the organization said it was concerned about the effects the selective use of its reports by governments may have on its reputation for impartiality. This followed South Korea's breach of copyright on two Amnesty International reports on North Korea.

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