

The European Union's engagement policy towards North Korea

HRWF (05.04.2017) – On 29 March, a conference dealing with literature and human rights in North Korea was held in Seoul. Ms Zsuzsa Anna Ferenczy, political adviser at the European Parliament, presented a paper entitled "The European Union's engagement policy towards North Korea". Below is an excerpt from her paper, the full text is available here: <http://hrwf.eu/human-rights/our-reports/>

EU Assistance to North Korea

In line with its critical engagement, the EU has been a provider of assistance, humanitarian and food aid since 1995. Most of the projects it currently funds - under the responsibility of the European Commission - relate to **food security, health, water and sanitation** and are of benefit to the most vulnerable people in the country. Initially a food aid assistance program, it has increasingly moved from regular food aid to structural food assistance and, in particular, the provision of inputs and technical assistance to enhance agricultural production. These projects are carried out by various implementing partners some of whom are resident in the country. For example **Handicap International** is one such organization since March 2001. **Action Against Hunger** was present on the ground from 1998 to 2000 providing assistance to malnourished children in Hamgyong province in government-operated facilities, but confronted with the impossible access to the most vulnerable groups, the NGO decided to withdraw.[1] **Welthungerhilfe**, or World Hunger Aid, German NGO has been present on the ground since 1997, spending more than 60 million on projects to improve food, sanitation and water supply. In 2015 its country director, who has been working in the country for 10 years, was expelled, but the NGO continues providing aid on the ground.[2] **Médecins Sans Frontières** closed its projects in North Korea in 2015, after 20 years of working there. The EU's humanitarian assistance to North Korea started in 1995, when serious flooding affecting 5.7 million people made the country appeal for the first time for aid. Member States have their own development and aid projects in North Korea along complementary lines to those of the EU. The member states present are: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, Romania, Sweden (since 1973), UK.

[1] <http://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-peoples-republic-korea/action-against-hunger-stops-its-activities-north-korea>

[2] <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-northkorea-germany-ngo-idUKKBN0MT12120150402>