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International Protest Letter

# **In Protest against the Arrests of Oh Jong-ryul and Jung Gwang-hoon**

Wednesday 4 July 2007, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 3 July 2007).

**Participate in the campaign for the release of two Korean Alliance against KorUS FTA co-chairs, who were arrested and imprisoned as of 3<sup>rd</sup> July, for leading anti-FTA activities.**

**For enquiries, please write to the KoA intl team [interstruggle@gmail.com](mailto:interstruggle@gmail.com)**

**See also: [Campaign: Release Korean Anti-FTA leaders!](#)**

***We Demand their Immediate Release!***

***We Demand an Immediate End to Police Suppression of the Korean Alliance!***

July 3, 2007

**From: International Community Concerned about Democratic Principles and Economic and Social Justice**

To: South Korea's President Roh Moo-hyun

We are seriously disappointed and troubled by the police suppression of the **Korean Alliance against the Korea-U.S. FTA** and the arrests of its two officers. We write this urgent letter to demand 1) the immediate release of Mr. Oh Jong-ryul and Mr. Jung Gwang-hoon, two Co-Chairs of the Korean Alliance and 2) an immediate end to police suppression of the Korean Alliance..

First, the arrests of Mr. Oh and Mr. Jung are a direct violation of basic democratic principles and constitutional rights. We believe that South Korea is a democratic nation that guarantees, under the constitution, the right to associate and oppose unjust practices of ruling authority. These rights are fundamental to any democratic nation, and we strongly feel that today's arrests may represent a retrogression of Korea's status as a democratic nation. In addition, the police's disregard for their old age and health conditions shows a sign of inhumane treatment.

Second, their arrests are an infringement of international principles of political and civil rights. As a member of the United Nations, South Korea has signed on to conventions that protect and promote the advancement of social freedom and human rights. South Korea has made important democratic strides since the 1970s. We have witnessed this transformation. We urge the Roh Moo-hyun Administration, elected by democratic means, to not forget Korea's history and to foster international and democratic principles. The rights of the people to assemble and express their voices must be protected.

And third, we demand an immediate end of police suppression against the Korean Alliance. We are aware that South Korea's constitution (Article 21) does not recognize a permit system for rallies;

only notices need to be given, which the Korean Alliance has done without fail. Therefore, we believe that the activities of the Korean Alliance is by no means illegal. The police suppression of FTA protests, which we have seen in the media, is shocking. The fact that the Korean Alliance's activities are singled out and determined as illegal indicates a direct attack against a people's organization and an obvious violation of Korea's constitution.

We disapprove the decisions made by the Roh Moo-hyun Administration on the officers and activities of the Korean Alliance. Along with the recent suppression of Korean auto workers, we fear that the suppression of the Korean Alliance signals a dangerous digressive trend in Korea's democracy. If this trend continues, we can promise the Administration that the international community will not sit still. We urge the Administration to correct its mistakes and return the rights that are inherent to the people of Korea and the world.

Signatures:

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Europe solidaire sans frontières (ESSF), France

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Please send endoresements via email to [interstruggle gmail.com](mailto:interstruggle@gmail.com)

Indicate that you endorse this letter, then give us your name, organization, city, and country.

***Timing is crucial, so please send us your endorsements by July 13, 2007***