

**PRESS STATEMENT BY YURI LUSTENBERGER-KIM**

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Dear Family, Friends and Supporters,

Today is a sad but hopeful day for our beloved son, brother, and father, Stephen J. Kim.

In the past 4 years, under the prosecution of the U.S. government, Stephen has suffered deeply in terms indescribable in words, fighting charges that could imprison him for more than 15 years. The government's prosecution which started 4 years ago in 2010 has taken a horrific toll on my brother and our entire family. It destroyed his career. It tainted his reputation and honor. It bankrupted him and his family. It made us sick with worry and sadness every single day.

We had to make a difficult choice given that our resources are exhausted, both financially and emotionally, and because we want Stephen to have a second life, a chance to plan and anticipate life like every human being deserves. The decision to plead has been the most wrenching, painful decision in our collective family experience.

Our parents survived the atrocities, hunger and poverty of World War II on the Korean Peninsula and then the Korean War. Our parents lost their parents and family members and entire life's belongings as refugees during the Korean War. We struggled with the illnesses of our parents and children but nothing as wrenching as today's decision.

But it does give my brother a chance to start his life again after 4 years of being stuck in legal and personal limbo.

My brother has never given up. He fought valiantly for nearly 4 years and bore his burden with dignity, grace and a fierce determination. He endured what would break a normal person, abandoned by his significant other, deserted by his 'friends', shunned by his former colleagues, ostracized by society.

Due to the tyranny of geography, my parents and I could not be near him on a daily basis to sustain him.

Despite that isolation, he has not once cried in front of me or on the phone, not once complained, not once lost control of his emotions. Always neatly comporting himself. Always wearing a smile that I know masked unspeakable pain and suffering.

On the contrary, he assured me, my parents and his friends that he was alright. He sought to comfort the pain and worry of others. He continued to research and write, on Fukushima, the South China Sea, strategic nuclear deterrence, East Asian nationalism, and North Korea. He persevered through this turmoil largely on his own, relying on family and his small band of brothers and the group of supporters who rallied around him. Including a 92 year old elderly woman from Los Angeles, a complete stranger to Stephen and our family, who unfurled with her shaking hands \$2000 in crumpled \$20 bills she had assiduously saved. My brother's poignant letter to her would make even the most jaded of humans to weep.

My brother is an extraordinary individual, with a penetrating and broad intellect. His multidisciplinary knowledge and approach to analyzing North Korea and foreign affairs is unique and invaluable. It is regrettable that the United States will be deprived of a person whose knowledge and expertise were sought by Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, and Richard Cheney and who has been called a "national asset" by Newt Gingrich. His character, honor and reputation have been impeccable. He is adored by his family and friends.

We are so proud of him that he kept on, never losing hope, remaining brave, and sprinkling us with his witty sense of humor, maintaining his acute and penetrating analytical mind of world developments despite the crushing pressure of prosecution. But, he simply cannot go on without irreversible damage.

My brother needs the chance to see his young son grow up. My brother needs to be there for the last years of his aging parents in Korea and have the chance to bury them personally when that time comes.

It was the State versus a single individual, an uphill struggle to begin with. He took it on and did the best he could. Now we decide to stop.

We owe our deepest felt thanks and appreciation to all those who came into our lives and shared this extraordinary journey with us in the past 4 years. To all those who sent their hard earned donations and to those who sent words of support and prayer, to those who fed my brother and patted him on the back, we

owe you so much. To all those strangers who sent us e-mails and letters urging us not to lose hope, you touched us deeply and we will never forget you. To the Korean-American community leaders who campaigned and rallied for my brother tirelessly, we are forever indebted to you. To the senior leadership at Livermore National Laboratory who steadfastly stood by him through this difficult period, we express our deep respect and gratitude. To the three extraordinary men who have earned Stephen's undying love and respect - Abbe Lowell, Keith Rosen, and Scott Coyle, our legal team - we salute you for your untiring, exceptional professionalism and superb intellect and - above all - your human compassion. We owe everything to them. I know Stephen considers them as brothers and leans on them for his life.

Four years ago, I declared on our support website how proud I was of my brother when he decided to fight. Four years later, I am more proud of Stephen than ever, now that he has taken this step to regain his life.

So, today, our friends, family and supporters, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your belief in Stephen for the past 4 years. We look forward to your continued interest and support as Stephen attempts to move forward with his life and return to a normal and vibrant life. In fact, he needs you more than ever from this moment onwards.

Our family and everyone who knows Stephen, this man of integrity, warmth, courage, intelligence and wit, believes in him and loves him unconditionally and unequivocally, in knowing that he will be, as Camus would say, "In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer."

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