



March 26, 2008

To: Honorable President Lee Myung-bak
Republic of Korea

Dear Honorable President Lee Myung-bak,

EarthRights International (ERI) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Washington D.C. and Thailand that focuses on the intersection between the environment and human rights, and we are writing to you to express our concern about two projects: the proposed Great Korea Canal Project, as well as the Shwe Gas Project in Burma (Myanmar), which is being developed by Daewoo International and Korea Gas Corporation.

After reviewing the potential environmental impacts of the Great Korea Canal Project and the concerns expressed by respectable Korean NGOs and citizens, we strongly urge you to cancel your plan to construct a series of canals in order to link the four largest river systems in South Korea. This project stands to create an environmental footprint disproportionate to its expected economic benefits. South Korea has the opportunity to lead East Asia and the world in environmental sustainability, and in canceling the Great Korea Canal Project, you are afforded several excellent opportunities: You will save valuable wetlands and ecosystems and have the unique opportunity to show the world in a tangible way that your new administration is committed to preserving the environment for future generations; you will have the opportunity to demonstrate why Time Magazine named you an environmental hero in 2007; and you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your respect for international environmental law, as South Korea is signatory to the U.N. Ramsar Convention for Wetlands of International Importance.

We would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to scrutinize your administration's policies toward natural resource extraction by Korean corporations in military-ruled Burma. Daewoo International and the state-owned Korea Gas Corporation (KOGAS) are currently engaged in the Shwe natural gas development project in Burma. In 2006, ERI and the Korea Federation for Environmental Movements (KFEM) sent joint letters to the chief executive officers of both companies, respectively, urging them to urgently conduct environmental and human rights impact assessments for the Shwe gas project in Burma. These letters went unanswered, and the Shwe gas project is proceeding. ERI, KFEM, and the Shwe Gas Movement, led by activists from western Burma, are concerned that the project will involve massive-scale human rights abuses, including forced labor and other abuses connected to the already increasing militarization around the project. Human rights impacts of the early stages of this project have already been documented by the Shwe Gas Movement (SGM). We encourage you to take executive

action to suspend Daewoo and KOGAS involvement in this project until the appropriate preconditions for responsible investment in Burma are in place, including adequate environmental and human rights impact assessments and a transition to a democratic civilian government in Burma under which citizens can express dissent without fear of reprisal.

The Yadana natural gas project in Burma was developed in the 1990s and included construction of a 39-mile long pipeline to Thailand. Construction, maintenance and security for the pipeline has led to thousands of human rights abuses by state actors with the knowledge of foreign operators and investors, including forced labor, rape, torture, and killing - some of which are continuing today, seventeen years after abuses connected to the project began. The U.S. State Department recently noted that the human rights situation in Burma is worsening and that the military regime is as brutal as ever. The Shwe Project led by Korean corporations will involve construction of a pipeline to China that will be at least 40 times longer than the Yadana pipeline, and presumably will result in a proportionately high number of human rights abuses committed by the direct business partner of Daewoo and KOGAS: the military regime. The project is projected to traverse areas where the U.S. State Department and other non-governmental sources have already documented ongoing human rights abuses.

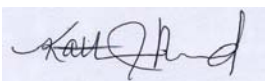
South Korea is risking complicity in human rights abuses in Burma for natural gas that will not even supply Korean markets.

Thank you very much for your administration's attention to these very important matters.

Sincerely yours,



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