North Korea has been a leader in human rights violations since the Korean War when they kidnapped and forced thousands of South Koreans to fight on the side of the North. The civil war, each side backed by a corresponding political superpower, lead to the split of the peninsula along the 38th parallel. Since, North Korea has used fear, torture and propaganda to ensure the loyalty of its citizens to the regime and the Kim family. Atrocities committed by the communist regime include Nazi-like work camps believed to house approximately 500,000 domestic and political prisoners, systematic starvation of non-party citizens and forced abortions.

The situation in North Korea is defined as politicide and is in the most severe and deadly stages of the process. In assessing the severity of the politicide in North Korea, Genocide Watch employs *The 8 Stages of Genocide* by Dr. Gregory Stanton (1998). Stages four and five in the “eight stages of Genocide” (Stanton, 1998) are organization and polarization. The labor camps in North Korea are an example of polarization. The existence of these camps has been affirmed by Amnesty International with the use of satellites and also by defectors who have confirmed their existence. The people are organized into two groups, those for the communist party and those not explicitly working for the party, those “against” the party are at risk of being imprisoned in the camps. Those who do not work for the party also face the reality of starvation.
 The 1990’s was a period known as the “arduous march” in which North Korea’s economy failed and fell into depression and famine. Since that time, the needs of the common people have taken a back seat to those who are members of the communist party and the military. These members are the first and often the last to receive the rations that are provided from foreign humanitarian aid.
 The final stage of this process is denial. Kim Jong-il has long denied the existence of these prison camps. More recently, following the death of Kimg Jong- il his son, Kimg Jong –Un, denied allegations of sending people to labor camps for “not mourning enough” according for CNN’s report by Jiyeon Lee and Jethro Mullen.
 Despite the fact that this Hermit Kingdom has come under new leadership this year, Kim Jong-un has already made his intentions known as the new “Great Leader” with his increase in military activity along the South Korean border. It is for this reason that North Korea remains at the top of the list of Countries at Risk in 2012, according to Genocide Watch.

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