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## Roh vows terror will fail

### Nation joins in outrage over death of Kim Sun-il

By Bae No-pil / Min Seong-jae  
JoongAng Ilbo / Staff Writer

Though deeply divided over what role, if any, their country should play in Iraq, South Koreans were firmly united yesterday in expressing grief and indignation at the abduction and murder of a fellow countryman by Islamic militants.

Private citizens and government officials voiced outrage and confusion at the news that Kim Sun-il, a South Korean civilian worker in Iraq, had been beheaded as threatened. Some expressed open hostility to Arabs in general.

Kim Gyeong-cheol, 40, an office worker in Gyeonggi province, was perplexed by events. "Only until a day ago," he said, "I heard the news that Mr. Kim would likely survive. The next morning, I heard the worst news. I wasn't able to work all day long."

Jeon Im-taek, 54, a business owner, said, "My heart has been torn out because a young man who is like my son was sacrificed. I was so horrified that I decided not to watch television news anymore."

On the campus of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, where Mr. Kim had learned to be an Arabic interpreter, a service for the victim was held.

"I just feel sorry that the effort to save him failed," said an Arabic-language professor at the university who attended the service.

Meanwhile, anger boiled over on the Internet. Naver, one of the nation's largest Internet portals, had 60,000 messages posted in just a couple of hours, with many demanding revenge for the slaying.

But the nation remained split over whether South Koreans should play any role in Iraq. Heated disputes erupted around the country over the Internet.

Representatives of civic groups opposed to Korean troop deployments in Iraq held a press conference in central Seoul yesterday and declared, "The government killed Mr. Kim. It should withdraw the troop dispatch plan so that innocent life will no longer be lost." The civic groups held a candlelight vigil for Mr. Kim in Gwanghwamun yesterday.

Voices were also raised in support of sending troops. "Iraqi militants killing civilians should be punished right now," said a 23-year-old university student identified as Ms. Hwang.

Those who demanded troop dispatch were less organized than those who opposed it, however.

Meanwhile, 50 lawmakers of both the governing and opposition parties presented a bill to the National Assembly to withdraw the previously approved troop dispatch bill.

In the bill, the lawmakers insisted that it would be impossible to carry out peaceful reconstruction operations under the current situation in Iraq.

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The last images of Kim Sun-il, at bottom in orange clothes, before he was killed were broadcast yesterday morning by the Arabic-language Al Jazeera television network. [YONHAP]

### Killing is called 'inhumane act'

By Kim Ji-soo  
Staff Writer

Declaring his country would not waver in the face of international terrorism, President Roh Moo-hyun told the nation yesterday that the beheading of a South Korean national by militants in Iraq would not sway his government nor deter it from sending troops to aid Iraqi reconstruction efforts.

In a two-minute national address yesterday morning in response to the killing in Iraq of 33-year-old Kim Sun-il, Mr. Roh said grimly, "Harming an innocent civilian will not be tolerated for any reason. We cannot let terrorism achieve its goals."

U.S. military police recovered Mr. Kim's body west of Baghdad yesterday after militants opposed to the U.S. occupation of Iraq carried out a threat to behead him, if the Roh government did not rescind plans to send more troops and did not withdraw the ones already there.

The American soldiers who found Mr. Kim and recovered his badly damaged body and head said they had found explosives attached to it.

In a formal statement, the South Korean government condemned Mr. Kim's death as an "inhumane act," and reiterated that plans to send more troops to Iraq would not be changed.

Mr. Roh said that South Korea was trying to help Iraqis.

"The South Korean plan to send troops to Iraq is not to engage in hostilities against Iraqis or other Arab people," the president said, "but to help in the reconstruction of Iraq."

Apologizing to the public and the victim's family, Mr. Roh promised that the government would do every-

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thing so that such an unfortunate incident does not recur.

"I bow my head to pay respects to the deceased, offer my deepest condolences and consolation to the family and the public." He bowed for a few seconds before leaving the Blue House press room.

In an emergency meeting with his senior aides yesterday, Mr. Roh ordered government officials to "strongly recommend that remaining South Koreans in Iraq leave."

About 70 South Korean businessmen and journalists are now in Iraq.

A government team was sent from Jordan into Iraq to bring Mr. Kim's body to South Korea. Mr. Kim was employed as an interpreter by Cana General Trading Co., a supplier to the U.S. military in Iraq.

The news of the death reached Seoul early yesterday morning after hopes were raised that negotiations had begun in a bid to secure the hostage's freedom.

When Mr. Kim fell into militants' hands is uncertain, and he may have been held for as long as three weeks with no disclosure of kidnapping.

"According to testimony from Kim Chun-ho, [Cana Trading's top executive in Iraq], Kim Sun-il was last seen on May 31. But we have yet to

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## Security is tightened at Muslim sites

By Brian Lee  
Staff writer

The Korea Muslim Federation, the largest Islamic group in the country with 40,000 members, condemned the murder of Kim Sun-il in Iraq, as the Seoul government ordered security strengthened at Islamic facilities around the country.

The Central Mosque in Itaewon, Seoul, the center of Korea's Muslim community, was placed under heavy guard. Following an incident in which an apparently drunken person intruded onto the premises and chanted anti-Islamic slogans before being detained, the police announced yesterday morning that they would guard the 40 or so mosques nationwide until calm had returned.

The Muslim organization said it had received numerous telephone threats from angry individuals.

In a press conference at the mosque yesterday morning, Son Ju-young, a federation official, offered his condolences to Mr. Kim's family and said that a separate, special prayer service for Mr. Kim was scheduled for Friday, the Muslim holy day. Previously, the federation had sent appeals to Iraqi religious groups, pleading for Mr. Kim's release.

Shocked by the killing, the federation took pains to point out that the Islamic militants responsible for Mr. Kim's death belong to a political group and should not be linked to the Islamic faith.

"The 17th chapter, 33d verse of the Koran forbids the taking of precious life," said Lee Haeng-rae, an imam, or religious leader, of the Seoul Central Mosque. "Those who killed Mr. Kim are not true followers of the faith. It's against everything that Islam teaches." The imam also urged the public to refrain from violence, or more innocent people would be hurt.

The country's Muslim population seemed eager to distance themselves from the culprits. Kim Sun-mi, who converted to Islam last year and wears



After the murder in Iraq of Kim Sun-il, threats were made against the local Islamic community. Security was raised at Seoul's mosques. By Kim Sang-seon

a scarf around her head, is afraid of retribution but says that she will keep wearing the scarf, a tradition in many Islamic countries.

"People have to understand that Islam is not a violent religion. What they saw has nothing to do with Islam," said Ms. Kim.

"We are just as shocked as everyone else. People treat us as if we are standing behind this whole thing," said a federation official. "We understand the anger, but people have to know that the Islamic faith is peaceful in nature."

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## Cyber firewalls planned to dampen public trauma

By Wahn Dong-hee  
Staff writer

With public emotion running high following the beheading of Kim Sun-il — an incident that is fueling rallies to demand a halt to Korea's troop deployments to Iraq — the government is seeking ways to dampen passions by censoring possible Internet images of Mr. Kim's murder.

The Ministry of Information and Communication announced yesterday that it would close or block access to any Web site showing images of Mr. Kim's beheading, though it added that no such sites have yet been discovered.

An ethics committee within the ministry is monitoring the Internet around the clock; portals such as Yahoo and Empas have agreed to join the effort. The ministry has also requested that high-speed Internet service providers such as KT and Hanaro Communications prepare firewalls, in the event these kinds of sites appear.

"Under current laws, the ethics committee has the right to review sites containing violence or scenes of murder," said ministry official Moon Ki-hwan. "Fortunately, [Arab broadcaster] Al Jazeera has said it would not broadcast cruel images, but we remain on alert."

The ministry is especially concerned about an American Web site that posted an advertisement Wednesday requesting photographs or video clips of Mr. Kim's murder. The site has previously posted images of Nicholas Berg, an American beheaded recently by Islamic militants.

The government's measures can necessarily only extend as far as local service providers, but the ministry said "[Although] we cannot hold back all content, [our actions] could have a slight effect on easing the public trauma."

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Before the beginning of the six-party talks yesterday in Beijing, South Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Soo-hyuck greeting Kim Kye-gwan, Pyongyang's vice minister. [YONHAP]

## U.S., North appear more flexible at 6-party talks

By Choi Jie-ho  
Staff Writer

BEIJING — In an attempt to put the best face on difficult disarmament negotiations, chief delegates from the United States and North Korea to the third round of six-party talks said they had come with detailed proposals aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear arms development.

In two earlier rounds of talks, progress eluded the negotiators.

In his first remarks yesterday, Kim Kye-gwan, Pyongyang's vice minister and its chief delegate said, "If the United States is going to give up its hostile policy toward my country, then we would be prepared to give up our nuclear weaponry program in a

transparent way."

He said his delegation was prepared to place on the table a specific proposal to freeze its nuclear weapons program but that the proposals depended on the United States giving up its demand for complete dismantlement, while also accepting a number of additional steps with regard to energy aid and international recognition for the North Korean government.

The top U.S. envoy, James Kelly, said in his opening remarks that his delegation had come to Beijing determined to do whatever it could to find a solution to the nuclear stalemate. "We are prepared for serious discussions and we have a proposal to offer,"

he said.

The keynote speeches that followed the opening remarks were closed to the public.

Although Mr. Kelly did not elaborate, officials involved in the talks said that the United States will present North Korea with a number of incentives to move the talks forward.

The New York Times, quoting senior aides of U.S. President George W. Bush, reported yesterday that the U.S. negotiators were prepared to present new but conditioned incentives to Pyongyang if it chooses to give up its nuclear weapons the way Libya did last December.

The Times reported that U.S. officials said "aid would begin flowing

immediately after a commitment by Kim Jong-il to dismantle both plutonium- and uranium-based weapons programs," and that "Washington would offer a 'provisional' guarantee not to invade the country or seek to topple Mr. Kim's regime."

Senior officials of the Bush administration were quoted as saying that North Korea would be given three months of what was termed a "preparatory period of dismantlement" to adopt a similar decision to Libya's.

Other participants in the six-party talks held in Beijing this month reaffirmed their goal of seeking denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. jieho@joongang.co.kr