

Dr. Roh Kil Nam, advocate for peace and the reunification of Korea

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Dr. Roh Kil Nam

Statement from the Socialist Unity Party / Partido de Socialismo Unido

On April 25, the world lost a great person dedicated to the Korean people, international solidarity, with an unflinching determination to expose the truth — all motivated by his love for humanity. Dr. Roh Kil Nam, also known as Ken Roh, was the founder of “Minjok Tongshin,” an online news publication started in 1999 in the U.S. dedicated to reporting honest news about the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and countering misinformation from the U.S. media about North Korea.

Dr. Roh was born in 1944 in Gangneung, Gangwon-do, Korea, while under Japanese colonial rule. Roh began his political struggle for the democratization of South Korea during the dictatorship of U.S.-sponsored President Park Chung-hee.

Being born into the brutal Japanese colonial rule and enduring dictatorship in South Korea helped forge the steel of an activist and journalist. Dr. Roh lived his life determined to provide the movement for democracy in South Korea and the struggle for unification with the North with the necessary tools to counter imperialism’s powerful weapon of lies helping to continue the U.S. imperialist-maintained division between the North and South. He knew that the building of solidarity would require exposing those lies and professionally manufactured misinformation in the belly of the beast — the U.S.

Dr. Roh was instrumental in promoting organizations dedicated to that purpose and his work was recognized enough to have a meeting with a famous guerilla fighter against Japanese occupation who was also the DPRK’s first president, Kim Il Sung. Later in life, Dr. Roh would also be awarded the prestigious Kim Il Sung award by the DPRK government in 2014 for exemplary service towards building the ideals of the North Korean people.

Upon arriving in the U.S. in 1973, Dr. Roh quickly recognized that the claims of freedom and democracy in the U.S. were a myth that was exposed by the civil rights movement and historical racism faced by Black and Chinese people. His ideal of building solidarity and unity extended internationally. In Los Angeles County, where

Dr. Roh lived, he was always happy to participate and use his media to cover protests supporting the liberation struggles of all oppressed peoples. He was also dedicated to the building of unity between progressive organizations in the U.S.

Dr. Roh was a tireless advocate for peace and reunification of the Korean Peninsula. He traveled 75 times to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and each time brought back the truth of North Korea, her people and their efforts to defend their sovereignty.

Our heart goes out to his family, and to all those who worked with Dr. Roh to end the imperialist division of beautiful Korea. Long live Dr. Roh Kil Nam! Korea is one!

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The Kim Il Sung award given to Dr. Roh by the DPRK government in 2014.

