



HUMANE SOCIETY
INTERNATIONAL
UNITED KINGDOM

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

12th September 2016

Dear Mr. Johnson

We are delighted that a debate will be held in Westminster Hall on South Korea's cruel dog meat factory farms on 12th September, the second such debate on Asia's dog meat trade, demonstrating that Parliament takes seriously the very grave concerns the British public has about animal cruelty, wherever in the world it occurs.

This debate is a vital chance for MPs to discuss measures to stop the uniquely cruel intensive farming of up to 3 million dogs each year in South Korea, who are raised and killed largely to be made into a supposed 'health' soup – boshintang. Boshintang is favoured during the summer, but specifically over the three hottest '*boknal*' days of the year across July and August. The UK, with its long history of animal welfare laws and commitments, is well placed to offer encouragement and guidance to South Korea to help end this cruelty.

Dog meat is not a mainstream food. Much like the production of foie gras where geese are kept in dreadful conditions and brutally force fed to produce what is considered by some to be an occasional 'delicacy', so too is dog meat rarely on the menu for most South Koreans and is increasingly rejected as offensive by younger Koreans. For the first time ever, politicians in the country are also beginning to speak out against the trade, and a strong position of support from the British Parliament and Government would come as a tremendous boost to their efforts.

Exposés, dog farm closures and dog rescues by Humane Society International over the last two years have opened up to Korean public scrutiny this once secret cruelty - dogs of all breeds from Chihuahuas to Tosas, confined day after day, sometimes in total isolation, in small barren cages. The life of a dog on a dog meat farm is one of fear, deprivation, illness, loneliness and boredom which leads many dogs to slip into mental decline. When their time comes, they are taken to restaurants and slaughterhouses--

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crammed into cages so tightly they can barely breathe-- before being killed. The most common killing method is electrocution, where it can take up to 20 minutes for a dog to die. Hanging and beating are also used. It's a tragedy – a life time of suffering, then death by electrocution or hanging, for a soup.

There are around 17,000 dog farms in South Korea, and HSI's farm closures provide the South Korean government with a working blueprint for a State-supported phase-out of this industry. With just 18 months until the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang which will bring global media to South Korea's door, we urge the British Government's Ministers and representatives overseas to reach out to their South Korean counterparts and support the growing number of Korean politicians and citizens who want to see reform.

In recent months, draft amendments have been submitted to South Korea's Animal Protection Act that offer a real opportunity to move towards an end to the dog meat trade. We urge the UK government to vigorously encourage such legislative reforms, as well as to offer insights into the successful government-orchestrated phase-out of fur farms in the UK that offers a template for reform that South Korea could follow.

Sincerely,



Claire Bass, Executive Director, Humane Society International

Signing on behalf of:

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