
HYEONSEO LEE

**LONDON
SPEAKER
BUREAU**

- **North Korean defector and activist who now lives in South Korea**



Topics

- Asia
- Globalisation
- Politics
- Women

Hyeonseo Lee is a North Korean refugee living in Seoul, South Korea. Born in North Korea, Hyeonseo Lee left for China in 1997. Now living in South Korea, she has become an activist for fellow refugees.

Currently she is an undergraduate student at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies majoring in English and Chinese, and a Young Leader at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

As a child growing up in North Korea, Hyeonseo Lee thought her country was “the best on the planet.” It wasn’t until the famine of the 90s that she began to wonder. She escaped the country at 14 to begin a life in hiding as a refugee in China.

Hyeonseo spends much of her time speaking about North Korean human rights and refugee issues, including a speech at the British Embassy in Seoul, and has personally met public officials like UK Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and the South Korean Minister of Unification, Yu Woo-ik, to discuss these issues.

In February 2013, she gave a TED Talk that has already surpassed 3 million views. Hyeonseo has written articles for the Wall Street Journal Korea Real-Time, the London School of Economics Big Ideas blog and worked as a student journalist for the South Korean Ministry of Unification. She has also been interviewed by the BBC, CNN, CBS News, Swiss TV and numerous other television, newspaper and radio outlets spanning over 10 countries throughout the world.

She is currently writing a book about her life. The title of the book will be: “The Girl in the Red Shoes”. The book will be published early 2015.