

The five strategic objectives are:

- Ensuring and strengthening a legal and administrative system for the protection of fundamental rights
- Expanding the human rights protection for socially vulnerable groups
- Improving the effectiveness of its investigations and remedies
- Spreading a culture of human rights through human rights education
- Eliminating discrimination

Main Achievements

Since its establishment in 2001, the NHRCK has contributed to the improvement of human rights in Korean society. Below are just a few of the significant achievements:

- Handled over 110,000 cases through its counseling service (as of November 2011)
- Filed and investigated 58,105 complaints (77% concerned human rights violations; 20%, discriminations; and 3%, others, as of November 2011)
- Issued over 396 policy recommendations and opinions (approximately 75.6% in acceptance rate)
- Recommended the first term (2007-2011) National Human Rights Action Plan (NAP) in 2006 and prepared a monitoring report on the human rights issues for the second term (2012-2016) NAP recommendation
- Held the 10th anniversary symposium in 2011 on the prospects and challenges of the NHRCK to reflect on the achievements and to seek ways forward

- Established the North Korean Human Rights Documentation Center & Archives and developed the National Policy Recommendation on North Korean Human Rights
- Advocated for the enactment of the Anti-discrimination Act against Persons with Disability, which was enacted in April 2007 and became effective in April 2008
- Developed human rights educational curriculum and materials (films, animations, posters, etc)
- Initiated and coordinated networking among universities for human rights education and research
- Raised awareness and sensitivity about social discrimination based on age, marital status, sex, etc
- Proposed and encouraged for the improvement of living conditions and practices in prisons, detention centers, correctional facilities, military facilities, etc.



The NHRCK symbol consists of two colors; blue and ocher. The blue represents the heavens and freedom, while the ocher stands for the earth and equality. The blue can also be viewed as a hand or the torch of hope. The ocher ring on the left symbolizes circulation and completion. The symbol stands for the Commission's dedication to achieve harmony and balance between freedom (yang) and equality (yin).



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To file a complaint,
please call the Counseling Center at **1331**
or e-mail hoso@nhrc.go.kr

National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK)



Brief History

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRCK) was established on November 25, 2001 under the National Human Rights Commission Act to ensure the protection of the inviolable and fundamental human rights of all individuals and the promotion of the standards of human rights and to contribute to the realization of human dignity and worth and the safeguard of the basic order of democracy. Fulfilling a presidential election pledge of the then-President and 2000 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kim Dae-Jung, the NHRCK was launched as an independent governmental body. In the years following the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, civil society's ardent demands to make structural improvements for human rights in Korea also played a pivotal role in creating the NHRCK, which is independent from the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of the Korean government. It functions in compliance with the Paris Principles defining the competences and responsibilities of national human rights institutions.

The NHRCK has pursued exchanges and co-operations with international human rights organizations and human rights institutions of other countries; it has been a full member of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) since 2002, and joined the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions (ICC) in 2004. It served as Chair of the APF in 2004 and in 2007, and as Vice Chair in 2006 and 2008. Having been accredited with an "A status" in the ICC, it also served as Deputy Chair of the ICC (2007-2009) and a member of the ICC Sub-Committee on Accreditation (2006-2011), and serves as a member of the ICC Bureau since 2012.

Vision and Mission

The NHRCK's vision is to create a society where the dignity and human rights of all persons, including foreigners living in Korea, are fully respected and realized. To this end, the Commission is committed to the full implementation of the human rights standards set forth in the Constitution, as well as universally recognized international human rights instruments in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Mandate and Function

The NHRCK faithfully follows the comprehensive mandate outlined in the National Human Rights Commission Act, and works for the promotion and protection of human rights. It performs the following functions:

- Developing human rights policies through conducting human rights research and making policy recommendations on human rights issues
- Investigating human rights violation and discrimination cases and providing adequate remedies
- Promoting human rights education and raising public awareness of human rights
- Working closely with NHRIs through APF and ICC
- Cooperating with UN human rights bodies such as the Human Rights Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Developing collaboration with government agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders, both domestically and internationally

Commissioners

The NHRCK consists of 11 Commissioners: A Chairperson, three Standing Commissioners, and seven Non-Standing Commissioners. All Commissioners are appointed for a term of three years and can be reappointed to an additional term. Under the National Human Rights Commission Act, at least four of the Commissioners must be women.

The Plenary Committee, the Commission's highest decision-making body consisting of all Commissioners, convenes twice a month, while the Standing Commissioners' Committee meets once a week.

There are four thematic sub-committees. They address:

- Human rights violations caused by the prosecutor's office, the police, and the military
- Human rights violations in detention and correctional facilities, prisons and group care facilities
- Discrimination issues
- Discrimination against persons with disabilities



Plenary Committee

Secretariat

The Secretariat, led by Secretary-General, has 185 full-time staff members and an annual budget of approximately 20 million USD (2012). The Secretariat performs the Commission's decisions and policies, and is responsible for all of the NHRCK's administrative duties. It has twelve thematic divisions under three bureaus and several units including a counseling center, human rights library, and public information service. The NHRCK headquarter is located in Seoul, the capital city of the Republic of Korea, and is supported by three regional offices in Busan, Gwangju, and Daegu.

2012-14 Action Plans for Promotion of Human Rights

The NHRCK adopted the 2012-14 Action Plans for the Promotion of Human Rights which focus on 1) cultivating a culture of human rights; 2) constructing an institutional framework of human rights protection; and 3) strengthening its capacity to provide an effective remedy for victims of human rights violations.

The NHRCK sets forth five strategic objectives to achieve these goals, along with special projects on North Korean human rights, ICT and human rights, and business and human rights