

Forum Members Report

National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia

Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are pleased to say that the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia has organized numerous important activities in the field of human rights education and promotion, human rights research and studies, opinion and recommendation, complaints handling, international cooperation and policy development since the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions.

Human Rights Education

Human rights education and promotion is the priority area of the Commission. The Commission has organized a number of trainings and seminars on human trafficking, torture, human rights investigation and freedom of press for legal professionals, police officers, public servants, media, and the representatives of NGOs. Also one important activity undertaken by the Commission is the development of Model Human Rights Curricula for law schools with the support of the Canada Fund/Mongolia. The Curricula has been piloted at three law schools and teachers of law schools, who would be using the Curricula, were introduced to the Curricula by participating in three trainings organized by the Commission. The Commission has just organized a conference involving relevant Government officials, representatives of law school to ensure the Model Curricula is taught at all schools.

As a follow-up activity to the Regional Investigation Techniques Training project, organized in Canberra, Australia last year, the Commission organized trainings on “Investigation of human rights complaints” and “Conciliation and mediation”, for complaints officers of administrative bodies, officers of legal institutions including the police with a view to improve their skills in dealing with human rights complaints. The NHRCM is planning to organize such workshops and trainings with the support of the APF in 2004.

Human Rights Promotion

NHRCM organized Road Shows or Human Rights Open Days in nine provinces. The Human Rights Open Days feature human rights training and advocacy activities, complaints handling, meeting with local authorities. It is very significant for the Commission to organize such “Human Rights Open Days” in provinces to increase its accessibility in the local areas where it doesn’t have representative office or branch in local areas.

Also in commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the International Principles Relating to the Status of National Human Rights Institutions, the Paris Principles, the Commission organized competition among law school students aimed to enhance knowledge of future young lawyers on the importance of national institutions and the Paris Principles. The competition involved teams from 12 law schools and watched by approximately 1000 students.

Human Rights Status Report

As stated in the Law on the National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, the Commission submitted its second annual report on human rights situation in Mongolia to the State Great Khural (Parliament) of Mongolia.

The Commission made consistent efforts, with facilitation from our partners such as the Asia Pacific Forum of the National Human Rights Institutions, to establish a practice where the Human Rights Status Reports are heard by the Parliament. As a result, for the first time, the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs of the State Great Khural convened a hearing on the last report on 5th December 2003 and issued a resolution.

The reports are made available to the public by different communication channels including the media, press conferences and public hearings. The reports are published both in Mongolian and English and distributed widely to governmental, non-governmental organizations, international community, academic institutions and public libraries. In addition, the report of 2003 was published in the State Gazette, an official magazine of the state where laws and regulations are published and distributed among public servants.

Complaints handling

The Commission introduced the method of conciliation and mediation in the process of resolving complaints and so far the Commission has successfully resolved 15 complaints through mediation and conciliation. The developed skill and knowledge of complaints officer who worked at the New Zealand Human Rights Commission with the Staff Exchange Program of the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions was helpful in this regard.

Major achievements

The most significant achievement of the Commission in 2003 was the annulment of civil registration fees for rural-urban migrants. Based on the research carried out on the human rights status of rural urban-migrants in January 2002, the Commission considered that a resolution of the Citizen's Representatives Khural of the Capital city, which established fees for rural-urban migrants, was an act in breach of the rights to choose one's residence guaranteed by the Constitution of Mongolia and the international treaties ratified by Mongolia. Discouraged by the Government failure to take the necessary actions, the Commission brought the case to the court. The Civil Cases Chamber of the Supreme Court resolved the case that benefited more than hundred thousand immigrants.

One of the priority human rights concerns for the Commission was the issue of torture. In order to combat torture the Commission organized several activities aimed at reducing the number of incidences of torture by the authority. For example, the Commission initiated a media campaign against torture, in collaboration with Mongolian Coalition of United Journalists, to promote the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to improve public awareness on existing forms of torture in the administration of justice, and accordingly to influence positively on the monitoring and prevention from torture by drawing attention of the authorities to the existing practice of torture. This year the Commission is preparing to conduct public hearing on the issue and is planning to develop and disseminate wide range of information materials for the officials and public.

The Parliament of Mongolia adopted the National Human Rights Action Programme (NHRAP) in late October 2003. The NHRAP identified the NHRCM as one of the key-monitoring agency. The NHRAP is very significant in improving the human rights situation in Mongolia.

Budget

In 2003, the NHRCM budget equaled to 60,493 USD and only 2 percent was allocated for operational costs. The Capacity Development project, joint project implemented by the UNDP

and OHCHR, is making an important contribution in overcoming this financial problem. As mentioned earlier, the Commission was able to undertake number of activities with the financial assistance from the Canada Fund and the International Labor Organization.

International cooperation

Finally we are glad to say that our bilateral and multilateral cooperation with other human rights institutuoins have been strengthened. For example, Commission has cooperated with the National Human Rights Commission of Korea and the Malaysian Human Rights Commission in resolving human rights complaints.

The Commission was also honoured to welcome delegations from the APF Secretariat and the National Human Rights Commission of Korea to discuss further cooperation to protect and promote human rights in the region.

I am sure that we will have more opportunity to discuss about the activities undertaken regarding human trafficking, death penalty and issues relating to terrorism.

Thank you for your attention.