

## Activities on Death Penalty and Trafficking

### I. Death Penalty

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has planned to deal with the death penalty as one of the 10 major concerning human rights issues which the NHRC presented to the new government in early 2003. Thus, the NHRC started to review the issue on death penalty from May 2003 as one of the important projects.

First, the NHRC is making progress in dealing with the issue, by reviewing and analyzing:

1. documents and resources on issues of death penalty by making researches and analyzing national and international arguments on whether to abolish the death penalty or not.
2. dissertations and newspaper articles on death penalty
3. laws and regulations on death penalty
4. international standards related to the issue; and
5. cases of the Constitutional Court and Supreme Court in Korea on the issue.

Second, the NHRC is collecting data on the sentencing and execution of death penalty, such as data on how many convicts (of which crimes committed) have been sentenced to death and executed annually.

Third, the NHRC is planning to conduct a survey of the public consciousness on death penalty (that is, on how the public views the death penalty). In addition, such a survey will be accompanied by an in-depth research on the cases of convicts who are on death row, those who are victimized by the acts of such convicts, and their family members, etc. in order to compare cases of the convicts with imprisonment for life.

Fourth, the NHRC is planning to hold an expert meeting, public hearing, etc.

After evaluating and analyzing all the above data, results of the surveys, and other materials, and taking the opinions of the public and experts, the NHRC plans to make public its own opinion.

## II. Trafficking

After the NHRC attended the APF's 7<sup>th</sup> annual meeting, the NHRC translated the main arguments of the meeting and recommendations of the ACJ into Korean to enhance the public awareness on the trafficking issue and to educate the public, relevant government agencies, and NGOs. The NHRC distributed the report on the trafficking to the agencies including the Ministry of Gender and Equality (MGE) and the Ministry of Justice(MOJ), and posted it on the NHRC's website for the general public.

At present, the NHRC does not directly involve in the issue of trafficking because the MGE was established in January 2001 in order to specifically deal with the issues on women in general. In addition, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is in charge of controlling the trafficking as one of its law enforcement policies. Particularly, this year the MGE and MOJ co-organized an international expert group meeting for the Asia-Pacific region entitled "Prevention of International Trafficking & Public Awareness Campaign on 22 through 23 September 2003.

Although, the NHRC played a passive role of just raising public awareness on the issue, the NHRC will deal with the issue if any complaints on trafficking will be filed or any human rights violations will be reported, the NHRC will actively involve in such cases to investigate and make recommendations on the cases.