

**State under Review: The Republic of Korea**

**Deliver by: Hyunjin Yim (Head of Delegation)**

### **1. Freedom of Opinion and Expression**

Regarding the first topic, the ROK has taken measures by organizing committees from the civil sector and academia to carry out inquiries, held public discussions and amendment reviews on conscientious objectors, and sought to amend the Information and Communications Network Act to uphold their human rights. Fully recognizing the need to improve ROK's protection of human rights, the ROK strives to further its recommendations through planning consultation on the matter of military service, monitoring the police to take human rights training, as well as revising legislations to ensure freedom of assembly. The ROK also adopts specific legislation to guarantee the exercise of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and to ensure that laws on freedom of expression and freedom of the press are applied in conformity with international standards.

### **2. Human Trafficking**

Second, in terms of human trafficking, the ROK supports recommendation 124.42 in regard to strengthening national and international cooperation to fight against human trafficking. Last year, the Government provided trafficking investigations, prosecutions and convictions as well as services to 7,400 potential trafficking victims. Also, in full support of the recommendation 124.43 to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, the ROK has ratified the protocol on November 2015, which subsequently was taken into effect. The Criminal Act was also amended to stipulate articles of the Protocol and to specify and expand the definition of trafficking, in line with the principle of liability.

### **3. Right of the Children**

Third, with regard to right of the children, the ROK agrees with the necessity of the universal birth registration, as mentioned in recommendations 132.118~123. However, due to domestic concerns regarding its side effect, the Government shall take careful steps through hearing various opinions. As a complementary measure, the birth of a child of foreign nationals born in the ROK shall be registered in accordance with the laws of their countries even in cases where the parents are undocumented migrants. As a response to the recommendation 130.75, regarding the concern of the corporal punishment, the Enforcement Decree of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was already amended in 2011 and is still effective.

#### **4. Environment**

Fourth, concerning the topic of environment, the ROK is fully aware of that the Special Rapporteur accentuated the importance of managing and disposing of hazardous substances and wastes. His concerns were also expressed on the information gaps in the Act on the Registration and Evaluation of Chemical Substances. In response to the recommendation that the ROK increase efforts to identify the harms of pre-existing industrial chemicals, the Government has already registered 8,459 chemicals of the 15,800 used domestically to the list of Priority Existing Chemicals. The ROK will further facilitate this process by strengthening the infrastructure needed to generate information on such hazards. Through such actions, the ROK strives to fulfill its duty of ensuring that the information necessary to prevent exposure to and seek remedy from hazardous substances is available and accessible to all that need it.

#### **5. Gender Inequality and Violence**

Finally, accepting recommendation 130.48 regarding gender discrimination in employment, the ROK continues to strengthen Affirmative Action. Ministry of Employment and Labor announced 27 companies which violated the Affirmative Action in 2017 for the first time based on women employment standards. The ROK also supports job-seeking of women with career breaks through 155 supporting centers nationwide. Moreover, regarding recommendations on sexual violence prevention, such as 130.19, the ROK revised and implemented the Guidelines for Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Prevention in June, 2018. The Article 6, 7, 9, 10 emphasize counseling and legal support, and Article 8 and 17 address prevention education.