

## ACRC Korea Transparency Newsletter (May 2021)

- ▷ **ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui Elected as Director of International Ombudsman Institute (IOI)**
  - Chairperson Jeon joined the IOI's important discussion, such as by-law revision, subsidy execution, and membership assessment
  
- ▷ **ACRC Shares Best Practices of Korea's Anti-Corruption Policies with 12 Countries Including Russia**
  - The Commission holds a virtual training course due to COVID-19 to share Corruption Risk Assessment and protective measures for whistleblowers
  
- ▷ **ACRC Officially Launched the Center for Police Ombudsman**
  - To strengthen the role of Police Ombudsman in providing in-person consultation over civil complaints

### *[Special features on 4 Years of the Moon Administration]*

- ▷ **ACRC Achieved Concrete Results of Reform for Anti-Corruption and Justice with Increases in CPI Ranks for 4 Consecutive Years**
  - As the agency that supervises government-wide anti-corruption efforts, ACRC pushes ahead with reform for anti-corruption and justice to achieve "rises in the CIP ranking for 4 consecutive years to reach 33rd place for the first time"
  
- ▷ **"Conflict of Interest Prevention Law Will Take Effect from May Next Year" to Help Korea Becoming Top 20 in CPI by 2022**
  - The outcomes of international and domestic assessment of Korea's integrity level improved with the highest score of 61 points in CPI and 8.27 points in Integrity Assessment (IA) after 4-years consecutive rises

- ▷ **ACRC, “Cracks Down on Corruption and Public Interest Violations with the People”**
  - Convenient and far-reaching corruption and public interest reporting, Sound whistleblower protection and active reward system, Systematic public finance recovery system without loopholes
  
- ▷ **ACRC, “Made 329 Visits in On-site Civil Complaint Counseling Program and Ran 1.6 Laps Around the Earth (65,800km) over the Last 4 Years”**
  - Protected some 170,000 individuals’ rights and interests, and addressed conflicts and wishes involving 110,000 residents through mediation of 234 collective complaints
  
- ▷ **ACRC, “Usage of Online Administrative Appeals Increased for 4 Consecutive Years, Allowing Better Access to Administrative Appeals”**
  - Expanded the support with a representative for the appeals procedures for socially vulnerable people for free of charge
  
- ▷ **How Has ACRC Improved on Inconveniences in Everyday Life over the Last 4 Years?**
  - Addressed inconvenience and unfairness for citizens identified in 235 cases through civil complaint analysis and collection of people’s opinions

## ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui Elected as Director of International Ombudsman Institute

- Chairperson Jeon joined the IOI's important discussion, such as by-law revision, subsidy execution, and membership assessment -



(18 May 2021, ACRC)

The Chairperson of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) was appointed as a Director of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) in a by-election conducted online from May 10 to 14.

Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui was unanimously elected IOI Regional Director by 13 Asian members in the by-election, which was carried out before the 12th IOI General Assembly to fill a vacancy.

### ◇ International Ombudsman Institute (IOI)

The IOI is a non-profit institution established in 1987 for the purpose of advancing Ombudsman system and promoting the exchange and cooperation among ombudsmen in the world. It has 212 members from 120 countries, and is headquartered in Vienna, Austria, where the executive committee is operated. The general assembly is held every four years and the board of directors' meeting is held every two years.

\* Ombudsman : Ombudsman is of Swedish origin meaning mediator, arbitrator, and inspector, and the ombudsman institution was first established in Sweden in 1809 as a representative of the parliament to investigate judges and public officials of administrative organizations.

Chairperson Jeon, as an IOI Director, also joined important discussion of IOI board of directors, including on by-law revision, subsidy execution, and membership assessment. Most importantly, representing the Asian region, she promoted to the world the advancement of Ombudsman system in the region as well as strengthen the role of Asian members.

She attended the 12th IOI World Conference to be held on May 27, representing Asia Pacific Region, to make a presentation under the theme of “ACRC Giving Voices to the Voiceless in the Global Pandemic Situation.”

She also participated in the IOI regional meeting on May 20 to express her appreciation to Asian members for supporting her and to review the region’s agenda for discussion by the 12th IOI General Assembly.

At the regional meeting, various Asian Ombudsman institutions of Seoul, Gangwon Province, Bucheon, Japan, China, Pakistan, and the Philippines talked about a way forward for Asian Ombudsman institutions.

ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui said, “ The result of the election was largely thanks to the recognition by Asia members for ACRC’s efforts to protect the disadvantaged, such as the elderly, the physically challenged, the youth, through complaint handling and institutional improvement”



“As an IOI director, I will make efforts to share with IOI members Korea’s experiences in the COVID 19 pandemic situation. As the head of national ombudsman institution of Korea, which plays a leading role among Ombudsman institutions, I will strive to strengthen communication and cooperation with other IOI members to present a direction for development of ombudsman system in Asia and the world”, she added.

## **ACRC Shares Best Practices of Korea's Anti-Corruption Policies with 12 Countries Including Russia**

- *The Commission holds a virtual training course due to COVID-19 to share Corruption Risk Assessment and protective measures for whistleblowers -*

(25 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption Training Institute of the Anti Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) will run an online training course to share South Korea's outstanding anti-corruption policies and their achievements with East European and Central Asian countries.

The course took place from the 25th to 27th virtually in real time due to the spread of COVID-19, inviting a total of 34 public officials in government agencies involved in the fight against corruption in 12 nations, including the Office of Public Prosecutor of the Russian Federation, the National Agency for Prevention of Corruption of Ukraine, Independent Authority Against Corruption of Mongolia, the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Agency for State Financial Control and Combating Corruption of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The subject of the training is Korea's key anti-corruption initiatives, such as the Corruption Impact Assessment and protective measures for corruption and public interest reporters, among others, that are recognized by the international community for its excellence.

In addition, the course introduced Korea's recent achievements of anti-corruption policies, including the legislation of the Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office and the operation of the Anti-Corruption Policy Consultative Council and the public finance recovery system. It also provided a variety of educational content on integrity the ACRC produced for public officials and the general public with Russian subtitles.

The Commission has run training courses to help public officials in nations around the world enhance their capabilities in fighting against corruption every year since 2013. In the process, the ACRC was able to effectively contribute to improving anti-corruption institutions in developing countries by supporting them to make 61 concrete actions on the ground, including the introduction of the Integrity Assessment framework and protective measures for whistleblowers, and the legislation and amendment of laws and regulations.

The upcoming training course, in particular, that will be provided in Russian language, was newly developed with the growing demand in the Eurasian region and the government's New Northern Policy in celebrating the Year of New Northern Cooperation in 2020.

- \* The government's one of the key foreign policies aiming at strengthening exchanges and cooperation with countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, such as Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, etc.

The ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui said "providing the technical assistance needed in the fight against corruption to developing countries is what the United Nations Convention against Corruption obligates its member states. As

an increasing number of countries around the world are demanding to learn anti-corruption policies of South Korea, a leading nation in integrity, we will proactively respond to these calls.”

 <p>Виртуальный учебный курс ACRC 2021 для международных специалистов по борьбе с коррупцией 2021 ACRC Virtual Training Course for International Anti-Corruption Practitioners Прямая трансляция на русском языке Broadcast Live in Russian 25-27 мая 2021 г. Институт антикоррупционного обучения, Чонджу, Республика Корея</p>	<p><b>Принятие закона о предотвращение конфликта интересов госслужащих (18 мая 2021 г.)</b></p> <p><b>Ограничения и запреты</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ограничение деятельности за пределами организации при связи с рабочими обязанностями</li> <li>✓ Ограничения найма членов семьи</li> <li>✓ Ограничение заключения контракта без конкурса</li> <li>✓ Запрет использования в личных целях, получения прибыли на основе предметов гос. организаций и др.</li> <li>✓ Запрет использования секретной информации, полученной при выполнении рабочих обязанностей и др.</li> </ul>
<p><b>President of ACTI delivering her welcoming remarks</b></p>	<p><b>Introduction of the key highlights of the Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office</b></p>
 <p>1. Рациональность бремени соблюдения Проект поправок 2. Улучшение системы 3. Улучшение системы 4. Улучшение системы 5. Улучшение системы 6. Улучшение системы 7. Улучшение системы 8. Улучшение системы 9. Улучшение системы 10. Улучшение системы</p>	 <p>Виртуальный учебный курс ACRC 2021 для международных специалистов по борьбе с коррупцией 2021 ACRC Virtual Training Course for International Anti-Corruption Practitioners Прямая трансляция на русском языке Broadcast Live in Russian 25-27 мая 2021 г. Институт антикоррупционного обучения, Чонджу, Республика Корея</p>
<p><b>Presentation on the Corruption Risk Assessment</b></p>	<p><b>Presentation on the investigation of corruption cases</b></p>

## ACRC Officially Launched the Center for Police Ombudsman

- *To strengthen the role of Police Ombudsman in providing in-person consultation over civil complaints -*



(May 10 2021, ACRC)

The Center for Police Ombudsman was launched to provide intensive support with police ombudsman activities of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) designed to address civil complaints and violations of rights and interests in the police sector.

At 2 p.m. on the 10th, in the Government Complex Sejong, the Commission held a signboard hanging ceremony for the Center for Police Ombudsman where the ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, Vice-Chairperson Lee Junghee, and Commissioners Kang Jae-young, Oh Wan-ho and Son Nan-ju of Police Ombudsman joined.

The Center for Police Ombudsman was established to proactively respond to the expected growing number of complaints about investigations and other related areas as the investigative power between the prosecution and the police was rebalanced to allow the police the authority to close initial investigations starting from this year.

Citizens who visit the Center for Police Ombudsman will enjoy intensive consulting services from the case reception stage. Particularly, the Police Ombudsman Consultation System where people consult a police ombudsman in person over their grievances will further be strengthened.

Some 830,000 complaints regarding the police raised along with changes in the environment such as the public's increased awareness of their rights and interests were filed on e-People last year. The ACRC Police Ombudsman has processed a total of 24,528 police-related grievances through document and field investigations as well as by summoning relevant personnel for inquiry to resolve 3,932 cases of them since its inception in December 2006 up until last year.

On February 22 of this year, the ACRC appointed one standing commissioner and two non-standing commissioners for the Police Ombudsman in order to proactively address civil complaints and violations of their rights and interests with regards to investigations.

Separately, on the 28th of the last month, the ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui and the Commissioner General Kim Chang Yong of the National Police Agency signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two

organizations, which is expected to provide an opportunity to better deal with civil complaints about the police.

In her remarks delivered during the board-hanging ceremony, the ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui asked for the people to visit the Center for Police Ombudsman in case their rights and interests are violated in dealings with the police and also added that the Commission is committed to proactively tackling civil grievances through intensive consultation and investigation.

## **[4 Years of the Moon Administration]**

### **ACRC Achieved Concrete Results of Reform for Anti-Corruption and Justice with Increases in CPI Ranks for 4 Consecutive Years**

- *As the agency that supervises government-wide anti-corruption efforts, ACRC pushes ahead with reform for anti-corruption and justice to achieve “rises in the CIP ranking for 4 consecutive years to reach 33rd place for the first time”*
- *Conflict of Interest Prevention Law passed in the National Assembly in 9 years since it was proposed to “legislate standards of behavior to prevent 2 million public officials from wrongfully seeking personal gains”*
- *The national ombudsman ACRC resolved civil complaints with focus on the people and the field to “address 65,000 grievances and protect the rights and interests of 160,000 citizens”*

(12 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission that oversees the government's anti-corruption initiatives have made significant progress for the past four years since the current administration took office. It has since made sustained efforts in the reform for anti-corruption and justice to increase the nation's ranks in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for the past four consecutive years to allow the nation to reach 33rd place for the first time.



The government bill of the Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office designed to prevent some two million public officials from wrongfully seeking personal gains was passed in the National Assembly in nine years since it was proposed and will be effective from May next year.

The ACRC, as South Korea's national ombudsman, has addressed around 65,000 civil complaints and protected the rights and interests of some 160,000 citizens by mobilizing its capabilities in resolving grievances with its focus on the people and the field.

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) released some numbers that demonstrate what their key policy initiatives have achieved since the Moon administration was sworn in four years ago.

The Commission took the initiative in pushing ahead with the government's reform for anti-corruption and justice as it supervises the government-wide efforts against corruption. It implemented a wide range of measures to increase the level of integrity in our society while paving the way for making Korea to join among top 20 in the CPI.

The ACRC set up a nationwide response system against corruption and injustice by establishing the Anti-Corruption Policy Consultative Council for Fair Society and the Private-Public Consultative Council for Transparent Society, among others, and enhanced the legal and institutional framework to increase the level of integrity across the society.

The Commission, particularly, was able to legislate two laws that are integral to root out acts of corruption.

The ACRC enacted the Public Finance Recovery Act\* that allows the government to recover the total amount of illicit gains when an individual was found to falsely claim the public funds, including various types of subsidies, compensations and donations, amounted to around 252 trillion won, and has implemented the law since January 2020.

\* The Act on Prohibition of False Claims for Public Funds and Recovery of Illicit Gains

A study on the implementation of the Act over the last year since it took effect found that 45.3 billion won worth of public funds that had been paid as a result of false claims was retrieved. Likewise, the Commission is making sure to implement the law that a single coin of the public finance is not wasted in vain.

In April, the Conflict of Interest Prevention bill\* was passed in the National Assembly after nine years since it was proposed by the ACRC in 2013, which translated standards of behavior to prevent some two million public officials from seeking personal gains in an illegitimate way into concrete legislature.

\* The Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office

The enactment finally completed the sound legal framework against corruption with five anti-corruption laws along with the ACRC Act, the Act on the Protection of Public Interest Whistleblowers, the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act, and the Public Finance Recovery Act.

In addition, the Commission took the initiative to eradicate corruption on employment and establish fair employment practices. To that end, it has conducted an annual study on employment in public institutions since 2017 to reveal a total of 613 corruption cases on employment before strictly imposing sanctions on those involved in corruption while giving another opportunity for a job application to around 3,400 individuals who were the victims of the corruption cases.

The ACRC also drastically reinforced the protection and support for whistleblowers by widening the scope of laws subject to public interest reporting in the Act on the Protection of Public Interest Whistleblowers from 284 to 471 legislations.

The Commission has visited different communities across the country and taken activities to protect the rights and interests of our citizens by focusing on the people and the field as the national ombudsman. Over the past four years, it has processed some 65,000 civil complaints to protect the rights and interests of around 160,000 citizens who suffered from unlawful, unfair or indifferent public administration.

Not only that, the ACRC was able to protect the people's rights and interests that had been violated by 10,538 unlawful or unfair dispositions of public agencies and drive proactive public administration through administrative appeals that are easier and faster to proceed than lawsuits.

The Commission, especially, resolved 244 collective and pending complaints regarding the issues of the ownership of the land within the Civilian Control

Zone in Haeon Township of Yanggu County, the conflict between Korean Air and Seoul City over the sell-off of land site in Songhyeon Neighborhood, etc. to address the long-standing issues involving 100,000 local residents as well as private enterprises and prevent social conflicts.

The number of civil complaints filed on e-People that the ACRC operates exceeded 9.5 million for a year. The Commission fundamentally tackled the factors that caused corruption and inconvenience for citizens by studying the voices of the people received through various channels, including e-People, Government Call Center (110) and People's Idea Box, and improving 235 institutions.

The Commission also launched the Government Complaints Counseling Center in October 2019 that enabled comprehensive and professional counseling services on complex grievances where multiple government agencies are involved in a single place. Since the Center was opened, some 57,000 complaints were addressed via both online and offline channels.

The ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui commented "the Commission was able to make meaningful progress thanks to the people's aspiration for a corruption-free and fair society and their active support we enjoyed in the last four years."

Chairperson Jeon then added "we will continue to devote ourselves to completing the reform for anti-corruption and justice in order to make Korea an advanced nation in integrity and to becoming a reliable agency that supports the people by focusing on resolving civil complaints and social conflicts."

## Appendix

## ACRC's Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers

ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Anti-Corruption

### Korea's CPI(Corruption Perceptions Index) rose for 4 consecutive years

It won **61 points** and **33rd place** for the first time



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Anti-Corruption

### The bill on Conflict of Interest Prevention Law passed in the National Assembly in 9 years since proposed

to complete the legal framework for preventing 2 million public officials from seeking personal gains



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Anti-Corruption

ACRC's efforts in **rooting out** corruption on employment  
in the public sector **protected** rights and interests  
of **3,400 victims** of corruption cases



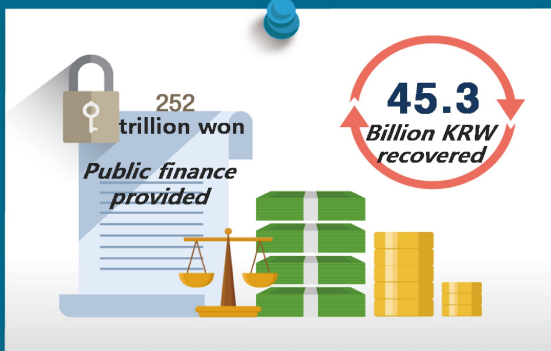
ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Anti-Corruption

The scope of laws subject to public interest  
Reporting dramatically **expanded**  
to include **471 legislations**



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Anti-Corruption

The Public Finance Recovery Act enacted  
to prevent waste of public finance  
**worth 252 trillion won(\$2.1billion)**



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

ACRC's proactive mediation  
for **244 collective complaints**  
addressed long-standing wishes and conflicts  
involving **100,000 local residents**





ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

ACRC processed **65,000 civil complaints** to protect the rights and interests of **160,000 individuals**



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

**Administrative appeals** faster to proceed than lawsuits addressed violations of rights and interests caused by **10,583** unlawful or unfair dispositions



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

ACRC recommended institutional improvements on **235 cases** in areas prone to corruption and where civil complaints frequently arise



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

Promotion of People's Idea Box, a platform for some **350,000 citizens** to engage in policies



ACRC Key Policy Achievements in the Last 4 Years in Numbers | Rights & Interests Protection

The Government Complaints Counseling Center opened to provide one-stop counseling services to resolve **57,000 complaints**



To complete reform for anti-corruption and justice to make Korea an advanced nation in integrity  
**Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission**  
that is reliable and supports the people



## **“Conflict of Interest Prevention Law Will Take Effect from May Next Year” to Help Korea Becoming Top 20 in CPI by 2022**

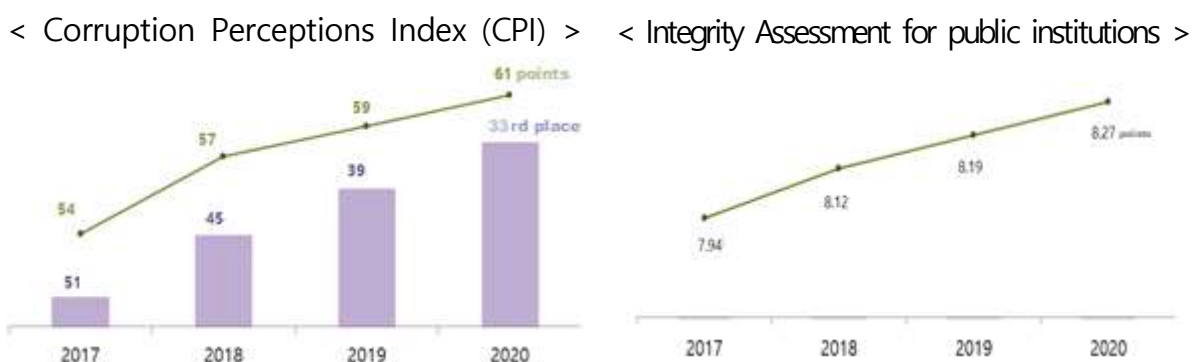
- *The outcomes of international and domestic assessment of Korea's integrity level improved with the highest score of 61 points in CPI and 8.27 points in IA after 4-years consecutive rises*
- *The bill on Conflict of Interest Prevention Law passed in the National Assembly after 9 years when ACRC proposed it to legislate standards of behavior to prevent 2 million public officials from wrongfully seeking personal gains*
  - *Improper Solicitation and Graft Act has become standards in day-to-day life with support of 87.8% respondents, a survey found*
- *The ACRC has conducted an annual study of corruption on employment in public institutions since 2017 to identify 603 corruption cases and protect the rights and interests of 3,400 victims*

(17 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) that oversees anti-corruption initiatives of the Moon Jae-in government has continued to push forward with reform for anti-corruption and justice to realize a corruption-free and fair society over the past four years since the administration took office.

Thanks to its efforts, in the 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) released by the Transparency International in January, South Korea won 61 out of 100 points, the highest score ever, and the 33rd place after the continuous rise in the national ranking for the four consecutive years, which created the momentum for Korea to join among the top 20 nations of integrity.

Furthermore, the scores of the Integrity Assessment (IA) for public institutions that the Commissions conducts each year has been on the rise for the past four years, demonstrating that the increasing number of people have better perception towards the public office.



In addition, the bill on the Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office was passed in the National Assembly in April, creating an opportunity to restore the people's confidence in the government that has been lost due to the LH scandal while enhancing the standards of behavior in the public office so that they meet the expectations of the people.

In a survey on the awareness of the Improper Solicitation and Graft Act conducted last year, 87.8% citizens showed their support for the Act and 75.4% respondents said the law helps improving on corruption issues in our society. The overwhelming support with the law demonstrates how the Act now has established itself as the representative anti-corruption law in the country.



Not only that, the Commission has conducted an annual study on employment in public institutions since 2017 that identified a total 603 corruption cases and has held the wrongdoers accountable while providing 3,400 individuals who were the victims in the cases with another chance to apply for a job. Likewise, the ACRC has tried its utmost to eradicate corruption on employment and establish fair employment practices.

The ACRC Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui stated “Despite the challenging circumstances under the COVID-19 crisis, we were able to make meaningful progress in our fight against corruption thanks to the interest and cooperation of the people.”

Chairperson Jeon then added “the ACRC will continue to play its role as the supervisor of the government’s anti-corruption initiatives in making Korea among the top 20 nations of integrity and realizing a corruption-free society that our citizens dream of by completing the reform for anti-corruption and justice.”

## ACRC, “Cracks Down on Corruption and Public Interest Violations with the People”

- *Convenient and far-reaching corruption and public interest reporting*
  - *Sound whistleblower protection and active reward system*
  - *Systematic public finance recovery system without loopholes*

(18 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) revealed that it has made progress in preventing acts of corruption and violations of public interests through citizens’ proactive reporting as well as its sound protection and reward for whistleblowers and legislation of a public finance recovery law over the last four years since the current government came to power.

### 《Convenient and far-reaching corruption and public interest reporting》

The ACRC built and operates Clean Portal\_Corruption and Public Interest Reporting system where any citizen can easily submit reports regarding corruption or violations of public interests online and access whistleblower protection or reward.

The number of laws that are subject to public interest reporting was 284 when the government took office, but the scope was significantly expanded to include some 180 key legislations that are relevant to everyday life, such

as the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment, etc. of Sexual Crimes and the Act on Special Cases Concerning the Punishment, etc. of Child Abuse Crimes, among others, last year in order to broaden the scope of the acts subject to reporting and of protection provided to whistleblowers. This year, four laws related to education and workplace, including the Labor Standards Act, the Private School Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the Higher Education Act were added that now 471 laws in total are subject to whistleblowing.

With the change in the system, the number of reports people filed increased. Over the last four years, the Commission received a total 22,042 reports and referred or forwarded 10,947 (49.7%) cases to investigative agencies to contribute to identifying acts of corruption and public interest violations.

\* 2,130 reports on corruption, 2,758 on false claims of government subsidies, 17,154 on violations of public interests, etc.

### **《Sound whistleblower protection and active reward system》**

The ACRC introduced a proxy reporting system to keep whistleblower's identity confidential at source while toughening criminal punishment imposed on those who violate the confidentiality obligation or those who implement disadvantageous measures on whistleblowers and increasing the limit on rewards for whistleblowers up to three billion won from the previous two billion won.

In the last four years, the Commission received 830 applications for whistleblower protection, processed 696 cases out of them, and provided

19.4 billion won worth of compensation or reward to whistleblowers, which contributed to promoting corruption and public interest reporting.

### 《Systematic public finance recovery system without loopholes》

The ACRC enacted the Public Finance Recovery Act that allows the government to recover the total amount of illicit gains when an individual was found to falsely claim the public funds, including various types of subsidies, compensations and donations, amounted to around 252 trillion won and impose penalties up to five times the amount of the claim, and has implemented the law since January last year.

Over the last year since the Act took effect, public funds worth 45.3 billion won that had been paid as a result of false claims were recovered. The ACRC will continue to be committed to recovering false claims of the public finance that a single coin of the funding is not wasted in vain.

Kim Ki-seon, Chief of the ACRC's Inspection and Protection Bureau said "citizens' proactive reports in the hopes of making a society free of corruption and unfair privileges for the past four years seemed to make our society more transparent and contribute to the rise in the country's integrity level. We will continue to engage the people in carrying out report inspection and operating whistleblower protection and reward system and the public finance recovery system."

## **ACRC, “Made 329 Visits in On-site Civil Complaint Counseling Program and Ran 1.6 Laps Around the Earth (65,800km) over the Last 4 Years”**

- *Protected some 170,000 individuals’ rights and interests, and addressed conflicts and wishes involving 110,000 residents through mediation of 234 collective complaints*
- *To concentrate capabilities on legislating a mediation of collective complaints law to resolve social conflicts*

(20 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) has made 329 visits across the nation where citizens ask for help for the on-site civil complaint counseling program and drove 65,800km, a distance equivalent to run 1.6 laps around the earth, over the last four years. It also has protected some 170,000 individuals’ rights and interests that had been violated by resolving 234 collective civil complaints that had been pending in the respective localities for years.

These are the achievements the ACRC has made after carrying out reform for anti-corruption and justice as the supervisor of the government’s anti-corruption efforts, and playing its role as the national ombudsman that prevents citizens’ rights and interests from being violated by unlawful or unfair dispositions of public administrative agencies as well as unreasonable laws and institutions while sharing the people’s joys and sorrows.

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) has pursued field-centered civil complaint resolution and proactive public administration in line with the Moon Jae-in government's key political philosophy of "the government of the people" to process 68,000 civil grievances and resolve 9,298 civil appeals over the last four years.

- ※ ACRC delivered corrective recommendations or opinions on a total of 2,204 unlawful or unfair dispositions from May '17 to April '21  
: (May '17~) 221 cases → ('18) 448 cases → ('19) 633 cases → ('20) 726 cases  
→ (~April '21) 176 cases

The ACRC has concentrated its capabilities on resolving collective civil complaints that are hard to be resolved in a smooth manner therefore can cause social conflicts and make the society less inclusive by resolving 234 collective complaints, including the issues regarding the ownership of the land within the Civilian Control Zone in Haeon Township of Yanggu County, the residential and environmental improvement of the village of people with Hansen's disease in Gyeongju City, the conflict over the building of a treatment plant for livestock wastewater in Eumseong County, the resumption of ferry operations between Gunsan City and Bian Island through mediation to address long-standing wishes of some 110,000 local residents.

Residents in Icheon City who lived near a treatment plant for livestock wastewater that Eumseong County was planning to build filed a complaint objecting the construction of the facility. The ACRC mediated to have petitioners, Eumseong County and Icheon City agree on a deal to minimize damage following the building of the plant, and develop and implement eco-friendly construction and landscaping plans. (November 2020)

Although Korea has the world's highest Internet penetration rate and an online system to file a civil complaint, there are people who still find it difficult to visit administrative agencies and submit a grievance. For these

citizens, the Commission has made 329 visits for the on-site complaint counseling program to provide consulting services on around 8,000 cases and resolve some 4,000 cases among them in order to protect the rights and interests of vulnerable local communities and people.

A petitioner who had lived in an LH public housing unit for a month after sleeping in the street, and was at an advanced age (born in 1948) and with limited mobility (the liver could function only around 30% compared to normal people) was finding hard to make a living. As the individual was announced not to be qualified for the Basic Livelihood Security Program due to the properties of the person's family members who had not been in contact with the petitioner for years, the individual asked for the reexamination of the application and provision of food such as side dishes. The ACRC had City A to provide the petitioner with the benefits of the security program along with other supports such as the emergency livelihood allowance, medical allowance, etc. (August 2020)

Apart from the existing areas where civil complaints were resolved, the ACRC also introduced or enhanced ombudsman functions in the police, national defense, business, and finance sectors to take the initiative in addressing grievances of citizens, military personnel, small and medium-sized enterprises, and micro business owners who are desperately in need but tend to be left behind.

(A case of resolving a civil complaint in the finance sector) The ACRC delivered a corrective recommendation to the Financial Supervisory Service to reexamine whether each policyholder of a group insurance had agreed on buying the plan as the Commission found it was unreasonable for the FSS to close a consumer complaint about the conclusion of a group insurance contract without individuals' consent before the Service investigating the case. (April 2020)

The ACRC Vice-Chairperson Lee Junghee said "we will not be satisfied with the achievements we have made so far in protecting people's rights and

interests, but take care of grievances of the vulnerable who are facing challenges due to COVID-19 by strengthening communication activities with the field, and exert all of our capabilities to encourage the National Assembly legislate a mediation of collective complaints law, which will serve as the institutional framework for specialized mediation in addressing collective civil complaints.”



## **ACRC, “Usage of Online Administrative Appeals Increased for 4 Consecutive Years, Allowing Better Access to Administrative Appeals”**

- *Expanded the support with a representative for the appeals procedures for socially vulnerable people for free of charge*
- *Introduced Indirect Compulsion System in which an administrative agency that does not comply with the adjudication in an administrative appeal may face a monetary compensation*
- *Resolved long-standing wishes and business grievances, including building of Osaek cable car in Mt. Seorak and disposition to suspend operations of Hyundai Steel, by accepting 10,538 cases*

(24 May 2021, ACRC)

The usage of Online Administrative Appeals involving 70 Administrative Appeals Commissions across the country has increased for the four consecutive years, demonstrating improved citizens' access to administrative appeals. The ACRC also has processed 95,189 administrative appeals and accepted 10,538 cases in the last four years.

It introduced not only the Public Representative System where a representative was assigned to support with appeal procedures free of charge for socially vulnerable populations, but also the Indirect Compulsion System in which an administrative agency that does not comply with the adjudication in an administrative appeal faces a monetary compensation.

The Central Administrative Appeals Commission (CAAC) of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) released its achievements of protecting people's rights and interests from unlawful or unfair dispositions of public administrative agencies for the past four years since the Moon administration took office.

The ACRC has protected people's rights and interests that had been violated by unlawful or unfair dispositions of administrative agencies in 10,538 cases over the last four years.

In particular, it accepted the claim to withdraw the notification of the environmental impact assessment on the construction project of Osaek cable car in Mt. Seorak, leading to the resumption of the project that local residents and visitors had wished for a long time.

The Commission also accepted after in-depth deliberation over the withdrawal of the disposition to suspend operations of Hyundai Steel that could have resulted in 800 billion won of losses in the company's revenue, preventing the business loss and contributing to vitalizing the national economy.

The ACRC has implemented the Indirect Compulsion System where an administrative agency that does not comply with the adjudication in an administrative appeal may face a monetary compensation since October 2017 to increase the effectiveness of the system to protect people's rights and interests.

The Commission also has implemented the Public Representative System where a representative was assigned to support with appeal procedures free of charge when a claimant does not have enough capacity to appoint a representative as well as the Mediation System that minimizes conflicts through a settlement between the two parties since November 2018 to address the vulnerabilities of the administrative appeals system.

Thanks to these efforts on top of the Commission's drive to engage 70 Administrative Appeals Commissions across the nation in Online Administrative Appeals, the usage rates of the system rose for the last four consecutive years from 28.3% in 2016 to 39.7% in 2020, improving the people's access to administrative appeals.

With the online system, citizens can easily submit an administrative appeal whenever and from wherever and see the progress of the case and the adjudication.

Min Seong-sim, Chief of the ACRC's Administrative Appeals Bureau stated "we will further increase access to Online Administrative Appeals so that citizens can find it easy to use the system that is faster and more affordable to proceed than lawsuits."

Chief Min then added "we will continue to improve on the vulnerabilities in the system and advance it to make sure the administrative appeals system can be reliable and helpful to the people."

## How Has ACRC Improved on Inconveniences in Everyday Life over the Last 4 Years?

*Addressed inconvenience and unfairness for citizens identified in 235 cases by ▲developing measures to address fine dust and ▲improving working environment of package delivery workers, etc. through civil complaint analysis and collection of people's opinions*

(25 May 2021, ACRC)

The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (Chairperson Jeon Hyun-Heui, ACRC) released key cases where voices of the people who called for improvement on inconvenience and unfairness in everyday life have resulted in concrete policy improvements over the last four years.

The ACRC operates e-People, Government Call Center (110), People's Idea Box, a platform for citizens to engage in policies, and the Complaints Analysis System. It analyses civil complaints submitted via various channels and collects citizens' opinions to recommend ways of improving institutions to relevant government agencies so that the people can feel the benefits of the change.

With this process, the ACRC has delivered some 230 institutional improvements over the last four years, and the following is some of the key cases.

## **#1. Addressing fine dust with people's ideas** (June 2019)

As fine dust emerged as a major social issue in 2019, the Commission analyzed 14,649 civil complaints received via e-People, local community channels, etc. and identified tasks for institutional improvement.

The ACRC then developed 10 measures to address fine dust issues, including protection of vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly, scarp of old diesel cars in advance and the enhancement of eco-friendly vehicles adoption policies, expansion of the scope of whistleblowing for vehicles and vessels causing fine dust emissions, among others.

## **#2. Making cancelation of content subscription services as easy as the purchase** (May 2020)

Music and video subscription services significantly grew as people stay home with social distancing measures imposed due to the spread of COVID-19. However, an increasing number of consumers have experienced inconvenience as some of the services have complex cancelation processes and fail to inform users on terms and conditions of automatic payments.

The Commission, therefore, asked the people for ways to improve on the issue on People's Idea Box. As a result, it was able to develop measures to prevent users of content subscription services from losses by displaying the subscription and cancelation buttons on the same page and allowing users to choose from different ways of obtaining a refund when canceling the services, which reflected the voices of the people.

### **#3. Reflecting the voices of the people in improving working environment for package delivery workers** (January 2021)

As the deaths of package delivery workers from overwork have become a major issue, the ACRC examined improvement ways through civil complaint analysis (352 cases), opinion collection via People's Idea Box (1,628 users), discussions with delivery workers (2 sessions) and on-site visits (2 visits).

As a result, the Commission came up with some 20 measures for policy improvement, including recognition of deaths from overwork as a serious accident and deletion of exceptions in applying for the workers' compensation, and proposed the policy measures to the Ministry of Employment and Labor, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, and the Fair Trade Commission.

The Chief of ACRC's Institutional Improvement Bureau said "listening to the real voices of the people who experience and feel issues firsthand should be the priority to implement effective policies. We will continue to analyze civil complaints and collect people's opinions, among others, that more people can feel the benefits of institutional improvements."