

**The person who should resign is not Standing Commissioners but  
Chairperson, Mr. Byungchul Hyun!  
We are calling for his resignation!**

Yesterday, Standing Commissioner, Mr. Namyong Yoo and Ms. Kyungran Moon announced that they have resigned from the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (hereafter: NHRCK). According to them, they recognized that the Commission has been barely limping along and this led to the Commission to wither away since the current Chairperson took office.

The Chairman who was appointed last year has been criticized by human rights activists and NGOs due to his lack of experiences, insights, and sensitivity regarding human rights. Therefore, they have insisted that the Chairperson must resign from the Commission. They also claimed that the Chairperson has been managing the Commission in an undemocratic way that ignores the Commission procedure and the operation of the Commission was not based on consensus among other Commissioners. We think all of these were intended not to go against the President who nominated him. Furthermore, pro-government and non-standing Commissioners, Mr. Taehoon Kim and Ms. Yunhee Choi, proposed a draft amendment to the NHRCK's managerial regulations. The essence of this revision is that Chairperson can bring the case to the Commission without the resolution of the Standing Commissioners Committee which consists of one Chairperson and three Standing Commissioners. The intention of this revision is to reduce the authority of Standing Commissioners who have played an important role in producing many meaningful decision-makings for human rights. On the other hand, this revision is against the basic idea of the Commission as a polycracy institution since it will lead to strengthening the Chairperson's authority.

The reason why Chairperson managed the Commission in an undemocratic way was not to challenge the policies made by the President who has appointed him. However, since the main role of the Commission is to protect and promote human rights, it is inevitable for the Commission to challenge and criticize the police of the Government. Nevertheless, the Chairperson has not tried to make decisions which are against state policies. Here are the notorious examples such as investigations of civilians, unreasonable prosecution of a MBC TV program (PD Notebook) and a government lawsuit against an NGO leader, Mr. Won-Soon Park. Indeed, the Chairperson has led the Commission to deal with the cases which are not against the governmental policies.

All of these problems was caused by the Government which appointed an inappropriate person as a Chairperson and has threaten the independence of the Commission.

The only way to solve all of these problems is the resignation of the Chairperson. We can no longer tolerate the damage of the Commission's independence and the retreat of human rights in Korea. Furthermore, it is necessary to establish well-organized procedure for the appointment of Commissioners, which secure that more qualified persons can be appointed as Commissioners. Therefore, the revision of the NHRCK Act is needed to reform selection

processes which secure democratic and active participation of civil society.

We, human rights activists, will make every effort not only to make the Chairperson Hyun resign from his post but also revise the NHRCK act for the transparent and democratic appointment procedure.

2 November 2010

"NGO's Collaborative Action to put the National Human Rights Commission of Korea in its place" (established in 2009 to deal with the crisis of the NHRCK's independence)