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REPUBLIC OF KOREA
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

MUN/185/05

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and has the honour to provide the information requested in the latter's note DAW/2005/02 of 31 March 2005. The requested information is attached.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women/Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

20 May 2005
New York



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VISION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
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Violence against Women

1. Legislation

The legal foundation for the elimination of violence against women was laid in January 1994 with the enactment of the Act on the Punishment of Sexual Violence and Protection of Victims (Sexual Violence Act) followed by the Special Act on the Punishment of Domestic Violence and the Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims (Domestic Violence Acts) in December 1997.

These two laws have been amended to improve measures to address violence against women and to protect victims. For example, with the amendment of the Sexual Violence Act in 2003, the use of video equipment in interviews with victims became possible when determined necessary by the court.

In addition, in 2004, the Act on the Prevention of Prostitution and Protection of Victims Thereof and the Act on the Punishment of Procuring Prostitution and Associated Acts (Prostitution Acts) were enacted, which together constitute legal grounds to punish perpetrators of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual predation or those who arrange prostitution.

The Gender Discrimination Prevention and Relief Act prohibits sexual harassment and stipulates the obligation of employers, in the public and private sector, to take preventive measures against harassment in the workplace.

As of May 2005, an amendment of the Domestic Violence Acts to formally introduce punishment for marital rape, which has been sought by the government and women's organizations for several years, is being planned by the ruling party.

2. Systems, Programmes, and Policies

There has also been gradual progress in terms of systems, programmes, and policies in the field of violence against women. For example, Public Prosecutor Responsible for Domestic Violence System was introduced in 1999 and Public Prosecutor Responsible for Gender-Based Violence System was instituted at the nationwide level in 2004. Most of all, the establishment of the Ministry of Gender Equality in 2001 added impetus to efforts to offer protection to victims of violence as well as to develop policies to prevent violence against women.

The Comprehensive Action Plan to Eliminate Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence, which has been enforced since 2002, outlines seven critical areas in efforts to stem violence against women, including police intervention, counseling, prevention education and awareness-raising. In particular, *hotline 1366*, a hotline for assisting and advising victims of violence set up in 2001 is accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Interpretation services are available to non-Korean victims of trafficking or sexual violence who are in need of protection.

Sexual violence against minors has been on the rise in recent years, which is a great concern to the government. In 2004, a center for child/adolescent victims of sexual violence which provides counseling and therapy was established as a first step to dealing with this troubling trend. In terms of judicial procedures, the 2003 Amendment of the Sexual Violence Act put in place measures to better protect the

privacy and ensure the safety of victims of sexual violence with special needs, such as those under 13 and those with disabilities, during investigations or trials.

For the protection of victims of domestic violence, 182 counseling centers are in operation as of December 2004, 66 of which are funded by the government, along with 39 shelters for battered women. For victims of sexual violence, 95 counseling centers are in operation, 63 of which receive financial aid from the government, along with 12 shelters.

In the Republic of Korea, prostitution is now widely recognized as a crime which often involves the use of force or coercion by a third party who arranges prostitution and reaps its illegal financial gains. In this context, measures are being taken to identify and penalize acts of violence against women related to prostitution. In June 2003, the Task Force for the Elimination of Prostitution was established under the Office of the Prime Minister and a Comprehensive Action Plan to Prevent Prostitution was drawn up in March 2004. Since September 2004, the abovementioned Prostitution Acts are being implemented.

3. Efforts to enhance the implementation of laws and policies on violence against women

To enhance the implementation of relevant laws and policies, the government has issued various guidelines and manuals on investigations of violence against women and organized seminars and training workshops. Most recently, manuals on domestic and sexual violence investigations, guidelines on sexual violence cases involving children under the age of thirteen and disabled victims and a book on investigations of children victims of sexual violence were issued in 2004.

Seminars or symposiums held on violence against woman include: seminars on current problems and possible improvements in implementing laws related to domestic violence (1999); seminars on domestic violence and probation (2002 and 2004); a symposium on the eradication of violence against women (2002); and a seminar on child-sensitive investigation procedure for children victims of sexual violence (2004); Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of International Trafficking (2003 and 2004).

A training course on crimes against women for police officers and investigators was launched in October 2001, and a lecture course was created in the Judicial Research and Training Center and the Legal Research and Training Institute to help newly recruited public prosecutors with sexual violence investigation techniques so as to prevent future problems or violations of victims' rights resulting from a lack of human rights perspectives.