

Citizens' Charter for a Transparent Society

Korean society has borne enormous political, economic and social costs incurred from multiple forms of corruption, from the large-scale illegal political fundraising, collusion between businesspeople and politicians, and fraudulent corporate accounting to the petty illegal gratuities paid day to day. In addition, cronyism based on school or regional affiliations and other entrenched corrupt practices have hindered the development of Korea into a mature and advanced society in which competition is based on fairness and strict adherence to law.

Corruption is now holding Korean society back from its advance into the future. The doors of a brighter future will not be opened for the nation if Koreans are unable to rid themselves of chronic corruption. However, a clean break from past practices requires active participation throughout society and widespread implementation of reforms so that the deeply embedded culture of corruption is eradicated.

We, as Koreans, have achieved remarkable economic development and a proud legacy of democratic progress, but we can no longer overlook the daunting issue of corruption. Therefore, we shall put into practice the following pledges to pave the way for a new round of progress by building a society that is clean and transparent:

We believe that abiding by the law and principles is the best way to prevent corruption, and we shall strive to do so at all times and in all circumstances.

We shall not tolerate any corruption, no matter how petty, and shall not seek benefits for ourselves or for others by relying on fraudulent methods or means.

We shall make decisions and act according to rational and fair criteria rather than basing our actions and decisions on regional, academic or kinship ties. Also, we shall spearhead the anti-corruption drive in our everyday lives by neither giving nor accepting any kind of illegal gratuities or contributions that could be construed as a form of corruption.

We shall not engage in tax evasion, illegal transactions, money laundering and other acts that run counter to our economic obligations as citizens.

We shall not engage in unethical practices related to information such as benefiting ourselves and selected other individuals or damaging the public good by illegally leaking, concealing or fabricating information that is private, public or financial.

We shall do our best to protect whistleblowers from being subjected to disadvantages and shall fight against corruption by eradicating and reporting, in the spirit of "doing the right thing," illegal transactions and other illicit practices that are embedded in organizational culture and that have been tacitly allowed and even encouraged until now.

We shall initiate activities for monitoring administrative, legislative, judicial and corporate corruption. Moreover, citizens shall assert the fundamental rights provided to them in a democratic society such as the right to vote and the right to request public information in order to create a more transparent society.

We believe that corruption can be defeated by the use of our collective strength, and therefore, we shall voluntarily work with other people, agencies and organizations that are striving to build a more transparent society.

We shall focus on educating youth, who represent the future of our society, on the evils of corruption and the importance of integrity. Various methods such as public service messages, press reports and public campaigns shall be employed to fight against corruption.

We shall practice this Citizens' Charter, for we recognize that monitoring and overcoming corruption are necessary for us to achieve stability in and sustainable development of our politics, economy and society and for our society to join the ranks of the world's most advanced.

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