



Special Article - Changes to policy for overseas Koreans in 2025

Current Issues & Topics - Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visits U.S. for pre-convention inspection; travels to LA and Houston before arriving in Atlanta

Current Issues & Topics - Kim Ki-moon, chairman of Korea Federation of SMEs, '23rd World Business Congress will be first year of building Global Korean Economic Zone'

Policy in Focus - 'We need to compile and educate people on overseas Korean independence movement history to improve domestic awareness'



Sakhalin compatriots return to Korea permanently



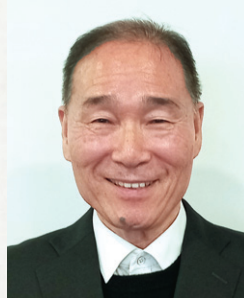
Now is time to empower fledgling OKA

Currently in February 2025, there are more than 7 million overseas Koreans living in 181 countries around the world. This is 10 percent of the 70 million Koreans in North and South Korea. That's more than the combined population of Busan and Daegu. This is more than just demographics. Who are our overseas compatriots? Asking who they are is an awakening to our recent and modern history. At the same time, it provides insights into the present and future of global Korea.

Despite this, our society's understanding of overseas compatriots is low. Even among our leaders, in every section, there is a shallow perception, and in the media, it is difficult to find in-depth coverage. In many cases, they are simply understood as people who left Korea in the past. This is a regressive perception formed during a time of struggling national fortunes, but Korea is now a country that is forging its own era across the globe. The Korean diaspora is an invaluable asset that will contribute to our country's continued development, whether it's in the face of a declining population, the globalization of the next generation or the enhancement of our economic and cultural strength. In short, now is the time for a national strategy to share and realize the future value of overseas Koreans.

The Overseas Koreans Agency is a government agency that was created in response to this need of the hour. It was born in June 2023; it is only 20 months old and still a newborn OKA. The OKA has a big mission. First, it must mobilize the capabilities of the 7 million overseas Koreans to continue to develop the strength and capabilities of the Korean global community. This, of course, must be accompanied by the realization of future values that will enable the Korean diaspora and Korea to grow together. If we translate these goals into concrete tasks, there is a lot of work to be done. It also requires the elaboration of policies and strategies to wisely pursue them.

The work of the OKA is multilayered and complex. The issues and measures are closely linked to the various problems of the overseas Korean community, and cooperation with multiple ministries is essential. Just counting the main ministries involved, we have the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Employment



Dr. Park In-gi,
professor emeritus at Kyungin
University, chair of OKA Policy
Advisory Board

and Labor, the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. Without smooth collaboration with these ministries, it is difficult to expect substantial results.

In last year's national audit, the National Assembly also emphasized the need to centralize overseas Korean affairs under the OKA. In reality, however, it is questionable whether other departments are listening to what the OKA has to say. For policies to be effective, they must go

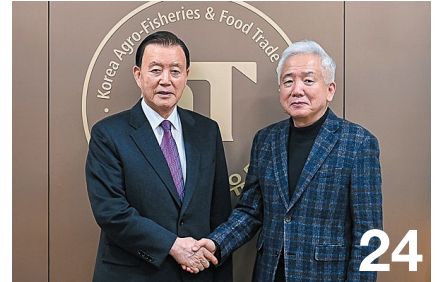
beyond nominal cooperation and be accompanied by actual policy coordination and active support.

For example, one of the current initiatives that the OKA is focusing on is supporting Korean language education for returning overseas compatriots to help them integrate into society. However, this requires close policy consultation with the Ministry of Education. It also requires close communication with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety, which will ultimately implement the policy. In addition, the operational issues relating to more than 1,500 Korean language schools scattered around the world cannot be resolved smoothly without close coordination with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

Currently, the OKA has a weak institutional foundation. It is fundamentally understaffed and underfunded. This is because it is a young organization. Just as a newborn baby needs the care and support of their family, the newborn OKA needs the mutual cooperation and good governance of related ministries. Of course, the support of overseas Koreans and the Korean public is essential.

For this to happen, the right perception of overseas Koreans must be prioritized. We need a warmer view of them, not just as migrants, but as partners who can grow with Korea. And there must be responsible policy development to support this. We look forward to seeing the new OKA grow strongly with the understanding of the public and the cooperation of relevant ministries, as well as the new future for the Korean community in Korea and around the world. 





- 02 Opening the Window** Now is time to empower fledgling OKA
 Dr. Park In-gi, professor emeritus at Kyungin University, chair of OKA Policy Advisory Board
- 04 Special Article** Changes to policy for overseas Koreans in 2025
 'We will expand overall capacity of global Korean community'
 'Improve legal and institutional framework to establish system for strengthening overseas Korean policies'
 'Strengthen education to foster stronger sense of overseas Korean identity'
 'Strengthening protection and support for compatriots worthy of Korea's national standing'
 'Establishing Korean networks by region, field, generation'
 'Expanding one-stop digital integrated civil services for convenient compatriot lifestyle'
- 10 Current Issues & Topics** Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visits U.S. for pre-convention inspection; travels to LA and Houston before arriving in Atlanta
 Kim Ki-moon, chairman of Korea Federation of SMEs, '23rd World Business Congress will be first year of building Global Korean Economic Zone'
- 14 Policy in Focus** 'We need to compile and educate people on overseas Korean independence movement history to improve domestic awareness'
- 16 Special Seat** Hangeul school children's choir to perform at Carnegie Hall for first time
- 18 Into the News** OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visits Australian compatriots for 'NextGen Economic Seminar'
 'In their homeland's embrace after 80 years': 100 Sakhalin compatriots return to Korea permanently
 Korea achieves second place overall at Asian Winter Games, best result ever
 Cheongchodang volunteer group wins gold medal
 Kim Hyun-tae appointed new president of Federation of Korean Associations in Japan
 Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center launches KrossOverR for supporting promotion of overseas Koreans
 Issuance of military registration certificates for overseas Koreans to become faster by more than a week
- 24 OKA News** OKA once again calls for participation in 23rd World Korean Business Convention
- 25 Column** 'We must think beyond Korean Peninsula to solve population problem'
 Myung Seung-hwan, professor of public administration at Inha University (former president of the Korean Association for Policy Studies)
- 26 OKA Announcements** Call for companies to participate in 2025 Overseas Korean Companies Youth Internship Program

Publisher: Lee Sang-deok
Publishing Company: Overseas Koreans Agency
Address: 34-36th Floor, Booyoung Songdo Tower, 241, Incheon Tower-daero, Yeonsu-gu, Incheon, Korea (22009)
Tel: +82-2-6747-0404, www.oka.go.kr
Instagram: @overseas_koreans_agency
Facebook: facebook.com/oka202365
YouTube: @OKAKOREA
Designed and edited by: Overseas Koreans Agency **Production:** Yonhap News Agency

The Overseas Koreans Agency is an external agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that conducts various policies and projects to support the rights and interests of the overseas Koreans around the world and their integration into mainstream society in their countries of residence.

This magazine can also be viewed at <http://webzine.korean.net>

'We will expand overall capacity of global Korean community'

OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk unveils major work plan for 2025

The Overseas Koreans Agency announced its 2025 work plan on Feb. 11, vowing to strive for a greater Korea by expanding the collective capabilities of the global Korean community.

At a briefing for the new year held at the Overseas Korean Welcome Center in Songdo, Incheon, OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk presented five key tasks for the year: ▲ Strengthening overseas Korean identity, ▲ Enhancing protection and support for overseas Koreans, ▲ Establishing a system for strengthening overseas Korean policies, ▲ Revitalizing Korean networks and ▲ Convenient services for overseas Koreans.

"As the Korean Wave, including K-culture, spreads across the globe, it is the purpose and mission of the OKA to expand the future growth engine of Korea by partnering with the Korean diaspora, which is growing economically and rising in political stature around the world," Lee said. To this end, he said, it is important to improve domestic awareness of overseas Koreans, and to strengthen exchanges and cooperation between the diaspora and their homeland to create a win-win situation.

In particular, the OKA will conduct customized support policies based on a survey of the 860,000 returnees who have been in the blind spot of overseas Korean support and stateless Koryo people who have not even been audited since 2007.


The OKA plans to first revise the Basic Act on Overseas Koreans to align the name and functions of its affiliated organization, the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center, with the purpose of its establishment and publish the "Status of Overseas Koreans in 2025" every other year to lay the foundation for policies and projects. To foster the next generation's identity, the budget to support the operation of Korean language schools has been set at 18.6 billion won, a 32 percent increase from 2023, and the number of participants in the Next Generation Compatriots Home Country Invitational Training has increased from 2,100 last year to 2,600 this year. We will also expand practical support for the vulnerable. We will actively support the permanent return of Sakhalin compatriots and their children and help them stabilize in



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk gives a briefing for the new year on Feb. 11.

their homeland.

To support compatriots living in Korea, we will collaborate with local governments in Korea to support customized projects that take into account regional characteristics. Currently, there are 860,000 Koreans, including Joseonjok and Koryo people, who have returned to Korea, and as the number continues to grow, the OKA will promote "customized adaptation education programs" for youth, adults and the elderly to help them become members of Korean society. This year is the first time since its inception that the OKA has allocated a project budget to support returning Koreans. In addition, to improve awareness among Koreans, the OKA has decided to recognize the contributions of overseas Koreans to their home countries by selecting an Overseas Korean of the Month, starting this year.

This year, the OKA will organize the Future Leaders' Conference in May and the World Korean Association Conference in October to strengthen ties with the homeland. In April, the World Korean Business Convention will be held in Atlanta, the U.S., to help Korean companies expand overseas and build a global Korean economic network. Additionally, an online platform called Hansang Net will provide business matching opportunities all year round for Korean companies seeking to expand overseas. 

‘Improve legal and institutional framework to establish system for strengthening overseas Korean policies’

Priority action to revitalize pan-governmental collaboration and collect opinions from compatriot communities

Improve legal and institutional frameworks

The key actions to establish a system for improving overseas Korean policies are to strengthen the legal and institutional framework and to activate intergovernmental collaborations and collect opinions from the Korean compatriot community.

To strengthen the legal and institutional foundation, the first step is to revise the Basic Law on Overseas Koreans. The main focus has been set as “Policy for supporting the settlement of returned overseas Koreans in Korea,” including Sakhalin compatriots. It also stipulates the responsibilities of local governments for the smooth implementation of overseas Korean policies. The OKA plans to improve the system for establishing and evaluating the implementation plan for overseas Korean policies.

In addition, the OKA plans to change the name of the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center and adjust its functions. In line with the purpose of establishing the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center, we will change the name of the organization to the Institute for Compatriot Exchange and adjust the scope of its activities, including public relations projects. Lastly, the government plans to establish a system to follow up on grants to overseas Korean organizations.

The second way to strengthen the legal and institutional foundation is to establish a pan-governmental “Overseas Korean Policy Implementation Plan.” The first Basic Plan for Overseas Korean Policy (2024-2028) was established on Jan. 30, 2024, and on Sept. 9 of the same year, the “2024 Overseas Korean Policy Implementation Plan” was established. This year, we plan to establish the “2025 Overseas Korean Policy Implementation Plan,” which is in line with the first basic plan.

Revitalizing intergovernmental collaboration and collecting opinions from compatriot community

To revitalize intergovernmental collaborations and collect opinions from the compatriot community, first, the OKA will hold compatriot meetings on the occasion of major events, such as the overseas tours of the president and prime minister.

Second, the Overseas Koreans Policy Committee will be internalized. Four subcommittees, including the Subcommittee on Current Laws and Systems, the Subcommittee on Next Generation



Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yeol (C) presides over the 24th meeting of the Overseas Koreans Policy Committee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jongno, Seoul, South Korea, on Feb. 11.

Diaspora and Education, the Subcommittee on Historical and Special Diaspora, and the Subcommittee on Compatriot Services will be activated to quickly identify and respond to issues in each area of overseas Korean policy at the pan-governmental level. To this end, we plan to synthesize the results of the subcommittee meetings and link them to higher-level meetings at the ministerial and vice-ministerial levels (Overseas Korean Policy Committee and Working Committee) to internalize the policy promotion system.

The third is to improve and internalize statistics on the status of overseas Koreans. To this end, we will research and publish the “Status of Overseas Koreans in 2025,” which is the status of overseas Koreans by country of residence. We also plan to prepare statistics on compatriots residing in Korea in cooperation with relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, and local governments.

The fourth is to revitalize policy research to support the resolution of current issues in the Korean diaspora. To this end, we will conduct customized policy research by identifying and surveying the current situation of overseas Koreans in the Americas, Europe, Oceania, Asia, and the Russian Federation and CIS. We will also study ways to respond to current issues in each area, such as generational changes in the Korean community and the increase in the number of overseas compatriots staying in Korea, including naturalized returning Koreans. In addition, the OKA will organize the “Academic Forum on Overseas Korean Policy in 2025” and an academic seminar involving overseas Koreans and private sector experts.

‘Strengthen education to foster stronger sense of overseas Korean identity’

Key action item is internalization of projects to support next generation of overseas Koreans

Strengthening education for overseas Koreans

The second of the organization’s five key priorities for the year is to foster a stronger sense of the overseas Korean identity. The first priority action task for achieving this is to improve overseas Korean education. To accomplish this, the Overseas Koreans Agency plans to first support the operation of Korean language schools and strengthen them internally to increase the number of students and teachers participating in Korean language, history and culture education for the next generation of Koreans. The budget for supporting the operation of Korean language schools has been set at 18.6 billion won, up 4.5 billion won (32 percent) from 14.1 billion won in 2023.

In addition, to strengthen the capacity of teachers at Hangeul schools, we plan to enhance their professionalism through on-site training, as well as support for obtaining degrees and completing teacher training programs. To this end, we will provide customized teaching methods that take into account differences in competencies by region and level.

In addition, we will improve the convenience of the Study Korean website, an online education platform for Korean language schools, by improving functions and expanding content. We also plan to diversify educational content by developing and distributing various educational materials tailored to learners’ characteristics and learning purposes, such as region and age.

In particular, we are promoting the construction of the Overseas Korean Education and Culture Center, an educational, cultural and training facility for overseas Koreans. To be built on Seoul National University’s Siheung Campus, the center will have five floors above ground and one basement floor with a total area of 7,063 square meters, and aims to provide education on the history of migration and enhance understanding of overseas Koreans by operating exhibition halls and providing experiential learning spaces. To effectively implement this, the center will collect overseas Korean archival materials and build a digital archive.

Consolidating projects for supporting next-generation compatriots

In order to internally strengthen the project to support the next generation of Koreans, the OKA will, among other things, expand



The Overseas Korean Education and Culture Center, which will be completed on Seoul National University’s Siheung Campus in 2026

the number of Korean youth and university students invited to their home country. The number of invitations will increase from 2,100 people and eight training sessions last year to 2,600 people and 10 training sessions this year.

We will also improve the promotion and system of invitational scholarship programs. This year, we plan to select 100 new talented students who will contribute to the overseas Korean community and their home countries and support them in acquiring degrees. In addition, we will promote follow-up and networking activities, such as activating exchanges among current students, exchanging graduates living in Korea and abroad, and building a talent database.

In particular, the tentatively named Global Next Generation Korean Committee will be established. In order to create policies that respond to changes in the Korean community, such as generational changes, a new committee of next-generation Koreans representing various regions and areas will be formed from next-generation leaders, representatives of adoptive Korean organizations, and related experts to discuss overseas Korean policy proposals, agenda selection and operational measures.

In addition, a youth internship program for overseas Koreans will be implemented. The program aims to foster global talent by giving overseas Koreans the opportunity to participate in Korean national affairs. It will support internships (six months) for overseas Koreans aged 20 to 34 at overseas diplomatic missions. 

‘Strengthening protection and support for compatriots worthy of Korea’s national standing’

Enhancing status of compatriots in their countries of residence and supporting vulnerable compatriots at home and abroad

The third of the five key initiatives for 2025 is to strengthen the protection and support of compatriots in line with national dignity. The priority actions for this are as follows.

Advancing status of overseas Koreans in their countries of residence

To improve the status of overseas Koreans in their countries of residence, the Overseas Koreans Agency will support the development of rights and interests tailored to local conditions. We will review and support the impact of changes in U.S. immigration policy on the Korean diaspora and prepare measures to support the legal residency status for Koryo people who are considered stateless. We will also promote the improvement of the dual citizenship system in accordance with the changing times, such as lowering the age for dual citizenship. Last year, the OKA completed a research study to analyze the impact of lowering the age for overseas Koreans to hold multiple citizenships.

In particular, we will strengthen the promotion of nationality systems, such as multiple citizenship, through collaboration with relevant organizations to improve understanding of the multiple citizenship system. To this end, the Traveling Integrated Civil Service System will directly visit overseas Koreans in their countries of residence to explain and counsel them on the nationality and military service systems. In addition, various measures will be taken to establish a network of overseas adopted Korean citizens and to promote their rights and interests.

Support for vulnerable compatriots at home and abroad

First, we support the permanent return, resettlement and stabilization of Sakhalin compatriots. The Sakhalin Compatriots Act has been amended to expand the scope of accompanying family members and stabilize the permanent return of Sakhalin compatriots to Korea. For the first time, a survey on the living conditions of permanently returned Sakhalin Koreans will be conducted.

We will also diversify support for the rights and interests of Koryo compatriots. We will also conduct a survey of stateless Koryo people, which has not been conducted since 2007. Support policies will be tailored to the needs of local Koryo communities. In



Byun Chul-hwan, deputy director general of the Korean Overseas Korean Affairs Office, welcomes Sakhalin compatriots who returned to Korea after 80 years through Donghae Port in Gangwon Province on Feb. 9.

accordance with the agreement between the Korean and Uzbek presidents, we will prioritize the construction of a Koryo history museum in Uzbekistan. In addition, we will support the Korean children of women returning to Vietnam, support for Korean communities in crisis abroad and support for vulnerable Koreans living in Korea.

Promoting comprehensive and practical policies to support Korean compatriots in Korea

To support Korean compatriots in Korea, the OKA will:

- ① Develop and operate customized adaptation education programs for Korean compatriots,
- ② Promote resettlement support projects for Korean compatriots by region and local government,
- ③ Conduct a survey of Korean compatriots in Korea,
- ④ Establish a collaborative network of relevant ministries, parliaments, local governments, academia and compatriot organizations, and
- ⑤ Provide convenient services for Korean compatriots’ entry and stay in Korea.

Improving domestic public awareness of overseas Koreans

- To improve public awareness of overseas Koreans, ① Include overseas Korean-related content in domestic textbooks, ② Conduct “traveling education on understanding overseas Koreans,” ③ Establish a communication platform with overseas Koreans, and ④ Select and announce the Overseas Korean of the Month. [창]

‘Establishing Korean networks by region, field, generation’

Contribute to recovery of economic livelihoods through network of overseas Korean businesspeople

Strengthening Korean networks by region, field, generation

To strengthen the Korean network, the first step is to improve overseas Korean exchanges and cooperation. The 2025 World Korean Association Conference, which will be held in October, will be internally strengthened by having leading representative overseas Korean organizations plan and operate the programs. In addition, we will promote the internalization and enhancement of the Overseas Koreans Literary Awards by reorganizing the prize categories, increasing the prize money and holding related invitational events.

Second, we will internalize and systematize support for projects tailored to the overseas Korean community. We will support projects to strengthen overseas Korean exchanges and cooperation in line with the government’s overseas Korean policy. In particular, this year marks the 80th anniversary of Korea’s liberation, the 60th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan, the 120th anniversary of the Korean migration to Mexico, and the 60th anniversary of the Korean migration to Paraguay and Argentina. Therefore, we plan to expand support for projects springing from these events, such as commemorations of regional migration histories. In addition, we aim to strengthen the capacity of the Korean community, prepare for generational change, and increase support for collaborative projects between the new and old generations.

Third, we will strengthen the capacity of next-generation overseas compatriots. The plan is to identify core next-generation Korean organizations in each region and activate a network of regional bases for the 2025 Future Leaders’ Conference, which will be held in Songdo, Incheon, in May with about 70 participants. It will also support the holding of regional next-generation conventions led by next-generation organizations.

Contributing to recovery of economic livelihoods through network of compatriot businesspeople

First, the Overseas Koreans Agency plans to focus all its efforts on successfully hosting the 23rd World Korean Business Convention in Atlanta, the U.S., this coming April. OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk has traveled to the United States for a



A meeting of businessmen and compatriots is held on Feb. 5, for the success of the upcoming World Korean Business Convention 2025 in Atlanta, the U.S.

preliminary inspection, and the plan is to diversify the sales channels of domestic companies by holding the event in Korea and abroad. In addition, we plan to develop business programs that meet the needs of domestic companies and overseas compatriots, such as startup contests.

Second, we will pursue the internalization of business projects at all times. The Overseas Korean Biz News Advisory Group (OK Biz), which is composed of outstanding Korean entrepreneurs, will support business matching and connections between Korean and overseas businesses. It also provides overseas expansion advisory services and business matching opportunities for domestic SMEs through an online platform (Hansang Net).

Third, we will prepare measures to attract overseas Korean businesses to invest in Korea. We will promote the investment of outstanding overseas Korean companies in Korea to revitalize the domestic economy and strengthen exchange cooperation between the homeland and the Korean diaspora. We will also organize a regional and local investment opportunity seminar on the occasion of the 23rd World Korean Business Convention. A study on institutions and policies to encourage overseas Korean businesses to invest in Korea will also be completed in the first half of this year.

Fourth, we will organize internships for Korean youth at overseas Korean companies. Korean youth under the age of 34 will be offered internships at overseas Korean companies. This year, 39 people will be selected: 30 by the OKA and nine by local governments. 장

‘Expanding one-stop digital integrated civil services for convenient compatriot lifestyle’

Making it easier for overseas Koreans to use digital services in Korea

This year, we will provide more convenient civil services for overseas Koreans. Following a pilot run in November last year, the Overseas Korean Authentication Center was recently launched officially and will allow overseas Koreans without a Korean mobile phone to conveniently use e-government services, as well as domestic online services, after verifying their identity through non-face-to-face identification.

Identity verification is one of the biggest complaints of overseas Koreans, which is expected to be dramatically improved through the provision of the authentication center’s services. In addition, overseas Koreans who have difficulty visiting overseas diplomatic missions will be provided with a non-face-to-face video consulate service, and they will be able to use the apostille civil service on their mobile phones.

The Incheon branch of the OKA Unified Civil Service Support Center, which opened last December, will also provide a service for receiving and handling complaints at Incheon International Airport. In addition, we will revise the Enforcement Decree of the Overseas Korean Registration Act to simplify the documents for overseas Korean registration and actively promote it to increase the registration rate of overseas Koreans.

Lastly, people can directly experience improvements in their lives through the OKA’s implementation of its 2025 priorities.

❶ (Domestic Compatriots) Compatriots living and working in Korea can become full-fledged members of our society and receive systematic support.

Compatriots living in Korea can take customized educational programs by age group for each stage of settlement with a focus on strengthening their capabilities. In addition, local governments provide support for residency resources, life skills enhancement, industrial and life safety, and social integration, depending on the characteristics of each region. In addition, support for Korean compatriots from private organizations in Korea will be further strengthened.

❷ (Sakhalin compatriots) Sakhalin compatriots can return to Korea permanently with all their children and settle down happily and safely in Korea without the pain of separation.

Beginning in 2025, all children of Sakhalin compatriots will be able to apply for permanent return, not just one direct relative. In



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk (6th from L) and other participants press the Overseas Korean Authentication Center pilot service launch button at a ceremony to mark its launch at Diplomatic Town in Seocho-gu, Seoul, on Nov. 28, 2024.

addition, a survey on the lives of Sakhalin compatriots who have returned permanently and are settling in Korea and their accompanying families will be conducted for the first time in 2025, which will be reflected in the establishment of effective policies in the future.

❸ (Domestic Businesses) Through the World Korean Business Convention and connections with compatriot businessmen, they will gain confidence in entering overseas markets and developing sales channels, and gain a wide range of export opportunities.

❹ (Overseas Koreans) Compatriots living abroad can now use domestic online services even without a Korean cell phone.

Overseas Koreans without a Korean mobile phone will be able to issue a private electronic signature certificate through the Overseas Korean Authentication Center, a non-face-to-face identity verification system using their e-passport and overseas residence information, without visiting an overseas diplomatic mission. With the certificate, they will be able to use various online services, such as domestic e-government services, finance, health care, education and shopping easily and conveniently without verifying their identity through a Korean cellphone.

❺ (All compatriots) No matter where you are in the world, you can easily access news, policies and K-content from your home country anytime and anywhere. Beginning in 2025, a new platform for communication with overseas Koreans (tentatively named Overseas Koreans TV) will be launched and operated 24 hours a day. Overseas Koreans TV will provide various content related to the government’s policies for overseas Koreans according to their daily schedules.

Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visits U.S. for pre-convention inspection; travels to LA and Houston before arriving in Atlanta

Held meetings with compatriots in various locations to hear their concerns, offered words of support for wildfire recovery

Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visited Atlanta, the host city of the 23rd World Korean Business Convention (WKBC), from Feb. 5-7 for a preliminary inspection to ensure the success of the event.

The convention, which is a venue for Korean small and medium-sized enterprises to enter overseas markets and attract investment, will be held from April 17-20 at the Atlanta Gas South Convention Center.

The event is being held in conjunction with the Korean American Chamber of Commerce USA (Chairman Lee Kyung-chul) and is expected to attract more than 3,000 Korean and overseas Korean businesspeople and 10,000 general visitors.

Lee checked the preparations of the convention center and accommodation facilities, which is where major programs, such as the opening and closing ceremonies, the 400 booths of export counseling and the economic forum, will be held, and inspected the

shuttle bus service, parking and safety management measures.

He also held a meeting with overseas Korean businesspeople in Atlanta to introduce the OKA's vision for building a global Korean economic zone and encouraged the Korean community to participate in the convention.

'Providing opportunities for domestic companies to enter global market'

"This event will provide domestic companies with opportunities to enter the global market and expand their sales channels amidst the rapidly changing external economic environment, especially with the inauguration of the second Trump administration," Lee said at the meeting. "We will also promote domestic investment from Korean businesses that have a significant economic presence in their respective countries of residence. We will strengthen links between overseas Korean businesses and domestic companies and local governments to also contribute to the revitalization of the domestic economy.

"We need to promote investment in Korea from strongly growing global Korean businesses and expand the links between Korean businesses and domestic SMEs. We need to establish policies in a win-win direction between overseas Koreans and Korea, such as promoting the employment of domestic



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk (front row, 3rd from L) takes a commemorative photo after meeting with business leaders on Feb. 5 for the successful hosting of the World Korean Business Convention 2025 in Atlanta, U.S., in April.



OCA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk discusses the current status of wildfire damage and relief efforts with the Korean Association in Los Angeles on Feb. 3.

Korean youth in overseas Korean businesses.”

Ahead of this, on Feb. 3-4, he visited the areas affected by the massive wildfires with the Korean Association of Los Angeles to console the Korean community and discuss ways to support them.

‘We will dispatch overseas staff to LA and other areas’

Lee, who visited the Korean Association of Los Angeles on Feb. 3 to discuss support measures for Korean Americans affected by the wildfires, said, “We will dispatch overseas staff to major areas, including Los Angeles, as soon as possible.”

This year’s budget for the agency is 107.1 billion won, about 400 million won more than last year. Lee plans to efficiently execute the budget to dispatch staff and actively handle the major issues of compatriots in the LA area.

Lee also said the government is “prospectively considering” the issue of lowering the age for multiple citizenship, which the Korean community here has been demanding. However, he said, it is not easy to consult with related organizations, such as the Ministry of Justice, and build a consensus of public opinion.

“The agency is considering directions for lowering the age from the current 65 and is consulting with related organizations, such as the Ministry of Justice,” Lee said. “Related organizations, academia and public opinion are divided for and against, and it is necessary to form a national consensus and make adjustments.”

Regarding the recent deportation of South Koreans who committed felonies under the President Donald Trump administration’s policy of deporting illegal immigrants (undocumented immigrants), he emphasized, “We are receiving reports from the U.S. Embassy and consulates general in each region, and we will continue to seek ways to deal with it with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” On the other hand, he did not speak about South Korean domestic politics,

including the impeachment trial of President Yoon Suk Yeol.

This is Lee’s first trip to the Americas since taking over as the second commissioner of the OKA last year.

“We in Korea are concerned and worried about the damage caused by the LA wildfires,” he said. “Through this visit, the OKA will work closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss the necessary support measures.”

‘When situation in LA stabilizes, we will organize meeting with compatriots’

“I wanted to visit Los Angeles, where the largest number of overseas Koreans live, and greet them in a formal manner, but since the situation here is severe, we will discuss how the OKA can be of help, and when the situation in Los Angeles stabilizes, we plan to hold a meeting with the Korean community here,” Lee added.

His visit is part of a site inspection for the 23rd WKBC, which will be held in April at Atlanta’s Gas South Convention Center. Prior to his visit to Atlanta, Lee met with the presidents of the Korean Association of Los Angeles and the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council to understand the damage caused by the recent wildfires.

He also held a meeting in Houston, a city in the south-central region of the country, to listen to the compatriot community’s concerns and explain the key policies of the OKA. 🇺🇸

Kim Ki-moon, chairman of Korea Federation of SMEs, '23rd World Business Congress will be first year of building Global Korean Economic Zone'



Kim Ki-moon, president of the 23rd World Korean Business Convention (chair of the Korea Federation of SMEs)

The World Korean Business Convention (WKBC) was first held in Seoul in 2002, and since then, it has been hosted by various local governments in Korea. In 2023, the 21st WKBC was held in Anaheim, Orange County, the U.S., and was the first to be held overseas. It was evaluated as the largest and most successful event ever, with the OKA acting as the honorary chair and the Korea Federation of SMEs (KBIZ) acting as the host organization. The WKBC has always been organized by overseas Koreans. This is the first time that a non-overseas Korean chairman has taken the helm of the event, which has attracted attention. We caught up with Kim Ki-moon through a written interview.

Can you explain the background of becoming the host of the 23rd World Korean Business Convention?

As the chair of the Korea Federation of SMEs, I have a lot of experience in the overseas expansion of SMEs, including presidential tours, economic delegations for

SMEs and overseas exhibitions. I was appointed as the chair because I was expected to prepare the event well based on these experiences.

Please tell us how you feel about taking on the role of chair and how you plan to make it a success.

With the declining population and stagnant domestic demand, it is no longer an option but rather compulsory for SMEs to enter overseas markets. I feel a great sense of responsibility to take on this important role. Last year, Korea's exports reached a record high of \$683.7 billion, ranking sixth in the world, with SMEs contributing more than 40 percent of the total. We will do our best to make this competition a success and help SMEs achieve tangible results in overseas expansions. Interest in Hallyu (the Korean wave) globally is a hot issue, and K-food and K-beauty, which are popular in the U.S., are mostly products of SMEs.

In particular, K-food products, such as "frozen kimbap" and "buldak fried noodles" are often sold out of stock in U.S. supermarkets. A global luxury brand is planning to make a jacket with a Hangeul motif and give it as a gift to Korean dignitaries. K-beauty overtook France, a cosmetics powerhouse country, to take the top spot in the U.S. market in the first quarter, with 72 percent of cosmetics exports coming from SMEs.

To ensure the success of the convention, we plan to attract excellent SMEs and buyers with purchasing power. In particular, the central committee is meeting with local governments, agricultural cooperatives and other related organizations to request that promising SMEs participate in the exhibition. We are also planning to organize cultural performances so that overseas Korean businesspeople and local people can check out Hallyu and enjoy it together.

What are the goals of the 23rd WKBC?

The 23rd edition will be the first year of building a Global Korean Economic Zone. The Global Korean Economic Zone is first a global business network centered on overseas Korean entrepreneurs and second a practical network that creates tangible results compared to the existing Korean business network through trade, investment and joint projects. In addition, we plan to discover and select outstanding Korean SME products and develop export markets by utilizing the network of Korean businesspeople, who are local salespeople all over the world. In addition, we plan to create tangible support outcomes by providing business matching opportunities with buyers from large U.S. retailers, such as Walmart and Costco. Atlanta is a hub for building the Global Korean Economic Zone, and we plan to use this event as an opportunity to

세계한인비즈니스대회 대회장

2025. 1. 20(월)

K 중소기업중앙회



재외동포청



Kim Ki-moon (L), chair of the Korea Federation of SMEs, receives a certificate of appointment from Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Sang-duk on Jan. 20 as president of the 23rd World Korean Business Convention in Atlanta, U.S., which will be held this coming April.

solidify cooperation with the United States and the new Trump administration.

KBIZ participated in the 21st World Korean Business Congress as an organizer and set up the KBIZ Pavilion with 60 booths, the most among the 650 booths set up by domestic and foreign companies.

How many entrepreneurs and how many booths will be set up this year?

This year, we plan to expand the KBIZ Pavilion to more than 80 booths and exhibit a selection of competitive SME products. In addition to the KBIZ Pavilion, about 90 booths will be set up by cooperatives and companies, such as agricultural and fishing cooperatives.

At the 21st WKBC, 15 local governments, including Incheon, Jeonbuk and Gyeongnam, participated. How many local governments are participating in this year's convention?

Currently, 15 local governments are planning to set up a total of 204 exhibition booths, and a number of local governors, including the provincial governors of North Gyeongsang Province and North Chungcheong Province, are planning to attend the convention. The number of booths includes South Chungcheong Province's 31, North Gyeongsang Province's 30, Gyeonggi Province's 26, North Jeolla Province's 20, Incheon's 20, South Jeolla Province's 15, Busan's 14, Daegu's 10, North Chungcheong Province's 10 and Gyeonggi Province's seven. Smaller local governments, such as Seongnam, Ansan, Chungju, and Seoul's Gwanak-gu and Gangseo-gu, are planning to set up a total of 21 booths.

I understand that state-level secretaries of commerce are participating in the 23rd WKBC in the United States. How many states do you expect to have commerce secretaries participating from?

We will be running a Government-to-Government Forum (discussing ways to cooperate on trade and investment between two governments), and we plan to have delegations from 11 to 16 U.S. states. The commerce secretaries of Georgia, Alabama, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Arkansas, Nevada, Texas and New Jersey have confirmed their participation,

and we are in contact with four or five more states. It's time to respond to Trump's tariffs. We are looking forward to the opportunity to network and strengthen cooperation with U.S. economic officials.

This year, many small businesses are struggling with the economic crisis caused by the second Trump administration. How do you think you can overcome this?

First of all, we plan to utilize the overseas Korean business network (Hansang Network). In addition to the official diplomatic channels, we need to activate private cooperation channels utilizing the Hansang Network to respond to the America First policy. I believe that the Hansang network can play a big role in helping small and medium-sized enterprises enter the local market, just like the Jewish and Chinese business networks.

Alongside this year's WKBC, I expect the Korean American business community in the U.S. to serve as a bridgehead for networking and cooperation with U.S. state economic officials. We are also trying to diversify our export markets. In the medium to long term, we need to diversify our export markets to Southeast Asia, Europe and the Middle East to ease our dependence on U.S.-China exports. I visited Dubai and Oman for five days from July 7-11 to meet with ministers and businessmen, and they are very interested in Korea and are very active in attracting investment. Even the Vietnam-Korea Investment Cooperation Forum in Vietnam held in December last year had to limit the number of participants because there were too many Vietnamese applicants. As the world's interest in Korean SMEs is strong, we will explore various exchange and cooperation opportunities to diversify our export markets.

‘We need to compile and educate people on overseas Korean independence movement history to improve domestic awareness’

At a forum on overseas Korean policy issues hosted by Incheon National University (President Park Jong-tae), it was suggested that the history of the independence activism of overseas Koreans should be compiled and used in educational materials to improve the awareness of domestic Koreans.

“This year, which is the 80th anniversary of Korea’s liberation, should be used as a year to change the perception of overseas Koreans,” Kim Yong-pil, CEO of the Dongpo World Newspaper, said in a presentation on the theme of “Understanding Overseas Koreans and Win-Win Solutions” at the forum held on Incheon National University’s Songdo Campus on Feb. 10.

Kim went on to say that leadership in the overseas Korean community needs to be fostered, and that workshops should be held for Korean diaspora organizations to foster leadership and strengthen their capabilities.

He also drew attention with his suggestion to find win-win projects with local residents.

“Together with local governments in Korea, we should find pathways to understand our compatriots and create win-win projects,” he said, recommending that legal amendments be enacted to allow celebrations on World Korean Day (Oct. 5) in areas where large numbers of compatriots are residents.

The forum was attended by more than 150 participants, including Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Sang-duk, the head of the Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center Kim Young-geun, academics and heads of organizations related to overseas Koreans in Korea.

“We made the decision to cooperate closely with Incheon National University on overseas Korean issues, and today’s forum is the first step and the first fruit,” Lee said. “The OKA’s goal this year is to expand the collective capabilities of the global Korean community, and strengthening the network between overseas Koreans and Korea for mutual development is also the



A lively discussion takes place following a presentation at the Forum on Understanding Overseas Koreans and Policy Issues held at Incheon National University’s Songdo Campus on Feb. 10. (From L to R) Kim Yong-pil, CEO of the Dongpo World Newspaper; Oh Jin-hee, planning and coordination officer of the OKA; Noh Young-don, vice chancellor of Incheon National University; Lee Ki-sung, director of policy at the OKA; Lee Min-ho, Seoul bureau chief of Japan’s One Korea Daily News; and Kim Jae-ki, professor of political science and diplomacy at Chonnam National University.

very reason for the existence of the OKA.

“In the future, as the diaspora grows, various businesses targeting overseas Koreans or overseas Korean studies can be created here in the homeland, and there is a high potential for infinite development. Instead of being centered on the home country, the diaspora and the home country will now be on an equal footing and will join forces to take care of each other globally, just like overseas Chinese and Jewish communities,” he added.

In the first presentation, Oh Jin-hee, the planning and coordination officer of the OKA, presented the major policy achievements since the launch of the agency, including the establishment of a legal and institutional foundation to promote overseas Korean policies, the strengthening of the overseas Korean identity, support for vulnerable compatriots at home and abroad, support for the recovery of economic livelihoods through the network of overseas Korean businessmen and the establishment of an integrated civil service platform.

“As a major task this year, we will promote compatriot policies that contribute to expanding the collective capabilities of the entire Korean community,” Oh said. “We plan to strengthen protection and support for compatriots worthy of our national standing.”

Decorations and honors for independence heroes require cooperation between Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs and OKA

Moderated by Incheon National University Vice Chancellor for External Affairs Noh Young-don, the discussion was attended by Lee Ji-sung, director



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk (front row, 6th from L) and Park Jong-tae (7th from L), president of Incheon National University, pose for a photo with participants at the Forum on Understanding Overseas Koreans and Policy Issues on Incheon National University's Songdo Campus on Feb. 10.

of policy at the OKA; Lee Min-ho, the Seoul bureau chief of Japan's One Korea Daily News; and Kim Jae-ki, professor of political science and diplomacy at Chonnam National University.

"The issue of recognizing overseas Koreans requires a shift in thinking," Director Lee said. "We plan to sign an MOU with the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs to promote joint cooperation, and we plan to actively promote the first domestic overseas Korean support program with local governments, such as Gwangju, Ansan and Jecheon, to support overseas compatriots residing in Korea."

"The category of overseas Koreans should be viewed as open, not closed," he said. "We should mix bloodlines and nationalities. Currently, the OKA supports Sakhalin compatriots in obtaining Korean citizenship. We are also considering including Koryo and Joseonjok compatriots in the program."

Bureau Chief Lee pointed out that there are 7,285 Korean independence heroes who are still undecorated, around 40 percent of the total number of Korean independence heroes, among whom there are a significant number of overseas Koreans. He pointed out that the issue of unrecognized independence heroes is an ongoing task that the Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs is working on with a dedicated staff member, but there is only one person involved, and he argued that if a large number of the unrecognized heroes are overseas Koreans, "The shortest way to solve the problem is to turn it into a collaborative project with the OKA rather than the Ministry of Veterans Affairs handling it alone." The OKA would be able to leverage the network of diaspora organizations and individuals that it has built up over 25 years since its days as the Overseas Koreans Foundation. He suggested that the two organizations should pool their wisdom in conducting joint surveys and investigations.

"Actively identifying the descendants of independence heroes in the Mexico-Cuba region and passing on the honors to them will strengthen their connection to their homeland and give them a sense of pride as Korean descendants," professor Kim said.

"For the descendants of Koreans in Cuba, special measures using local experts are needed to face the special circumstances of Mexico and Cuba,

such as dispersed living, Spanish language barriers, increased localization due to mixed marriages and the deaths of second-generation Koreans who remember their first-generation parents," he added.

Discrepancies in expatriate population statistics are also issue

In particular, the issue of discrepancies in statistics on the number of overseas Koreans was an issue in the discussion.

"Statistics on overseas Koreans are the basis for overseas Korean policies," said OKA Director Lee, adding their reliability is still questionable. "The discrepancies between the statistics of the Korean government and the government of the country of residence and the statistics collected through local diaspora organizations in the country of residence lack objective credibility and hinder the establishment of overseas Korean policies.

"The legal status, rights and scope of overseas Koreans should be more clearly defined," he said. "An objective standard that does not discriminate by country should be established to count the number of overseas compatriots."

In response, professor Kim also emphasized that one of the key tasks of the OKA should be to conduct a census of the Korean diaspora, arguing, "The South Korean government figures show the number of Koreans living in Mexico to be 990, but it is estimated to be 60,000, and in the case of Cuba, the number of Koreans is said to be three, but it is at least 1,000." 장

Hangeul school children’s choir to perform at Carnegie Hall for first time

On 10th anniversary of its founding, choir sang at White House and U.N., ‘finding identity and spreading Korean culture through song’



Hwang Hyun-joo, director of the New Jersey Children’s Choir and principal of the New Jersey Korean School

The New Jersey Korean School Children’s Choir will celebrate its 10th anniversary with a special performance on June 21 at Carnegie Hall in New York City, a world-renowned music venue.

This is the first time that students from a Hangeul school have performed at Carnegie Hall since it opened in 1891. The children’s choir will perform Korean and American songs, nursery rhymes and classical pieces with choreography.

“Although we are not professional musicians, we are very proud that our children will be able to perform on the Carnegie Hall stage,” said Hwang Hyun-joo, choir director and principal of the New Jersey Korean School.

This is not the first time the New Jersey Korean School Children’s Choir has performed on a big stage. Hwang had always dreamed of one day performing at the White House

in front of the presidents of the United States and South Korea, and that dream came true sooner than expected in April 2023, when the choir was invited to the official welcome ceremony for the U.S.-South Korea summit at the invitation of President Joe Biden, where they dressed in “hanbok” and performed “Arirang Alone” in Korean.

“That experience made me realize once again how important identity education is for our children,” he said.

That’s not all. The choir has also performed for ambassadors of the United Nations three times, promoting Korean culture to the world. After the White House performance, the choir was also recognized for its solid skills, appearing on the KBS music program “Immortal Songs.”

“With Hallyu spreading around the world, we are convinced that the next generation living abroad will value the greatness of Korean culture and build on it,” Hwang said. “The choir will continue to do its best to promote Korean culture, communicate with the world and serve as a cultural bridge.”

Last month, the children’s choir also performed at Englewood Hospital in Bergen County, New Jersey, in advance of the Lunar New Year, hosting 300 Korean American seniors at a ceremony organized by Korean volunteer organizations in New Jersey. The children’s choir sang “New Year,” “Spring in my Hometown” and “Hunchback Grandma.” Hwang reported that the event was meaningful and delivered joy for the attending seniors, with Korean doctors delivering a health seminar and “tteokguk” served to all the participants.

“When we sang Korean nursery rhymes and songs, we could see that the elderly were very happy to sing along,” she said, adding that such activities help share Korean culture and build emotional bonds between generations.

The New Jersey Korean School choir was founded in 2015 with the goal of promoting Korean culture in the U.S. by inspiring the next generation to learn about their native

culture, build identity through choral activities and connect with other ethnic groups. It started with 20 members and has grown to more than 50 today.

The school opened in January 1983 and has about 650 students.

The New Jersey Korean School was founded in 1982 and opened in January 1983 in the northern New Jersey town of Tenafly, which is known for its excellent school districts, at a time when the Korean community was growing and becoming more economically established in the cosmopolitan city of New York. Today, the school enrolls approximately 650 students, employs 47 teachers and has nearly 900 alumni.

The name of a school that teaches Korean language and culture to the next generation of Korean children is commonly referred to as a Hangeul school. However, this school is called a Korean school because it teaches not only Hangeul but also places a particular emphasis on teaching Korean culture.

Hwang, who took over as principal 15 years ago after serving as a teacher, is now a 27-year veteran teacher at Paterson Elementary School in New Jersey and is known as the Pestalozzi of New Jersey.

“At the New Jersey Korean School, 45 minutes of each week’s three-hour class is devoted to Korean culture and arts, which is required for all students in each grade. Special subjects include Korean children’s songs, Korean dance, Korean painting, Korean art and culture, Korean history and immigration history to the U.S. In addition, we are constantly planning new programs, such as sports days, Korean holiday celebrations and making kimchi, to help students discover and nurture their talents in various fields.”

Principal Hwang Hyun-joo is ‘Pestalozzi of New Jersey’

The New Jersey Korean School provides a unique learning environment for students through a variety of programs and an experiential approach to education that sets it apart from other Korean schools.

“During holiday celebrations, we offer activities, such as folk games, making Korean sweets and making ‘songpyeon,’” Hwang said.

The school has also organized a Hangeul Day writing contest for Korean schools in the northeast region of the U.S. for the past 24 years in order to strengthen community connections.

In particular, the school offers special classes for students




Members of the New Jersey Children’s Choir greet the leaders of the two countries after performing at an official event between the United States and South Korea during a South Korean state visit to the White House in April 2023 at the invitation of President Joe Biden. When President Biden and first lady Jill Biden approached the children, held their hands and put an arm around their shoulders, refusing to leave, the White House press secretary suggested they “hear one more song,” so the children sang “Tomorrow.”



Members of the New Jersey Children’s Choir pose for a photo after their performance at the United Nations for ambassadors from around the world. Principal Hwang Hyun-Joo is in the back row on the far right.

who do not speak Korean at home and provides customized education to meet their individual learning needs. Furthermore, the school extends Korean language education to the local community by organizing “traveling Korean classes” at community hospitals and companies upon request.

“Our school’s vision is to ‘Grow into exemplary global citizens with a Korean identity,’” the principal said. “To this end, we aim to develop Korean language skills, understand Korean culture and history, and provide education that will help students develop emotional maturity.”

“We will do our best to instill in our students a sense of Korean identity and help them grow into globally competent human assets.” 

OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk visits Australian compatriots for ‘NextGen Economic Seminar’

Event in Sydney was great success with diverse participation from different generations

Lee Sang-duk, commissioner of the Overseas Koreans Agency, visited Melbourne and Sydney in Australia from Feb. 20-22 to hold a meeting with compatriots and the “NextGen Economic Seminar.”

On Feb. 21, Lee attended the General Assembly of the Federation of Korean Societies of Oceania in Melbourne, where he met with more than 80 representatives of Korean associations in Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, as well as the heads of major Korean organizations in Melbourne, to listen to the major issues of the local Korean communities and explain the major policies and projects of the OKA this year.

Lee evaluated the development of the Korean diaspora in the Oceania states, which have settled down stably despite a short immigration history compared with the United States and China, and emphasized the need to expand intergenerational communication and the participation of the next generation in the Korean diaspora to ensure the sustainable growth of the Korean diaspora and called for the Korean diaspora’s interest in the “NextGen Academy,” a model project of the OKA.

Prior to the meeting, Lee visited Melbourne’s Koreatown, where he interacted with Korean small business owners, encouraged them to work together to promote Koreatown in the multicultural society of Australia, and listened to the process and challenges of promoting the town.

Following his visit to Melbourne, Lee traveled to Sydney on Feb. 22 to host the “NextGen Economic Seminar,” a major initiative of the OKA, and a meeting with the Sydney Korean community. The seminar was attended not only by representatives from major Sydney-based Korean organizations but also by second-generation Korean immigrants, including 1.5-generation Korean immigrants, local-born second-generation Korean immigrants, international students and working holiday participants, providing an opportunity for intergenerational communication. The seminar, which was organized for 100 people through advance registration, was a great success, with all 100 people who expressed interest attending.

The lectures by experts on the topics of “How to be 100% Successful” and “Empathy Marketing” were well-received, as they




Lee Sang-duk (front row, 6th from L) cheers with participants at the compatriots meeting of the Federation of Korean Societies of Oceania on Feb. 21.

shared real-life startup experiences and know-how to succeed in the industry. At the meeting of Sydney compatriots held after the seminar, Kim Min-cheol, director of exchange and cooperation, explained the major policies and projects of the OKA this year, including the new overseas Korean TV program that allows the Korean community to communicate with their home country at all times.

In his greetings, Lee emphasized the importance of fostering the next generation of talented people with a Korean identity and intergenerational communication for the future of the Korean community, and called for the participation of the compatriot community to strengthen the capabilities of the Korean community with stable generational change so that the capabilities of the entire Korean nation can be gathered and multiplied for the mutual development of the Korean community in the home country and around the world.

The participants at the meeting expressed various opinions on establishing a closer communication channel between the OKA and the Korean associations, bidding to host the World Korean Business Convention in Sydney, lowering the age of multiple citizenship, expanding opportunities for youth to visit their home countries, government support for spreading Korean culture and pretraining for the safety of working holiday participants.

Prior to the economic seminar, Lee held a meeting with officials of the Australian Council of Hangeul Schools on Feb. 20 to listen to the difficulties of teachers in the field and discuss ways to support them. 

‘In their homeland’s embrace after 80 years’: 100 Sakhalin compatriots return to Korea permanently

OKA-Red Cross hold welcome ceremony at Donghae Port on Feb. 9; 270 to be resettled in homeland this year

One hundred compatriots who migrated to Sakhalin due to forced labor during the Japanese occupation were welcomed back to their homeland at the Donghae Port International Passenger Terminal in Gangwon Province on Feb. 9. This year, 270 Sakhalin compatriots will return home permanently, including 100 first-generation compatriots and their descendants, including grandmother Lee Song-gui, who is 100 years old. The remaining 170 will be settled in their homeland through individual entry.

The Overseas Koreans Agency and the Korean Red Cross, which organized the permanent return program, held a group welcome ceremony at the International Passenger Terminal. Byun Chul-hwan, deputy commissioner of the OKA, and Park Eun-young, head of the Korean Red Cross, attended the event to welcome the compatriots to their homeland after more than 80 years.

“I am grateful to the Korean government for allowing me to be buried in my homeland,” said Choi Gunja (92), the oldest Sakhalin compatriot to step onto her homeland’s soil on this day with her daughter, Emontoturi (72). “It’s good to see that my homeland has developed a lot and is clean.”

Choi lost her husband more than 40 years ago and raised three sons and two daughters, supporting them through farming. She plans to live in Busan as her second son came to Korea 10 years ago and settled there.

In addition, Ahn Bok-soon (89), whose hometown is Ulsan, expressed her feelings that “I went to Sakhalin with my parents when I was 9 years old, and it hurts my heart that I am the only one to return here without my parents, whose ardent wish was to be buried in their homeland. I will spend my remaining years in my home village in Ansan.”

Deputy Director General Byun Chul-hwan pledges to ‘do our best for stable settlement’

“The Korean government will always be with you, Sakhalin compatriots, so that your new beginning in the homeland will not be lonely,” Byun said in his welcoming remarks. “We will listen to the voices of Sakhalin compatriots and do our best to help you settle



Choi Gun-ja (92), permanently returning to her homeland in a wheelchair at Donghae Port, is escorted by Byun Chul-hwan, deputy commissioner of the Overseas Koreans Agency, to the arrivals hall on Feb. 9.

down in Korea.”

After the welcome ceremony, the compatriots traveled in five buses to their new homes in Seoul, Busan, Ansan, Incheon and other cities across the country.

The Ministry of Health and Welfare, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, the Korea Land and Housing Corporation, and other related organizations have also been working together to help Sakhalin compatriots return to Korea permanently, settle down and stabilize their lives. Since 1992, 5,340 Sakhalin compatriots have returned home permanently. Last year, the Special Law on Support for Sakhalin Compatriots was amended to expand the eligibility for the permanent return from one immediate relative to children, so all children of Sakhalin compatriots will be eligible for permanent return this year.

In addition to the permanent return program for Sakhalin compatriots, the OKA is also carrying out various projects, including a homeland visit program for second- and third-generation Sakhalin compatriots, a legal assistance program for permanently returned Sakhalin compatriots and a survey to determine the living conditions of permanently returned Sakhalin compatriots and their accompanying families. 장

Korea achieves second place overall at Asian Winter Games, best result ever

Cheongchodang volunteer group wins gold medal

Korean volunteer organization united in spirit of An Jung-geun -- from cheering to language interpretation for tourists

With Korean athletes winning 45 medals -- 16 gold, 15 silver and 14 bronze -- at the Harbin 2025 Asian Winter Games to finish second overall behind China, Korea's best performance ever, the efforts of the Korea Consulate General in Shenyang, the Korean Cultural Centers in the three northeast provinces and the Korean Volunteers of Cheongchodang were also described as "worthy of a gold medal."

According to the Overseas Koreans Newspaper, the joint public-private volunteer effort consisting of 11 organizations, including the Cheongchodan Korean Volunteer Group (hereafter referred to as the Volunteer Group, President Kim Jeong-yeol), the Dandong Korean Association (President Song Yong-wan), the Dalian Korean Association (President Yoo Dae-sung) and the Fushun Korean Association (President Lim Eun-sun), conducted systematic volunteer activities, including a welcome ceremony for the Korean athletes, cheering group, interpretation support, and introduction to the history and culture of Harbin and the three northeast provinces.

The volunteers first held a welcome ceremony for the Korean team (head coach Choi Hong-hoon) upon their arrival at Harbin Taiping International Airport on Feb. 4 and then encouraged the Korean athletes by handing out Team Korea scarves, Team Korea cheering brochures and souvenirs to the entire team.

"As this tournament is being held for the first time in eight years, the athletes have been preparing thoroughly to perform well," said Choi Hong-hoon, head coach of the Korean National Team. "We will bring joy to the Korean people with the best possible results."

"I would like to sincerely welcome the Korean athletes, their families and supporters to Harbin despite the current national difficulties," said President Kim Jong-yeol in his welcome address. "I hope that the good performance of the Korean athletes at the Games will bring comfort and a message of hope to the Korean people who are going through a difficult time."



Athletes of the South Korean team pose for a photo with members of the Harbin 2025 Winter Asian Games Civilian Joint Committee and the Korean Volunteer Group at Harbin Taiping International Airport in Harbin, China, on the afternoon of Feb. 4, three days before the opening of the Harbin Asian Winter Games.

"Cheongchodang" is one of the many papers written by An Jung-geun (1879-1910) between Feb. 14, 1910, when he was condemned to death in Manchuria's Yushun Prison, and his martyrdom on March 26, 1910. The paper's title means the hope of the hill by the water's edge where green grass springs up. Harbin Park (now Jiaolin Park) is the place where An took a walk two days before his death and the monument to An's "Cheongchodang" now stands.

Above all, the sacrificial spirit of the volunteers shone through at the Harbin 2025 Asian Winter Games. Due to local territorial customs, it was not easy to secure funds to pay for visitor tickets. In response, the volunteers secured special sponsorships from the Shenyang Korean Visa Center (Director Oh Jum-geun) and the Korean Cultural Center of the Three Northeast Provinces (Chairman Park Shin-heon) to create a group of supporters for Korea in the audience. During the ice hockey games between Korea and Thailand and Korea and Kazakhstan, the volunteer team mobilized more than 60 international students from Harbin, including the Harbin Korean Association, to fiercely cheer for the Korean athletes. [\[장\]](#)

Kim Hyun-tae appointed new president of Federation of Korean Associations in Japan

‘We will further activate exchanges between two countries on 60th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations’

The Federation of Korean Associations in Japan announced that Kim Hyun-tae (68), the former president of the Kyushu Korean Federation in Japan, was elected as the third president of the organization and began his duties following his inauguration ceremony on Feb. 11.

The inauguration ceremony, which was held at Hassenkaku in Fukuoka, Japan, was attended by more than 130 key figures from both Japan and Korea. The inauguration ceremony was a meaningful occasion to strengthen harmony and unity between the two countries, as it brought together not only the executives of Korean associations across Japan but also the heads of major Korean organizations, as well as the heads of local Korea-Japan Friendship Associations and Korean lawmakers.

Kim Yi-jung, president of the central headquarters of the Korean Residents Union in Japan (Mindan), and Takeo Kawamura, chair of the Japan-Korea Friendship Association, a leading pro-Korean group in Japan, were present. Joo Ho-young, deputy speaker of the National Assembly (chair of the Alliance of Korean and Japanese Lawmakers), and Kim Seok-ki, chair of the National Assembly Foreign Affairs and Unification Committee (vice chair of the Alliance of Korean and Japanese Lawmakers) also attended the event, which was an opportunity to promote harmony and future-oriented development not only among the Japanese diaspora but also between Korea and Japan, which celebrated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic normalization this year.

In his inaugural speech, Kim Hyun-tae said: “We are people who have left the mainland of Korea and made our own small Koreas abroad, and as Korean associations and small Koreas around the world, we should strive to develop further for the honor of our homeland. Especially this year, which marks the 60th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and South Korea, we Korean Associations will further activate exchanges between the two countries and pursue meaningful activities alongside Mindan.”



Guests pose for a photo during the inauguration ceremony for the new president of the Federation of Korean Associations in Japan at Hassenkaku in Fukuoka, Japan.

The Federation of Korean Associations in Japan was founded in 2017 as an alliance of Korean associations representing newcomers who moved to Japan after the 1980s. Currently, there are nine Korean associations in Tokyo, Osaka, Fukuoka and other cities across Japan.

Kim, who was elected president at the general assembly late last year, announced his ambition to lead the federation under the banner of “Leading the Korean community as One Family” by: ▲ Establishing the role of the Federation, ▲ Establishing a new award for Japanese people who have contributed to the spread of Korean culture, ▲ Strengthening the federation’s position globally, ▲ Respecting the independence of regional Korean associations, ▲ Strengthening the national network and ▲ Encouraging the establishment of new Korean associations. Kim will serve a two-year term until December 2026.

Kim, who is also vice president for Japan in the World Federation of Overseas Korean Traders Associations (World-OKTA) and president of the World Korean Hotel Association, graduated from Kyung Hee University with a degree in hotel management and worked in major luxury hotels in Korea, serving as general manager of Ramada Hotel. In Japan, he served as general manager of IP City Hotel and is currently managing the Benikea Calton Hotels in Osaka and Fukuoka. [\[장\]](#)

Overseas Koreans Cooperation Center launches KrossOveR for supporting promotion of overseas Koreans

30 supporters from 12 countries held activity evaluation meeting; 159 cases of overseas Korean content created and promoted

The Overseas Korean Cooperation Center (OKOCC), an organization operated by the Overseas Koreans Agency, announced Thursday that the first batch of overseas Korean public relations support through KrossOveR has achieved results in communicating with domestic Koreans through various social media activities.

OKOCC held an evaluation of the supporters' activities and a disbanding ceremony at Shilla Stay in Seocho-gu, Seoul, from Feb. 21-23. KrossOveR is a combination of the words Korea and crossover, and is a brand image of the supporters' activities to foster the Korean identity through the convergence of overseas and domestic Koreans.

The 30 supporters, comprised of overseas and domestic Koreans from 12 countries, began their activities in August last year at the launching ceremony. So far, they have created 159 social media posts on various topics related to overseas Koreans, such as World Korean Day, holidays, food and literature, and have accumulated more than 500,000 views, contributing to the cultivation of the Korean identity among the next generation of overseas Koreans and enhancing online communication between Koreans at home and abroad.

They reported on the results of their seven-month program, shared their know-how on how to create high-quality content and took part in cultural experiences, such as viewing traditional media art exhibitions and mother-of-pearl crafts.

Kim Han-byul (33), a next-generation Korean from Denmark who participated in the program, said, "I tried to soften heavy and hard topics with small details from my own daily life, and it was rewarding to get a lot of empathy from social media users."

Through the activity evaluation meeting, the supporters said they were able to learn more about the history of overseas Koreans by visiting the Korea Immigration Museum and other exhibits related to




Supporters pose for a commemorative photo after the activity report and closing ceremony of the first KrossOveR program at Shilla Stay in Seocho-gu, Seoul, which ran from Feb. 21-23.

overseas Koreans, and they realized they have a common history and identity.

In addition, covering the Koryo Arirang event and the training program for Korean language teachers in Russia and the CIS gave them a chance to experience the present and think about how Koryo people feel about Korea.

Participants remembered in particular the exchanges with Koryo supporters and the stories of Koryo Korean language teachers and introduced the teacher Valeria. They explained that based on her own experience of difficulty learning Korean in the past, she founded the Choi Jae-hyung Koryo People's School in Primorsky Krai to help Koryo students learn in a better environment. Another example that drew attention was the teacher Veronica, who teaches Korean to her Koryo compatriots in Kyrgyzstan because she wants them to never forget their identity.

"KrossOveR has played an important role in helping the next generation of Koreans feel a sense of belonging and informing domestic Koreans about the importance of overseas compatriots," said Kim Young-geun, director of the OKKOC. "We will run a second intake of KrossOveR supporters to actively communicate with the overseas Korean community." 

Issuance of military registration certificates for overseas Koreans to become faster by more than a week

Reduced processing time from more than 10 days to around 2 days through system linkage between OKA and Military Manpower Administration

From now on, the processing time for overseas Koreans to obtain military registration certificates is expected to become faster by more than a week.

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) and the Military Manpower Administration (Commissioner Kim Jong-cheol) will improve the system for issuing military registration certificates through the Overseas Koreans Agency - Military Manpower Administration System Linkage beginning Feb. 21.

This is expected to significantly shorten the processing time for overseas Koreans to obtain military registration certificates from more than 10 days to around two days.

In the past, to process these certificates applied for by overseas Koreans through overseas diplomatic missions, various organizations, such as local military service offices, the OKA and overseas diplomatic missions, had to process them through internal requests, which caused inconvenience due to the long processing time.

In order to resolve these inconveniences, the Military Manpower Administration and the OKA have been discussing improvement plans since 2023, and as a result, the MMA's Military Affairs Administration System and the OKA's Integrated Electronic Administration System (G4K) have been linked to allow for the quicker processing of requests.

As a result, overseas Koreans will benefit from a significantly shortened request processing period, and administrative efficiency is expected to increase.

"It is very meaningful that we were able to improve the convenience of overseas Koreans' requests together with the Military Manpower Administration, and we will do our best to


continue to expand digital services that overseas Koreans can actually experience so that we can become a strong resource for overseas Koreans," OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk said.

"We are pleased to be able to provide faster services to overseas Koreans through the application of digital technology," said Kim Jong-cheol, head of the MMA. "We will continue to do our best to spread a social atmosphere where the value of military service is respected by improving conveniences for those who fulfill military service."

Since 2018, the MMA has improved the online issuance of military registration certificates in English and for official declarations.

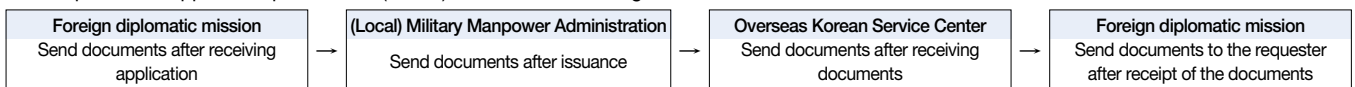
The MMA has improved the ability to issue military registration certificates in English and official declarations online because until now there had been no system in place to issue English-language certificates, and since all military service must be verified for official declarations, it was inconvenient to visit the local military administration office or the nearest civil affairs center to get a certificate in English or for official declarations.

In particular, most overseas residents who applied for an English certificate had to apply through relatives living in Korea or through overseas diplomatic missions (by mail) because it was difficult to visit the office in person, which meant certificates took one to two weeks to be issued.

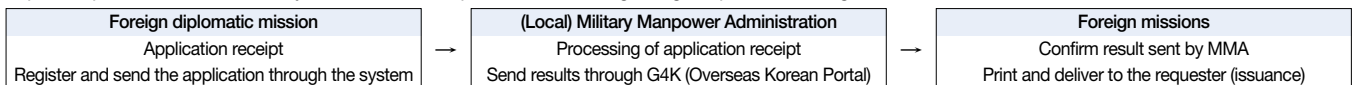
Given that many overseas Koreans use military registration certificates for employment and renewal of permanent residency in their country of residence, the prompt issuance of medical certificates has helped overseas Koreans live and work in their country of residence. 

Improved process for receiving and issuing military registration certificates

Current process -- Appoint a representative (consul) to handle the exchange of documents



Improved process -- MMA-OKA system to handle requests without designating a representative agent



OKA once again calls for participation in 23rd World Korean Business Convention

Commissioner Lee Sang-duk requests participation from Incheon, Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation

Overseas Koreans Agency Commissioner Lee Sang-duk met with President Hong Moon-pyo of the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT) at the aT Center in Yangjae-dong, Seoul, on Feb. 13 to introduce the 23rd World Korean Business Convention (WKBC), which will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, from April 17-20, and asked him to actively encourage Korean agri-food companies to participate.

“As K-food is capturing the taste buds of people around the world, we plan to actively help Korean agri-food companies enter the North American market by inviting overseas buyers specializing in food and distribution to participate in the convention,” Lee said.

In response, aT President Hong Moon-pyo said, “We will actively cooperate with the 23rd WKBC to increase the exports of leading domestic companies in the agri-food sector.”

In addition to discussing this year’s convention, Lee and Hong also decided to sign an MOU between the two organizations to support the overseas expansion of domestic agri-food companies by utilizing the global overseas Korean business network and to ensure the continuation of the global K-food craze.

Prior to the event, Lee met with Park Il-joon, executive vice chair of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), on Feb. 11 and requested the participation of KCCI member companies that wish to enter the North American market at the 23rd WKBC.

“At a meeting with overseas Korean businesspeople during my site visit to Atlanta on Feb. 5, I confirmed their expectations and eagerness to participate in the event,” Lee said. “The participation of KCCI members will be very helpful.”

In response, Park said, “This is a great opportunity for small and medium-sized enterprises to expand overseas, so we will actively cooperate for the success of the convention.”

Lee also met with Incheon Mayor Yoo Jung-bok at Incheon City Hall in Namdong-gu, Incheon, on Jan. 31 to request his participation at the 23rd WKBC.

Lee spoke of the plan for the WKBC to utilize the network of Korean businessmen to actively help Korean SMEs enter the North American market. He also explained the key policies and business plans of the OKA to support the settlement of overseas Koreans living in Korea and requested the active support and cooperation of



Lee Sang-duk (R), commissioner of the Overseas Koreans Agency, meets with Hong Moon-pyo, president of the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT), at the aT Center in Yangjae-dong, Seoul, on Feb. 13 to introduce the 23rd World Korean Business Convention and ask him to actively encourage Korean agri-food companies to participate.



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk (R) meets with Incheon Mayor Yoo Jung-bok.

Incheon to support compatriots living there.

In response, Mayor Yoo said he would actively cooperate with the successful hosting of the convention and the OKA’s pursuit of support programs for Korean compatriots living in Incheon.

In addition, through this year’s WKBC, the OKA plans to make this the launch year for building the “Global Korean Economic Zone” so that the network of Korean businesspeople and their home countries can be united as one economic zone and overcome global economic crises, such as protectionism.



‘We must think beyond Korean Peninsula to solve population problem’



Myung Seung-hwan,
professor of public administration at Inha University (former
president of the Korean Association for Policy Studies)

Even though the government has spent nearly 280 trillion won over the past 18 years, the result has still been a disastrous fertility rate of 0.74. On July 1, 2024, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety announced the establishment of the Ministry of Population Strategy and Planning as a control tower that encompasses all population policies, including not only low birth rates but also responses to an aging society and labor force and immigration (Korea Policy Briefing (www.korea.kr)). The ministry also announced it would change the Premier of Social Affairs from the Ministry of Education to the Minister of Population Strategy and Planning so that they can oversee all planning, budget allocation and evaluation of implementation. However, the current state of national emergency has rendered these plans opaque.

In fact, governments have repeatedly attempted to address social issues and national crises with control towers and reactive policies that “lock the barn door after the horse is out,” with little success. Such crises are more likely to be successfully solved if they are included as priorities in the national agenda and reorganization plan when a new government takes office.

Unfortunately, the issue of the low birth rate and local demographic decline has been largely neglected in the midst of the climate crisis, ideological conflicts and rapid social transitions. Of course, it is also obvious that when 300 trillion won of the budget has been spent, the issue has not exactly been neglected. So what exactly is the problem?

The biggest culprits are the nonprofessionals, careerists and cronies who appear on committees after every regime change. This is the talent pool of special presidential committees, ministerial committees, local government committees, etc., that are filled with cronies. These people are absolutely loyal to the president and those who appointed them. They have no expertise, no convictions,

no knowledge of social justice or global trends, and no desire to know either. They are there for the high salaries, the ceremony and the foreign trips.

If the control tower is properly equipped in the future, I propose it should look at policies for the 7.5 million overseas Koreans as a possible breakthrough to the current problems of the low birth rate and local depopulation. In fact, overseas Koreans are people who have made a life for themselves through competition in their respective countries and are active in various fields and integrated into mainstream society. In addition, the human resources associated with the Korean diaspora are directly or indirectly involved in issues, such as connections with their countries' local populations, multicultural families and multinational businesses.

In fact, it is the compatriots who provide the right information abroad and play a crucial role in settlement and local business. In addition, these human assets can always return to their home country at any time and create positive synergies through economic activities. If compatriots are economically active in Korea, it will help improve the government's financial situation through tax revenues, health insurance premiums and income taxes. In addition, lowering the age for multiple citizenship from the current 65 years old to 40 years old will ease the burden of military service for young Koreans, as military service obligations under the Military Service Act end at 40 years old and can be a powerful motivator for economic activity in their homeland.

Korea is a country where people are important. Therefore, we need to increase the incentives for talented people scattered around the world to return to Korea. Regulatory reforms must be carried out in parallel to ensure that overseas Korean talent has an incentive to return to Korea. As it is now, overseas talents will not come if there are many unnecessary regulations and high tax burdens that scare away overseas investors.

I hope the Overseas Koreans Agency, which was launched in June 2023, will play such a role. However, as an agency in charge of enforcement at the vice-ministerial level, it has limitations. But it could play an important role in solving the population problem if it were to become the main agency of a control tower, such as the Population Strategy and Planning Division, in charge of immigration and compatriot-related projects and tasks.

Now is a great time for K-pop, K-culture and other Korean trends to be recognized and spread around the world. As the descendants of Goguryeo, which ruled over the vast Northeast Asia with great skill and ambition, the global K-community has the world as its home and stage of activity. Big thinking and bold challenges are urgently needed. 🇰🇷

* The contributor's claims or opinions may differ from the position of the Overseas Koreans Agency.

OKA's Upcoming Events

On-site inspection of 23rd World Korean Business Convention (Feb. 5-6)
Announcement of 2025 OKA Work Plan (Feb. 11)
Australia's NextGen Economic Seminar and Diaspora Meeting (Feb. 20-22)

OKA Commissioner's Activities in February

Feb. 3-6: **Visits to Los Angeles, Houston and Atlanta** (Briefing on damage recovery activities of the Korean community in Los Angeles, meeting with Korean community members in Houston, meeting with Korean businesspeople in Atlanta and joint pre-event inspection meeting for the World Korean Business Convention)

10: **Meeting with Park Il-joon**, executive vice president of the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and participation in the Overseas Korean Policy Discussion at Incheon National University (forum on Understanding Overseas Koreans and Related Policy Issues)

11: **Presentation of the 2025 OKA Work Plan and attendance at the 24th Overseas Korean Policy Committee**

13: **Meeting with Hong Moon-pyo**, president of the Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT)

19-23: **Visit to Australia** (Sydney Korean community meeting, NextGen Economic Seminar, general assembly of the Federation of Korean Societies of Oceania)

25: **Meeting with North Gyeongsang Province Gov. Lee Chul-woo**

27: **MOU signing ceremony with Korean Political Science Association**

28: **Meeting with Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) President Kang Kyung-sung**, meeting with Federation of Korean Associations USA President Seo Jeong-il

OKA Announcements

Call for companies to participate in 2025 Overseas Korean Companies Youth Internship Program

Open to companies with annual revenue of \$1 million or more and 10 or more full-time employees

The Overseas Koreans Agency is recruiting overseas Korean companies to participate in the 2025 Overseas Korean Companies Youth Internship Program by March 1 in order to provide opportunities for Korean youth to strengthen their global competencies and expand overseas, and to introduce overseas Korean entrepreneurs to outstanding young talents from their homeland.

Interns can work in any country where an employment visa can be issued, and their duties will be white-collar jobs in trade, administration, marketing and design. The internship period is six months (July to December).

To be eligible for the intern program, companies must be registered as a local business with an annual revenue of at least \$1 million, excluding overseas branches of public institutions and overseas subsidiaries of domestic companies, and have at least 10 employees at any given time. In addition, the company must be able to provide interns with on-the-job training and adaptation to the local environment, and must be able to offer administrative or professional jobs.

No physical labor beyond simple repetitive or clerical tasks, such as cleaning, serving, carrying or repetitive labeling, is permitted. In addition, the company must be able to provide at least US\$700 per month in cash (no in-kind substitutions), and minimum wage coverage is required for working holiday and work permit countries. Priority will be given to companies that support the acquisition of employable visas and companies that can hire full-time employees after completing internships.

The OKA plans to invite human resources managers of companies that use Korean youth as interns to Korea for three days of training and will provide roundtrip airfare and accommodation for the companies. In addition, the agency will cover a portion of the company's expenses (up to \$1,000 per person) for obtaining a visa that allows interns to work.

The interns will depart Korea in May after recruitment, interviews and domestic training. To participate in the program, overseas Korean companies should apply on the Hansang Net website (www.hansang.net). For more information, please call 032-585-3226 or email mjan23@korea.kr.



700만 재외동포와 대한민국이 하나로 통하는 첫 번째 온라인 세상 코리아넷

코리아넷 회원에 가입하시면 재외동포 소식, 재외동포 단체,
재외동포청 지원사업 등 관련 정보를 만나실 수 있습니다.



오늘의 대한민국이 빛나기까지 **재외동포**도 함께했습니다.

하와이의 뜨거운 사탕수수밭과
중남미의 선인장 농장에서 번 돈은
우리의 **독립자금**으로 쓰였습니다.

파독 광부와 간호사들의 현지 송금은
우리나라 **산업화 과정**에서
소중한 종잣돈이 되었습니다.

일본에 있는
대한민국 **대사관**을 비롯한 **총영사관** 등
공관 10개 중 9개는
재일동포의 기증으로 조성되었습니다.

서울올림픽을 개최할 때,
또 우리가 **외환위기**를 극복할 때에도
재외동포는 힘을 모아 주었습니다.