

REDEFINING SECURITY

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Solidarity for Peace & Human Rights
Saewoomtuh for Kijichon Women and Children
Feminists' Coalition Against Militarism and Prostitution

Recruitment of Foreign Women into S. Korea's Sex Industry : A Focus on Filipino Women

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0. Introduction

Korea was liberated from Japan at the end of the World War II, however, Korea was immediately occupied by the American military, and then it had to endure the Korean War (1950~53). Since then, Korea hasn't been able to assert itself as a fully independent country. The *Kijichons* (U.S. military camp towns) are part of the legacy of the American military occupation of S. Korea. Injustice and violence against women still remains in all areas of S. Korean society, where feudalistic patriarchy and militarism still persist.

For over 50 years, the knowledge violence against women in *Kijichon* has been suppressed and the *Kijichon prostitutes* marginalized from society. More seriously, the violence against women of *Kijichon* continues to worsen. We were able to witness a new phenomena in *Kijichon*. As women from various Asian countries, particularly Filipino women, are being recruited into *Kijichons*, the sex industry is showing a new face; it is reformed and getting stronger.

In the name of expansion of tourism, through Asian countries' government support and silent consent, the international sex industry is able to form and grow. The increasing economic disparity between wealthy and poor countries due to the current economic crisis in Asia also contributes to the increase in selling and buying of women. Due to poverty and unemployment, women who are seeking to work overseas are endlessly migrating to wealthier countries such as S. Korea and Japan. The migrations of workers that are promoted as a result of the demand for cheap labor are then exploited by dealers for buying and selling women between countries.

There are several factors that are involved in the maintenance and increase in trading of women between nations. Economic inequality due to sexism, ever-increasing disparity between rich and poor countries, practice of feudalism and patriarchy in Asian countries, and unending demand for sex-industry that arises from U.S. military occupation all contribute to strengthening the oppressive prostitution ring.

As Filipino women are being exploited in *Kijichons* of S. Korea, it is necessary to analyze what S. Korea and America are gaining from it. The S. Korean government silently consents to the recruitment of Filipino women into the *Kijichon* sex industry