

## OKA signs MOU with Korea Legal Aid Corp. to protect overseas Koreans' rights

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Kim Kyung-hyup) announced on Nov. 17 that it has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Korea Legal Aid Corp. (Director Kim Young-jin) to strengthen the protection of overseas Koreans' rights and interests, and to enhance their legal welfare.

Overseas Koreans, including overseas citizens, often face difficulties in addressing various legal issues that arise during temporary visits to their homeland or while residing domestically. This MOU was established to expand support related to South Korean law, excluding matters concerning the laws of their country of residence.

Under the MOU, the two institutions will cooperate on: ▲ providing and linking legal services to protect the legitimate rights of overseas Koreans, ▲ supporting statutory education to help repatriated compatriots adapt to their homeland society and ▲ activating legal aid projects for overseas Koreans.

At the signing ceremony held that afternoon at the OKA in Yeosu-gu, Incheon, Commissioner Kim Kyung-hyup said: "I express my deep gratitude to the Korea Legal Aid Corp. for its



OKA Commissioner Kim Kyung-hyup (L) signs a memorandum of understanding with Kim Young-jin, director of the Korea Legal Aid Corp., on Nov. 17 to protect the rights and interests of overseas Koreans.

extraordinary efforts to protect the rights and interests of overseas Koreans thus far. I look forward to both institutions communicating closely and cooperating to advance together toward the goal of strengthening solidarity between the homeland and the overseas Korean community."

## 24 second-generation Sakhalin compatriot elders visit Korea to experience their homeland

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Minister Kim Kyung-hyup) hosted an invitation event to strengthen the homeland ties of elderly second-generation Sakhalin compatriots. The agency selected 24 individuals who were ineligible for permanent repatriation due to the death of their first-generation parents.

They arrived on Nov. 18 and spent a week touring major Seoul landmarks. They also visited Gyeongju, where the recent APEC summit was held, along with Mungyeong Saejae and Danyang, experiencing traditional Korean culture. They also had time to reunite with relatives residing in Korea.

The OKA is supporting the permanent return of Sakhalin Koreans and their accompanying family members who were forcibly conscripted to Sakhalin during the Japanese colonial period but were unable to return to their homeland after liberation, in accordance with the Special Act on Support for Sakhalin Koreans. It also supports visits to the homeland so that permanent returnees can meet with their children or grandchildren residing overseas.



Second-generation Sakhalin Koreans visit their homeland at the invitation of the Overseas Koreans Agency.

Meanwhile, 21 first-generation Sakhalin Koreans residing overseas also visited their homeland this time. This project is implemented by the Korean Red Cross with support from the Japanese government.

"We hope this visit to their homeland will be a meaningful time for Sakhalin Koreans to feel a sense of belonging as members of the Korean nation and to strengthen their connection with their homeland," Commissioner Kim Kyung-hyup said.