

The Just Settlement of the Past Wrongdoings

Towards an Integrated Society and a Brighter Future.

Subcommittee of Investigation  
on Mass Civilian Sacrifice

March 2008



**Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
**Republic of Korea**



# Truth and Reconciliation Commission

## Chronology

Key Events in Contemporary Korean History	Efforts for Truth and Reconciliation
1905. 11. Korea lost diplomatic rights to Japan 1910. 8. Korea annexed by Japan	1948. 10. Abortive efforts to punish pro-Japanese collaborators
1945. 8. Liberation of Korea, The end of WWII, US military occupation began	1960. 5. National Assembly set up special investigation committee on civilian massacre before and during the Korean War
1948. 4. Jeju's April 3 Incident	1985. 12. National Council of Families of Democratic Fighters founded
1948. 8. The Republic of Korea established	1988. 6. National Assembly held Gwangju Democratic Movement fact-finding hearings
1948.10 Yeosu-Suncheon Incident	1990. 3. Special act on compensation for people involved Gwangju Democratic Movement
1950. 6. The Korean War broke out, Nogeunri and other massacres	1995. 12. Former Presidents Chun Doo-Hwan and Rho Tae-Woo arrested and put into jail
1951. 2. Civilian massacre in Geochang	1995. 12. Special act on the May 18 Democratic Movement and statute of limitations removed for criminal acts violating constitutional order
1953. 7. Armistice agreement signed	1996. 1. Special act to reinstate those involved in Geochang incident
1960. 4. April 19 Student Revolution	2000. 1. Special act to investigate suspicious deaths, Special act to restore reputation of and compensate for people involved in democratic movements, and special act on Jeju April 3 Incident to restore the impaired reputation of the victims
1961. 5. May 16 military coup	2001. 1. US President Clinton apologized for Nogeunri Incident occurred in Yeongdong, Chungbuk
1963. 10. Park Chung Hee elected as President	2004. 1. Special act to restore the impaired reputation of and compensate for the victims of Samcheong Training Camp
1972. 10. Revitalizing Reforms (Yushin) proclaimed	2004. 3. Special acts to investigate the forced mobilization and pro-Japanese collaboration under the Japanese rule, and a special act to restore reputation of Nogeunri victims
1979. 10. President Park Chung Hee assassinated	2005. 5. Framework Act on Truth and Reconciliation
1979. 12. Military hard-liners seized power	2005. 7. Special act to investigate of suspicious deaths in the military
1980. 5. May 18 Gwangju Democratization Movement	2005. 12. <a href="#">Truth &amp; Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea, launched</a>
1980. 8. General Chun Doo-Hwan elected as President	
1987. 6. June democratic struggle	
1987. 12. Rho Tae-Woo elected as President	
1992. 12. Kim Young Sam elected as President	
1997. 12. Kim Dae-Jung elected as President	
2002. 12. Roh Moo-Hyun elected as President	





Welcome to

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission



As President of the Commission, I am very pleased to introduce our activities.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (hereafter referred as TRCK) was established on December 1, 2005, under the Basic Act on Truth and Reconciliation. To reveal the truth of Korean history, we investigate past incidents, such as anti-Japanese independence movements and the history of Koreans residing abroad during the Japanese occupation, mass victimization of civilians before and during the Korean War, and human rights violations and politically fabricated trials from August 15, 1945 up to the end of the authoritarian rule.

As of the late January 2008, we have ascertained the truth for sixty incidents, including the Cho Yong-Soo incident, the late founder of the Minjok Daily. This raises the total number of ascertained cases to 1,007. In 2007, the remains of 400 people, along with 1,085 articles of the deceased, were excavated from four of the 160 suspected killing sites. These sites are in relation to the civilian massacres which took place during the Korean War period.

By revealing the hidden truth of modern Korean history, we will put forth every effort in our search for the truth to restore the honor of the victims and the bereaved families. In order to achieve national unity and reconciliation, we will persist in our mission to ascertain the truth. At the same time, we will strive to be an international role model as a truth commission.


Many truth commissions throughout the world are actively pursuing the just settlement of past wrongdoing. In order to be a role model, we will provide full cooperation with other truth commissions in the world. In this respect, we look forward to your continual interest and support in our activities.

Thank you

Dr. Ahn, Byung-Ook

President of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea





## Scope of Investigation

### ○ National Independence

- Anti-Japanese independence movements during or immediately before Japanese occupation
- Efforts by overseas Koreans to uphold Korea's sovereignty and enhance Korea's national prestige since the Japanese occupation until the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (December 1, 2005)

### ○ Mass Victimization

- Mass illegal victimization of civilians from August 15, 1945 to the Korean War period
- Terrorist acts, human rights violations, violence, massacres and suspicious deaths by parties that denied the legitimacy of, or were hostile towards, the Republic of Korea from August 15, 1945 up to the end of authoritarian regimes

### ○ Human Rights Violation

- Incidents of death, injury or disappearance, and other major acts of human rights violation, including politically fabricated trials, that were committed through illegal or seriously unjust exercise of state power such as breaking the constitutional order from August 15, 1945 up to the end of authoritarian regimes
- Cases that have already been ruled in court, but qualify for new trial and need to be reinvestigated for truth
- Cases that the Presidential Truth Commission on Suspicious Deaths inconclusively investigated and requested the TRCK to reinvestigate





## Measures for Reconciliation

The state and the TRCK will take adequate measures to rectify damages and restore the honor of casualties, victims and families.

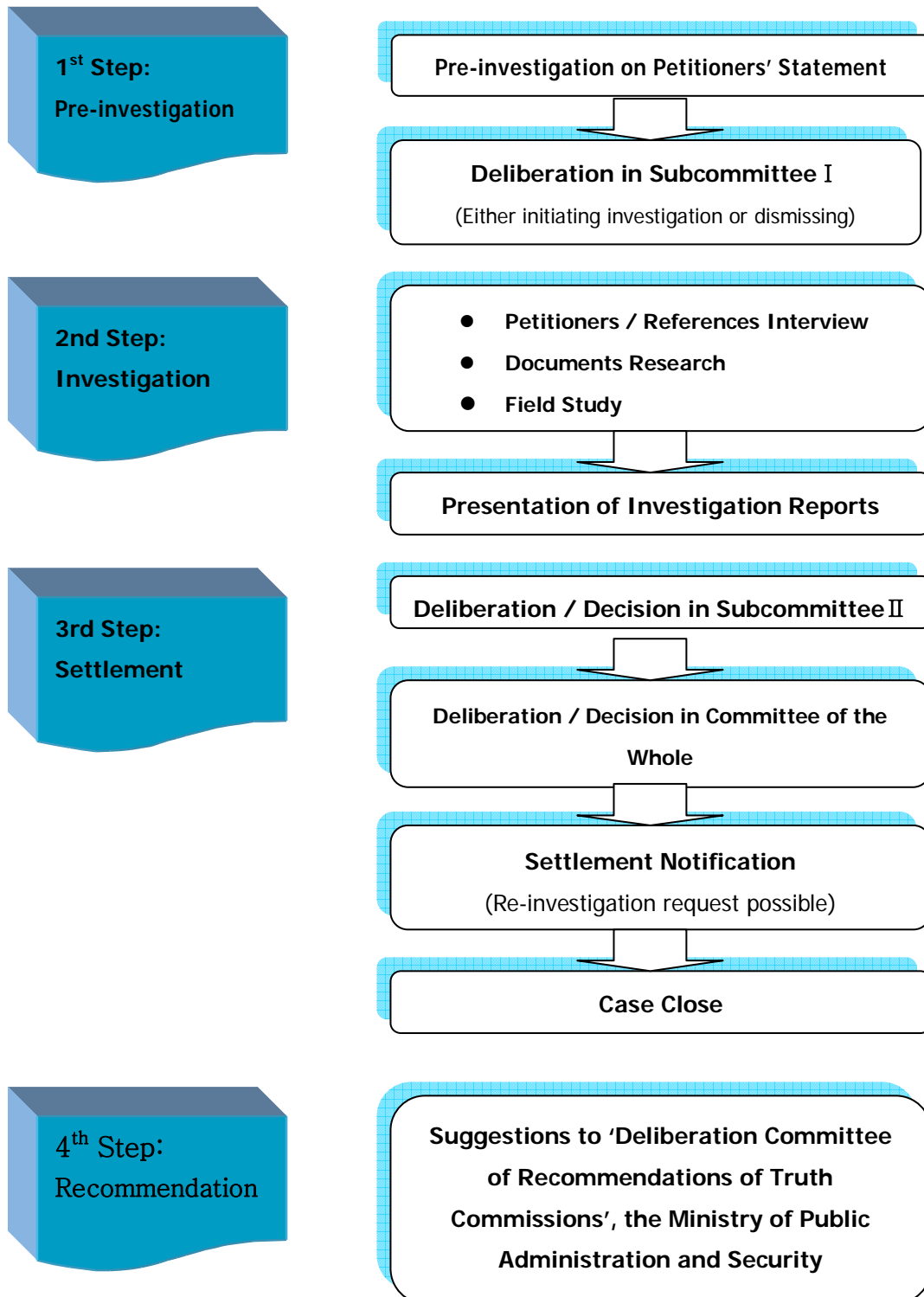
Measures by the TRCK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Proposals for special pardon and reinstatement for those that have been convicted or had their qualifications suspended or rescinded due to concealment or distortion of truth</li> <li>▪ Proposals for special pardon, reinstatement, or reduction of penalties for offenders who have confessed the truth</li> <li>▪ Active persuasion for reconciliation between offenders and victims and their families</li> </ul>
Measures by the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adequate measures to rectify damages and restore the honor of victims and their families               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>※ Except for cases in which adequate measures have been taken by other laws and ordinances</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Adequate legal and political reconciliation measures for offenders</li> <li>▪ Necessary measures for national reconciliation and integration</li> <li>▪ Respect for various decisions and proposals by the TRCK</li> </ul>
Common measures by the TRCK and the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support the establishment of a research foundation that will hold memorial services and organize historical exhibitions</li> </ul>





## Process of Investigation

### - Procedure for the Just Settlement of Cases





**Greetings from Standing Commissioner,  
Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice**



The mass civilian sacrifice cases during the Korean War period, which our committee investigates, comprise nearly 75% of the TRCK's petition cases. All of these are extremely sensitive and delicate matters to investigate.

58 years have passed since the outbreak of the Korean War and most of the witnesses have passed away. Also, official records in relation to the petition cases are either missing or removed. For the reasons, we have difficulties in finding the real truth. The Killings of civilians conducted by the North Korean Army during the Korean War are quite well known in the international arena, unlike the ones conducted at the same time by either South Korean military and police or the US military. Unfortunately, in the midst of Cold War era, people were forbidden to discuss such matters. Even nowadays, long after the end of the Cold War, they are still tricky to deal with. However, the victims and the bereaved, and their efforts to make their voice heard finally saw the establishment of the Commission in 2005.

Some people might question why the TRCK dig up the past which does not seem relevant to the present where everyone wants to move forward. However, we should remember that without addressing the deep trauma suffered by some of the members of Korean society, we cannot go forward to the bright future and in order to near the peaceful unification of the country, we have to verify the truth out of such tragic events of our history. Through these truth-finding activities, we hope to heal the trauma and pain of the victims and the bereaved. Also, we hope to raise awareness on this issue, not just in Korea, but throughout the world so that we may contribute a little to prevent such tragic wars from reoccurring in future.

We welcome you to actively support our activities and participate with us by providing any information or data in relation to the mass civilian killings during the Korean War period. We also encourage you to give us advice at any time and we greatly appreciate any active attention you may offer us.

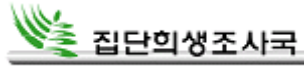
Thank you.

Prof. Kim, Dong-Choon  
Standing Commissioner of the TRCK,  
Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice



# 집단희생규명위원회

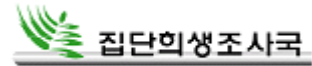
Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice



**Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice** is mandated to undertake investigations on mass civilian victimization before and during the Korean War period.

Our investigation coincides with some key issues of Korean modern history over the period. Such incidents mainly brought about from the ideological clashes between the Left and the Right since the Liberation from the Imperial Japanese in 1945. Upon the outbreak of Korean War, many civilians were unlawfully killed by the South government as potential insurgents and collaborators, which was followed by retaliations from North Korean Army and South Korean leftists. Members of the National Guidance Alliance, an organization set up by the South government to convert leftists, were first targets to get killed as soon as North invaded South. Other cases include mass executions of prisoners, killings of civilians by South Korean National Police, Army and North Korean Army and killings by American bombings and shootings.

Out of more than 7,700 petitions, the committee has decided on 903 cases as of 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2008.



**Investigation Teams 5** under the Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice investigates on civilian killings by American bombings, strafing and shootings during Korean War period. In total, 509 petitions were gathered. Most of incidents were said to have happened at the early stage of the war, i.e. from June 1950 to February 1951, while the heavy bombing strategy was instituted by the UN Command to break through the North Offensive.

So far, the team has completed investigations on Sansung Dong and Wolmi-do Incidents.

Other cases under investigations include Haman, Uiryong, Sachon-Chinju, Yong-in, Tanyang, Pohang and Kangwon-do bombing incidents.

◀◀ 경산 코발트 광산 ▶▶



▲ 개토제 현장 답사 당시 제2수평굴에 드러나 있던 유해의 모습(7. 8) ▲ 현장 설명회에 전시된 240여구의 유해를 유족들이 살펴보고 있다. (9. 20)

Excavated remains of victims: unveiling the sheer scale of massacre



## II . The Present Status of the Investigations

### 1. The Status of the Investigations

- The TRCK has received 10,907 petitions in total: of these, the TRCK launched investigation of 9,274 cases (85.0%), dismissed 953 cases (8.8%), is conducting preliminary investigation of 254 cases (2.3%), is reviewing 42 cases (0.3%), withdrew 287 cases (2.6%) and transferred 97 cases (0.9%) to other relevant organizations.

<Table 1> The Status of the Investigations (As of January 31, 2008)

(Unit: Cases, %)

Range of Investigations	Total	Investigated Cases				Dismissed	Pre-investigation	Review	Withdrawal	Transferred
		Sub-Total	Verified	Unverified	Investigating					
Grand Total	10,907 (100.0)	9,274 (85.0)	997 (9.1)	10 (0.1)	8,267 (75.8)	953 (8.8)	254 (2.3)	42 (0.4)	287 (2.6)	97 (0.9)
Civilian Massacres	7,777	7,539	903		6,636				234	4



## 2. The Status of the Verified and Unverified Cases

- The TRCK passed verdicts for 1,007 cases. Out of those, 997 cases (99%) were verified as true and 10 cases (1.0%) were unverified.

<Table 1> The Status of the Verified and Unverified Cases(As of January 31. 2008)

Type of Decision	The Name of Cases	Number of petition	Date of investigation launching	Date of decision
Grand Total		1,007		
Verified Cases Total		997		
Civilian Massacre	Subtotal	903		
	• Naju Dungebakgul-jae Incident	23	5. 30. 06	4. 17. 07
	• Massacre at Naju Dongchang Bridge Incident	12	7. 25. 06	6. 12. 07
	• Goyang Keumjeong Cave Incident	52	4. 25. 06	6. 26. 07
	• Munkyeong Sukdal Incident	16	4. 25. 06	6. 26. 07
	• Hampyung 11th Division Incident	184	4. 25. 06	7. 3. 07
	• Naju Police Unit Incident	59	2. 28. 07	10. 23. 07
	• Hampyeong Yangrim Incident	27	2. 28. 07	10. 23. 07
Civilian Massacre	• Jeju Preliminary Arrest Incident	106	4. 25. 06	11. 13. 07
	• Cheongwon Ochang Warehouse Bodo League Members Incident	166	5. 30. 06	11. 13. 07
	• Yecheon Sanseong-dong Bombing Incident	1	12. 19. 06	11. 20. 07
	• Gochang Wollim Incident	4	1. 23. 07	11. 20. 07
	• Goyang Complicity in Treason Incident	5	4. 25. 06	11. 20. 07
	• Sancheong Sicheon, Samjang Civilian Victims Incident	23	5. 30. 06	11. 20. 07
	• Ulsan Bobo League Members Incident	223	9. 29. 06	11. 27. 07
	• Yeongyam Gurim Incident	2	2. 28. 07	11. 27. 07



## □ Effort for Strengthening the Effectiveness of Reconciliation and Recommendations

- Recommendations after Truth Verification
  - For 18 cases, we recommended that the government offer an apology to the victims and bereaved families, restore the honor of the victims and establish a memorial. The memorial would serve two purposes; memorialize the victims and be an archive for historical records for history books. For 17 cases, we recommended retrials. For 3 cases, we recommended that free medical service to treat the victims and bereaved families be administered, correct false and exaggerated records, and offer reparation. For 2 cases, we recommended legislation to rectify the damage suffered by the victims. For 7 cases, we recommended extra follow-up measures.
- Effort to Ensure the Effectiveness of Implementation of Reconciliation and Recommendations
  - On January 8, 2008, we urged the enforcement of the presidential decree on "Regulations on Recommendations and Follow-up Measures in relation to the Past History."
  - On June 19, 2007, we urged for the establishment of the Reconciliation Commission.
- In June 2007, 37 sites (out of 154 sites) were designated as massacre burial grounds regarded as foremost areas for exhumation.
  - 4 sites were excavated
  - The ashes of 400 bodies were uncovered, along with 1,085 articles of the deceased (rifles, empty cartridges and bullets), from the cobalt minefields of Gyeongsan, Daegu, Cheongwon and Gurae.
- Surveys on the Status of Civilian Genocide Victims
  - Surveys conducted with Donga University from May 2007 to December 2007.
  - Approximately 8,600 bodies were discovered; 20 of which involved cases of retaliation





## Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice

### I. Commissioners



Prof. Kim, Dong Choon

**Standing Commissioner**

- Professor/Sociology, Sungkonghoe University
- Director, Human Rights & Peace Center, Sungkonghoe University
- Policy President, People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy



Prof. Do, Jin Soon

- Professor/History, Changwon National University
- Co-Researcher of ‘the National Committee for Investigation of the Truth about the Jeju April 3 Incident’



Prof. Cheong, Byung Joon

- Professor/History, Ewha Women’s University
- Research Fellow at the National Institute of Korean History

**피카소작**  
**Massacre in Korea(조선의 학살 1951년)**



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### III. Civilian Sacrifice by the US Force Bombing and Shooting

#### **1) US Military Government (Aug. 1945 – Aug. 1948)**

Under the US Military government, there were some civil disturbances where some civilians were killed by the American force quelling the demonstrations.

#### **2) North Korean Offensive (Jun. 1950 – Sep. 1950)**

At the early stage of the war, US force bombed, in a massive scale, major facilities including railroads, bridges and other civilian facilities which can be used by the North Korean force. Even the US force shot and strafed refugees assuming that they were disguised North Korean soldiers. Areas in Suwon, Taejon, Iksan and Naktong region were mainly subject to the attacks.

#### **3) UN Forces Counteroffensive (Aug. 1950 – Nov. 1950)**

A number of civilians were killed in the areas of Kunsan and Wolmi-do, Inchon while the Inchon Landing in progress, a major operation instituted by UN forces.

#### **4) Chinese Intervention and UN forces' Fightback (Dec. 1950 – Apr. 1951)**

UN forces faced North Korean guerilla activities and infiltrations disguised as civilians. In response to such tactics, UN forces executed a bombing campaign employing extensive use of artillery, air power and infantry incendiary ammunition, which is known to mount to heavy toll of civilian casualties.

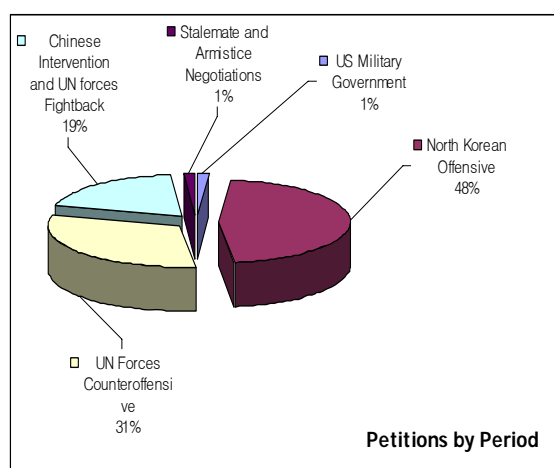
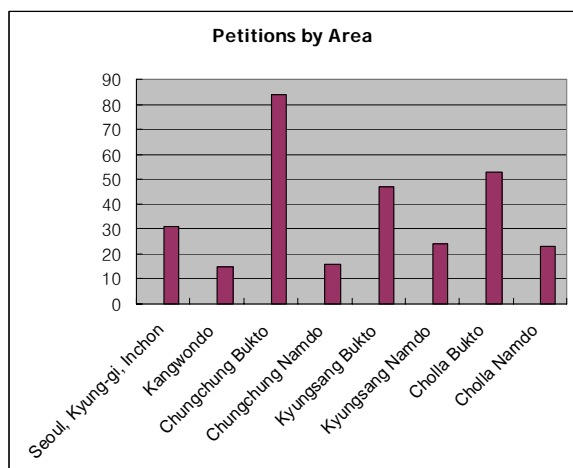
#### **5) Stalemate and Armistice Negotiations (May 1951 – Jul. 1953)**

There were sporadic killings by US soldiers in the US occupying area.



### IV. Petitions (Investigation Team 5)

Periods \ Areas	Areas									Total						
	Inchon	Kyung-gi,	Seoul,	Kangwondo	Bukdo	Chungchung	Namdo	Chungchung	Bukdo		Kyungsang	Namdo	Kyungsang	Bukdo	Cholla	Namdo
US Military Government (Aug. 1945 – Aug. 1948)		3							2						2	7
North Korean Offensive (Jun. 1950 – Sep. 1950)		6	2	7	11	19	123	51	21							238
UN Forces Counteroffensive (Aug. 1950 – Nov. 1950)		8	2	7	3	19	117	2								158
Chinese Intervention and UN forces' Fightback (Dec. 1950 – Apr. 1951)		11	9	70	2	7										99
Stalemate and Armistice Negotiations (May 1951 – Jul. 1953)		3	2							2						7
<b>Total</b>		31	15	84	16	47	242	53	23							<b>511</b>



## V. Cases Verified

### Sansung-dong, Yechon Bombing Incident

On November 20, 2007, the Commission ascertained that at least 51 residents were killed at Sansung-dong, Yechon due to US Air Force bombing.

It is revealed in the official military document dated on January 19, 1951 that the US Air Force conducted three bombings by 18 fighter-bombers including F9F, F4U, and AD. The fighter-bombers dropped Napalms over Sansung-dong and strafed houses and inhabitants in the area.

Although at that time North Korean force concentrated in the vicinity of Hakga Mountain, no enemy was present in Sansung-dong itself. Therefore misreading the coordinates is assumed as a possible reason for attacks.

According to the Mosquito Mission Report, "many people in white in area of DR 6457," yet at that time, most Korean civilians wore white clothes anyway. Therefore, this could be another reason for the bombings against the people of Sansung-dong.

The area bombing policy for the elimination of the North Korean troops' possible shelter in this area was not an indispensable strategy for military necessity. Also, due to these bombings, only the innocent civilians became victims, so it cannot be justified even under "the Principle of Proportionality."

Even according to the US document, North Korean soldiers were not present at Sansung-dong. Therefore, at the time of incident, Sansung-dong village was an "undefended village," pursuant to the positive law of Article 25 of the Hague Convention Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on





## Inchon Wolmi-do Bombing Incident

On February 26, 2008, the Commission ascertained that the residents in Wolmi-do were killed on September 10, 1950 by the US Forces bombing over the area. At least 10 of the victims were verified by the Commission but much more residents were believed to be killed.

The bombing was executed by the US marine aircrafts of Carrier Division 15 led by Rear Admiral Richard W. Ruble. The flights' mission was to saturate the east half of Wolmi-do. The marine aircrafts (VMF-214, VMF-323) launched from USS SICILY and USS Badoeng Strait dropped 95 napalm bombs, rocketed and strafed the east of Wolmi-do and the area was thoroughly destroyed.

Wolmi-do was a strategically important area for the Operation of Inchon Landing. The saturation of Wolmi-do was executed to eliminate all the possible danger which could injure US Forces in advance

of planned fleet bombardment of the 13<sup>th</sup> and the 14<sup>th</sup> of September, 1950. For that reason the US Forces saturated the east side of Wolmi-do (residence of civilians) by napalm bombing, rocketing and strafing houses and habitants in the area.

**AIR ATTACK REPORT**

1. GENERAL  
 DATE OF ATTACK: 9/10/50  
 TIME: 1500  
 LOCATION: East half of WOLMI-DO  
 WEATHER: B-2 135 1. 1

2. AIRCRAFT TAKING OFF, LOADING, ROCKET FIRING, BOMBING, TORPEDOING, MISSILE FIRING, etc.  
 SQUADRON: VMF-214  
 TYPE: F4U-7D  
 NO. OF AIRCRAFT: 8  
 TYPE OF BOMB: 2 x RP

3. ATTACK (Include time, type of attack, direction, altitude, results, etc.)  
 WOLMI-DO Island  
 TARGET: East half  
 RESULTS: 2 warehouses - wooded area burned, numerous small buildings.

4. AIRCRAFT NOT BY ENEMY AIR (THIS WITNESS)  
 TYPE: F4U-7D  
 NO. OF AIRCRAFT: 8  
 STATUS: 2 x RP

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Air Attack Report Sep. 10. 1950



There is quite a possibility for the US Forces to be aware that numerous civilians were living in Wolmi-do but no action of lessening the victims was found like warning or discriminating civilians. On the contrary, the US Forces napalmed numerous small buildings, strafed children, women and old people in the open area from the early morning. The weather was clear and one of the firing altitudes was only 100 ft.

The devastation of Wolmi-do cannot be justified under the principal of discrimination nor the principal of proportionality.



A picture of burning Wolmi-do



## IV. Cases under Reviewing

### - Bombing Incident of a Cave in Tanyang

The victims and the bereaved of the bombing over Yongchun, Tanyang filed their petitions, insisting they and their families were killed or wounded in a cave, while taking refuge there, by the napalm bombing and strafing from American Jet fighters in January 1951.

### - Kyungsang Namdo Haman Incidents

This case was filed by the villagers of small towns in Haman and Masan. Many of villagers were said to have been killed by American bombing and strafing between July and September 1950.

### - Kyungsang Namdo Uiryong Incidents

Between July and August 1950 American jet fighters bombed and strafed small towns in Uiryong causing heavy civilians deaths.

### - Kyungsang Namdo Sachun-Chinju Incidents

These incidents are said to have happened in Sachun-Chinju in the early August 1950 by the American bombing and strafing.



## - Kyunggi-do Yongin Incidents

American jet fighters were known to have bombed the village of Pungdeokchun-ri and strafed some villagers in January 1951 killing several people.

## - Chungchung Bukdo Tanyang Incidents

Some villages in Tanyang were heavily bombed, strafed and burned by American forces in January 1951 and more than 200 villagers were said to have been killed during the operations

## - Kyungsang Bukdo Pohang Incidents

9 separate incidents were filed concerning civilian casualties inflicted by bombing and strafing from air strikes and by bombardment from warship from the period from August to September 1950.

## - Kangwon-do Incidents

Many civilian casualties were inflicted by the air strikes in Kangwon-do between July 1950 and January 1951.





**Subcommittee of Investigation on Mass Civilian Sacrifice  
Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Republic of Korea**

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