

**Terms of Reference for the Fact Finding Mission on
Demonstration at the Youngwon Trading, in Bangladesh
9 February 2011 – 16 February 2011**

I. Background

- Workers at Youngwon Trading, a South Korean company located in the Free Export Zone in *Chittagon, Bangladesh*, organized a strike to demand a higher salary. Police authorities suppressed the strike in which participated thousands of workers. During the crackdown, 4 people were killed and 250 people were injured on 12 and 13 November 2010. Also, approximately 30,000 workers were prosecuted. There is no information whether proper compensations were given to the killed or injured.
- Youngwon Trading is the biggest apparel manufacturer in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the textiles and clothing industry constitutes 80 per cent of the total export. South Korean companies, including Youngwon Trading, are very influential players in Bangladesh textiles and clothing industry. However, their strong power is considered to be a negative factor to the enhancement of democratization in Bangladesh. Corruption and bribery are widespread in business and politics in Bangladesh and are considered as the biggest obstacles to enhance democracy.
- Minimum wage of garment industry workers was 25 USD per month; it increased to 45 USD in November, 2010. Although the minimum wage was lifted from 25 USD to 45 USD, it is still relatively low and working conditions stay very poor. Bangladesh government has ignored these continuous demands from workers and has acted as surrogate for corporation. Therefore, the government has neglected its duty to act as a fair mediator between labor and managements.
- South Korean media has received biased information from the company which claims that the demonstration was intervened by outsiders and its properties were vandalized. In addition, the chairperson of the company had an interview with the South Korean media claiming that the demonstration was instigated by outsiders and the 'ignorant' workers of the company were manipulated by them. This clearly shows that South Korean companies' attitude towards their Bangladesh employees is racially intolerant and provincial.

II. Objectives:

- 1) To collect evidences and testimonials from workers and company officials regarding demonstration on 12 and 13 November 2010;
- 2) To investigate the working conditions and human rights violations committed by South Korean companies in Bangladesh;
- 3) To verify whether excessive force was used by police during the protest and to investigate legal cases charged against South Korean companies;

- 4) To secure reliable local contacts to exchange information on human rights violations;
- 5) To express civil society's concerns towards South Korean companies, South Korean government, Bangladesh government and their labor policies

III. Methodology:

- Field Visit and Documentation
- Meeting and Interview with the employees of Youngwon Trading, local Trade Unions and labor groups as well as Bangladesh government officials and the South Korean embassy in Bangladesh
- Literature Review

The Fact Finding Report will be prepared by **Mr. Hyun-phil Na** and **Attorney Jong-chul Kim** from Korean House for International Solidarity. The Fact Finding Report will be submitted by **28 February 2011**.

IV. Functions of the Researcher:

- The Fact Finding report will be prepared based on the various sources of information including field visit, interview, literature and inputs received from discussion with relevant individuals, NGOs and government representatives, in order to achieve objectives mentioned above.
- The paper should ensure consistency, reliability and credibility of the findings, conclusions and recommendations
- The paper should ensure confidentiality on the source of information from witnesses and victims, as well as others who wish to remain anonymous, for their safety and security.
- The Researcher will present the preliminary findings of the report in a press conference which will be held at the end of the mission in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- The Researcher shall not publish or release any information regarding their findings during the research period without the report being finalized and released by the FORUM-ASIA

IV. Budget

FORUM-ASIA will provide USD 3,600 to the Korean House for International Solidarity to carry out the fact finding mission for the drafting of the report. 2,500 USD (75% of the budget) will be transferred before the mission and another 1,100 USD (25% of the budget) will be transferred after the completion of the report. The Researcher will carry out the study and submit the final report by **28 February 2010** to FORUM-ASIA at the following email address: easia@forum-asia.org and sasia@foru-asia.org

SIGNATORIES AND EFFECTIVITY

The undersigned hereby execute this Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of their respective organizations. The TOR shall take effect following the signing of the parties in agreement.

Signed:

Date:

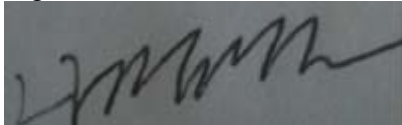


17 January 2011

Mr. Yap Swee Seng, Executive Director,
FORUM-ASIA

Signed:

Date:



17 January 2011

Mr. Hyun-phil Na, Coordinator
Korean House for International Solidarity (KHIS)