



Australian Government

Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice

South Korea

South Korea – KOR37997 – State
Protection – Police Force – Aga Dong San

10 January 2011

1. Please send some information on the ability of authorities in South Korea to protect their citizens from criminal acts.

Reports indicate that South Korean authorities are able and willing to respond to criminal allegations made against Aga Dong San group members and leaders.¹ In 1997 South Korean authorities undertook an investigation of Aga Dong San members and leaders in relation to allegations of murder and exploitation.² According to *Joong Ang Daily*, a South Korean news agency, the investigation was initiated as a result of a legal petition by Aga Dong San group members.³ As a result of the investigation 10 Aga Dong San leaders were arrested on swindling and embezzlement charges worth over 30 billion *won*.⁴ *Joong Ang Daily* reported that in 1998 Kim Ki-soo, the group founder, was convicted of tax evasion, embezzlement and exploitation.⁵ The report states that Kim Ki-soo received a four year prison term and a 5.6

¹ Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1; Cho Yoon-Jung 1997, 'Scandal hurts S. Korean music industry; nation's largest record distributor linked to cult. (Syn-Nara)', *Billboard*, 25 January – Attachment 2; 'Leaders of S.Korean multi-million dollar cult swindle jailed' 2000, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 July – Attachment 3; Hye-son, S. 2000, 'Prosecutors uncover nation's biggest religious fraud case', *The Korea Herald*, 10 July – Attachment 4; 'A Reliable Police Maintains a Healthy Society' 2010, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 5; 'Status for occurrence and arrest of 5 major crimes' 2009, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 6; The World Justice Project 2010, *Rule of Law Index 2010*, pp. 23 & 82 http://www.iberglobal.com/Archivos/Rule_law_index.pdf - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 7; 'Worldwide Governance Indicators: South Korea: 2009' 2009, World Bank website http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/sc_chart.asp - Accessed 10 January 2011 - Attachment 8; Bertelsmann Stiftung 2009, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2009: South Korea Report*, pp. 21-22 http://www.sgi-network.org/index.php?page=countries_status&country=KOR&pointer=14#point_14 - Accessed 10 January 2011 - Attachment 9.

² Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1; Cho Yoon-Jung 1997, 'Scandal hurts S. Korean music industry; nation's largest record distributor linked to cult. (Syn-Nara)', *Billboard*, 25 January – Attachment 2.

³ Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1.

⁴ 'Leaders of S.Korean multi-million dollar cult swindle jailed' 2000, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 July – Attachment 2; Hye-son, S. 2000, 'Prosecutors uncover nation's biggest religious fraud case', *The Korea Herald*, 10 July – Attachment 4; Du Mars, Roger Dean 2000, 'Cult Leaders Accused Of Swindling \$1 billion', *South China Morning Post*, 11 July -<http://www.rickcross.com/reference/general/general251.html> Accessed 21 October 2003 – Attachment 10

⁵ Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 – Attachment 1

billion *won* fine but was acquitted of the murder charges due to lack of evidence.⁶ No further recent reports were found in the sources consulted regarding suspected murders or death threats by the Aga Dong Son group.

In 2008, the Seoul High Court also upheld the property rights of former Aga Dong San members. Aga Dong San reportedly filed lawsuits in 2006 against its former members claiming that they should relinquish their rights to the group's collective property.⁷

General information on the Korean National Police Force (KNPA) indicates that they maintain a strong presence throughout the country.⁸ Information from the KNPA website states that within South Korea there are 244 police stations and 760 police offices. There are also 793 police boxes which operate under police stations.⁹ Police boxes operate as police substations which are responsible for maintaining security and responding to criminal incidents within a specified area.¹⁰ According to KNPA statistics, in 2009 there were 99,554 police officers and each police officer was responsible for 498 individuals.¹¹

Recent statistics from the KNPA website also indicate a high degree of arrests in relation to reported incidences of major crimes including murder, burglary, rape, theft and assault.¹² Crime statistics from the KNPA website indicates that in 2009 there were 485,406 arrests in relation to 590,366 reported incidents of murder, burglary, rape, theft and assault.¹³ These figures suggest significant police action in relation to reported major crimes. The table below provides further information on KNPA crime and arrest statistics:

6 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', Joon Ang Daily, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> – Accessed 5 January 2011 – Attachment 1

7 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', Joon Ang Daily, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> – Accessed 5 January 2011 – Attachment 1

8 'A Reliable Police Maintains a Healthy Society' 2010, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 5; Bertelsmann Stiftung 2009, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2009: South Korea Report*, pp. 21-22 http://www.sgi-network.org/index.php?page=countries_status&country=KOR&pointer=14#point_14 - Accessed 10 January 2011 - Attachment 9.

9 'A Reliable Police Maintains a Healthy Society' 2010, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 5;

10 'Korean National Police' 1990, Country Data website, June <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-12389.html> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 11; 'National Police Agency' (undated), Global Security website <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/rok/npa.htm> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 12.

11 'Change of police work force and population in charge by a single police officer' 2009, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 13.

12 'Status for occurrence and arrest of 5 major crimes' 2009, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 6.

13 'Status for occurrence and arrest of 5 major crimes' 2009, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 6.

■ Status for occurrence and arrest of 5 major crimes

▶ Status for occurrence and arrest of 5 major crimes (Unit: no. of people)

Category		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Total	Occurred	532,243	475,369	497,066	455,840	487,847	489,575	521,142	544,527	590,366
	Arrested	396,885	400,359	399,119	363,437	354,089	354,131	385,704	407,451	485,406
Murder	Occurred	1,051	957	998	1,084	1,061	1,074	1,104	1,109	1,374
	Arrested	1,076	994	1,038	1,041	1,023	1,055	1,062	1,087	1,341
Burglary	Occurred	5,692	5,906	7,292	5,834	5,172	4,832	4,430	4,811	6,346
	Arrested	4,670	5,957	7,165	4,941	4,021	4,071	3,731	4,125	5,895
Rape	Occurred	6,751	6,119	6,531	6,959	7,323	8,759	8,732	9,883	10,215
	Arrested	6,021	5,522	5,899	6,322	6,443	7,937	7,795	8,654	9,167
Theft	Occurred	180,704	175,457	187,352	155,393	188,960	192,808	212,473	223,216	256,590
	Arrested	78,777	125,593	114,920	80,570	80,785	82,491	102,688	113,658	177,771
Assault	Occurred	338,045	283,930	294,893	286,570	285,331	282,102	294,403	305,508	315,841
	Arrested	306,341	262,293	270,097	270,563	261,817	258,577	270,428	279,927	291,232

Independent NGOs have reported that South Korea performs relatively well internationally in terms of rule of law, security and effective criminal justice.¹⁴ The World Justice Project *Rule of Law Index 2010* provides an assessment of South Korea's relative performance in relation to 'order and security' and 'effective criminal justice'. South Korea's overall score on these two factors is quite high (0.8 and 0.73). In relation to the 35 surveyed countries, South Korea was also ranked in the upper middle percentile on both of these factors. The below table shows the overall ranking and score of South Korea on the *Rule of Law Index 2010*:

This table presents aggregate scores by factor for each country in comparison with its regional and socioeconomic peers.

		Score	Global Ranking	Regional Ranking	Income Group Ranking
Factor 1:	Limited Government Powers	0.60	15/35	4/7	11/11
Factor 2:	Absence of Corruption	0.80	11/35	4/7	11/11
Factor 3:	Clear, Publicized, and Stable Laws	0.63	11/35	4/7	10/11
Factor 4:	Order and Security	0.80	13/35	4/7	11/11
Factor 5:	Fundamental Rights	0.78	7/35	2/7	7/11
Factor 6:	Open Government	0.65	5/35	1/7	5/11
Factor 7:	Regulatory Enforcement	0.65	10/35	4/7	10/11
Factor 8:	Access to Civil Justice	0.75	5/35	2/7	5/11
Factor 9:	Effective Criminal Justice	0.73	11/35	4/7	11/11

14 The World Justice Project 2010, *Rule of Law Index 2010*, pp. 23 & 82

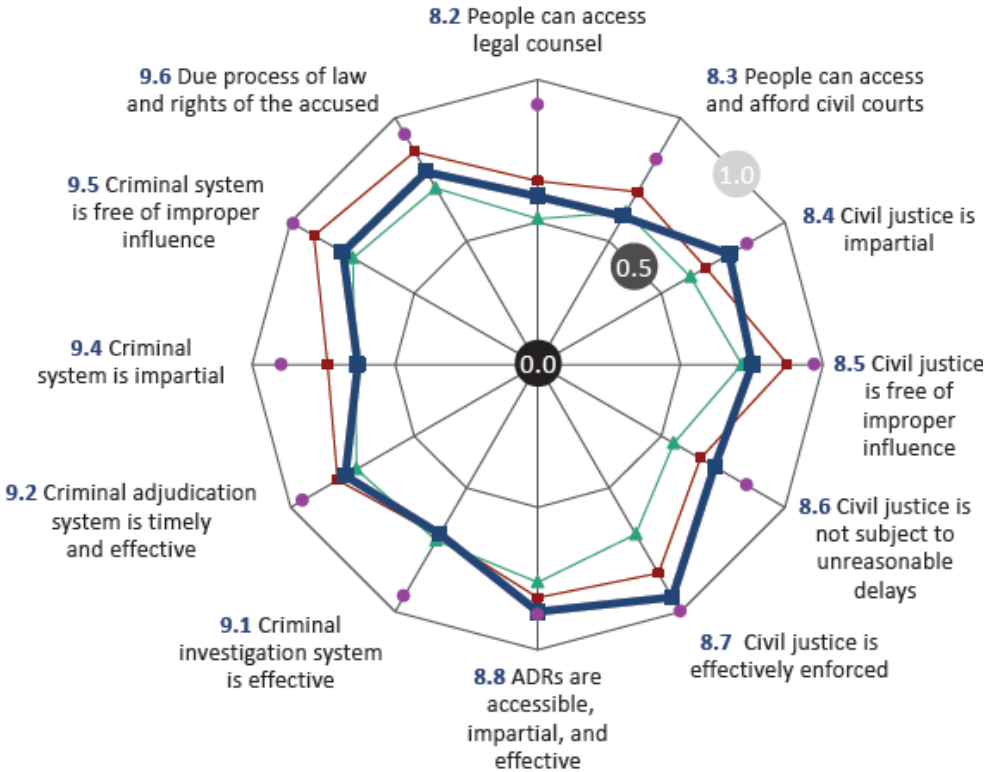
http://www.iberglobal.com/Archivos/Rule_Law_index.pdf - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 7;

'Worldwide Governance Indicators: South Korea: 2009' 2009, World Bank website

http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/sc_chart.asp - Accessed 10 January 2011 - Attachment 8.

The Rule of Law Index 2010 also includes the below table which represents South Korea's performance in relation to various sub-factors of access to justice.¹⁵ The graph demonstrates that South Korea has been rated relatively well in terms of having an effective criminal investigation system. (Please note that the centre of the circle corresponds to the lowest possible score for each sub-factor (0); the outer edge of the circle marks the highest possible score (1). The blue line represents South Korea, the purple dot represents the top score of all surveyed countries. The green line shows the median performance of the East Asia & Pacific region and red line represents the median score of high income surveyed countries.):

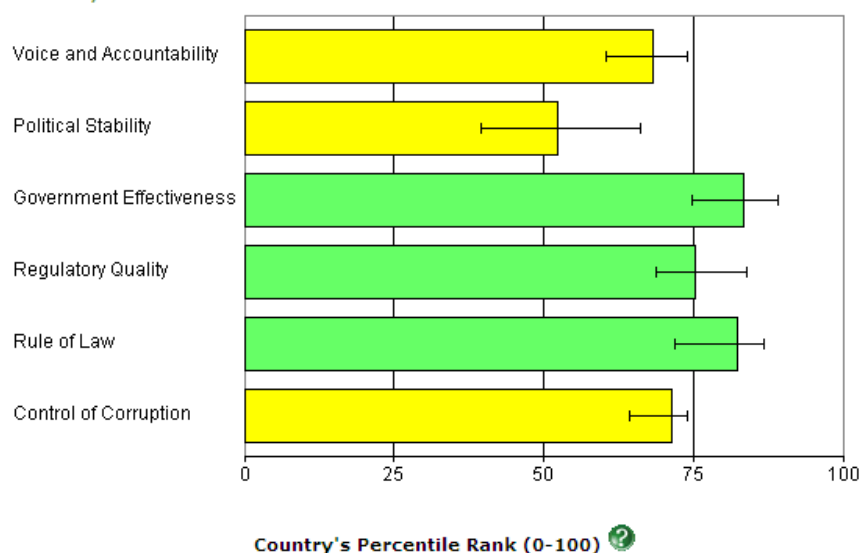
Access to Justice



The Worldwide Governance Indicators research project, which covers 212 countries and territories, measures six dimensions of governance from 1996 to 2009. The “Rule of Law” dimension of governance measures “the extent to which agents have confidence in and abide by the rules of society, in particular the quality of contract enforcement, the police, and the courts, as well as the likelihood of crime and violence”.¹⁶ The following graph illustrates that South Korea was ranked in the 75-90th percentile in relation to ‘Rule of Law’ in 2009.¹⁷ Please note that that 0 corresponds to lowest rank and 100 correspond to highest rank:

15 The World Justice Project 2010, *Rule of Law Index 2010*, pp. 23 & 82
http://www.iberglobal.com/Archivos/Rule_law_index.pdf - Accessed 7 January 2011 - Attachment 7.
 16 ‘Governance Matters 2008: Rule of Law: Worldwide Governance Indicators’ 2008, World Bank website
<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/pdf/rl.pdf> – Accessed 23 February 2009 – Attachment 14.
 17 ‘Worldwide Governance Indicators: South Korea: 2009’ 2009, World Bank website
http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/sc_chart.asp - Accessed 10 January 2011 - Attachment 8.

KOREA, SOUTH



A 2009 report titled, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2009: South Korea Report*, describes the Korean police force as “efficiently organised” and “quite effective in combating organized crime”. The report is by the Bertelsmann Stiftung organisation, a private foundation based in Germany. The report provides the following information on internal security in South Korea:

Korea is a relatively safe country, with a homicide and incarceration rate close to the OECD average. The budgetary share of spending on internal security is one of the highest in the OECD, but this is mainly an effect of the below-average overall budget size.

...In the past, internal security institutions were overgrown, because of the military confrontation with North Korea and the fact that authoritarian leaders used them to control pro-democracy forces. After democratization, a main task of internal security policy was the reorganization of these institutions to adapt to a new political environment. Their efficiency and effectiveness were also considered. Because of this background the police force is efficiently organized throughout the country, and quite effective in combating organized crime. Korea has a centralized police organization that concentrates power at the national level.¹⁸

2. Additional Information

Aga Dong San

Alternative spellings include A-Ga-Dong-San, Aga DongSan and AgaDongSan.

According to a report by *Joon Ang Daily*, a South Korean news agency, Aga Dong San was founded in 1982 by Kim Ki-soo.¹⁹ Various news media reports published between 1997 and 2008 describe the Aga Dong San group as a cult, sect and also as a religious group.²⁰ The Aga

18 Bertelsmann Stiftung 2009, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2009: South Korea Report*, pp. 21-22 http://www.sgi-network.org/index.php?page=countries_status&country=KOR&pointer=14#point_14 - Accessed 10 January 2011 Attachment 9.

19 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, ‘Renegade former cult members get property’, *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1.

20 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, ‘Renegade former cult members get property’, *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1; ‘Leaders of S.Korean multi-million dollar cult swindle jailed’ 2000, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 July – Attachment 2; Cho Yoon-Jung 1997, ‘Scandal hurts S. Korean music industry; nation's largest record distributor

Dong San community is reportedly composed of collective farms and factories located in Icheon city, Gyeonggi Province.²¹ *Joong Ang Daily* has reported that membership in the Aga Dong San group gradually decreased to 80 people by 2006.²² No further information was found in the sources regarding the beliefs or practises of Aga Dong San.

Attachments

1. Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011.
2. Cho Yoon-Jung 1997, 'Scandal hurts S. Korean music industry; nation's largest record distributor linked to cult. (Syn-Nara)', *Billboard*, 25 January.
3. 'Leaders of S.Korean multi-million dollar cult swindle jailed' 2000, *Agence France-Presse*, 12 July.
4. Hye-son, S. 2000, 'Prosecutors uncover nation's biggest religious fraud case', *The Korea Herald*, 10 July.
5. 'A Reliable Police Maintains a Healthy Society' 2010, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011.
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7. The World Justice Project 2010, *Rule of Law Index 2010* http://www.iberglobal.com/Archivos/Rule_law_index.pdf - Accessed 7 January 2011.
8. 'Worldwide Governance Indicators: South Korea: 2009' 2009, World Bank website http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/sc_chart.asp - Accessed 10 January 2011
9. Bertelsmann Stiftung 2009, *Sustainable Governance Indicators 2009: South Korea Report* http://www.sgi-network.org/index.php?page=countries_status&country=KOR&pointer=14#point_14 - Accessed 10 January 2011.
10. Du Mars, Roger Dean 2000, 'Cult Leaders Accused Of Swindling \$1 billion', *South China Morning Post*, 11 July -<http://www.rickcross.com/reference/general/general251.html> Accessed 21 October 2003.
11. 'Korean National Police' 1990, Country Data website, June <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-12389.html> - Accessed 7 January 2011
12. 'National Police Agency' (undated), Global Security website <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/world/rok/npa.htm> - Accessed 7 January 2011.
13. 'Change of police work force and population in charge by a single police officer' 2009, Korean National Police Agency website <http://www.police.go.kr/eng/index.jsp> - Accessed 7 January 2011.

linked to cult. (Syn-Nara)', *Billboard*, 25 January – Attachment 3; Hye-son, S. 2000, 'Prosecutors uncover nation's biggest religious fraud case', *The Korea Herald*, 10 July – Attachment 4; Du Mars, Roger Dean 2000, 'Cult Leaders Accused Of Swindling \$1 billion', *South China Morning Post*, 11 July - <http://www.rickcross.com/reference/general/general251.html> Accessed 21 October 2003 – Attachment 10
21 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1.
22 Su-ryon, P & Myo-ja, S. 2008, 'Renegade former cult members get property', *Joon Ang Daily*, 29 May <http://joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2890448> - Accessed 5 January 2011 - Attachment 1.

14. 'Governance Matters 2008: Rule of Law: Worldwide Governance Indicators' 2008, World Bank website <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/pdf/rl.pdf> – Accessed 23 February 2009.