Election and Civil Society

The Series on Korea’s Democracy Movement Book

- Clean Election Movement
- Blacklist Movement
- Institutional Reform Movement
- Election Participation Movement
- Manifesto Movement
- Monitoring and Assessment of Legislation

Korea Democracy Foundation
Korean civil society’s experiences and activities aimed at building a healthy and fair election culture
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Preface

The Korea Democracy Foundation has published books compiling the valuable experiences and activities carried out in developing Korea’s democracy.

Korea’s democracy has continued to advance since 1987, expanding political freedom including the freedom of the press, assembly and association, and improving political procedures and institutions. During that time, numerous civic organizations were born and their activities were as vigorous as ever. The government and civil society’s efforts to establish a free and fair election culture were especially remarkable. Their drive helped generate a social desire for “an election free from money” through institutional reforms including the revision of the Election Law. It also led to the election participation movement and helped heighten public awareness of the need for the manifesto movement.

Election and Civil Society recounts Korean civil society’s experiences and activities aimed at building a healthy and free election culture, especially from the June Democratic Movement in 1987 until 2006. We expect this book to introduce foreign civic activists to Korea’s precious experiences, thus helping forge a sound election culture in countries facing major votes and contributing to development of democracy across the world.

We owe a lot to many people, including the civic activists of those days. I am deeply grateful to Professor Young-Tae Jung for our intense discussions and his supervision of this publication, as well as planning committee members and the writers.

I hope this book will be a good reference and provide guidelines for countries that just started democracy or are preparing for elections.

Thank you,

June 2012
President of Korea Democracy Foundation
Chung Sunghun
Introduction

Democracy and Election

Democracy is in general referred to as a political form “of the people, by
the people and for the people”. In other words, democracy is a system in
which sovereignty belongs to the people and politics is led by the people
and works for the people. It is also a philosophy that pursues such a
political system. In a democratic country, the people, as the holders of
sovereignty, should be able to participate in decision making that affects
them both directly and indirectly.

In ancient Greece, which realized democracy for the first time in human
history, all citizens congregated and directly made decisions on important
issues. But most modern democratic countries adopted representative
democracy in which elected politicians make decisions on behalf of the
people, because it is impossible for all the people to get together in one
place.

To realize democratic ideals in representative systems, more than
anything else, elections should be fair and free. This is possible only
when electoral laws and institutions are democratic, impartial, and ensure
orderly competition among candidates. The degree of development of
such systems and conditions is a crucial measure of how democratic
a country is. Many newly democratized countries are still dogged by
undemocratic elements in institutions and consciousness left over from
the past authoritarian regimes. Democratization is not completed with
the establishment of a direct, popular election, but is a process of endless
efforts to make up for deficits and improve systems.

Undemocratic institutions and practices remaining after
democratization

Like in other young democracies, many undemocratic laws and institutions
remained in Korea after its democratic transition in 1987. The most
conspicuous was the distribution of proportional representation seats of the
National Assembly based on a “one person, one vote” system. Proportional
representation seats, which accounted for 15-25 percent of the parliament,
were distributed according to the number of constituency seats or the
percentage of the vote won by parties. The system distorted voter’s choice
because it equated support for candidates with that for parties, and the
standard was based not on total votes earned but on the number of seats.

The methods parties used to nominate candidates were also undemocratic.
Until the late 1990s it was the norm that party presidents and other leaders
handpicked candidates. As a result unqualified figures won candidacy
through illegal donations and personal connections. They were easily
tempted into bribery and even willingly used violence in the National
Assembly for the sake of the party leaders who nominated them. The
undemocratic nomination process coupled with a patriarchal social
atmosphere also made it difficult for women to get candidacy. Other
undemocratic elements included gerrymandering, in which incumbent
lawmakers set electoral districts to their advantage, a disproportional electoral districting in which some precincts had too many voters - in violation of the principle of equal election - and campaign rules that gave unjust favors to incumbent lawmakers and established parties.

In addition to institutional faults, illegal campaign practices were also rampant, including the use of unauthorized facilities and publications, as well as cash, gifts, slander and malicious false propaganda, which were typical campaign irregularities in undeveloped countries.

Korea’s democracy also suffered from undemocratic and irrational ways of thinking, such as regionalism and anti-communist bias. To achieve their political goals in elections and legislation, conservative parties and candidates took the advantage of anticomunist thinking among voters, labeling competitors as “commmies” and “pro-communists” and painting their policies as “leftist ideas”. To win elections, politicians from southeast and southwest regions (called Yeongnam and Honam, respectively) often appealed to regional sentiment and stirred up local pride and discriminatory bias against rival regions. These practices were grave obstacles to free and fair campaigns and induced voters to make choices based on irrational sentiments rather than assessment of their policies, qualifications and abilities.

But major parties, the media, and the National Election Commission (NEC) had clear limitations in reforming these undemocratic and irrational systems and practices. It was against this backdrop that further democratic progress required civic organizations’ engagement in politics.

Opportunely, the number of civil society organizations sharply increased after democratization. About 1,700 new groups were established from 1990 to 1999. The People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) and the Korea Women’s Association United were created during the period and later played crucial roles in electoral reform.

The role of civic groups for free and fair elections

The NEC and political parties are directly responsible for democratically reforming electoral systems and monitoring elections. And the media also plays an important role in the process. However, their activities were limited for several reasons. The NEC, in charge of supervising and managing the election process, had difficulty carrying out its duties because of its limited authority and shortage of resources. As direct stakeholders, parties helped prevent the manipulation of election outcomes. But when disputes and conflicts with rival parties arose, they often acted blindly in pursuit of their self-interests. The media, responsible for monitoring elections and providing voters with correct and sufficient information about candidates and parties, often lacked objectivity when they were controlled by the state or swayed by large advertisers.

This was why the role of civil society was important. Seeking political neutrality, civic groups won deep trust and support from the general public as they were more interested in how changes in political systems would affect democratic progress than individual parties, and emphasized electoral processes over the outcome. The Korean civil society’s activities to consolidate a democratic election culture included election monitoring and participation, surveillance of legislative activities, institutional reform, the blacklist movement and the manifesto movement.

They could be roughly divided into the following three periods.

1. The first period spanned from 1987 until the mid-1990s. Key activities included the movement to encourage young people to vote, election
monitoring to fight the influence of money and state powers, and surveillance of lawmakers, which also aimed to promote sound legislative activities and give voters correct and sufficient information about them.

2. The second period was from the 16th parliamentary elections in 2000 until the 17th parliamentary elections 2004. Key activities included the blacklist movement to stop the nomination and election of corrupt, undemocratic and incompetent politicians, and the institutional reform movement to overhaul undemocratic systems and practices related to elections, party funding and the National Assembly.

3. The third period from 2004 onward is characterized by the manifesto movement, which aims to encourage parties and candidates to come up with verifiable and feasible policies so that voters could make choices based on reasonable standards.

Active and continuous efforts by various civic organizations significantly improved Korea’s electoral systems and practices. The following chapters introduce civic activities to establish a democratic and rational culture of election - the clean election, blacklist, institutional reform, electoral participation, manifesto, and legislation monitoring movements.
neighborhood association chiefs - called tongjang and banjang - for illegal electioneering. With the growth of civic movement after democratization in 1987, citizens became increasingly intolerant of government-masterminded election fraud. However, the media and the NEC could not completely wipe out the election irregularities that had persisted over the previous 30 years. Society needed the help of civic groups, which were relatively free from influence and interference from the government and political forces. The Clean Election Campaign of Practice Citizen Conference (CECPCC) led by the Citizens’ Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ, formed in 1989) began a clean election movement as one of core goals of civil society organizations in 1991. Meeting society’s call for democratic and clean elections, the movement drew keen public attention.

The group exemplified a long-term alliance of civic organizations and led to the creation of the Council of Civic Movement for Fair Society in 1993 and the Citizens’ Alliance for General Elections in 2000.

The clean election movement proceeds


After democratization in 1987, moderate liberal groups including the CCEJ, the YMCA, Heungsadan, and the League of Women Voters worked together to fight illegal, corrupt elections and ensure fair voting and counting. They had operated separately or were only loosely allied until they formed the clean election alliance in 1991 for the local elections that year. This also marked the start of a moderate civic campaign that differed from the popular
movement rooted in the radical political activism of the 1980s.

The alliance led the clean election movement for two main reasons. First, ending the collusion between businesses and politicians involving money for favors was urgently needed. At the time businesses usually donated illegal campaign funds to parties and candidates. They were rewarded with preferential treatment when the politicians were elected.

Second, there was a need to prevent unethical and incompetent politicians from winning elections through vote buying, so that the National Assembly could secure a representative mandate and reflect the people’s will.

Initially the movement focused on on-the-spot election monitoring as a kind of citizens’ resistance to authoritarian regimes’ illegal campaigning using money and government powers. Citizens volunteered to join election observers’ corps. They obtained evidence of illegal electioneering, such as handing out money and buying ballot papers. They reported such cases to the media or filed complaints with the prosecution. When they collected enough illegal print handouts to constitute a crime, they referred them to law enforcement agencies. When the materials clearly proved law violations, they distributed copies of them within the district and directly informed voters of the fact.

But civic groups had difficulty securing evidence because they did not have investigative authority. To compensate for this limitation, they had journalists accompany their on-site inspections and informed newspapers and broadcasters swiftly before politicians interfered using government powers. When tipped off about the illegal offering of entertainment, the activists often staked out the places where it was thought to be happening, inviting journalists to join them.

Civic groups also faced difficulty proceeding with the cases they filed. Their legal efforts would be meaningless if the courts and prosecutors, which were under the influence of politicians, refused to take appropriate action. During election season, alliance activists visited the prosecutor general and called for rigorous investigations while discussing cooperation for a clean election. Still now, the personnel affairs of prosecutors’ offices and the judiciary are swayed by politicians and their lukewarm responses.

With the assistance of the alliance, Army Lieutenant Lee Ji-mun revealed illegal practices in military absentee voting in March 1992. Illegal activities he disclosed included training lectures in support of the ruling party, open voting under seniors’ surveillance, screening of ballots and retaliation against those who refused to vote for pro-government candidates.

Then the group formed an investigation team and defense counsel for the whistleblower. It also staged a campaign to collect 1 million signatures calling for the inquiry and rectification of illegal absentee voting in the military. Amid this struggle, the alliance received another report on election fraud in the barracks. The Ministry of National Defense finally admitted wrongdoing and three people were punished for violating the Election Law.

The crusade initiated by Lee’s revelation gradually introduced a democratic process of voting in the military.
and lenient verdicts regarding illegal campaigning remain an obstacle to the clean election movement.

In addition, the alliance actively cooperated with other social organizations. It staged a clean election sticker campaign with the National Federation of Taxi Drivers’ Unions. It also hung a placard at City Hall Station with the subway workers’ union and recorded a song to promote clean campaigning. It formed a student watchdog with university student councils to carry out a badge-wearing drive and monitor party rallies.

The clean election movement culminated in 1992. The number of participating organizations sharply increased from seven in the 1991 local elections to 57 during the 1992 parliamentary elections. They encompassed more than 400 groups in 39 regions and included newly established groups such as the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement, the Federation for Green Transportation and the Green Korea United. The number then jumped to more than 500 in 17 regions during the presidential election later in the year. Its activities also expanded beyond simple monitoring and reports of illegal campaigns to include voter education, pressuring for stern punishment of violators, and lobbying for the revision of the Election Law. In particular, its fight against irregularities in military absentee voting helped build an atmosphere favorable toward clean elections. In addition, 43 participating organizations, including the CCEJ and the Korea Confederation of Trade Unions, established the Council of Civic Movement for Fair Society in May 1993 to maintain their alliance and activities beyond the presidential election.


After the inauguration of the civilian government in 1993, democracy spread to more parts of political and civil society and more diverse issues emerged to move elections beyond the simple frame of confrontation between democratic and anti-democratic forces. In addition, since the 1996 parliamentary elections, illegal campaigning using money and government powers has significantly declined. Accordingly, the civic movement and alliance activities that focused on clean elections had fallen behind the times and had to change direction.

The CCEJ began to give more weight to its drive for policy-oriented campaigns based on evaluation and comparison of candidates’ election pledges, which it started independently during the 1992 parliamentary elections, The People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), launched in September 1994, focused on political, economic and social reform for participatory democracy in partnership with student movements and political activists.

The organizations in the civic alliance also went through changes in status and activity, as they embraced a growing middle class. In this vein, the clean election alliance transformed into the Council of Civic Movement for Fair Society aiming to eradicate corruption, bring reforms through legislation and change social awareness, shortly after the launch of the civilian government in 1993. It changed again in September 1994 into the Council of Korean Civic Organizations which supported the individual
policy activities of civic organizations rather than conducting allied activities. It also served as a channel of communication among the people, business, government and the international community.

During this period, civic movements for political and social reforms diverged into alliance activities, the PSPD and the CCEJ. The NEC took over at the center of clean election campaigns, instead of the civic alliance, and the main focus of citizen movements shifted from clean elections to fighting corruption and pushing policy alternatives.


During this period, the NEC took over the monitoring of illegal campaigns and promoting clean elections, which were formerly led by the civic alliance. The state watchdog operated election monitoring corps and conducted vigorous on-site surveillance, which helped reduce the use of money and government powers gradually.

Accordingly, the focus of civic movements began to switch from the clean election movement to the disclosure of candidates’ information, blacklisting of unqualified candidates and policy-oriented campaigns. The most conspicuous activity was the blacklist campaign conducted by the PSPD in 2000 and 2004. The movement had a tremendous impact on the political establishment by encouraging active political participation by citizens who previously had to watch helplessly as politicians engaged in blatant corruption and undemocratic behavior. But the movement was illegal under the Election Law and dogged by controversies over how to assess first-time candidates and issues related to its support for clean, democratic candidates. As a result, the campaign ended after the 2004 parliamentary elections.

4. Divergence of the clean election movement (2004-present)

From 2004, the significance and role of the clean election movement began to wane and differences in ideological and political positions among civic organizations came to the surface. Civic groups carried out their own activities in line with their identities and the CECPC’s status and influence rapidly weakened.

Nevertheless, some civic groups continued with the clean election movement, individually or together with the alliance. They collected citizens’ reports on electoral fraud on their Internet homepages, operated on-the-spot monitoring groups and conducted signature campaigns to pressure candidates to abide by the law during the 2004 parliamentary elections. The CCEJ operated a center for citizens’ reports of election fraud on its homepage and monitored illegal campaign activities such as vote buying and the aggravation of regional sentiment. The YMCA also launched a citizen monitors’ group during the 2004 elections, collected reports and complaints from citizens, gathered information about candidates, conducted field investigations and reported Election Law violations to the NEC.

Achievements and limitations

In a survey conducted by the NEC after the 2004 parliamentary elections, 7 out of 10 voters said the movement helped establish a fair electoral culture. After the clean election movement began, the number of detected Election Law violations decreased noticeably. The total number of cases handled during the official campaign period fell from 1,377 in 2000 to 1,212 in
Election and Civil Society

Chapter 1. Clean Election Movement

Second, its activities were limited by the Election Law with excessive regulation on pre-electioneering and organizations’ involvement in campaigns.

Third, the movement increasingly lost relevance as the nation’s democratization and an improved Election Law made illegal electioneering difficult.

Despite these limitations, the movement made a great contribution to the establishment of the civic movement as an independent social force, and laid the groundwork for the subsequent blacklist movement, policy campaigns and the manifesto movement.

2004, The number of complaints and investigation requests decreased from 429 to 203 during the same period (Yonhap News report on April 15, 2004). Cases of offering cash and entertainment, the typical illegal campaign strategies, fell from 212 to 53. These significant reductions are a positive result of civil society groups’ consistent effort for clean elections. Of course, the NEC’s active surveillance and crackdowns and enhanced regulations in the new Election Law revised in March 2004 also played a crucial role. The movement made a great contribution to realizing a free and fair election culture and expanding civic groups’ role in monitoring and criticizing campaigns. The CECPCC set a good precedent for future solidarity of civic organizations.

However, the clean election movement had some limitations. First, because of limited social status and legal rights, citizens’ organizations could not conduct their own inquiries and had to send election irregularities to the NEC and prosecutors’ offices, which had investigative authority. The prosecution and court, under the influence of political circles, tended to do what political bigwigs wanted, rather than thoroughly probing complaints filed by civic groups.

Table 1. Assessment of civic groups’ monitoring of illegal election campaigns(Unit: %)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>48.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost not helpful</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not helpful at all</td>
<td>4.8</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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Chapter 02

Blacklist Movement

Tae-Ho Lee
Secretary General
People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy
participation would ensure wins by pro-democracy forces and political reform. But their hopes were crushed in the face of a stark, outdated political structure. In past elections, both ruling and opposition parties mobilized huge amounts of illegal funds. Politicians had colluded to foil attempts to rewrite laws governing elections and political funding. Law enforcement authorities had also lacked determination to tackling political irregularities. Moreover, parties’ nomination of candidates was far from democratic. Opaque nomination procedures often gave party candidacy to corrupt and incompetent figures. Parties put candidates’ loyalty to the party leader over their ability to make laws and deliver campaign pledges. What mattered most to politicians was not voters’ trust and judgment, but the confidence of their party leaders.

To ordinary voters, elections every four years felt like picking vegetables in a shop full of rotten produce and the political world seemed populated by a “league of others” that never changed. Citizens disenchanted with the political establishment could not find any alternative. In such a political environment, voter participation and fair elections alone fell short of...
achieving a real electoral democracy. It was time for civic groups to go beyond the clean election movement. They needed to find innovative, relevant, even extreme ways to impact the political scene and show the full power of voters.

Against this backdrop, the Citizen’s Alliance for General Elections declared the start of the blacklist movement ahead of the 16th parliamentary elections to give citizens an opportunity to mete out justice to lawmakers.

Overcoming hurdles to a vigorous start

The blacklist movement hit several snags from the start. The biggest was institutional barriers. At the time, the Election Law banned any organization - excluding those of party-backed candidates and registered campaign workers - from election campaigning or activities to defeat particular candidates (Article 87 on the prohibition of social organizations’ intervention in elections). In addition, both politicians and civic groups were banned from endorsing or opposing candidates before the campaign period begins (Article 59 on the prohibition of premature campaigning). These provisions outlawed any civic campaigns opposing particular politicians and prohibited them from making any remarks during the periods of election and candidate nomination.

To wage the blacklist movement, the alliance had to either pressure the legislature into amending the Election Law or disobey the current laws. The civic groups declared that should the “poisonous” provisions remain unchanged before the elections, they would break the law in order to justly exercise their constitutional right to vote.

The declaration enraged politicians. Even before the alliance’s official announcement, the media reported on the blacklist campaign, sparking anger among politicians. They called the move “political terrorism” and threatened to sue civic leaders for violating the Election Law. Their reaction backfired. Politicians’ fierce resistance met with increasingly severe public criticism. Public opinion overwhelmingly supported the blacklist movement as a vital and legitimate movement. Just 10 days after the movement’s proposal was issued, 412 organizations across the country had signed up, meaning that almost all members of the clean election movement had joined the blacklist campaign.

The alliance encompassed the nation’s leading civic and religious organizations, including the PSPD, the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement, the Green Korea United, the Korea Women’s
concentrate on the goal of getting the law revised in February and March. If it failed, the next step would be civil disobedience.

Fortunately, some clauses including Act 87 were revised through a bipartisan agreement ahead of the parliamentary elections. The revision stipulated that social groups except those receiving government subsides could carry out election campaigns during the campaign period. But only campaigns through news conferences, Internet homepages and in-house newsletters for members were allowed. Printed materials, banners, street campaigns and assemblies were still banned. In other words, direct contact with voters and mass rallies were still outlawed, as well as electioneering before the official campaign period.

After a long debate, the alliance chose a varied approach. It decided to use several means that were not seen as “assemblies”, such as telephone discussions with voters and one-man street rallies, while holding assemblies, though illegal, shortly before the elections, for which alliance leaders were later fined.

Seven guidelines for selecting unqualified candidates

The alliance received proposals from participating organizations on how to decide on undesirable candidates. Each group should make sure that the criteria had enough voter support to affect the outcome of the elections and that they had convincing evidence.

Finally, a set of seven standards were agreed on as follows:
1. Corruption
2. Election Law violations
3. Disruption of the constitutional order and barbaric acts (such as taking part in a coup and torture)
4. Sincerity in legislative activities
5. Attitudes toward major reform legislation
6. Provocation of regional sentiment, frequent switches of party affiliation and other behavior undesirable for a politician
7. Integrity in paying taxes or reporting assets

Priority was given to the first three items: If politicians had done something that fell into one of those categories, they would definitely be blacklisted. The remaining four criteria were applied selectively: Findings falling into these categories would be reviewed comprehensively and the final decision would depend on seriousness of their actions.

Sincerity in legislative activities and attitudes toward reform legislation was not given precedence because the National Assembly in the past did not properly collect and disclose statistics on legislative affairs, records on lawmakers’ attendance and voting, or session minutes. In addition, the guidelines did not include lawmakers’ stances on issues of interest to activist groups such as the environment, women’s rights, media reforms, budget oversight and human rights. This was because of a lack of materials available to judge their policy stances and it was uncertain whether individual policy issues were of interest to the entire electorate and important enough to influence election outcomes. After a long debate, the alliance decided not to treat policy attitudes and sincerity in legislative activities, with some exceptions, as part of official standards but to provide related information to voters. Accordingly, the final blacklist criteria concentrated on issues such as corruption, election fraud and collaboration with military dictators.

Inquiry and selection of unfit candidates

Even though the standards were established, it was not easy to determine what actions should be regarded as “corrupt”. The decision was simple for politicians convicted of corruption, but in cases where they had avoided penalties because of a lack of pertinent legal provisions or lax enforcement the decision was prone to dispute.

For example, politicians who received 50 million won or more from companies without issuing a receipt could be found guilty of violating the Political Fund Law, albeit not of bribery. But before the 1997 economic crisis, there were no provisions to punish such behavior, meaning that those politicians could claim that they "are free from corruption suspicion". Politicians would be blacklisted if their misdeeds were confirmed and came under the criteria, even if they had been punished lightly or ruled not guilty in the past. The alliance decided to judge past wrongdoings retroactively in accordance with the latest political law provisions and civic groups’ proposed revisions. To minimize controversy, the alliance sent politicians copies of materials unfavorable to them so that they could make their cases. Legal advisers including lawyers supporting the campaign reviewed legal matters including libel.

The final list was reviewed by the 100 Voters Committee, a sort of jury consisting of civic group members, and approved by a meeting of representatives from participating organizations. Voters committees existed in 12 regional chapters and three religious groups, too. In making up the list, the alliance ruled out political considerations. Though it consisted of progressive groups, they agreed that the movement should not act as a judgment on political views.

The first blacklist was announced on January 22 and February 22 and aimed to block party nomination for 102 figures. Of them, 44 failed to get candidacy, with some voluntarily withdrawing. The rest ran for election either as party nominees or independently.
The second blacklist was announced on April 3, 10 days before the elections, aiming to ensure the defeat of 86 candidates, including 22 independents.

Promotional strategy and voters’ action strategy

The alliance carefully designed promotional programs to gain greater public support. First, it conducted a survey on whether citizens approved of the blacklist campaign. In a poll just after the movement’s launch, about 85 percent of respondents supported it. About 85 percent also said they would back the campaign even if it was illegal under the current Election Law.

Theoretical and legal legitimacy was also important. An advisory group of 150 professors in political science, sociology and law presented the theoretical basis for the movement. Its legal advisers and other lawyers’ organizations filed a petition with the Constitutional Court against the Election Law provision that banned the blacklist drive, and provided counterarguments against politicians’ claims of libel.

The main publicity images were a yellow card in soccer during the first phase of the campaign and a red card during the second stage, which were fairly effective.

Its media team actively promoted the campaign to the press, releasing the names and detailed reasons they were blacklisted. It was not easy for the media to disclose the names because of fierce opposition from the politicians on the list. But under a strong pressure from public opinion, not only liberal but also conservative newspapers and public broadcasters reported it.

The alliance also formed a cyber team to communicate with Internet users. Use of the Internet was already widespread and various online media outlets were popping up. The campaign garnered explosive support online, to which the movement’s overall success was attributable.

The rate of nomination and election failures

- Rate of nomination failure: 43.1 percent (44 of a total of 102 blacklisted figures failed to win party nomination)
- Rate of election failure: 68.6 percent (59 of a total of the final 86 blacklisted candidates lost the elections)
- Rate of election defeat in 22 focus constituencies: 68.2 percent (15 candidates were defeated)

Affiliated organizations

- A total of 1,101 organizations participated (as of April 12, 2000)
- Covered 10 major metropolises and provinces / 53 basic local administrative units
- 3 religious groups (Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist) / 1 professional association (a health care organization)

Financial donations

- Number of donors: 5,667 people (as of April 12, 2000)
- Total amount: 350,191,652 won
- Total spending: 328,851,681 won

Cyber campaign (www.ngokorea.org, the site has since been closed)

- Total number of hits: 856,090 (as of April 12, 2000)
- Daily average: 10,569
- Citizens’ postings on the site: 45,674
In late March, the alliance began a cross-country bus tour and collected signatures to promote voter participation in the elections. Some 330,000 citizens signed up, promising to vote and consider the blacklist when casting their ballots.

On April 3, the alliance unveiled the final list and launched a 10-day drive to defeat blacklisted candidates, especially zeroing in on 22 big-name politicians. The alliance used “shadow candidate” tactics. For example, it dispatched a renowned human rights lawyer to head the campaign against a candidate allegedly involved in torture as a prosecutor. The effect of the symbolic contrast was as powerful as that of several mass campaign rallies.

The achievement of the blacklist movement

Of the 102 on the nomination blacklist, 44, either failed to win party nomination or gave up candidacy. Of the 86 on the second list, 59 lost elections, including a number of party big-wigs. The movement particularly targeted 22 influential politicians, of whom 15 were defeated. The results in Seoul and nearby areas were more dramatic with 19 of the 20 blacklisted losing elections.

Fresh wind blows through Korean politics

What made the blacklist movement successful

The success of the campaign stemmed from a combination of political events. Citizens’ desire for political reform was as strong as ever, especially after the financial crisis of late 1997. Public distrust in political leaders’ ability to deal with the crisis and anger about corruption by the privileged elite were ever deepening. But politicians did not even understand the seriousness of the situation, let alone carry out reforms. While ignoring a flood of corporate bankruptcies, mass unemployment and other simmering social problems, lawmakers abused their immunity to sabotage investigations into corruption in what was derisively called a “brain-dead” and “bullet-proof” National Assembly.

The blacklist drive, though led by civic organizations, was in fact a citizens’ resistance movement. Another major factor in its success was the strength of the nation’s civic movement that had built up since the June 1987 democratic uprising. Diverse civic groups concerned with the environment, women’s rights, local communities, political reform and fighting corruption expanded rapidly through the 1990s and reached their peak in 2000. In addition, civic groups sought solidarity based on their shared experience of the pro-democracy movement under dictatorships. It would have been impossible for more than 1,000 groups scattered across the country to agree on standards and form an alliance for the blacklist campaign without their shared history of hardships and pursuit of a common agenda.

The Internet also played a crucial role, providing new tools and forums for political communication. Restrictive measures in the Election Law were unable to gag the dynamic communication of the Internet. The aspiration...
for reform among the generation behind the pro-democracy movement and the younger Internet-savvy people sustained the blacklist movement and altered the form and content of Korean politics drastically.

Controversies over the blacklist movement

The blacklist movement was not free from disputes, however, with complaints coming from both conservatives and progressives.

Conservatives compared the movement to China’s Communist Red Guards, accusing it of one-sided attacks and abusing the power of public opinion. Such criticism was raised mainly by the opposition Grand National Party and spread by conservative media. Many members of the GNP were involved in corruption and military coups. Their argument was strengthened when the then liberal ruling party supported the blacklist campaign, judging that its candidates were not threatened by the movement.

But the movement never used political powers and the blacklist was designed only to help voters make an informed judgment. Moreover, its protagonists strived to exclude any political considerations and the result was not necessarily disadvantageous to the opposition party. In fact, GNP candidates won in most of the party’s traditional strongholds.

Progressives criticized the movement for focusing on individual politicians, rather than structural reform. They also charged that the movement was so preoccupied with maintaining political neutrality that it neglected to do what was needed to help progressives advance into politics.

This argument was also less than convincing. The movement was an effort to pave the way for long-stalled political reform, and indeed added critical momentum to pull down the privileges of political conservatives that had been embedded in the way parties, elections and political funding were run. Furthermore, in the wake of the movement, new progressive forces became much better placed to enter politics.

Fresh wind of change in Korean politics

The movement rode on a wave of citizens’ anger at crooked politics and created a crisis in the political establishment. Battered by the movement, politicians got painfully aware that they were far behind the times and could not survive without fundamental renewal. It dealt a serious blow to the structure of corruption and collusion among old parties and considerably weakened the influence of their corrupt bosses. Reforms of election, funding, parliament and party systems began in earnest. The creation and disclosing of records of parliamentary activities was also enhanced and the screening of politicians’ assets and the monitoring of their legislative activities became standard procedures.

After the parliamentary elections, the National Assembly launched a special committee on political reform and began work to amend political laws. The blacklist movement especially acted as a catalyst for substantial changes to party nominations. For the presidential election two years later, the ruling party chose its standard bearer through primaries in which both party members and general citizens voted. A one-person, two-vote system was introduced for general elections, allowing voters to cast ballots for their favored party, as well as their preferred candidate. With the new system, parties and their policies were now judged by voters separately from candidates. The system allocated parliamentary seats in proportion to the votes each party won, in effect lowering the barriers for new parties to enter politics,
Most importantly, the campaign helped spur voters’ voluntary and creative participation in politics. Voter participation advanced beyond the blacklist movement. Open nomination systems gave rise to a political supporters’ movement. The new form of participation often triggered political storms that catapulted formerly marginalized politicians to the center stage, as shown by the rise of the Roh Moo-hyun administration.

The blacklist movement stirred a fresh and dynamic wind of change to Korea’s electoral and political culture in the early 2000s.

2004, the second blacklist movement

Diverging civic movement and diversifying voter activism

In 2004, civic groups staged the blacklist movement again, but on a smaller scale and at a lower level of intensity. Only 289 groups, about a quarter of the number of 2000, joined the alliance and the two blacklists were issued mainly through press conferences and on the Internet.

Citizens’ aspiration for political reform had found outlets in more diverse spheres of political participation. Many active supporters of the blacklist movement in 2000 had diverted their interest into party primaries and new progressive parties. Many civic activists suggested they switch to a movement of selectively supporting candidates and parties after evaluating their policies, rather than returning to the same blacklist movement. Even if they stuck with a blacklist movement, the criteria should include policy issues in addition to corruption, they argued.

The blacklist movement in 2004 was greatly affected by the National Assembly’s approval of a motion to impeach President Roh Moo-hyun just before the elections. The move was prompted by his remarks that suggested he intended to back the ruling party in the elections. The opposition parties, which held a majority in the parliament, unilaterally passed the impeachment bill in early March. The action backfired, triggering a wave of nationwide candlelight protests and turning the elections into a fierce confrontation between forces for and against the impeachment.

Then a dispute erupted within the alliance over whether to blacklist the lawmakers who voted for the impeachment, which would drive the movement into a political storm.

Result and meaning of the 2004 blacklist movement

The alliance finally announced two blacklists. The first included 106 figures selected by criteria similar to that of 2000. The second targeted 100 who supported the impeachment, accusing them of “anti-democratic and anti-voter” behavior.

As a result, 78 of the 106 on the first list, and 51 of the 100 on the second list, failed to win in the elections. As expected, the alliance’s blacklisting of pro-impeachment lawmakers added fuel to the accusation from conservative parties and media.

Some proposed that the blacklist include lawmakers who supported Korea’s dispatch of troops to the U.S.-led war in Iraq or the Saemangeum project, the largest-ever tidal flat reclamation project, which was feared to seriously damage the environment. Finding it difficult to reach an agreement, the alliance decided to encourage related groups to release their own blacklists.
in their fields. Accordingly, environmental and anti-war groups released their lists, but failed to produce results with statistically meaningful and verifiable effects. It was not easy to judge politicians on individual policy issues that sharply divided public opinion.

Despite the high rate of defeat for blacklisted figures (63 percent for both lists combined), the movement itself was not a major factor in the 2004 general elections, which was overshadowed by the anti-impeachment protests and other hot-button issues. As Korean voters became mature enough to judge and act on their own, the blacklist movement was reduced to a supplementary tool that helped voters make informed choices by delivering information and imparting civic groups’ positions.
Citizens sent a stern warning to corrupt and incompetent politicians during the 2000 parliamentary elections through the extreme and illegal blacklist movement. About 70 percent of the blacklisted candidates lost in the elections, a major blow to the political establishment tainted by corruption and infighting.

The most important thing to turn the change initiated by the movement into real democratization was to reform the outdated political systems. Aware of this, civic groups began to debate how to reform elections, political funding and political parties, riding on broad public support garnered through the blacklist movement. In February 2001, more than 200 civic groups launched the Civil Society Organizations Network in Korea (CSONK) and began the institutional reform movement in earnest.

The new movement considered three approaches to address undemocratic aspects of political laws: Demanding the revision of particular laws, promoting the cause of institutional reform through conferences, statements and hearings organized by the parliament and parties, and petitioning the National Assembly to revise the law. Previously, civic groups had relied mainly on the first two methods. The PSPD, launched in the mid-1990s, largely used the third method. As a result, the number of legislative petitions by civic groups jumped from 13 between 1988 and 1994 to 62 between 1995 and early 2007 and has since been increasing exponentially.

In October 2000, six months after the 16th general elections, 32 groups that led the blacklist movement, including the CCEJ and the PSPD, agreed to launch the CSONK for a continuous and systematic movement to reform political institutions. The groups worked together through the preparatory committee and launched the solidarity network in February 2001 with the participation of more than 200 organizations nationwide. As its three core projects, the network agreed to push for an invigorated civic society, local autonomy and political reform as it set the agenda for working-class welfare, reform legislation and comprehensive monitoring.

The CSONK formed the Special Political Reform Committee in April to campaign nationwide to attain transparency of political funds, assessment
of legislative activities, and revision of electoral and political laws. Priority was given to the introduction of a new proportional representation system based on votes cast both for candidates and parties, and the abolition of restrictions on early campaigning. They submitted unified revision proposals for political and local autonomy laws to the National Assembly in December. In 2002, they engaged in activities for the local elections in June and the presidential election in December, hosted hearings on revision of regulations on political donation and launched the Network NGO Legislation Committee to improve the quality of their legislative petitions.

In January 2003, 13 organizations including the PSPD, the Lawyers for a Democratic Society, the Korean Womenlink, the Korea Women’s Associations United, the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement and the Citizens’ Coalition for Better Government launched the Civil Society Organizations Network for Political Reform (CSONPR) to lead the political reform movement until the parliamentary elections in 2004. The number of participating organizations increased to more than 300 at the end of the year as a result of persistent promotional efforts. "Let’s clear away the legacy of old politics such as corrupt and outdated parties, opportunistic politicians, the perennial confrontation and conflict, and an unproductive National Assembly. Let’s open the way for a new politics”. This was the professed goal of the political reform group. As key strategies to achieve this, it set public campaigns and legislative petitions with citizens’ participation. The group hosted public discussions on reforming the systems of parties, election, parliament and political funding and opened an Internet forum called Public Square for Political Reform.

Cooperation between civic groups and lawmakers

The CSONPR proposed to political parties forming the National Council for Political Reform to allow experts and groups in academia, law, media and other fields to participate in the legislative process. At the time, the National Assembly’s Special Committee on Political Reform had been in operation since November 2002. But the panel was considered to have been unable to reflect civil society’s demands or push bold reforms that could damage politicians’ vested interests. Indeed, the parliamentary committee had yielded no tangible results.

Parties were lukewarm to the proposal. They said the National Assembly’s exclusive rights to legislation should not be compromised and that parties and lawmakers still differed on how many civic group representatives should be on the proposed council and whether its decision should be binding. Eventually, the civic groups teamed up with 70 ruling and opposition lawmakers disgruntled with undemocratic management of parties to launch the National Council for Political Reform at the end of February 2003. The politicians joined the council in their private capacity. The council was not a formal parliamentary group. It was a limited, unofficial alliance of civil society organizations and individual lawmakers. But this was the first time in Korea’s political history that civic groups and lawmakers had organized a forum to discuss legislative agenda.

The council drafted the first petition on political reform in mid-April and submitted it to the extra session of the National Assembly in late April. The members heard more opinions from experts in various fields and conducted internal debates on some controversial issues before drafting its second legislative petition and submitting it in June. The following month, the lawmakers officially proposed political reform bills covering about 50 agenda items agreed through two rounds of in-house consultation.
Pressures on parties bear fruit

On the other hand, major political parties including the Democratic Party and the Grand National Party had held 20 meetings since March to follow up on their previous agreement to make into law their common presidential election commitments. But they neither made any progress in the talks nor accepted the council’s proposals.

A major political funding scandal involving the ruling Democratic Party erupted in June. The council took the opportunity to demand transparent disclosures of political donations and presidential campaign funds. It also demanded the National Assembly expand the special committee into the National Special Committee on Political Reform encompassing representatives of more sectors of society. The opposition GNP, which had been reeling from internal disputes over who should be held responsible for its defeat in the presidential election and how to reform its organizations and operations, launched a new leadership in June and made a proposal similar to that of the civic groups. The leaders of the ruling and opposition parties agreed in principle at the end of August to establish the proposed new committee. However, they failed to proceed further due to differences over details.

They finally bowed to civic groups’ mounting pressure and launched the National Special Council on Political Reform as late as early November. But unlike the original proposal the panel was limited to a role as an advisory body to the National Assembly’s special committee. The new organization consisted of 11 private experts with no lawmakers participating, and did not have legislative authority. After twists and turns, the council officially began operation on November 13 and submitted its proposals to revise political funding and election laws in early December. The parliamentary committee, however, arbitrarily altered the amendment proposals. Coincidentally, another election funding scandal broke out, this time involving the GNP. Through statements and rallies the civic groups stepped up pressure on parties to disclose details of political funds and accept the council’s reform proposals.

In March 2004, one month before the 17th parliamentary elections, the National Assembly passed amendment bills far short of the extent of reforms the civic groups had demanded.

**Big achievements, disappointing limits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Before amendment</th>
<th>Civic groups’ demands</th>
<th>After amendment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parties  | • Undemocratic, top-down nominations  
|          | • Male dominated nominations  
|          | • Bloated central party with regional party chapters reduced to campaign offices  
|          | • Opaque finances  
|          | • Legal requirements for democratic nomination regulations including all-member votes or open primaries in which the public can participate  
|          | • Mandatory quota for women  
|          | • Reduction of central party headquarters and reforming the operation of local chapters  
|          | • Transparent disclosure of financial structures  
|          | • Revision of nomination regulations was not passed but almost all parties adopted primaries  
|          | • Females were given 50 percent of proportional representation candidacy (odd numbers on the party list) and more than 30 percent of constituency candidates  
|          | • Those defeated in party primaries were barred from running in the election  
|          | • Abolition of local chapters |
Elections

- One person, one vote
- Strict regulations on campaigning before the official campaign period
- Limited public campaign funding
- Light penalties for Election Law violations

- One person, two votes (proportional representation to make up at least a third of Assembly members)
- Ending prohibition of campaigning before the official campaign period
- Full public campaign funding
- Strict punishment of Election Law violations

- One-person, two-vote system was introduced with one vote for candidates, the other for parties (There were 56 proportional representation seats, about a fifth of the Assembly seats)
- Preliminary candidacy was introduced, allowing limited electioneering before the start of the official campaign period
- Campaigning through media and the Internet was expanded
- Public campaign funding was expanded
- Supervision and punishment of Election Law violations were enhanced. Anyone who received money and entertainment could be fined 50 times the amount they received. Anyone reporting such violations could be rewarded up to 50 times the amount

Political funding

- Large donations by a few people
- Political donations by companies and organizations allowed
- Opaque accounting

- Donations in small amounts by many people
- Linking donations and government subsidies by matching funding
- Transparent disclosure of income and expenditure of political funds

- The ceiling of individual donations was lowered and the disclosure of major donors introduced in an effort to promote small-sum donations by many people
- Political donations by companies and organizations were banned
- The total income and the details should be reported and payment above a certain amount should be made by check or credit card

National Assembly

- Recorded vote conducted in principle
- Making public parliamentary committee sessions in principle

- Making recorded votes mandatory
- Making public all parliamentary sessions

- Rejected

Authority of National Election Commission

Rights to investigate income and expenditure of political funds

- The NEC given enhanced mandate or more substantial powers

- Measures were introduced to facilitate the NEC’s monitoring and surveillance of the income and expenditure of campaign money and political funds

- Rejected
The success of the movement was attributable in part to a favorable political atmosphere. Politicians’ illegal electioneering, frequent provocation of regional sentiment and corruption scandals heightened public resentment of established politics and increased citizen’s zeal for political reform. In addition, the National Assembly could no longer delay amendments because the Constitutional Court had ruled unconstitutional both the one-person, one-vote system and the upper and lower limits on constituency size in January and October, 2001, respectively.

The favorable conditions were fairly influential, but had it not been for well-designed strategies it would have been difficult for the movement to achieve such successful results.

Creative strategies behind success

The success of the movement was attributable in part to a favorable political atmosphere. Politicians’ illegal electioneering, frequent provocation of regional sentiment and corruption scandals heightened public resentment of established politics and increased citizen’s zeal for political reform. In addition, the National Assembly could no longer delay amendments because the Constitutional Court had ruled unconstitutional both the one-person, one-vote system and the upper and lower limits on constituency size in January and October, 2001, respectively.

The favorable conditions were fairly influential, but had it not been for well-designed strategies it would have been difficult for the movement to achieve such successful results.

First, it created a standing civic solidarity organization, the Civil Society Organizations Network in Korea, and an institutional reform body, the National Assembly Special Committee on Political Reform. Unlike previous election monitoring movements based on transient collaboration among...
Sixth, the network used the mass media to pressure political circles to accept its reform proposals. Civic groups worked together with broadcasters to host TV debates on political reforms. When such sessions were not arranged, they promoted the need for and direction of political reform through statements and interviews. They tried to get party policy chiefs to take part in TV debates and pressured parties to publicly promise to pass agreements made during the discussions which were often called the "to-the-end debate".

Lastly, the civic groups also applied pressure on anti-reform politicians even by using corruption scandals involving them as well as information on individual politicians and parliamentary operations obtained through their parliamentary monitoring activities.

The institutional reform movement led by the alliance of major civic groups garnered broad-based support and participation by citizens and removed many undemocratic elements of political laws. It spurred the nation's move toward real democratization, which had been started by the clean election movement.
Chapter 04

Election Participation Movement

Women’s political participation movement

- Kyoung-Sook Lee
  Secretary General, Korean Women’s Association United

Green politics and the environmental movement

- Hyung-Won Seo
  Chairperson, Gwacheon City Council

Netizens’ participation in politics

- Yeon-Jung Chung
  Professor, Department of Public Administration
  Paichai University
Women’s political participation movement
-The drive to have 100 women elected to parliament

Creating a new political landscape by expanding women’s political participation

Korea came 63rd out of 70 nations in 2003 in terms of the gender empowerment measure by the United Nations Development Programme, which surveyed women’s political and economic participation and decision-making power. With the number of female lawmakers just 16 - or 5.9 percent of the 272 National Assembly members - women’s political status in Korea was deplorably low. Because of women’s low social status and power, many urgent problems remained unresolved. For example, two bills fervently pushed by women’s groups since 1999-the abolition of the patriarchal family system and the revision of the law against prostitution to punish sex buyers and brokers- had been pending in the National Assembly for several years. Women’s expanded presence in political institutions was desperately needed to improve a host of unequal laws and systems that abused women’s human rights, and to end the corrupt and incompetent male-dominated political culture. Long suppressed under the patriarchal system, women had the potential to grow into a political force that understood and spoke for the disabled, the elderly, badly paid youths and other socially weak people.

The Political Party Law revised in 2002 stipulated that women account for 50 percent of proportional representation candidates for local councils with women taking every other spot on the list. Parties were also required to try to fill 30 percent of constituency candidates with women. Parties complying with the rule could be rewarded with additional state subsidies. In National Assembly elections, 30 percent of the party list had to be allocated to women but there was no gender quota for direct constituency polls. Women’s rights groups agreed to the need to revise the Political Party Law to increase the quota for women among parliamentary proportional representation lists to 50 percent and make it mandatory to put women in every other spot. Some called for increasing the total number of proportional representation seats to allow more women to enter the National Assembly.
In August 2003, an alliance of both progressive and conservative groups that had campaigned for the gender quota since the mid-1990s disbanded and reformed as the Women’s Alliance for the 17th General Elections. The alliance encompassed 321 women’s organizations across the country. It focused on institutional reform including revision of laws on political parties and political funding.

Movement for 100 women lawmakers

On November 6, 2003, women from various fields launched the Women’s Network for Clean Politics 2004. It declared a movement to have 100 women elected to the National Assembly. It aimed to raise the proportion of female lawmakers from a mere 5.9 percent to 30 percent. In the male-dominated political environment, at least 100 seats were needed if they were to become a meaningful force to represent women and social minorities.

Practical preparation to achieve this goal began in earnest in 2003. The 2004 Plan for Women’s Political Participation was developed in September 2003 by the Korea Women’s Associations United, consisting of six chapters and 29 progressive women’s groups. The KWAU campaigned not only to boost women’s political presence but also to address various issues of women’s rights including sexual assault, domestic violence, prostitution, society’s responsibility for protecting maternity, expansion of public elements in child care and the abolition of the patriarchal family system. In October, the group set the goal of sending 100 women to the Assembly and hosted a conference to call for wider participation. The Women’s Network for Clean Politics was inaugurated after 78 female leaders from various fields joined the preparatory panel and more than 200 citizens took part in the campaign until November.

The network drafted detailed plans to form its candidate selection committee, identify qualified candidates, demand parties’ nomination and support for them, and conduct publicity, recruitment, election campaigns, fund-raising and Internet operations for its candidates.

Candidate recommendations

The candidate recommendation committee set the standards for selection as follows,

```
Qualifications: morality and trust
Qualities: ① devotion to social development and public interest
         ② expertise ③ democratic leadership
         ④ commitment to gender equality and social awareness
```

Former and incumbent lawmakers were not on its recommendation list because the group’s aim was to find new competent female candidates. The group received recommendations from November 15 to December 6, 2003 and from December 7 to 25. They were required to fill in an application form that included their desired party, choice of constituency or proportional representation list and the most significant aspects of their careers. They should also obtain recommendations from at least two preparatory panel members.

However, the number of applicants was fewer than expected. There were not many women with enough experience in politics because of the limited opportunities for women in the conservative and patriarchal political environment. Women who wanted to advance into politics were also reluctant to come forward on their own due to their inexperience.
Selection and announcement of women candidates

Candidate screening was conducted alternatively by the recommendation committee and the steering committee, and a list of 102 candidates was finally announced in January 2004. Of them, only 25 percent opted for constituency candidacy. As many as 30 percent did not specify their desired party, which meant that they attached more importance to entering politics than to which party they would like to represent. After the list was unveiled, problems were raised about some candidates, leading to their reevaluation by the recommendation committee. Only one was dropped and the remaining 101 made into the final list.

Table 3. The numbers of women candidates including those recommended by the Women’s Network for Clean Politics 2004 (Unit: persons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Number of candidates</th>
<th>Number of women candidates recommended by the network (% in total women candidates)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>1,175</td>
<td>1,109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportional representation</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole</td>
<td>1,365</td>
<td>1,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The network tried to persuade parties to accommodate as many of its picks as possible. It met the leaders of four major political parties and delivered each party the list of candidates who sought party tickets and those who did not select a particular party.

The ruling Uri Party (currently the Democratic United Party) promised to field more women candidates and take measures such as forming a special committee for the task and appointing a female lawmaker to head the panel. But the largest opposition Grand National Party (currently the Saenuri Party) had officially decided to scale down proportional representation and increase constituency seats. Therefore, the party just promised to comply with the 50 percent quota and have female candidates on every other spot on the party list.

The network delivered a proposal regarding the criteria for proportional representation candidates. Indeed all major parties met the quota by allocating women to odd number spots. However, the National Assembly Special Committee on Political Reform made little progress due to partisan differences over the numbers of lawmakers and constituency seats. Judging that women’s greater political participation was difficult to realize under the current system, the group switched its focus to institutional reform, aiming to introduce and expand a mandatory gender quota. It believed that the passage of the quota rule was essential to its goal of having 100 women elected to the parliament. The network devoted itself to institutional reform together with the Women’s Alliance for General Elections.

Massive advancement of women into the National Assembly

The 17th general elections in 2004 produced 39 female lawmakers in the 299-member National Assembly. This was just 13 percent, far short of the original goal of 30 percent, but carried an important meaning. The proportion of women lawmakers more than doubled, paving the way for more women to advance into parliament to represent socially disadvantaged people and replace corrupt and incompetent political forces. Of the 39 female lawmakers-elect, 21 were candidates recommended by the network. It was also meaningful in that political novices verified by civic groups entered politics.
The 2004 general elections laid the institutional foundation for expanding women's political participation. The number of proportional representation seats increased by 10 and the quota for women candidates - 50 percent for proportional representation and 30 percent for constituency seats - was made into law. In addition, political parties referred heavily to the list of the network's recommendation. Later a database of female political hopefuls in various fields and regions was created and used widely in future elections.

The impact of women's advance into politics soon became visible. The two long-cherished wishes of the women's rights movement - the abolishment of the patriarchal family system and the enactment of the Prostitution Prevention Law - were fulfilled less than one year after the elections.

A long way to go

The number of female lawmakers more than doubled on the strength of the women's movement through the 17th general elections, but their proportion of total representatives was still less than the Asian average of 14.5 percent. In addition, of the 39 elected women, only 10 took proportional representation seats, underscoring women's weakness in organizational power and funding abilities and their need to develop more diverse and sophisticated campaign strategies. The movement was, however, not free of controversy. A number of conservative candidates were tapped by the group on the basis that quantitative expansion of female lawmakers would lead to qualitative change. It caused a heated dispute after the elections. Though it was an inevitable strategy given the weak position of the women's rights movement, questions were raised about whether simply increasing the number of female lawmakers regardless of ideological leaning would help the ultimate goals of speaking for women and socially weak people and consolidating democracy.

The network also ran into friction with other civic groups in its bid to expand female representatives. The incumbent members of the National Assembly intended to restore the total number of parliamentary seats from 273 to 299. Civic groups opposed the idea. As a way to end regional bias in politics, they called for a 50-50 ratio between constituency seats and proportional representation seats by cutting the former and increasing the latter sharply. In response, lawmakers proposed to keep the total number of seats unchanged while decreasing constituencies and increasing proportional representation seats. The women's movement could not accept this. Given the difficulties female candidates faced in district votes, they called for an increase in the number of proportional representation seats and implementing the 50 percent quota. In mid-February, two months before the elections, the National Assembly proposed to increase the number of lawmakers by introducing new, wider-area constituencies for women while keeping the existing constituencies intact. The women's movement was for the proposal but other civic groups were against. They argued that the new system would increase directly elected seats and reduce proportional representation, inevitably causing reverse discrimination and violating the principle of excess prohibition. The Women's Alliance for General Elections and the Women's

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constituency</td>
<td>Proportional</td>
<td>Constituency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of elected</td>
<td>10 (3 from the</td>
<td>29 (18 from</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candidates</td>
<td>network)</td>
<td>network)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39 (13.0%)</td>
<td>260 (87.0%)</td>
<td>299 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Lawmakers-elect: 17th general elections (Unit: persons)
s Network for Clean Politics issued a joint statement to counter the civic groups’ stance. The National Assembly finally passed a compromise bill that added 16 new district seats and 10 proportional representation seats, increasing the number of lawmakers to 299.

According to a 2001 survey by the World Bank, the more women lawmakers a country has, the less corrupt it is and the higher its national income is. The phenomenon was confirmed again by the International Parliamentary Union’s 2003 annual survey. According to a 2010 IPU report, the ratio of women lawmakers in Korea was 14.5 percent, 80th among 155 surveyed countries. The ratio edged up slightly through the 17th general elections but still had a long way to go. However, the country was clearly on track to make politics clean and transparent and better protect social minorities by empowering women.

Green politics and the environmental movement

Green politics paves the way to the future

Green politics envisages an extension of politics, from today’s form that concerns only human beings, the current generation and domestic population, to a future form that speaks for global citizens, future generations and all kinds of life. In that sense, it is a new, hopeful, future-oriented politics. Green politics is a product of various values, such as ecology, feminism, pacifism, grassroots democracy and advocating diversity. Its proponents necessarily seek international unity to solve global problems beyond national borders.

Korea’s green politics originated from environmentalism’s advance into politics. In 1988, the Korean Anti-Pollution Movement Association was founded as the first popular environmental group, in April 1993, eight environmental organizations across the country, including KAMA, united to create today’s Korean Federation for Environmental Movement. Another major environmental group is the Green Korea United, which was initiated in April 1994 as an amalgamation of the Baedal Environmental Research Institute, the Citizens’ Alliance for a Green Korean Peninsula and the preparatory committee for the Green Party. In addition, organizations have begun operations in nearly every corner of the country since the 1990s.

Regional green politics

In its early stage, the environmental movement showed great interest in green politics as an alternative to the nation’s anachronistic political system. Since local elections were revived in 1991, the environmentalists focused their activities on local communities, which they regarded as suitable places to put global-scale thinking into practice. They participated in local elections for two reasons.

First, environmental issues were regional in nature.
Second, the reinstatement of local autonomy spurred a wave of regional development that damaged the environment.

Activists attempted to head off environmental degradation and practice an eco-friendly community model by winning local elections against the pro-development political establishment and local leaders. Local elections offered a better chance for activists to advance into political institutions than parliamentary polls, National Assembly members were elected in a single-winner constituency system, a barrier to political rookies and new
parties. But in local elections mainstream parties’ influence was far smaller because party nominations were prohibited until 2002.

Central green politics

At the national level, the environmental movement focused on policy suggestions and blacklist campaigns against corrupt and anti-environment candidates rather than direct involvement. Their scope of activity was limited largely because the electoral and party systems favored existing parties. But their passion and influence were remarkable.

In the 1996 parliamentary elections and 1997 presidential vote, environmentalists made concrete policy proposals to parties, assessed the environmental impact of election pledges and published the results, and campaigned for environmentally-friendly candidates. They also allied with labor and other civic groups for democracy and political reform. In the 2000 parliamentary elections, they joined the blacklist movement to defeat candidates who pushed environmentally harmful policies like mudflat reclamation projects. In the 2002 presidential election, they joined the Voters’ Alliance for Presidential Election to support environmental policies.

Toward Green Party

Since the mid-1990s, in line with political democratization, government policies had reflected a significant portion of civic groups’ requests, but not much of the environmentalist agenda. The central government was pressing ahead with the two most controversial projects - the reclamation of Saemangeum and the construction of a nuclear waste repository. At the local level, environmentally harmful development projects continued to boom, stemming from the campaign promises of elected officials and councilors from established parties. Environmental activists became fast disenchanted with established politics and expressed the need for a new, independent politics.

More than a few environmentalists had long considered founding a green party an urgent priority. In fact, the Green Korea United and the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement listed the realization of green politics as one of their main aims.

Against this backdrop, the Green Peace Party was initiated in the run-up to the 2002 local elections. Officials from the Green Korea United took the
In April 2003, the Green Politics Preparation Conference was launched, led by 10 environmentalists elected in 2002 to local councils and joined by civic groups and activists in environmental, women’s rights, peace and grassroots movements.

Rather than creating their own party early on, the forum concentrated on solidifying the base of the green political movement and expanding the participation of groups from diverse fields and regions. It also carried out political experiments such as decision-making by rank-and-file members and youth participation.

In June 2004, the Alliance for Green Politics was officially created. In February 2005, it became a member of the Asia-Pacific Green Politics Network, which was launched in Kyoto, Japan.

lead, joined by some regional activists, The Green Peace Party captured 2.26 percent of the vote in seven provinces and cities, but failed to gain a seat, Environmentalists launched the Green Social Democratic Party with some labor activists ahead of the 2004 parliamentary elections, but broke up after it fell short of a 3 percent vote-share requirement for political parties. The humiliating result stemmed from a political structure that disadvantaged new parties and the party’s failure to attract broad support and participation from other environmental and civic groups.

The Alliance for Green Politics, however, suffered a crushing defeat in local elections in May 2006. It fielded just 25 candidates, of whom only two were elected. Minor parties’ entry to political institutions had been made more difficult by the revision of the Local Election Law in 2004, which gave them added disadvantages, such as marking party numbers on the ballot.

Preoccupied with ensuring political neutrality, most civic organizations including environmental groups were also reluctant to create a party and challenge for national or local assembly seats, which further complicated its candidate recruitment and election campaigns. The requirements for registering a political party have recently been made more complex. While other opportunities for citizens’ political participation have expanded, breaking into elected office is becoming more difficult due to the barriers erected by mainstream parties.

Since 2004 the AGP has pushed forward its plan to launch a party and stepped up efforts to scout for participants and develop policies. Even though it missed its initial goal of launching before the 2008 parliamentary elections, Koreans are increasingly interested in a green party as climate change and the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 have heightened concerns about the environment. The promoters held a convention in October 2011 to initiate the Green Party before the parliamentary elections in April 2012. The party was finally launched in March 2012 and is spurring its efforts again to secure places in institutional politics.
Future for green politics

Korea's environmental movement, a new social activism derived from the pro-democracy movement, has been involved in multiple elections. Its methods of participation have varied, including fielding its own candidates, devising policies, assessing candidates and parties, the blacklist movement and campaigns with citizens.

Would these achievements and experiences lead to the establishment of bona-fide green political forces and the "greening" of our political society? Looking at history, the outlook appears dim, given the high barriers raised by mainstream parties, some civic groups' political neutrality and avoidance of politics and defeatism stemming from large and small failures.

However, the political potential for civic organizations including environmental movements is still immense. There are activists with years of field experience. The number of citizens longing for green politics is increasing, despite the ongoing development fever. As such, green political forces will soon progress, moving beyond institutional barriers and past failures.

Netizens’ participation in politics

Netizen means people who exchange opinions and information on the Internet, or who create online communities to do this routinely. The advent of netizens was made possible by the development of information and communications technology and the proliferation of personal computers.

In recent years, they have been even more active, as wireless technologies enabled the Internet on mobile phones.

Korea has been supporting the IT industry since the late 1990s. Government policies have expedited the development of hardware such as PCs and mobile communications equipment, as well as Internet programs for computer communications and electronic commerce, resulting in a surge in the number of netizens.

Meanwhile, people in their 10s and 20s had reduced opportunities for face-to-face contact because of rapid urbanization and stiffening competition in society. For these young people, the Internet emerged as the most important means of communication and source of entertainment and information. They have accordingly formed the core of netizen groups. Beyond games and communication between peer groups, netizens have often expressed their stance on crucial political and social issues, encouraging voting and organizing support for a certain party or candidate in election years.

Netizens most frequently visited sites related to computers, Internet information and entertainment, but news and media sites also made up about 20 percent. (The National Internet Development Agency of Korea)
Korean netizens’ political influence came to the fore between 2000 and 2004 when they were active in election campaigns, the movement against the impeachment of President Roh Moo-hyun, and anti-American demonstrations after a U.S. armored vehicle struck and killed two 14-year-old Korean girls, Shin Hyo-sun and Shim Mi-seon, in Uijeongbu, Gyeonggi Province, in 2002.

Netizens flex muscles

There are three reasons for netizens’ brisk political participation and growing political influence.

First, the Internet spread rapidly and the number of netizens skyrocketed. The number of Internet users shot up to 70 percent of the total population in 2004 from 30 percent in 2000. More than 70 percent of 20-somethings, the driving force behind “cyber politics”, were already using the Internet in 2000, and the rate among students neared 80 percent. Young netizens were able to share not only their daily routines but also political opinions easily and quickly via e-mail and on mobile phones.

Second, voters in their 20s had a strong desire for reform. Young people are often said to be indifferent to politics, but when a new political issue or figure emerges, the 20s generation reacted more sensitively than any other group. With dire employment rates and job opportunities in the aftermath of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, their discontent with the current politics was higher than for any other age group.

Third, diverse groups of like-minded online users led communications in cyberspace. Netizens primarily used the Internet to gather data or information and meet other individual needs such as entertainment, games, shopping and learning.

But in such new communities they exchanged not only everyday conversations but also views on political issues and often extended these activities to off-line meetings. In fact, the number of online community participants went beyond 10 percent of netizens at the end of 2002 from about 7 percent a year before. The 2000 blacklist movement, the 2002 candlelight vigils in protest against U.S. Forces Korea and the 2004 candlelight rallies against conservatives’ bid to oust Roh were all led by such communities. Among the most prominent groups were “Nosamo”, Roh’s fan club; “DC Inside”, an online forum which was initially dedicated to digital cameras and photography but later steered protests against Roh’s impeachment and drummed up votes for liberal parties in the 2004

Cyworld is a Korean social network service comprised of mini homepages called minihompy and blogs. Since its 2001 launch, Cyworld swept the nation and triggered a frenzy among young Koreans. The number of users topped 10 million in October 2004 then 20 million in February in 2007. NateOn, an instant messenger service, also breached the 20 million threshold that month soon after being interlocked with Cyworld. This means that in 2004 about one-third of Internet users had a minihompy there. Minihompy owners not only update about their daily lives but also post comments on social and political affairs, which are delivered immediately to other close friends, called “ilchon”, in their networks. This scheme can instantaneously spread news on political figures and parties.

According to an analysis of Cyworld’s network structure, most users go through four stages to get connected to their acquaintances. Information produced by one single netizen can be distributed across the country and generations in the blink of an eye. Minihompys also allowed users to find lost friends and facilitated off-line gatherings.
Methods of political participation

Netizens chiefly took part in politics by sharing views on politicians and political issues, commenting on the websites of parties, politicians, the parliament and media outlets, producing and distributing political parodies, voting online or with mobile phones and campaigning for parties or candidates. Exchanging ideas via the Internet was the most basic and moderate form of political participation. They were executed via e-mails, websites, mini homepages or blogs.

Political satire has spread widely thanks to the development of photo-editing programs. Users began adopting various collage techniques to criticize politicians and parties at the onset of the 2004 parliamentary elections. Among the most popular parody sites were Ddanzi Ilbo, DC Inside and Sisa Gallery. With the rapid advance of technology, parody videos also gained popularity. For young people, political parody made politics fun, but for parties and politicians, it drew embarrassment.

Visiting the homepages of politicians and parties en masse, a type of denial of service attack also called a “cyber raid”, was one of netizens’ favorite ways to criticize or display opposition. At the height of the Roh impeachment row, they launched a “carpet bombing” attack on the websites of the GNP and other opposition parties and politicians who led the action against the president.

After online discussions, netizens often assembled in off-line venues such as squares and bars to express their collective opinions. Just like student activists’ sudden street protests in the 1970s and 80s, flash mobs were a typical off-line movement as netizens took to the streets and shouted slogans to criticize politicians or handed out leaflets.

During election periods, they voted and ran crusades for or against certain candidates. Civic activists who led the blacklist campaign in the 2000 parliamentary elections delivered strategies and specific action guides through their Internet homepages. In the 2002 presidential election, Nosamo spearheaded a voting campaign for Roh via the Internet and mobile phones. In the 2004 parliamentary elections, Internet communities including DC Inside and miclub.com called for electoral participation through parodies.

Nosamo’s devotion sparked a craze in the Democratic Party’s national primaries, which led to Roh’s nomination and eventually his win in the presidential election, getting over several hurdles. It also helped Roh defend his presidency in the face of the unprecedented impeachment crisis. When the National Assembly passed the impeachment motion in March 2004, Nosamo immediately mobilized some 70,000 Koreans for a candlelight vigil. It also played a crucial role in the swift rise of the fledgling Uri Party, which grabbed a majority of seats in the 17th parliament in the wake of the impeachment dispute.

Fun politics in the Internet world?

While off-line political participation had been limited, the Internet enabled online activities and noticeably increased the interest and involvement of young people in politics.

Nosamo not only contributed to shifting the culture and dynamics of elections but also helped compensate for the limitations of representative democracy. For instance, though Nosamo netizens united to support a particular candidate, in the process they evoked curiosity among other
Election and Civil Society

voters and boosted their interest and participation in elections.

Despite its social significance and influence, concerns could be raised about netizens’ political accountability. Given the anonymous nature of the virtual space, rampant malicious comments could constrain other people’s participation by offending others or spreading a sense of disillusionment with politics. If Internet-based political participation is successful in overcoming these hurdles, Korea’s politics, often regarded as a “dull and nasty gang fight” could be transformed into a thrilling and pleasant spectacle. The future could be brighter if young voters move beyond disgust and indifference and actively participate in real politics.

Nosamo epitomizes the enormous influence netizens’ political participation can exert. Netizens who encouraged Roh after his setback in the 2000 parliamentary elections held regional gatherings and hosted the inaugural meeting for Nosamo in June in Daejeon. Only 33 showed up when they met in May to discuss the founding of the fan club but the figure rose sharply, surpassing 1,000 in August. Shortly after Roh announced his bid for the DP nomination, Nosamo saw its members surpass 10,000 in March 2002 and 43,000 three months later.

Nosamo’s dedicated activities fueled the Roh wave in the primaries, finalized his nomination and played a pivotal role in his victory in the 16th presidential election. What’s more, Nosamo defended Roh in the face of his impeachment in 2004.
Why the manifesto movement?

One of the most remarkable features of the local elections in May 2006 was the emergence of the manifesto movement. A manifesto differs from ordinary campaign pledges in that it offers clear goals, concrete financial means and schedules. It refers to an election commitment with timetables, goals, process, financial resources and priorities.

The manifesto movement began in the United Kingdom to promote policy-oriented campaigns by urging politicians to present feasible commitments in a verifiable manner. It is intended to prevent elections from degenerating into political fighting, and instead have parties and candidates compete over policies. It calls on them to clarify their election pledges so that voters can compare and verify them easily.

Campaign pledges in Korea’s elections fell far short of having this level of detail. Without clear goals, financial resources and concrete plans, they were rosy, unrealistic pledges aimed only at winning votes. The most typical of them were falsely sweet, pork-barrel plans such as farm debt relief for rural voters, eased development restrictions for greenbelt residents, half-price apartments for low-income people, and shortened military service periods. Unverified surprise pledges often swayed the outcome of elections. Voters felt dejected and betrayed when those promises were not delivered or were ruled unconstitutional. Public distrust of the political establishment further deepened when mainstream parties failed to cope with the financial crisis in the late 1990s. Because of this, an increasing number of voters did not support any existing party. Parties supposed to present their national visions and lead political change became a major obstacle to political development and the target of reform.

Until then, discussions on party reform focused on fixing their undemocratic and high-cost internal structures, such as by abolishing regional chapters and streamlining organizations. They neglected a more important issue: how parties should compete with each other. The manifesto movement was desperately needed to
usher in a new politics that would hold parties more accountable, ensure policy implementation and strictly assess them. It was vital for overcoming the existing politics that ignored the people’s needs, served only the political elite and lacked visions for the future. It was essential to changing the rules by which parties competed and refurbishing the fundamentals of Korean politics.

The manifesto movement jolts election culture

Korea’s manifesto movement’s being led by civic organizations is intriguing and meaningful, considering the equivalent movements were initiated by parties in the United Kingdom and by governor candidates in Japan.

The 5/31 SMART Manifesto Policy-Oriented Election Steering Headquarters was launched on February 1, 2006, attracting keen interest from the public and media. It was praised especially for its constructive and positive direction in comparison with other election-related civic crusades. Political competition and voter choice based on policies are basic conditions of democracy. But the effort to introduce them was a shock for Korea, where votes had been heavily influenced by regionalism. The manifesto movement brought a more meaningful approach, especially in regional elections that determine local government policies that directly affect residents’ lives.

The movement increased the accountability of parties and candidates because it not only induced competition over policies but also made it possible to assess their fulfillment of pledges. In addition, the movement helped upgrade the nation’s election culture, as when true pledges were presented, voters could base their choice on policies and were less swayed by money, regional background and personal relationships. It raised political productivity, as parties tried to concentrate on how to realize campaign commitments rather than indulging in political fighting. They would distance themselves from the practices of mobilizing massive organizations, which were very costly, and negative campaigns using false accusations and slander.

In short, the movement was a valuable first step toward reinventing the nation’s election culture and creating a more productive politics.

The manifesto movement in the 2006 local elections

The start of the manifesto movement

From May 2005, the National Council for Local Agenda 21 pushed for a project to develop policy agenda for sustainable regional development ahead of the 2006 local elections. In the process, several grass-roots civic organizations initiated the manifesto movement for the local elections. They held the first meeting to prepare a civic group network for the elections on November 2005. After several more meetings, the Manifesto Movement Headquarters was launched.

Civic groups across the country began to meet in November 2005 to build their networks for the May local elections and in the process considered the feasibility of the manifesto movement. After several further discussions, they adopted the manifesto movement as the pillar of their election activities. From the outset, the movement was anchored on regional networks and operated in a decentralized way. By May 20, 2006, 384 organizations had joined the movement. Networks were established in 12 metropolitan
Prominent figures from local communities of women, youth, residents, businesses, government, industrial workers, farmers, scientists and civic movements took part in the Local Agenda 21 campaign. The initiative involved a set of concrete action plans to build a sustainable society by protecting the environment. The agenda also included cultural, welfare and economic issues.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, Brazil, in 1992 established the agenda of Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development (ESSD) to resolve the Earth’s environmental problems. It recommended sovereign countries establish Agenda 21 at the central government level and Local Agenda 21 at the regional level.

In line with the U.N. recommendation and the central government’s encouragement, the cities of Chuncheon and Ansan set out Local Agenda 21 in 1994 for the first time in Korea and Busan became the first metropolitan- or provincial-level government to push the vision the following year. Other local governments followed suit and by 2005, 229, or 90 percent of a total 250 local administration bodies, had established Local Agenda 21. The National Council for Local Agenda 21 was formed in June 2000 as a consultation forum for the steering bodies in those local governments.

### Key strategies and actions

The movement adopted three major strategies as follows.

First was a publicity campaign to promote public awareness of the significance of the movement and policy-based elections.

Second was promotion and education for candidates and political parties. This was crucial because the manifesto movement could be quite burdensome to parties and candidates that had never engaged strongly in policy competition.

Third was the assessment of candidate manifestos. There was a need to evaluate campaign pledges before the elections and verify their implementation after the elections.

These strategies were put into practice in roughly five stages.

In the movement’s initial stages, there was an urgent need to promote the understanding of the unfamiliar word “manifesto” and the related movement. The headquarters held a conference comparing local elections and political developments in Korea and Japan, and arranged a meeting...
between Korean and Japanese activists. It also appointed publicity envoys and distributed character models, symbolic buttons and vests. The aim was to learn from Japan’s experience and spread the movement.

In order to support the formation of local steering organizations, the headquarters then held meetings with regional activists and hosted public conferences on developing sound regional policies and establishing the manifesto movement. It also promoted the movement to political circles. Five major parties and major candidates in 16 metropolitan and provincial areas declared their support for the movement. Activists visited parties to explain the movement and urge cooperation. It campaigned for public participation and hosted a ceremony in which Seoul mayoral candidates pronounced their commitment to transparent governance of the capital. A growing number of civic groups and candidates lined up behind the cause, gradually building up momentum for the fledging movement.

Developing and suggesting desirable policies was also important. Together with the National Election Commission and the JoongAng Ilbo, the headquarters published a book on good policy agenda and opened a data bank for campaign pledges. The undertaking opened a new chapter in voters’ election participation by helping campaign pledges reflect residents’ proposals from start. Manifesto Academies were run six times across the country to provide candidates and parties with opportunities to learn about manifestos. The events also tried to link voters’ demands with campaign pledges.

To spread the movement in the long term, the headquarters also pushed for preliminary verification of the major campaign pledges of mayoral and gubernatorial candidates in collaboration with three major broadcasters. It also organized the “Play, Manifesto Campaign”, in which voters were given individual scorecards to evaluate candidates, and a manifesto report contest for university students.

Its evaluation committee, which largely consisted of professors in its policy advisory group, developed indices for assessing candidates’ manifestos. The evaluations were done according to two sets of criteria - SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed) and SELF (Sustainability, Empowerment and Follow-up) - and the results were open to the public. The evaluation was limited to candidates running to head the 16 provinces and metropolises and 10 lower-level entities. The assessment was spotlighted by the mass media and provided voters with an objective basis for judgment. After elections, the headquarters continued to look into whether the pledges were being delivered.

The manifesto movement did not aim to influence the election outcome in the short term but was a movement to encourage sincere campaign pledges. In the long term it also intended to have winners embrace losers’ good policies and refine and practice campaign pledges in cooperation with residents throughout their term in office. Though the movement did not last long, the group’s activities were so successful that the word manifesto quickly became a familiar word among Koreans.

Roles of the NEC and media

The success of the movement was also attributable to interest and support from the NEC and the media. The commission was highly praised for supporting the movement’s efforts to eradicate mudslinging and encourage positive campaigns. The agency cooperated with the movement through its team in charge of political parties’ policy activities.

Early in the lead-up to the elections, the NEC picked the manifesto campaign as a key item on its agenda and encouraged parties and candidates’ participation including declaring their commitment to policy competition. The NEC provided the “Guidebook for Manifesto Practice”
Even children, newlyweds are manifesto evangelists

The significance of the manifesto movement lies in the fact that it induced candidates to restrain from false promises and make true commitments. This opened the way for a true local autonomy in which residents are in the driver’s seat, making policy demands and holding elected representatives accountable.

In July 2007, the headquarters assessed local government heads’ implementation of manifestos marking their first anniversary in office. This was possible because their campaign commitments were presented in verifiable ways. The result was announced with awards given in five fields. If the performance evaluation is made every year, it would help voters to candidates and held educational sessions for about 60,000 prospective candidates, party and election officials and voters. It also collected voters’ policy suggestions through its online data bank, showing a clear break from the past in which it focused on regulatory duties. It also worked hard to promote the movement to voters, Its campaigns included a contest to pick a Korean word for manifesto, TV and radio advertisements and the publication of campaign pledges on the Internet. These greatly helped voters understand the movement and make an informed choice.

The movement drew considerable attention from the media as a result of the headquarters’ efforts to maintain cooperation with various media, not just a few specific news outlets. Vivid reports of manifesto competitions among candidates demonstrated a new type of election coverage and a break from the past practices, which narrowly focused on the changes in support rates. Reports on manifestos strained campaign offices and aroused a fresh voter interest in hard policies. In a major advancement, newspapers and broadcasters were no longer blinded by unconfirmed malicious revelations. They tried to verify such claims on their own and focused their attention to policies.

In short, the manifesto movement in the 2006 local elections was a joint crusade to reform election culture by civil society organizations, the NEC and the media. From its inception to policy evaluation, civic groups’ campaigns, the media’s agenda-setting and the NEC’s legal and institutional support combined to generate a rare alliance among the three sectors for public interest.

Table 6. Assessment of the manifesto movement’s Influence (Unit: %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>① Strongly agree</th>
<th>② Somewhat agree</th>
<th>①+②</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media dealt with campaign pledges and policies more than in past elections,</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidates and parties gave more emphasis on campaign pledges and policies than in past elections,</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The NEC contributed to the spread of the manifesto movement,</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* “Do not know” / no response were excluded
The manifesto movement in parliamentary elections

The manifesto movement had difficulty in engaging deeply with the masses because it dealt with hard policy issues. Despite an overall positive appraisal, critics pointed out some limitations of the movement in the 2006 elections.

First, some raised the general argument that civic election movements should consider a variety of factors including people, parties and policies, not concentrating on policies alone. Especially when an election is regarded as a judgment on the ruling party, focusing on policies will inevitably lose its appeal, they said.

Second, an emphasis on the manifesto-based election could unequally favor incumbents because of an asymmetry of information, they said. Another criticism was that the assessment of manifestos requires a high level of professional expertise and the results could differ depending on evaluators, confusing voters.

Despite these limitations, the manifesto movement succeeded in revamping the nation’s election culture and inspired hope for true local autonomy. It also encouraged regional civic organizations to pay attention to local issues and develop local agenda, thus helping decentralize the civic movement, which had been heavily concentrated in Seoul and its surrounding areas.

The participants should extend their efforts to spread this wind of change in local elections to presidential and parliamentary elections. Civic groups, the NEC and the media need to further widen their collaboration and expand the influence of the movement. Especially, professional expertise and fairness should be enhanced. Moreover, the manifesto movement in daily lives should be pushed actively to spread it to family lives, schools and all spheres of society.
Chapter 06

Monitoring and Assessment of Legislation

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Value-oriented legislative monitoring activities

Civic groups’ legislative monitoring began in earnest in 1996. The Nara Policy Research Institute analyzed the legislative activities of the members of the 14th National Assembly during 19 regular and extraordinary sessions between June 1992 and 1995. The Korean Federation of Voters’ Movement and the CCEJ conducted similar assessments that year. They attended parliamentary sessions, reviewed transcripts and criticized the often insincere, exclusive and undemocratic operation of the legislature.

Later on, civic groups gauged lawmakers’ sincerity by attendance and the number of law proposals they made, and took issue with closed-door meetings and session disruptions. They also lobbied for social reforms, expressing positions on key issues and observing parliamentary audits of government affairs.

However, the legislature had barely opened meetings on sensitive topics to the public until the 17th National Assembly began in 2004. Limited access to information and records on legislative affairs prevented civic groups from monitoring parliamentary activities in a comprehensive and systemic manner. Shortly after the inauguration of the 17th National Assembly, civic organizations and first-term lawmakers created a forum to reform parliamentary operations. Their joint proposal to revise the National Assembly Law was passed, allowing greater disclosure of parliamentary affairs to the public. Recently, civic groups have been calling for a qualitative assessment of political issues, policies and legislative proceedings, beyond session-focused monitoring activities. In particular, progressive groups such as the PSPD insist that legislative monitoring should be based on each organization’s goals, posing a direct challenge to the arguments of politicians that the civil rights movement must remain neutral and objective.

This chapter introduces major legislative monitoring projects and methods used by civic groups since the mid-1990s.

Legislative monitoring activities

Establishing database and providing information (1998 – )

Since 1998, civil society groups have been setting up a database of
Despite such limits in their comprehensive monitoring, the CAPA gained substantial support from the public as civil organizations from various sectors divided roles and crafted incisive and interesting evaluation methods such as picking the best and worst lawmakers. In 2000, 41 organizations took part in the initiative and proceeded with monitoring and lobbying centering on some 200 proposals they delivered to four standing committees. More than 250 experts and activists worked on surveillance and review panels. They attended every open standing committee meeting and took down speeches in shorthand. They chose the best and worst members in terms of sincerity, judged by attendance and number of speeches, and policy expertise, measured by the ability to raise issues and suggest alternatives. Finally, the CAPA released a comprehensive assessment report and measures to improve the audit system.

In 2001, after reviewing their performance over the previous two years, the organizations decided to individually handle regular sessions and establish collaborative systems. Though their alliance had enabled a comprehensive assessment, they agreed to operate independently to ensure each sector was dealt with appropriately and with as much autonomy as possible. The PSPD in 2001 demanded the passage of around 20 pending bills related to the livelihoods of low-income earners including the Commercial Building Lease Protection Act and the Interest Limitation Act. Its principal activities included issuing a standing committee monitoring report on welfare issues, publishing a newsletter summarizing key issues related to those bills and lobbying lawmakers on behalf of the public interest.

The CAPA was disbanded in 2002, but some of its member organizations formed the NGO Inspection Panel for Parliamentary Audits and have been awarding lawmakers for outstanding performances during audits.

Regular session and audit monitoring (1999 - )

In 1999, civic groups embarked on intensive monitoring of parliamentary regular sessions and audits of the administration to encourage more responsible legislative action that was more faithful to their duties. The campaign was led by the Citizens’ Alliance for Parliamentary Audits (CAPA), which ran from 1999 through 2001. They first selected 166 reform and monitoring agenda in areas including politics, the economy, education, the environment and women, and submitted them to parties and lawmakers. But nine of the 14 standing committees refused to let them attend their hearings and the organizations’ activities focused on protests rather than monitoring.

Politicians to help voters evaluate their legislative and political activities and make well-informed choices.

During the 2000 blacklist movement, the organizations provided information on the Internet related to the suitability and integrity of candidates, such as records of corruption, Election Law violations and damage to the democratic constitutional order. After the 17th parliamentary elections, the database began covering personal information and legislative activities of all incumbent lawmakers such as past careers, asset holdings, additional jobs, military service history, criminal records, session attendance, participation in standing committees, the number of bills submitted, voting records and attitudes toward social reform.

Since the disclosure of the database, voters have started lobbying representatives directly and monitoring their activities on a routine basis. This has greatly helped people gain detailed knowledge of the National Assembly and take part in legislative monitoring and lobbying for the public interest. To drum up more public participation, the PSPD runs a monitoring website called “Open, National Assembly”.

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The social reform legislation movement

Civic groups draft various reform bills related to their fields and conduct petitions, opinion polls, interviews and monitoring reports to help them get passed into law.

In 2000 the Citizens’ Alliance for General Elections presented reform agenda for legislation covering all social sectors. Since then, civic groups have discussed and laid out joint reform proposals for legislation in each crucial election. In 2000 and 2004, though voters had yet to be influenced by information on lawmakers’ legislative activities, such as law proposals and voting, the alliance named legislators who had opposed anti-corruption legislation and backed Korea’s troop dispatches to Iraq as part of the blacklist movement.

Since the 17th National Assembly, for the sake of consistent and systemic monitoring, PSPD has announced the objectives, directions and important bills at the start of each session and published comprehensive monitoring reports after each session. In a major contribution to the nation’s democracy, the legislature’s operations, important bills’ progress and lawmakers’ attitudes and comments in each section have been evaluated and recorded. The PSPD’s report provides the public and the media with civic groups’ perspectives and assessments countering political parties’ often biased evaluations.

Confirmation hearings for high-ranking officials (2000 - )

In 2000, the 16th National Assembly introduced a confirmation hearing on the prime minister nominee implementing one of the most important political reform measures. In the hearings, lawmakers evaluate the ability, reform-mindedness and ethics of nominees for top offices on behalf of the people before their official appointment. The first-ever confirmation hearing was held for Prime Minister-designate Lee Han-dong. To help establish the fledgling procedure, the PSPD submitted its own opinion on the nominee, monitored the hearing and disclosed its position on his appointment. Currently, all minister-nominees have to undergo confirmation hearings at the relevant parliamentary standing committees and civic organizations conduct similar monitoring activities.

Civic groups’ opinions were so influential that candidates they had assessed as unqualified usually failed to get parliamentary approval. Civic groups’ criteria, such as ability to handle state affairs, commitment to democracy and reform, and morality and reliability, became important considerations for the nomination of high-ranking public officials. Civic organizations have also gauged lawmakers’ attitudes, performance and sincerity and made proposals to improve confirmation hearings.

Inquiries of conflict of interest for committee members (1998 - )

Lawmakers are at risk of conflicts of interest, as they have access to sensitive information and participate in policy decisions.

In 1998 the PSPD obtained lawmakers’ reports on jobs held by lawmakers through public information requests, and filed constitutional petitions against the assignments of 10 lawmakers to the health and welfare committee and two lawmakers to the educational committee, on the basis that they had a conflict of interest. In September 2001, the group demanded an ethical review and disciplinary action against a lawmaker who allegedly used a parliamentary audit of government agencies to help his bid to acquire a major fisheries market in Noryangjin, Seoul. In June 2003, the PSPD analyzed and released stock portfolios of 167 members of
seven economy-related committees and their spouses. It took issue with 20 lawmakers over a possible connection between their share holdings and committee duties, prompting some to dispose of the stocks or shirk the committees.

There are plenty of examples of lawmakers abusing their legislative responsibilities to gain privileges in connection with their private or prior jobs, making it crucial for civic groups to investigate such risks and disclose them to the public.

Investigation into large political donations(2004 - )

Politicians’ legislative activities are usually affected by their sponsors. To prevent contributors gaining excessive influence, Korea introduced a rule in 2004 that requires politicians to release the personal information of people who donate 1.2 million won or more in a year or 300,000 won at one time.

Though the details of such donors are not fully disclosed yet, the rule itself has put considerable pressure on lawmakers. For instance, the relations between legislators involved in educational affairs and their financial backers in the private educational sector could be revealed when the lawmakers advocate their donors’ interests in revising education-related laws. It is the same with the relations between the members of the health and welfare committee and any doctors’ groups that financially support them.

To help the fully implement the scheme, civic groups have focused on scrutinizing reports of donations and criticizing tricky disclosures. To live up to the original purpose of the rule, they should from now on give more weight to digging up the hidden relationships between politicians and contributors.

Party policy evaluation(2006 - )

To encourage the policy-oriented development of political parties, civic groups’ legislative monitoring should also focus on assessing their policymaking. Since the voting for the party was introduced to parliamentary elections, evaluating parties’ vision, policies and will to implement them have become even more important.

In late 2006, the PSPD began a new project of comparing and evaluating each party’s real identity and will to push ahead with its policies. When skyrocketing apartment prices put the government’s property policy on the chopping block in late 2006, the group issued the “party policy comparison and evaluation report” that contrasted and assessed major parties’ stances and lawmakers’ remarks on the Housing Act and other real-estate measures. After reading the report online, many citizens came to realize that the National Assembly had not taken any preventative action until the real estate problem became so serious and that some lawmakers were all fired up about advocating multiple home owners and builders while neglecting the outright majority of Koreans, who were grappling with a housing crunch.

While it is still in an early phase, evaluating party policies can induce each entity to clarify its identity and more responsibly stick to its principles, and deserves constant attention and efforts from all sectors of society.
Legislative monitoring and voter participation

It is only in recent years that details on lawmakers’ legislative activities have been made public and the barriers to the National Assembly have lowered. Over the past 10 years, civic groups’ parliamentary monitoring focused on criticizing the outdated, stereotypical operations of the legislature and they have not acquired sufficient experience in evaluating standing committees, the centerpiece of parliamentary operations. Extreme confrontation and paralyzed sessions due to partisan bickering are common in the Assembly, and there is still much to improve in parliamentary operations.

However, both these operations and lawmakers’ activities have made significant improvements. The nation is now equipped with a basic structure for legislative evaluation. Lawmakers’ activities are broadcast in real time on the Internet or via cable television networks. Access to information and data has been far easier. Now each civic group needs to establish its own standards in accordance with its objectives and construct a systemic and consistent monitoring mechanism.

Korean civic groups made significant headway by building a database of all lawmakers, updating information every day and releasing regular monitoring reports. In the future, they need to develop diverse programs in which voters are directly involved in assessing politicians, which would greatly help boost public participation in politics.

Another meaningful development is that civic organizations in particular sectors continue to evaluate parliamentary activities in their fields. For instance, the Human Rights Forum of Persons with Disabilities in Korea publishes lawmakers’ remarks and attitudes toward disability policies in its white paper every year, The Korea Women’s Political Solidarity hosts an annual forum to review and discuss female lawmakers’ activities. These attempts to politicize their own areas could be appraised positively.

Organizations with experience, knowledge and expertise are expected to engage more energetically in legislative monitoring and providing data to voters for evaluation.

Their monitoring and evaluation should no longer remain lacking in value orientation for the sake of political neutrality and objectivity. Civic groups need to have more active discussions with each other on the direction of social reform and evaluate politicians based on the groups’ spirits and visions. Embracing the spirit of Web 2.0, which envisions participation, communication and sharing, the organizations need to devise programs in which voters can take the lead, take part and communicate with each other.

Civic groups’ parliamentary reform and monitoring drives could lose momentum in line with a growing public distrust and cynicism about the legislature. But as the normalization of politics does a great deal of good to the people, civic groups should not neglect their responsibility to monitor and evaluate the political process, in particular the legislature.
Korean society has gone through significant changes since 2007, when this book was written in Korean. The people’s distrust and dissatisfaction in the political establishment have grown. Their confidence in civic groups has also weakened. Ideological confrontation within civil society intensified as conservative groups jumped into the sphere of public debate, which had previously been dominated by their progressive rivals. On the other hand, the development of information and communications technologies allowed ordinary citizens, especially “netizens”, to participate more easily in public debate. The changing environment required civic groups to change the ways they get involved in elections.

First, public distrust in parties and politicians was higher than any other type of organization or institution, with no signs of it getting worse or better over time. According to a survey by the East Asia Institute, the level of public trust in the political establishment was lower than those for state agencies (excluding the National Assembly) and private companies. Among parties, the highest level of trust was around 45 points out of a total of 100, with the score on the decline over time. The Grand National Party had the highest score for four years - 45.6 in 2005, 44.5 in 2006, 44.8 in 2007, 41.1 in 2008. The next year the Democratic Labor Party had the highest level of distrust with 39.3 points. In a survey by the Center for Free Enterprise and Research & Research, which asked respondents to choose their least trusted organizations, an overwhelming 49.6 percent picked the National Assembly (along with political parties) compared to companies (1.4 percent), religious groups (1.9 percent), schools (2.3 percent), labor unions (3.7 percent), civic organizations (3.9 percent), the judiciary (7.2 percent), the media (7.4 percent), and the administration (7.7 percent).

Such a deep distrust in politics led to a decrease in the numbers of citizens voting in elections. The trend held true not only for local elections, in which voting rates are often low, but also for presidential and parliamentary elections. In the 1987 presidential election, the first poll after democratization, voter turnout reached a whopping 89.2 percent. It has since slid gradually to reach 62.9 percent in 2007. The voting rates for parliamentary elections plummeted from 75.8 percent in 1988 to 46.1 percent in 2008, attesting to heightened voter skepticism toward parties and politicians.

Second, the number of civic organizations steadily increased from 18,000 in 2003 to 26,000 in 2009. Korea’s civic movement, which emerged in the early-to-mid 1990s and peaked in the early 2000s, began to lose public trust in the wake of scandals. Citizen’s confidence in them lies in their non-partisan nature, devotion to public interest, morality, organizational democracy, open participation and policy alternatives. But as the government began to financially assist them and some progressive, reform-minded activists assumed major posts in the Roh administration, their non-partisan image was undermined. Prosecutors’ announcement in the second half of 2008 of embezzlement involving a civic group official dealt a serious blow to the entire civic movement. In addition, criticism mounted against them over their inability to accommodate citizens’ opinions and demands,
higher than chaebol companies and state agencies in term of public trust since the think tank began its survey in 2005. The PSPD, which topped the list with 4.98 points in 2005, fell to 4.47 in 2006, 4.57 in 2007, 4.64 in 2008, 4.23 in 2009 and 4.43 in 2011. While progressive civic groups have faced public scrutiny since the mid-2000s, their conservative rivals began to gain ground. The ideological confrontation within civil society, combining with political antagonism between liberals and conservatives under the Roh government, further complicated the landscape of civic movement and weakened the influence of individual organizations. It was no wonder that against this backdrop the National New Right Union, a conservative group launched in 2005, got over 4.5 points in the public trust survey.

Last but not least, the spectacular development of new information and communications technologies paved the way for ordinary citizens to participate in politics directly, bypassing existing political and civic entities. Citizens were now able to communicate almost simultaneously, due to the emergence in the mid-2000s of social network services (SNS), relationship-centered tools that facilitate user participation through sharing of a variety of content in open networks. According to a survey, more than half of all Koreans were users of SNS including Twitter, Me2day, Facebook and Cyworld. A joint survey released on September 29, 2010 by the Korea Communications Commission and the Korea Internet Security Agency showed that about 37.01 million people, or 77.8 percent of the entire population, were using the Internet and 65.7 percent were using SNS. The 2010 Survey on Internet Use polled 72,658 people, aged 3 and above, in some 30,000 households nationwide. These social connection services allowed ordinary citizens to communicate with friends and celebrities and had a huge potential to influence politics.

The civic movement since the mid-2000s had to cope with these changing circumstances. Let’s look into some aspects that have not changed

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Presidential election</th>
<th>Parliamentary elections</th>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>89.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
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It was learned that their decisions on crucial issues were being made by a small number of full-time leaders. Civic groups also failed to play a proper role during the massive protests driven by ordinary citizens against the Lee government’s decision to import U.S. beef in the first half of 2008.

These problems were apparently not very serious when compared to other agencies and organizations in Korea, but dealt a fatal blow to civic groups partly because of intensive and exaggerated offensives by conservative forces, the main target of civic groups’ criticism. Indeed, progressive civic groups that played pivotal roles in political and electoral reforms, including the blacklist movement, significantly lost citizens’ trust and support. In a survey of public trust in social organizations by the Korea Social Science Data Archives at Sungkyunkwan University, civic groups fell from No. 1 in 2003 and 2004 to 5th in 2005, and to 6th in 2006. The trend was confirmed by another study by the East Asia Institute. Civic groups have never scored
Now let's look at changes since 2007. First, the blacklist movement, which was initiated by progressive civic groups including the PSPD in the April 2000 general elections and had a big impact on politics and civil society, was revived for the 2004 parliamentary elections but not in 2008. There were three reasons. First, some leaders of the campaign faced penalties including fines for violating the Election Law after the 2000 general elections. In 2001, the Constitutional Court also confirmed the constitutionality of the law against the blacklist movement. The organizers would have to risk punishment again if they were to push ahead with the campaign as before. Second, agreement on the blacklist criteria was not easy. The movement also had difficulties shaking off its partisan nature as the list chiefly consisted of conservative politicians. Third, and most importantly, the spread of bottom-up, voluntary political participation led by netizens since 2002, such as large-scale candlelight vigils, eclipsed the ripple effect of the top-down blacklist drive. In fact, even before the 2008 parliamentary elections, candlelight rallies against the Lee Myung-bak administration's decision to resume U.S. beef imports continued through the summer, making it difficult for civic groups to focus on a new blacklist campaign. In addition, since the mid-2000s, the movement has not lived up to the expectations and demands of netizens, a new class of voters, due to withering public confidence in civic groups amid corruption scandals, claims of political bias and criticism of a "civic movement without citizen participation".

Liberal, reform-minded civic groups including the PSPD pledged to transform themselves through painful self-reflection. Responding to the changing circumstances, more than 1,000 civic groups formed the Voters' Network for General Elections on February 9, 2012 as they geared up for a new type of blacklist movement in the 19th parliamentary elections in April. The new movement in 2012 focused on policies rather than candidates' ethics. Rather than street campaigns and signature collecting,
the movement used an Internet site named Remember Me and SNS. They used a “legal” campaign of spreading the list of lawmakers who supported the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and President Lee’s four-river renovation project, who participated in railroad budget bills and a highly controversial media law revision, and who violated the constitutional principle of separating the politics and religion. The blacklist movement through SNS is expected to exert a great influence as a majority of the population uses SNS and the Constitutional Court ruled electioneering via SNS legal in December 2011, leading to the revision of Election Law provisions in February 2012.

The institutional reform movement has been relatively dormant since the introduction of a new proportional representation system. The movement was reactivated ahead of the 2007 presidential election when the NEC announced a guideline on the use of Internet user created content in January and began a massive crackdown on violations. Six civic groups including the PSPD filed a constitutional petition in September against the 1st clause of Article 93 of the Election Law, which the NEC cited as the legal basis of its action against UCC use. They gathered voluntary claimants via the Internet. They also called for the revision of the law through a legislative petition and other methods and channels. But after the 17th National Assembly failed to amend the law, some 88,000 election-related UCC items were deleted, hundreds of people were investigated by the police and prosecutors, and freedom of expression online was seriously violated. After the 18th National Assembly began in June 2008, the struggle to protect the freedom of expression on the Internet continued, including two constitutional petitions. The fight intensified after the NEC resumed crackdowns on election-related activities via Twitter and other SNS around the time of the local elections in 2010. In June 2011, 52 civic organizations, netizens and citizens formed the Voters’ Network for Freedom of Expression and started a full-fledged campaign to revise the law. The organization submitted legislative petitions and cooperated with Democratic Party lawmakers to rewrite 17 “toxic” clauses of the Election Law. The network also carried out an online petition and adopted a voters’ declaration calling for the Election Law revision. It launched a voters’ lobby corps to campaign for a legal amendment. Its legal supporters’ corps assisted citizens who were penalized for legal violations and filed a suit calling for a retrial for netizens punished in similar cases in 2007. Those efforts paid off when the Constitutional Court in December 2011 ruled that UCC and mobile phone text messages were not subject to the prohibition stipulated by the first clause of Article 93. Two months later, on February 27, the National Assembly passed the Election Law revision which allows electioneering via the Internet and SNS without time restriction.

With SNS-based campaigns made legal, ordinary citizens and Internet users are now able to exert considerable influence on elections in a more active and speedy way, prompting civic groups to explore new methods for election participation. Even before the constitutional ruling, an SNS-based movement to encourage voting was under way during the 2010 local elections even though it was illegal. In the October 2011 by-elections, celebrities and ordinary citizens took photos of themselves just after casting ballots and posted them on SNS sites to encourage others to go to the polls. It was expected that this and other campaigns using SNS would have significant repercussions but the impact was actually limited to Seoul and nearby areas. The effect was also less extensive than expected in the parliamentary votes in April 2012, as most of the main users of SNS, progressive-minded voters in their 20s to 40s, reside in the capital region. We have examined major shifts in Korea’s election environment and civic groups’ engagement since 2007. The findings confirm that civic groups should swiftly adapt themselves to political, social and technological changes and approach citizens constantly with new ideas and content in
order to help upgrade election culture and consolidate democracy. They should also acknowledge the need to boost efforts for self-surveillance and purification to meet growing expectations and support of citizens.

The Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)

The Korea Democracy Foundation was created with the legislation of the Korea Democracy Foundation Act, which was passed by the National Assembly with the belief that the spirit of the democracy movement should be extended, developed and acknowledged as a critical factor in bringing democracy to Korea. The foundation is a not-for-profit organization set up for the purpose of enhancing Korean democracy through a variety of projects aimed at inheriting the spirit of the movement. With various forms of international cooperation including forums, study tours, workshops and publications, KDF is taking more steps to contribute to the development and spread of democracy and to share new ideas and practices in the world.
Publications of KDF(Eng.)

- Birth of Resistance (2005)
- A Single Spark (2005)
- Contemporary History of South Korea - 60 Years (2007)
- Hope and Realities of Global Democracy Promotion (2008)
- Hope and Realities of Democracy Promotion in Asia (2008)
- Voices through Ballot - Overview of Asian Elections (2008)
- Global Citizens in Charge - How modern direct democracy can make our representative democracies truly representative (2009)
- The History of the Democratization Movement in Korea (2010)
Korea’s democracy has continued to advance since 1987 and during that time, numerous civic organizations were born and their activities were as vigorous as ever. The government and civil society’s efforts to establish a free and fair election culture were especially remarkable. Their drive helped generate a social desire for “an election free from money” through institutional reforms including the revision of the Election Law. It also led to the election participation movement and helped heighten public awareness of the need for the manifesto movement.

"Election and Civil Society," recounts Korean civil society’s experiences and activities aimed at building a healthy and free election culture, especially from the June Democratic Movement in 1987 until 2006.

We expect this book to introduce foreign civic activists to Korea’s precious experiences, thus helping forge a sound election culture in countries facing major votes and contributing to development of democracy across the world.