



Truth and Reconciliation

On March 26th, 2025, the first interim report on adoptions from South Korea will be published by the South Korean Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This report is eagerly awaited by adoptees worldwide, particularly by the Danish Korean Rights Group, who in 2022 formally requested the Commission to investigate adoptions from South Korea.

March 26th will truly be an historic day! Not only for the adoptees who have submitted their individual cases to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) but for all adoptees from South Korea around the world.

For 30 years, adoptees have heard rumours and allegations of irregularities in adoption documents and background information. Some things simply did not add up.

In 2021, two Danish adoptees decided to systematically examine the many stories and rumours that had circulated among adoptees and in the media for decades. Were these merely isolated errors, or was there a more systematic pattern behind these numerous discrepancies and accounts?

In November 2021, we participated in an online seminar hosted by the Korean organisation KoRoot, where several Korean researchers presented their studies on adoptions from Korea. During this seminar, evidence and documentation of irregularities and suspicious errors came to light.

- At the seminar, we asked the Korean researchers what they intended to do about the evidence of document falsification and illicit adoption practices in Korea. Their response was that they were researchers, not the affected victims. They asked us, 'Where are the adoptees?' We looked at each other and replied, 'We are adoptees, and perhaps we can do something.' This was the catalyst for the formation of the Danish Korean Rights Group, explains Peter Møller, one of the two founders of Danish Korean Rights Group (DKRG).
- Initially, we assumed that the vast majority of adoptions from South Korea were legitimate. Our focus was to identify cases where wrongdoing could be documented. Unfortunately, we soon realised that our assumption was incorrect, as every single adoption case we reviewed was highly problematic. In fact, we have been unable to find even one case where everything is in order, says Peter Møller.



This was the beginning of everything.

For years, adoptees had discussed adoption in social communities and closed Facebook groups worldwide. For DKRG, it has been crucial that the discussion takes place in the country responsible for adoptions from South Korea—namely, South Korea itself.

At DKRG, we have a research team consisting of experts and professionals. Being an international adoptee is not a profession, but many adoptees have professional careers in research, medicine, pharmacology, law, and the social sciences. We reached out to adoptees in Denmark, to adoptees who are experts in their respective fields and they have later become part of DKRG's work.

In August 2022, the DKRG formally requested the Korean Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to initiate an official inquiry into adoptions from South Korea.

On 23 August 2022, DKRG submitted the first 50 cases from individual adoptees, along with a comprehensive main application, requesting the Commission not only to investigate the submitted individual cases but also to examine the broader systemic structures within Korea's ongoing adoption history. These structures had made Korea the world's largest sender of children for adoption, establishing a model that influenced international adoptions beyond South Korea.

Following this initial submission in August 2022, DKRG received inquiries from adoptees worldwide. DKRG decided to accept cases from adoptees from countries other than Denmark. Consequently, on September 13rd, 2022, DKRG made a second submission to the TRC, including additional Danish cases and international cases from Sweden, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, the USA, Canada, Norway, and Germany.

DKRG continued submitting cases to the TRC in November 2022 and up until the final deadline for case submissions on December 9th, 2022.

In November 2022, adoptees from the adoption agencies Eastern Social Welfare Society and Korean Welfare Services decided to join DKRG, ensuring that adoptees from Eastern Social Welfare Society and Korean Welfare Services were also included. On December 9th, 2022, DKRG's sister organisation AUSKRG and its Swedish partner SKAN, representing adoptees from Eastern Social Welfare Society and Korean Welfare Services, respectively, submitted their applications to the TRC for an adoption commission investigation.

On December 7th, 2022, the TRC informed DKRG that the Commission had decided to establish an official inquiry into human rights violations in international adoptions from South Korea.



The TRC's decision to establish an adoption inquiry has had repercussions far beyond South Korea. Several of the receiving countries involved in international adoptions have since initiated national investigations into international adoptions. This has taken place in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, France, and Switzerland.

The world's eyes are quite literally on South Korea and the TRC, and the TRC's findings and conclusions will extend far beyond South Korea's borders.

- “For a country to dare to look itself in the mirror and confront its turbulent history, to face the demons of the past, speaks of a nation with great courage. This fills us with love for our motherland and pride in our Korean heritage”, says Boon Young Han, one of DKRG's two founders and CEOs.

Over the past three years, DKRG has collected more than 47,000 pages of documentation and evidence related to adoptions from South Korea. A significant portion of this material has been handed over to the TRC.

From this extensive material, we have learned that adoption is not just one thing. It encompasses many forms of abuse and violations. Documenting South Korean adoption practice, DKRG has discovered verified cases of child theft, abductions, sexual abuse, deceased children, coercion, and inhumane treatment on a scale beyond our imagination.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed corruption and cynical, calculating individuals and organisations in ways we never thought possible.

Every day for the past three years, we have encountered public officials and representatives from the adoption industry who continue to lie. They deliberately conceal the truth about adoptions.

Authorities and adoption agencies desperately attempt to explain away their failures, deny responsibility, and even today, seek to mislead and obscure the truth about their role while actively preventing adoptees from ascertaining their origins and backgrounds.

Findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Therefore the DKRG is now eagerly awaiting the TRC's conclusions in its first interim report, which will be published on March 26th, 2025.

Regardless of the outcome of the TRC's report, we will respect its findings and conclusions. The professional relationship we have had with the TRC and its investigators has demonstrated integrity, skill, and trustworthiness. Therefore, we are confident that whatever the TRC concludes, it will reflect the truth.



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