

Press Release of the Ministry of Justice

Date: January 28, 2014

Release unit: Ministry of Justice

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Our Country Becomes a Member of the Asset Recovery Inter- Agency Network of Asia/ Pacific (ARIN-AP)

To allow cooperation between Asia-Pacific countries to combat crimes and effectively recover criminal assets, the Supreme Prosecutors' Office Republic of Korea, under the counseling of the United Nations offices on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), initiated to hold a meeting for the establishment of the Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of Asia / Pacific (ARIN-AP) in Seoul on November 19-20, 2013. Through the joint efforts of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and its representative office in the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, along with 20 other countries, was invited to participate in the inaugural meeting of the said network and recently completed admission procedures to become a member of ARIN-AP.

With the globalization of financial activities that leads crimes to be more likely to conceal their illegal income by means of crossing borders, the law enforcement officers of each country for investigating cross-border crimes and money-laundering cases are facing with a new challenge of how to seize and confiscate illegal gains. Only close cooperation between various jurisdictions as well as sharing information and practical experiences can we overcome the challenge, and effectively seize illegal money of criminals as well as forge a sharp weapon to combat crime.

Major areas of the world such as Europe and South America have established institutional networks to act as area mutual legal assistance and information exchange platforms to process the recovery of criminal income, but there has been no such network in Asia-Pacific region so far. For this reason, the Supreme Prosecutors' Office Republic of Korea proposed the idea of establishing an institutional network for recovering illegal income exclusive for the Asia-Pacific region in December 2011 at the Annual General Assembly of FATF/APG and presented a plan in December 2012 at the Annual General Assembly of Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (CARIN) which obtained great responses in

many countries of the Asia-Pacific region. After our Association of Prosecutors were notified about the establishment of such a network, MOJ, MOFA and representative offices in South Korea actively expressed our country's will to participate and explained our indispensable status in this regional judicial assistance network. After several times of negotiation, our country finally joined the ARIN-AP on January 28, 2014.

Assets recovery has been one of the mutual legal assistance issues of concern to every country, and it is expected that, through the ARIN-AP network, the platform of intelligence exchanging, contact and cooperation between Asia-Pacific countries can be successfully established in order to remove obstacles to recovering criminal assets and improving the performance of mutual legal assistance.

Currently, the members of ARIN-AP include major countries in the Asia-Pacific region such as Japan, South Korea, China, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and our country. It is believed that the continued operation of ARIN-AP will be able to strengthen our country's capability in fighting against transnational crimes.