

## 《韩国总统朴槿惠就沉船事故道歉》

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SEOUL, April 29 (Xinhua) -- South Korean President Park Geun-hye on Tuesday apologized for the ferry sinking, saying that the government had failed to prevent the disaster.

Addressing a Cabinet meeting which was broadcast on the national television, Park said "I am sorry to the people and heavy hearted that many precious lives were lost."

"How should I apologize for the failure to prevent the accident and for the insufficient initial response in order to comfort the pains and sufferings (of relatives of the victims) even for a moment," the South Korean president said.

Park promised that she would create a government agency in charge of dealing with such large-scale accidents.

"We should have a firm determination to make the entire safety system of the Republic of Korea from scratch," the president said.

Park said the Cabinet should come up with safety measures for the people with an attitude to remodel the country.

The South Korean government has been criticized for being slow and incompetent in dealing with the disaster.

Responding to the public anger, South Korean Prime Minister Chung Hong-won resigned on Sunday.

"The right thing for me to do is to take responsibility and resign," Chung told a nationally-televised press conference, 11 days after the accident that is one of the country's worst maritime disasters.

"Keeping my post too great a burden on the administration," Chung said.

The prime minister apologized on behalf of the government for the deadly accident and its less-than-effective early response measures.

The Sewol ferry with 476 people aboard, most of them students and teachers, sank off South Korea on April 16. Officials have confirmed 187 dead.