

A to Z Guide for Just Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue



The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance
for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan



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Contents

Preface	4
Acknowledgment	8
Terminology	8
What is Japanese Military Sexual Slavery (“Comfort Women”)?	11
“Comfort Women” or Sex Slaves?	27
Was There NO Forced Mobilization, as Abe and Revisionists Say?	47
Did the Japanese Government Ever Apologize?	67
How Have the Survivors Fought for Justice?	95
Why Should We Remember the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue?	135
Conclusion	142
Supplementary Materials	144
Japanese Government’s Interference with the Movement for Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue	145
Twisting the Japanese Military “Comfort Women” Issue into an <i>Anti- Japan Tribalism</i>* Narrative	157
The Korean Council Response to Lee Yong-soo halmoni’s Press Conference	164
The Korean Council Statement on the Current Situation	169
Statements from the 8th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” International Solidarity Demonstration	172
Weekly Update	172
Introspection and Vision Committee Statement	176
1452nd Wednesday Demonstration Press Conference for Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue Statement	179
Further Readings on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue and Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict	181
Chronology	186
References	216

Preface

The year 2020 marks the 30th anniversary of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan¹ and the movement for just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery (“comfort women”) issue, since its beginning in 1990.

In the past 30 years, the women who survived the crimes against humanity committed by the Japanese military and social stigma against sexual violence survivors courageously came forward with their painful experiences and called for justice – the official apology and legal reparations from the Japanese Government. Kim Hak-soon’s public testimony on August 14, 1991, led to a series of #MeToo from other women from South Korea, North Korea, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan, Malaysia, East Timor, Netherlands, and more. Hundreds of women who survived the atrocities overcame more than 50 years of stigma, to bear witness the stories of other victims who could not return and to reveal the historical truth against the Japanese Government’s attempts to conceal it.

Since January 8, 1992, the survivors and supporters have held Wednesday Demonstration every Wednesday in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, South Korea, to call for the Japanese Government to make official apology and legal reparations. Survivors also traveled to the United States, Norway, France, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, United Nations and more, to testify their experiences and call for the international community to stand in solidarity, until the Japanese Government admits its war crimes and restores the women’s human rights and dignity. Countless citizens resonated with the women’s call for justice and became Butterfly activists who campaign for just resolution of the issue. The international human rights organizations, committees of the United Nations, International

¹ The organization changed its name to the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan in 2018, after merge of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, established in 1990 with 37 women’s human rights organizations, and the Foundation for Justice and Remembrance for the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, established in 2016 for annulment of the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement.

Labour Organization, United States House of Representatives, European Parliament, national and regional assemblies in multiple nations, and more joined the call by issuing recommendations and resolutions to urge the Japanese Government to take action to achieve justice for the victims.

Yet the Japanese Government's denial and distortion of truth continue. Concealing its legal responsibilities to make reparations behind the term "humanitarian aid" and "consolation fund," the Japanese Government has abused monetary measures to evade taking concrete action for official apology and reparations and to silence the survivors and movement. Further, the rise of ultra-nationalism and historical revisionist (neo-colonialist) views have allowed the right-wing politicians to defame the survivors over again with remarks distorting historical research data and violating principles of international human rights laws, as a means of consolidating their political power without facing repercussions.

Such rise of neo-colonialists and historical revisionists has spread to Korea as well, mirroring Japanese ultra-nationalist views and leading to defamation of 30 years of movement for justice as "anti-Japanese" and distortion of the survivor's testimonies on various platforms including book publications, YouTube, and other social media. It has even led to feasible threats during the Wednesday Demonstrations, in forms of anti-rallies against the survivors and supporters.

These grim phenomena of denial and revisionist attempts at historical facts rise from culture of impunity. Perpetrators of the Japanese military sexual slavery were not held responsible, due to the geo-political interests of the Cold War and silencing of the sexual violence issue. Lack of accountability and education for the war crimes committed by the Japanese Government allowed the "alternative narrative" by neo-colonialists to grow.

The Japanese military sexual slavery issue is sometimes seen only as an issue of foreign diplomacy and politics between South Korea and Japan. Yet the military sexual slavery system created and operated by the Japanese Government affected women across the Asia-Pacific region, in its colonies and occupied regions before and during World War II and the Asian-Pacific War. Indeed, the call for the Japanese Government's official apology and

legal reparations has been international, made possible from solidarity among survivors and activists across the world. Moreover, while Japanese military sexual slavery is a unique case of state (government)-led military sexual slavery system, it intertwines discussions on colonialism, women's human rights, militarism, classism, and thus is a universal human rights issue that calls for our attention and solidarity.

We hope this informational booklet could help you navigate through the historical truth of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and movement for its resolution. Through learning about and remembering the historical truth, we hope you could join us to stand in solidarity with survivors and call for justice – the Japanese Government's official apology, reparations, redress, and a true restoration of human rights and dignity for all victims.

In solidarity,

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan



Kim Hak-soon gave the first public testimony as a Japanese military sexual slavery survivor on August 14, 1991. Remembering her courage and survivors who came forward, participants of the 11th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan proclaimed August 14 as the International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” ©The Korean Council

Acknowledgment

This informational booklet was made possible through countless victim-survivors who shared their voices and activism, activists, researchers, and citizens around the world who have stood in solidarity for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue for the past 30 years. We express our special gratitude to Drs. Chung Chin Sung, Kang Sung Hyun, and Park Jung Ae for sharing their insights to improve this booklet, which allowed us to introduce a glimpse of their life-long dedication for research on the historical truth. We also thank Kim Woohee for her incredible dedication from the very first draft to final revisions of this booklet. Further, we dedicate this booklet to 5,929 citizens who have resonated with the importance of promoting the historical truth and joined the Kakao Together fundraising campaign in 2019.² This informational booklet is still a work in progress, and therefore our gratitude and solidarity also expand to you, who will be reading this information booklet and taking a step for just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue.

Terminology

Japanese Military Sexual Slavery

Terms describing the Japanese military sexual slavery (“comfort women”) have been under discussion, since historical records used variety of terms and the system was largely kept undercover during and after the war. Also, the term *Chongshindae* (Labor Corps) was broadly used to refer to the Japanese conscription/mobilization of women in colonized Korea, so earlier discussions used *Chongshindae* and “comfort women” interchangeably. After more research and investigation into the issue, however, **Japanese military “comfort women”** has been used to specifically refer to the victims of military sexual slavery by Japan. As the issue was raised in the

² Kakao Together, “Ilbon'gun ‘wianbu’oui chinshil, segyero ppödonagal suittorok” [Truth of the Japanese military “comfort women,” spreading to the world], accessed August 28, 2020. <https://together.kakao.com/fundraisings/68865>

international community as a violation of human rights and violence against women, the term **Japanese military sexual slavery** was used to convey the nature of the system as military sexual slavery, led and organized systematically by the state.³

This booklet used **Japanese military sexual slavery** to convey the nature of the system as a sexual slavery, and **Japanese military “comfort women”** or **“comfort women”** to reflect the historical use.

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (The Korean Council)

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereinafter the Korean Council) is a foundation based in South Korea working towards just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and prevention of wartime sexual violence.

In 2018, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, established in 1990 with 37 women’s human rights organizations, and the Foundation for Justice and Remembrance for the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, established in 2016 to call for annulment of the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement, merged to form the Korean Council.

The Korean Council carries out various domestic and international campaigns for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue, including survivor support, research and education, scholarship programs, commemoration programs, international solidarity campaigns, and support for survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict around the world.

Note about names

This booklet preserved the last name – first name order of Korean names, as many survivors are known in this name order (e.g. Kim Hak-soon, Kim Bok Dong, Gil Won-ok). For victim-survivors, Korean term *halmoni* is used to convey respect and connection.

³ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 2016), 3-10.



This picture was taken on August 14, 1944, a day before the Allied soldiers and “comfort women” parted. They took photos inside the temporary prison camp ringed by barbed-wire fences. American soldiers questioned these women by showing them documents and photos of Japanese soldiers. Photo Number CBI-44-21636 (T/4 Frank W. Shearer, 164th Signal Corps A Detachment, The U.S. Army, August 14, 1944). ©Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team⁴

⁴ Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of “Comfort Women,” Untold Words*, (2019), 68.

**What is
Japanese Military Sexual
Slavery (“Comfort Women”)?**

Japanese military “comfort women” refer to the women who were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese military before and during World War II (during the Asia-Pacific War) from the early 1930s to 1945. Japanese military sexual slavery system came into full operation after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese war in 1937. Women from various countries in Asia Pacific region colonized or occupied by Japan, including Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor, Malaysia, Thailand as well as from the Netherlands and Japan, were taken as “comfort women” and suffered from daily sexual violence, atrocities, and deprivation of freedom.

While the exact number of “comfort women” is unknown since the Japanese Government refuses to disclose official documents or conduct full-scale investigation, researchers estimate that approximately 16,000 to 410,000 women were forced into the sexual slavery system.⁵ In 2019, an official document revealed that the Japanese military stationed in China had requested one “comfort woman” for every 70 soldiers.⁶

⁵ Jung Ae Park, “P’ihaeshilt’aerül t’onghae pon ilbon’gunwianbuüi kaenyömgwa pömjü shiron” [An Essay on the Category and Concept of “Comfort Women” drafted into the Japanese forces through Damage Status], *Sahak Yonku: The Review of Korean History* 120, (2015): 172-176.

⁶ “EXCLUSIVE: Wartime Documents Shed Light on Japan Gov’t Role in Recruiting ‘Comfort Women,’” *Kyodo News*, December 6, 2019, <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2019/12/1066371998e9-exclusive-wartime-documents-shed-light-on-govt-role-in-recruiting-comfort-women.html>



Four women who had survived in ruined Songshan area were taken in a photograph. Among them, the pregnant woman on the right is Park Young-shim. Photo Number 230147 (Pvt. Charles H. Hatfield, 164th Signal Corps, The U.S. Army, September 3, 1944). ©Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team⁷

Photo of Park Young-shim, a North Korean survivor. Park Young-shim pointed out that she was the pregnant woman pictured together with other captured “comfort women” ©Women’s Active Museum on War and Peace, *Catalogue for the Third Special Exhibition Abandoned Korean “Comfort Women”* 2006, 33⁸



⁷ Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of “Comfort Women,” Untold Words*, 126.

⁸ Cited in Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of “Comfort Women,” Untold Words*, 142.

Women, including underage girls, were abducted, coerced, or otherwise recruited under fraudulent promises of factory jobs or nursing work.⁹ In comfort stations, they did not have freedom of movement, residence, or occupation.

The Japanese military systematically established comfort stations in their battlefronts and operated them directly or indirectly.¹⁰ In addition, the Japanese Government was directly involved in mobilizing and transporting women.¹¹

The comfort stations were run under systemic regulations on hygiene, hours of service, and contraception. In some regions including China and the Philippines, the Japanese military set up temporary comfort stations near the camps, abducted women from the occupied villages, and raped them through several weeks or months.

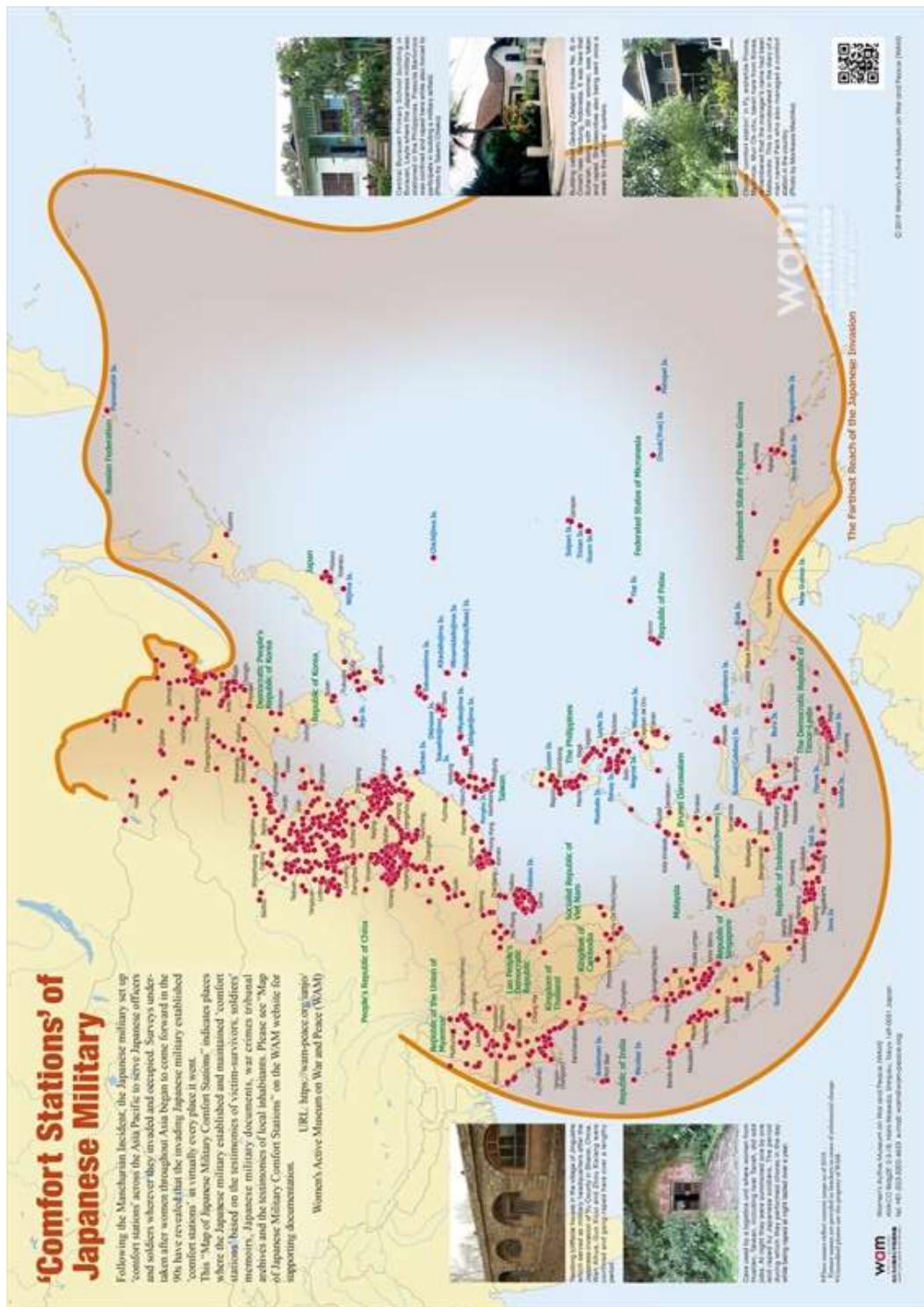
Multiple evidence pointing to the organization of comfort stations, according to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy, demonstrate not only that **“Japanese forces took direct responsibility for the comfort stations and were intimately connected with all aspects of their organization, but they also clearly indicate how legitimized and established an institution the stations had become.”**¹²

⁹ Chin Sung Chung, “The Origin and Development of the Military Sexual Slavery Problem in Imperial Japan,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 5, no. 1 (1997): 228.

¹⁰ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 44-51.

¹¹ Chin Sung Chung, “The Origin and Development of the Military Sexual Slavery Problem in Imperial Japan,” 228.

¹² United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/85*, ¶ 6, E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1 (February 5, 1996), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1>



Map of comfort stations © Women's Active Museum on War and Peace¹³

¹³ Women's Active Museum on War and Peace, "Nippongun iansho mappu" 日本軍慰安所マップ [Japanese military comfort station map], accessed August 28, 2020, <https://wam-peace.org/ianjo/>
For the Korean version of the map, see "Ilbon'gun wianso chido" [Japanese Military Comfort Station Map], Northeast Asian History Foundation, accessed August 7, 2020, <http://contents.nahf.or.kr/item/item.do?itemId=iswm>



Regulations of a comfort station in Shanghai, written by the Japanese Military Logistics Command, stated “permitted only for Japanese military use” and delineated hours, fees, and other regulations ©Tetsuo Aso, *From Shanghai to Shanghai: The War Diary of an Imperial Japanese Army Medical Officer*, Fukuoka: Sekimsha, 1993

Japanese military official document titled “Concerning the Recruitment of Women for Military Comfort Stations” issued by the adjutants to the Chiefs of Staff of the North China Army and Central China Expeditionary Army on March 4, 1938, discovered by Japanese historian Yoshimi Yoshiaki ©Japan Center for Asian Historical Records – National Archives of Japan¹⁴

アジア歴史資料センター
Japan Center for Asian Historical Records
http://www.jacar.go.jp/

¹⁴ For full document, visit: “Recruitment of female employees for Army brothels,” Japan Center for Asian Historical Records – National Archives of Japan, accessed August 19, 2020, https://www.jacar.archives.go.jp/aj/meta/listPhoto?NO=242&DB_ID=G0000101EXTERNAL&ID=%24_ID&LANG=eng&image_num=242&IS_STYLE=eng&TYPE=PDF&DL_TYPE=pdf&REFCODE=C04120263400&CN=1



Left) Dead bodies of Japanese troops and “comfort women” killed in the city of Tengchung, September 15, 1944.¹⁵

Right) Corpses of women lined the trenches leading out of Tengchung Fortress. The majority were Korean “comfort women.”¹⁶

When the war ended, Japanese military “comfort women” were abandoned in the battlefields or killed by the Japanese military to hide the war crimes. Those who managed to survive could not find or afford a way back home. The few who were able to return home faced social stigma against sexual violence survivors and were silenced for almost 50 years.

The issue of Japanese military sexual slavery was raised by researchers and activists working on women’s human rights in Korea since the 1980s, when Yun Chung-ok, a professor at Ewha Women’s University, started investigating the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. Having narrowly avoided conscription herself, she wanted to unearth what happened to the many women who had been taken away but did not return. Her efforts were joined by feminist sociologist Lee Hyo-jae, also a professor at Ewha Women’s University, and other feminist activists and women’s organizations. The Korean Church Women United, one of the foundational women’s organizations that assisted in starting the movement, organized the International Seminar on “Women and Tourism Culture” where Yun

¹⁵ Sung Hyun Kang, “The US Army Photography and the ‘Seen Side’ and ‘Blind Side’ of the Japanese Military Comfort Women: The Still Pictures and Motion Pictures of the Korean Comfort Girls in Myitkyina, Sungshan, and Tengchung,” *Korea Journal* 59, no. 2 (2019): 169.

¹⁶ Sung Hyun Kang, “The US Army Photography and the “Seen Side” and “Blind Side” of the Japanese Military Comfort Women: The Still Pictures and Motion Pictures of the Korean Comfort Girls in Myitkyina, Sungshan, and Tengchung,” 169.

presented her research. The issue was brought to wider public attention when **Kim Hak-soon publicly testified on August 14, 1991**. Her courage inspired many other survivors to come forward. Ever since, survivors have been fighting for justice and redress throughout the past 30 years.¹⁷



Professor Yun Chung-ok presented her research on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue at the International Seminar on “Women and Tourism Culture” held in Jeju, South Korea in 1988 ©The Korean Council

¹⁷ For more information on the history of the movement, please see Chapter How Have the Survivors Fought for Justice? in this booklet as well as the following source: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, *Han'gukchöngshindaedaech'aek'yöbüihoe 20nyönsa* [20 Years of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan], (Seoul: Hanul, 2014).

The Japanese military sexual slavery issue stands at the intersections of multiple social issues. Japan's colonial power, imperial aggressions, gender hierarchy and patriarchal norms led to the creation of the military sexual slavery system. Furthermore, victims were often women and girls of low-income backgrounds in areas colonized or occupied by Japan who were lured through fraudulent promises of job prospects or taken by physical force. Those who returned home after the war also suffered under social stigma in patriarchal societies. Victims thus suffered under intersecting systems of oppression of colonialism, patriarchy, nationalism, and classism.¹⁸

Although some approach this issue with a colonial male gaze under the discourse of "losing our girls to the Japanese enemies," understanding the issue solely via patriarchy-based nationalist perspectives fails to take into account the complexities of intersecting systems of oppression that shape the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and the agency survivors exhibited as feminist activists.¹⁹ On the other hand, removing nationalism altogether from the analysis may lead to overlooking the influence of colonialism and nationalism that allowed the Japanese military to force massive numbers of victims from Korea, Taiwan, and other colonized and occupied countries into sexual slavery.²⁰ Thus, it is important to understand the issue as an intersection of multi-layered systems of oppression that shaped the making of the system, its operations, and victims' experiences.

¹⁸ Pyong Gap Min, "Korean 'Comfort Women': The Intersection of Colonial Power, Gender, and Class," *Gender & Society* 17, no. 6 (2003): 943-952.

¹⁹ Na-young Lee, "The Korean Women's Movement of Japanese Military 'Comfort Women': Navigating between Nationalism and Feminism," *The Review of Korean Studies* 17, no. 1 (2014): 81-87.

²⁰ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 373-376.



This image demonstrates multiple social structures that intertwine into the Japanese military sexual slavery system. While victims' various positionalities in race, gender, country of origin, etc., shaped their experiences in different ways, these social structures significantly shaped the Japanese military sexual slavery system.

Story of Bae Bong-gi (born in Korea, passed away in Japan)²¹



Bae Bong-gi on a picnic with Kim Soo-seob and Kim Hyeon-ok ©Kim Soo-seob & Kim Hyeon-ok

Bae Bong-gi was the first Korean known to be a survivor of the Japanese military sexual slavery system. Born in South Chungcheong Province, Korea, Bae was forced into the Japanese military sexual slavery system in November 1944 after being recruited under fraudulent promises. She was put in a comfort station for Japanese imperial soldiers in Tokashiki, a small island in Okinawa Prefecture. After World War II ended, she still had to serve U.S. military soldiers who occupied Okinawa. Although Korea was liberated from Japanese colonial rule after World War II, she could not return to her home.

After Japan regained sovereignty over Okinawa in 1972, the Japanese government decided to limit residency grants to Koreans who could prove that they arrived at the island before 1945. Bae, who never had formal education and did not know how to write, could not prepare documents for residency application and faced the risk of being deported. To avoid being deported, Bae told the owner of the restaurant she worked for that she came to Okinawa as a Japanese military “comfort woman.” Her story was

²¹ To learn more: Jeong-gyu Lee, “Remembering Bae Bong-gi, the First Comfort Woman to Testify About Her Experiences as Sex Slave,” *The Hankyoreh*, March 18, 2019, http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/886367.html
Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of “Comfort Women,” Untold Words*, 201-250.

broadcasted by the Japanese press in October 1975. Japanese Government policies and press forced her to reveal her personal history.

Bae Bong-gi lived in a small hut in Okinawa and suffered from frequent headaches and pain that might have been symptoms of PTSD. Upon Japanese emperor Hirohito's demise in January 1989, Bae angrily said he died without apologizing for the Japanese military sexual slavery system. Through interactions with people who supported her and personal reflections on her life, Bae, who was at first regretful of the Japanese defeat in the war, had changed her perspectives. Bae Bong-gi's life story has been published in a book titled *A House With Red Roof Tiles – Story of a Korean Woman Who Became a Japanese Military “Comfort Woman”* by Fumiko Kawada.²²

²² Fumiko Kawada, *Ppalgan kiwajim ilbon'gun wianbuga toen han'gung yŏsŏng iyagi* [A House With Red Roof Tiles – Story of a Korean Woman Who Became a Japanese Military “Comfort Woman”], trans. Geun-young Oh, (Paju: Kkumgyoch'ulp'ansa, 2014).

Testimony of Estelita Basnaño Dy (the Philippines)

*The following testimony was taken and modified from the Korean Council informational booklet on The 14th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan “For the truth, justice, reparation, and non-recurrence on the issue of military sexual slavery,” held on May 18-20, 2016, in Seoul, South Korea. The Asian Solidarity Conference has been held since 1992 to strengthen solidarity among survivors and activists in Asia for the resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. Lola Estelita Dy participated in the 14th Asian Solidarity Conference with the Lila Pilipina activists.



Estelita Dy at the 14th Asian Solidarity Conference on May 21, 2015 ©The Korean Council

In 1943, when I was 12 years old, the Japanese military came over to Talisay town. Our family evacuated to the place called Minubunan along the river surrounded by a forest with each one of horses and cows and chickens from our farm.

In 1943 and 1944, I went to work in the Japanese military airfield in Tangub in Bacolod city with my mother. I got rice by 2 ganta (approximately 500g) there every time I worked there. On one day of 1944, we decided to stop working in the airfield because the airplanes of the U.S. military

dropped flyers telling us to “stop working in the airfield of the Japanese military because the U.S. military would come over here”.

The Japanese military became very cruel after the news that the U.S. military would come over soon was widespread. At that time, whoever was suspicious to be a member of the Chinese guerrilla group was caught by the Japanese military and was beheaded with a bayonet and thrown into a well. Those who tried to escape by running were also shot and killed with a rifle. And Japanese soldiers captured women and took them to the Talisay Sugar Mill (located in the center of Talisay town) used as a Japanese military post.

On one day from October to November in 1944, when I was selling chickens and eggs with my mother in a market, a lot of Japanese soldiers who got on a truck came over. The Filipinos who were in the market ran away all at once, but unfortunately, I fell down on the way and was caught by Japanese soldiers. My hair was grabbed to lift up, and my hand was pulled, and forced to put on the truck. Multiple women were put on the truck. I was very scared of a bayonet and trembling in fear of being killed.

When I arrived at the military post where entangled barbed wire was highly set up, I was pushed into a room of the house in that compound. There were only a desk and a chair in that room. Later in one hour or so, I was pushed down on the wooden floor by Japanese soldiers, and my mouth was shut when I tried to scream, then I was pressed down, and raped. Again, I was raped by another Japanese soldier and do not know how many soldiers raped me afterwards. I resisted them and was beaten on the head finally to lose consciousness. When I regained consciousness again, there were not Japanese soldiers around me anymore. I did not recover from the wound that I suffered at the time of my first rape for three days. However, on the third day, Japanese soldiers came back and raped me, and a different group of Japanese soldiers came over and raped me. During these three weeks, I was raped repeatedly; therefore, I was afraid of whether they might kill me later. I was forced to clean the house and wash the clothes of the Japanese soldiers in the daytime.

One day, there was a warning that the U.S. military would come to Talisay. Since then every night, Japanese soldiers left the military post to

withdraw into the mountainous area, and people caught by the Japanese soldiers were freed. I returned to my house immediately and met my family again. They thought that I had already died. I reentered the elementary school from a third grade and graduated from the school. I did not confide my secret to anyone for fear of being despised. In 1949, I went to Manila to forget my wartime experience. There I found such a job as washing clothes to make a living somehow. I got married but could not speak of anything about being forced to sexually service Japanese soldiers to my husband. I got to know sexual slavery when I heard on the radio in 1993. Then I went to where Lila Pilipina was located, and I became a member of the sexual slavery support organization. After I came forward, I told the fact to my children.

I cannot still stand it whenever I remember what happened to me during the war time. I strongly believe that we should not repeat a war again so that the same tragedies as we experienced before will never happen to the younger generations.

To learn more, watch Asian Boss interview with Lola Estelita Dy:
<https://youtu.be/j7FXmsLBqNI>



Survivors demanding the Japanese Government's apology and reparations at the Wednesday Demonstration on September 24, 2003 ©The Korean Council

“Comfort Women” or Sex Slaves?

Question. Why does the Japanese Government refuse the term “sex slave,” and what are the proper terms to refer to the survivors?

In 2019, Japan’s Foreign Ministry published Japan’s Diplomatic Bluebook, which stated that the term “sex slaves” should not be used in connection with the Japanese military “comfort women” issue because it “contradicts the facts.”²³

The euphemistic term “comfort women” was used by the Japanese imperial military to refer to the system of sexual slavery. The Japanese military started systematically organizing the sexual slavery system in 1932, setting up the first comfort station after the January 28th Incident, also known as the Shanghai Incident. The Vice Chief of Staff of the Shanghai Expeditionary Army, Yasuji Okamura, requested “comfort women” due to cases of rape in Shanghai. Okamura stated that he drew inspiration from the Japanese Navy in Shanghai, which suggests that the Navy had established similar military comfort stations before 1932.²⁴ The Japanese Consulate in Shanghai recorded the existence of 17 Japanese Navy comfort stations in December 1932 and noted that this statistic was collected after a number of comfort station closings and openings, implying that Navy comfort stations would have been established earlier than the date.²⁵ The Japanese military justified the sexual slavery system under the rationale that it would:

- 1) Reduce rape by the Japanese soldiers against civilians of colonized or occupied regions and thus lessen anti-Japanese sentiments,
- 2) Reduce threats of venereal diseases amongst the Japanese soldiers, and
- 3) Boost soldiers’ morale during the war of aggression.²⁶

²³ Ki-weon Cho, “Japan’s Diplomatic Bluebook States Term ‘Sex Slaves’ Should Not Be Used for Comfort Women,” *The Hankyoreh*, November 12, 2019, http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_international/916735.html.

²⁴ Chin Sung Chung, “The Origin and Development of the Military Sexual Slavery Problem in Imperial Japan,” 223.

²⁵ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 42.

²⁶ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 107-143.

Ustinia Dolgopol and Snehal Paranjape, *Comfort Women, an Unfinished Ordeal: Report of a Mission*. (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1994), 25.

The “comfort women” were framed as “gifts from the emperor” and source of sexual “comfort” for soldiers, which demonstrate the patriarchal and sexist framing of the system that dehumanizes the victims.

Yet despite the euphemistic term, it is clear that the women suffered from severe violations of human rights during the mobilization process, in the comfort stations, and after the war. As the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Special Rapporteur on systemic rape, sexual slavery, and slavery-like practices during armed conflict Gay J. McDougall explained in her report (E/CN.4/SUB.2/1998/13), victims in comfort stations were **“forcibly raped multiple times on a daily basis and subjected to severe physical abuse and exposed to sexually transmitted diseases.”**²⁷



Japanese soldiers waiting in line in front of a comfort station ©Moriyasu Murase’s album “I Joined the Chinese Front”

<https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/1994/01/Japan-comfort-women-fact-finding-report-1994-eng.pdf>

²⁷ United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflict: Final report submitted by Ms. Gay J. McDougall, Special Rapporteur*, ¶ 39, E/CN.4/1998/13 (June 22, 1998), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/13>



Yang Jia Zhai comfort station in Shanghai established in January 1938 ©Tetsuo Aso, *From Shanghai to Shanghai: The War Diary of an Imperial Japanese Army Medical Officer*, Fukuoka: Sekimsha, 1993

The origins of the term “comfort women” reflect such male (perpetrator)-centered and discriminatory perspectives against women that underlie the making of the system. Therefore, quotation marks are used around “comfort women” to indicate the historical use of this term.

The survivors and activists continue the discussion to find a term respectful of the women’s painful experiences, life stories, and call for justice. **“Military Sexual Slavery by Japan”** emerged as a term to reflect the situation of the victims who were forced into systemic sexual slavery by the Japanese military, more often after its use in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy report on her mission to North and South Korea, and Japan on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. In her report, Coomaraswamy stated:

“...the practice of ‘comfort women’ should be considered a clear case of sexual slavery and a slavery-like practice in accordance with the approach adopted by relevant international human rights bodies and mechanisms.”²⁸

²⁸ United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/85*, ¶ 4, E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1 (February 5, 1996), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1>



The 1st Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan was held in Seoul, South Korea from August 10th to 11th, 1992. Through the Asian Solidarity Conference, survivors and activists across Asia built transnational solidarity for the issue. ©The Korean Council

Question. Were they “prostitutes?”

In the reports by the Allied Forces, the Japanese military “comfort women” are sometimes referred to as “prostitutes.” Does that mean the “comfort women” were prostitutes, rather than sex slaves?

When reading and interpreting historical records, it is important to understand the contexts in which these records were made. As World War II was coming to an end, the Allied Forces were interested in investigating what had allowed the Japanese Government to continue the war for so long. Indeed, some “comfort women” were captured and detained as prisoners of war and were interrogated by the Allied Forces that left numerous records and reports.

When the Allied Forces faced the women for the first time, however, the women were treated more as “amenities” and holders of classified information, rather than victims of human rights violation. For example, information on “comfort women” was included in the report on Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces (Allied Translator and Interpreter Section Research Report No. 120), showing that the Allied Forces did not yet perceive the Japanese military sexual slavery issue as a war crime, but as a part of “amenities” for Japanese soldiers.²⁹ Such male-centered perspective can also be seen in some photographs of Allied Forces soldiers with “comfort women,” in which the women are subject to sexualized male gaze.

Despite these limitations, from interrogations of the captured “comfort women,” Japanese soldiers, agents of comfort stations, and Japanese military documents, the Allied Forces acquired more information that the “comfort women” system was systemic violence organized by the Japanese military.

²⁹ Sung Hyun Kang, “The US Army Photography and the ‘Seen Side’ and ‘Blind Side’ of the Japanese Military Comfort Women: The Still Pictures and Motion Pictures of the Korean Comfort Girls in Myitkyina, Sungshan, and Tengchung,” 158. Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of “Comfort Women,” Untold Words*, 95.

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examinations may also be carried out. Simultaneously, a complete physical examination, especially for tuberculosis, contagious diseases (trachoma), contagious skin diseases and the like, may be given.

"27. Managers of houses of relaxation will provide preventives for venereal disease, and have the hostesses (geisha and waitresses) and the guests make use of them.

"28. Managers of houses of relaxation will be responsible for providing the following measures of venereal disease prevention:

"a. Disinfectant (2000 strength potassium permanganate solution or 0.500 cresol soap solution) will be put in containers and left in the lavatories and other specified places.

"b. The houses will be kept particularly clean within and without, and commodities will be provided.

"c. The hostesses will wash and disinfect the necessary portions of the houses weekly.

"d. Association with the hostesses will be forbidden to those who refuse to use condoms.

"e. Hostesses are forbidden to have intercourse during menstrual periods.

"f. Baths will be taken daily.

"g. Vaseline will be provided in the hostesses' rooms.

"h. Only clean bedding will be used, and it will be aired frequently. Extra bedding will be provided. White spreads and pillow covers will be used, and will be kept clean. Any other hygienic measure is also recommended.

"i. Particular attention will be paid to light and fresh air in the rooms.

Part Five—Discipline

"29. For the purpose of maintaining good order, the Officer in Charge of MANILA Sector Line of Communications Duties will have officers (army physicians) carry out inspections of the establishments from time to time. When necessary, the assistance of the military police will be enlisted.

"30. Hostesses (prostitutes and waitresses) may not leave the designated areas without permission from the line of communications officer. They are also forbidden to have intercourse beyond the premise of the houses of relaxation. They must have the permission of the Officer in Charge of MANILA Sector Line of Communications Duties to attend dinner-parties for soldiers or army civilian employees.

"31. Managers of houses of relaxation will not supply food or liquor to guests except for specially designated individuals.

"32. Persons about to use the facilities of the houses of relaxation will not be allowed to bring in any liquor.

"33. No selling of food or drink will be permitted within the houses of relaxation, except in specially designated cases.

"34. Entrance to or permission to use the facilities of the houses of relaxation may be refused the following persons:

"a. Intoxicated persons.

"b. Persons carrying liquor.

"c. Other persons who may exert bad influence.

"35. Persons frequenting the restaurants must observe the following regulations:

"a. Only two beers (four glasses) per person will be allowed.

"b. Effective measures will be used to preserve the peace, and no actions unbecoming a soldier will be countenanced.

"c. All furnishings will be handled with care.

"d. There will be no discussion of military matters.

"e. Bills will be paid with army tickets.

"36. Persons frequenting the houses of relaxation must observe the following regulations:

"a. Payment will be made in advance with army tickets.

"b. Boisterous or loud singing or any such other action unbecoming a soldier or an army civilian employee is forbidden.

"c. Condoms or other preventives must be used for intercourse. To prevent disease, further care must be taken to insure proper laundering.

"d. The hostesses will not be kissed.

"e. Military security measures must be observed.

"37. Infraction of these rules will entail withdrawal of permission to continue business.

Part Six—Regulations for Special Clubs

"1. These regulations refer to special clubs within the MANILA Sector.

"2. Special clubs will be taken to mean food-stores, restaurants and houses of relaxation established to serve officers and high-ranking civilian officials, under the supervision of the Officer in Charge of MANILA Sector Line of Communications Duties with the approval of army headquarters.

"3. Special clubs are divided into three categories:

"a. Those that provide both restaurant and room facilities.

"b. Those that provide restaurant and 'relaxation' facilities.

"c. Those that provide only restaurant facilities.

"4. Only officers and high-ranking civilian officials (and those regarded as high-ranking civilian officials) may use the facilities of these special clubs. Clubs in (a) category above are for the use of naval officers of field grade and up, and clubs of (c) category above are for the use of naval officers and high-ranking civilian officials of the navy.

"5. Special clubs will not serve persons other than those mentioned above.

"6. Person intending to use these special clubs must therefore be prepared to identify themselves as officers or high-ranking civilian officials or the equivalent of the latter.

"7. Managers will refuse the facilities of the clubs to those not prepared to so identify themselves.

"8. In order to preclude the use of the clubs by the local population, the Officer in Charge of MANILA Sector Line of Communications Duties may have his designated officers enlist the assistance of military police for purposes of identifying customers. Prospective customers will be prepared to identify themselves on demand.

"9. Person wishing to hold dinner-parties at the special clubs will announce in advance the names of the representatives of the forces to which they are assigned, and prepare a statement as to the date and time contemplated.

"10. In cases in which the dinner-party fails

"Allied Translator and Interpreter Section Research Report No. 120 'Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces,'" November 15, 1945. This is a comprehensive report on "comfort women" and comfort stations based on all information that the U.S. military and Allied forces has assembled from diverse regions and analyzed throughout the Asia-Pacific war. It included translated version of regulations, permissions, price lists, and activity reports of comfort stations and recorded detailed testimonies of Japanese soldiers about comfort stations. This report reveals high level understanding of the U.S. military regarding the system of comfort stations. ©Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team³⁰

³⁰ Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of "Comfort Women," Untold Words*, 95. For the full document, see: "Amenities in the Japanese Armed Forces," Seoul Metropolitan Archives, accessed August 27, 2020, <https://archives.seoul.go.kr/item/109>

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Classified *Secret*

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
Psychological Warfare Team
Attached to U.S. Army Forces India-Burma Theater
APO CSE

Japanese Prisoner of War Interrogation Report No. 49.	Place interrogated: Date interrogated: Date of Report: By:	Ledo Stockade Aug. 20 - Sept. 10, 1944 October 1, 1944 T/S Alex Yonichi
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Prisoners: Date of Capture: Date of Arrival at Stockade:	20 Korean Comfort Girls August 10, 1944 August 15, 1944
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PREFACE:

This report is based on the information obtained from the interrogation of twenty Korean "comfort girls" and two Japanese civilians captured around the tenth of August, 1944 in the mopping up operations after the fall of Myittha in Burma.

The report shows how the Japanese recruited these Korean "comfort girls", the conditions under which they lived and worked, their relations with and reaction to the Japanese soldier, and their understanding of the military situation.

A "comfort girl" is nothing more than a prostitute or "professional camp follower" attached to the Japanese Army for the benefit of the soldiers. The word "comfort girl" is peculiar to the Japanese. Other reports show the "comfort girls" have been found wherever it was necessary for the Japanese Army to fight. This report however deals only with the Korean "comfort girls" recruited by the Japanese and attached to their Army in Burma. The Japanese are reported to have shipped some 700 of these girls to Burma in 1942.

RECRUITING:

Early in May of 1942 Japanese agents arrived in Korea for the purpose of enlisting Korean girls for "comfort service" in newly conquered Japanese territories in Southeast Asia. The nature of this "service" was not specified but it was assumed to be work connected with visiting the wounded in hospitals, rolling bandages, and generally making the soldiers happy. The inducement used by these agents was plenty of money, an opportunity to pay off the family debts, easy work, and the prospect of a new life in a new land - Singapore. On the basis of these false representations many girls enlisted for overseas duty and were rewarded with an advance of a few hundred yen.

The majority of the girls were ignorant and uneducated, although a few had been connected with "oldest profession on earth" before. The contract they signed bound them to Army regulations and to work for the "comfort station" for a period of from six months to a year depending on the family debt for which they were advanced.

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"US Office of War Information Psychological Warfare Team Interrogation Report No. 49," October 1, 1944. The US Office of War Information Psychological Warfare Team at Ledo reported the result of interrogating 20 Korean "comfort women." This report contains general information related to "comfort women," their lives and surroundings at comfort stations, charges, and systems of using comfort stations, and the living conditions of "comfort women." © Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team³¹

³¹ Seoul Metropolitan Government and Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team, *Records Memories: Stories of "Comfort Women," Untold Words*, 91-94. For the full document, see: "OWI PWT Interrogation Report No.49," Seoul Metropolitan Archives, accessed August 27, 2020, <https://archives.seoul.go.kr/item/82>

Some historical revisionists (neo-colonialists) argue that the Japanese military “comfort women” survivors are not survivors of sexual slavery, claiming that the women received money according to the “rate” in comfort stations and that the Japanese military sexual slavery system had similarities to the “licensed” prostitution system that had already existed in Japan. The Japanese military document on “rate” in comfort stations, however, require close interpretation of the context:

別表二

將見 校官	軍下 屬官	兵	區分	營業時間及料金表
五・二・九 〇・〇・〇	五・九 〇・〇・〇	五・六 〇・〇・〇	營業時間 遊興時間	
一時間	三十分	三十分	遊興時間	
三・〇 〇・〇	一・五 〇・〇	一・〇 〇・〇	遊興時間 料金	
六・〇 〇・〇	二・五 〇・〇	一・五 〇・〇	遊興時間 料金	
			備 考	

Rate in comfort station found in the official document by the Iloilo Local Office, Visayas Branch of Government Staff Office, “Regulations for comfort stations (Asia Hall, the 1st comfort station)” sent to the Military Police in Iloilo City, Panay, the Philippines ©November 22, 1942, Northeast Asian History Network, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in Republic of Korea³²

Category	Open hour	Duration time	Prices (in JPY)	
			No. 1 comfort station	Asian Center
Soldiers	9~16	30min	1.00	1.50
Non-Commissioned Officers / Civilians attached to the Army	16~19	30min	1.50	2.50
Probation Officers/ Officers	19~24	1hour	3.00	6.00

³² To read more about meanings of the historical document, visit (website in Korean): “Wianso kyujōng songbuŭi kōn” [Item on Comfort Station Rules], Northeast Asian History Foundation, accessed August 8, 2020, http://contents.nahf.or.kr/item/item.do?levelId=iswc.d_001_0010_1430

In comfort stations, the “rate” was determined according to the military ranks, and the “payment” was made in local currency or military coupons. However, most survivors testify that they did not receive any payment. Despite the possibility that some women might have been paid, the “managers” of comfort stations kept track of the women’s “debts,” arguing that transporting women to comfort stations, feeding, and dressing them were all debts. Furthermore, after the war ended in Japan’s defeat, the military coupons were made obsolete.

Also, it is important to note that the “licensed” prostitution system was illegal in both Japanese Criminal Laws and international law at the time, despite its misleading use of the term. With the aims of “keeping national security and prevention of venereal diseases,” the “licensed” prostitution system was operated in both “legal” and “illegitimate” ways. Victims of the “licensed” prostitution system were also subject to grievous violations of human rights, as did the Japanese military sexual slavery victims. The “licensed” prostitution system shows that the nation-state of Japan allowed and encouraged sex trafficking, which led to further violence against women. **Therefore, the “licensed” prostitution system in Japan should be understood as another form of sexual violence, just as the Japanese military “comfort women” system was a clear case of military sexual slavery.**³³

³³ Sung Hyun Kang, *T'alchinshirŭi shidae, yŏksabujŏngŭl munnŭnda* [Facing Historical Denial in the Post-Truth Era] (Seoul: Blue History, 2020), 101-105. Nishino Rumiko, Kim Puja and Onozawa Akane, “The Comfort Women and State Prostitution,” *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 16, no. 10 (May 15, 2018), <https://apjif.org/2018/10/Onozawa.html>

To learn about difference between the Japanese military sexual slavery system and the “licensed prostitution” system in Japan, see: “Was there coercion in military comfort stations?” Fight for Justice, accessed March 26, 2020, http://fightforjustice.info/?page_id=2768&lang=en

<p align="center">“Licensed” prostitution system in Japan and the Japanese military sexual slavery system</p> <p>Graph taken and modified from “Was there coercion in military comfort stations?” Fight for Justice, accessed March 26, 2020, http://fightforjustice.info/?page_id=2768&lang=en</p>				
<div> <div>Rights</div> <div>Systems</div> </div>	freedom to choose and change their residences	freedom to go out	freedom to quit	freedom to refuse
“Licensed” prostitution system in Japan	None	Not guaranteed. The Ministry of Home Affairs encouraged brothel owners to grant this freedom from 1933.	Despite legal provisions, in practice it was extremely difficult to quit	In theory women became prostitutes of their own free will, but in practice it was difficult for them to refuse
Japanese military sexual slavery system	None	Not guaranteed	Not guaranteed	It was almost impossible to refuse

Whether some Japanese military “comfort women” received “payment” cannot be an excuse for the Japanese Government to evade its legal responsibilities in establishment of rape camps, massive trafficking of women and operation of military sexual slavery, which are and were gross violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the discussions on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in Korea started from democratization and women’s human rights movement that fought against and investigated

“sex tourism” of Japanese men to Korea.³⁴ Also, the survivors who managed to return home had to suffer from stigma against survivors of sexual violence in their own communities. To achieve true justice and restore human rights and dignity for Japanese military sexual slavery survivors, we need to create a world where all women are freed from oppression, stigma, and violence, including other exploitations of women such as “prostitution” and daily sexual violence.

³⁴ The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, *Han'gukchöngshindaedaechek'yöbüihoe 20nyönsa* [20 Years of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan], 27-44. Seung-kyung Kim and Na-Young Lee, “Shared History and the Responsibility for Justice: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan,” In *Women's Activism and “Second Wave” Feminism*, eds. Barbara Molony and Jennifer Nelson, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 193-199.

Story of Moon Ok-joo (South Korea)

The story of Moon Ok-joo is often used by the neo-colonialists (historical revisionists) to argue that the Japanese military “comfort women” were able to “make a lot of money.”



Moon Ok-joo and citizens marching with pickets saying “Return Moon Ok-joo’s Military Post Office Savings” in 1992 ©The Korean Council

Moon Ok-joo was taken as a Japanese military “comfort women” at the age of 16 and suffered from Japanese military sexual slavery in Manchuria and Burma. In Burma, a drunken soldier tried to kill her with a sword. She fought back and ended up killing the soldier. She was put on trial by the Japanese military, but she was sent back to the comfort station again after a week.

She reported that she had saved up tips from the soldiers and military coupons to the military post office savings in Burma. In 1992, Moon Ok-joo filed a lawsuit against the Japanese Government to return her savings, and the accounting records for her military savings were found at the Shimonoseki Post Office. However, the Japanese Government refused to

return her savings arguing that she lost any right to make individual claims due to the 1965 Treaty, and her legal struggle was instead attacked by the neo-colonialists as “evidence that ‘comfort women’ earned a lot of money.”

In occupied Burma, however, the Japanese military had used “Southern Development Bank Notes” that were similar to military coupons instead of real money. Most of Moon Ok-joo’s savings were made in April and May of 1945, when the Japanese military decided to withdraw from Burma and the military coupon lost its value due to severe inflation.³⁵

After Kim Hak-soon’s public testimony, Moon Ok-joo called the “Comfort Women” Hotline and came forward as a survivor. Continuing her activism, she resisted the Asian Women’s Fund that offered private donations from Japanese citizens rather than the Japanese Government’s legal reparations. She passed away in 1996, without receiving an apology or legal reparations, let alone her own savings from the torturous time she survived, from the Japanese Government. Her story reminds us of her unstoppable, incredible will for survival.

³⁵ “Did Mun Ok Ju Became Rich in Burma?” Fight for Justice, accessed March 27, 2020, http://fightforjustice.info/?page_id=3136&lang=en

Jong-sung Kim, “Iyŏnghuni konggae chŏgyŏk'an wianbu munokchu, kŭe kwanhan chintcha iyagi” [True Story of Moon Ok-joo, the “Comfort Women” Survivor Lee Yong-hoon Publicly Attacked], *OhmyNews*, January 13, 2020,

http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/View/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0002603084

Se-won Lee, “Wianbu p'ihaeja komunokchu chŭngŏn, kironŭg ilch'i” [“Comfort Women” Survivor Late Moon Ok-joo’s Testimony Matches Official Records], May 17, 2016, *Yonhap News*, <https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20160517091600073>

Machiko Morikawa, *Pŏmajŏnsŏn ilbon'gun wianbu Munokchu* [Burma Battlefield Japanese Military “Comfort Women” Moon Ok-joo], trans. Jung-sung Kim, (Paju: Arŭmdaun saramdŭl, 2005)

Testimony of Chong Ok Sun (North Korea)



Screenshots of Chong Ok Sun giving testimony and showing tattoos from comfort station from documentary *Sorrowful Homecoming* ©1999 Ito Takashi, cited in Newstapa

*The following testimony is an excerpt taken and modified from United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/85*, E/CN.4/1996/53 (5 February 1996), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/1996/53>

I was born on 28 December 1920, in Phabal-Ri, Pungsan County, South Hamgyong Province, in the north of the Korean peninsula.

One day in June, at the age of 13, I had to prepare lunch for my parents who were working in the field and so I went to the village well to fetch water. A Japanese garrison soldier surprised me there and took me away, so that my parents never knew what had happened to their daughter. I was taken to the police station in a truck, where I was raped by several policemen. When I shouted, they put socks in my mouth and continued to rape me. The head of the police station hit me in my left eye because I was crying. That day I lost my eyesight in the left eye.

After 10 days or so, I was taken to the Japanese army garrison barracks in Heysan City. There were around 400 other Korean young girls with me, and we had to serve over 5,000 Japanese soldiers as sex slaves

every day - up to 40 men per day. Each time I protested, they hit me or stuffed rags in my mouth. One held a matchstick to my private parts until I obeyed him. My private parts were oozing with blood.

One Korean girl who was with us once demanded why we had to serve so many, up to 40, men per day. To punish her for her questioning, the Japanese company commander Yamamoto ordered her to be beaten with a sword. While we were watching, they took off her clothes, tied her legs and hands and rolled her over a board with nails until the nails were covered with blood and pieces of her flesh. In the end, they cut off her head. Another Japanese, Yamamoto, told us that “it's easy to kill you all, easier than killing dogs.” He also said, “since those Korean girls are crying because they have not eaten, boil the human flesh and make them eat it.”

One Korean girl caught a venereal disease from being raped so often and, as a result, over 50 Japanese soldiers were infected. In order to stop the disease from spreading and to 'sterilize' the Korean girl, they stuck a hot iron bar in her private parts.

Once they took 40 of us on a truck far away to a pool filled with water and snakes. The soldiers beat several of the girls, shoved them into the water, heaped earth into the pool and buried them alive.

I think over half of the girls who were at the garrison barracks were killed. Twice I tried to run away, but both times, we were caught after a few days. We were tortured even more, and I was hit on my head so many times that all the scars still remain. They also tattooed me on the inside of my lips, my chest, my stomach, and my body. I fainted. When I woke up, I was on a mountainside, presumably left for dead. Of the two girls with me, only Kuk Hae and I survived. A 50-year-old man, who lived in the mountains found us, gave us clothes and something to eat. He also helped us to travel back to Korea, where I returned, scarred, barren and with difficulties in speaking, at the age of 18, after five years of serving as a sex slave for the Japanese.

To learn more about survivors in North Korea, watch documentary *Sorrowful Homecoming Part 1 and Part 2* by Newstapa (2016) at <https://youtu.be/GRmhsulHpLE>; <https://youtu.be/yaI3bdGh8No>

Testimony of Gil Won-ok (born in North Korea, living in South Korea)



Gil Won-ok testifying in Germany in 2008 ©The Korean Council

*The following testimony was taken and modified from the Korean Council informational booklet on The 15th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan “To resolve the unrealized justice, the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan,” held on March 8-9, 2018, in Seoul, South Korea.

Gil Won-ok was 12 years old (13 years old in Korea) when she was taken to the comfort station. She was deceived that she would learn skills to work at a factory. She did not tell anyone in her family when she left. However, she was taken to a comfort station in Harbin, China, and then again to Shijiazhuang, China.

When young Gil Won-ok cried, the soldiers threatened that they would kill her and beat her severely. They often beat her when she resisted against violence. One day, a soldier hit her head with the back of a sword. After the war ended, she had lived her life without telling anyone what happened.

One day in 1998, her daughter-in-law saw that she sighed while she was watching a scene of Wednesday Demonstration on TV. Eventually her

son got to know. After that, she decided to register as a survivor of Japanese military sexual slavery. Since then, she has been continuously involved in the movement to resolve the issue.

She had testified her experiences in many events including the Wednesday Demonstration and international campaigns in the European Parliament, the United States, and the United Nations. Through her testimonies, she was able to encourage many survivors of wartime sexual violence. In addition to speaking out to spread survivors' voices of demanding reparation to the Japanese Government, she also initiated the establishment of Butterfly Fund and announced that she would provide support for survivors of wartime sexual violence.

After the announcement of 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement which was criticized for its lack of victim-centered approach, she traveled to various countries including the U.S., Canada, and Germany to raise awareness of the problems of the agreement and the truth of the Japanese military sexual slavery, despite being over 90 years old. She achieved her lifelong dream of becoming a singer by publishing her first album *Gil Won-ok's Peace* in 2017. On November 25, 2017, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, she received a Women's Human Rights award from 1 million citizens of Korea, which expressed appreciation of her continuous struggle to realize justice for all survivors of sexual violence against women in armed conflict.

She donated her award to create Gil Won-ok Women's Peace Prize in 2017, which awards human rights activists who advocate for women's human rights or peaceful reunification of Korea.³⁶

³⁶ Even after the war ended, Gil Won-ok could not return home to her family due to the division of Korea. Watch her heartbreaking poem, recorded in Gil Won-ok's voice: "Letter to mother by Gil Won-ok (English subtitles)," Korea Verband, June 9, 2017, Video, 5:54, <https://youtu.be/hnzlytXt-gA>



Gil Won-ok handing a small Statue of Peace to a Yazidi survivor during an international campaign in Germany in 2017 ©Tsukasa Yajima & The Korean Council



Kim Soon-deok, *Taken*, 1995 ©House of Sharing³⁷

³⁷ Kim Soon-deok was taken to a comfort station in Shanghai at age 17, having been deceived by false promises of a nursing job. She drew this picture in art therapy classes offered at the House of Sharing, a shelter for survivors of Japanese military sexual slavery where Kim and a number of other survivors lived. For more drawings by Kim Soon-deok and other survivors who participated in art therapy classes, see: “Halmōnidūrūi chakp'um min yup'um” [Halmonis’ artwork], War and Women’s Human Rights Museum, accessed August 4, 2020,

http://www.womenandwarmuseum.net/contents/board/gallery/galleryList.asp?page_str_menu=0305

“Halmōni kŭrim” [Halmonis’ Paintings], House of Sharing, accessed August 27, 2020, http://www.nanum.org/bbs/board.php?bo_table=gallery&device=pc



Kim Bok Dong, *The Day a 14 Year Old Girl was Taken*, 1998 ©The Korean Council

**Was There NO Forced
Mobilization, as Abe and
Revisionists Say?**

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and neo-colonialist historical revisionists have made remarks that defame the survivors and distort the historical truth. One of their main arguments is that “coercion (use of force)” only refers to abduction in the process of mobilization, as in “breaking into houses and taking people away.”

Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan

“No evidence has been found that indicates coercion in the narrow sense. There was no coercion of the sort where officials forced their way into houses and abducted women. We will not apologize even if the resolution was passed in the United States.”

– 2007 before adoption of the U.S. House Resolution 121 for resolution of the Japanese military “comfort women” issue

However, the Article 226 of the Japanese Criminal Code that applied to colonized Korea and Taiwan before the war of aggression had punished those who deceived or allured a person with the intent to carry him or her out of the Japanese Empire, even if no direct physical violence was involved.

Japan also had ratified numerous international treaties that prohibit forced labor and sex trafficking, including the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children.³⁸ By 1932, customary international law had prohibited slavery and slavery-related practices.³⁹

Not only the coercion in the process of mobilization of victims but also the subjugated conditions of victims inside the comfort stations attest to the coercive nature of the Japanese military sexual slavery. In comfort stations, victims were deprived of freedom of movement, residence, and occupation, and were forcibly raped by Japanese soldiers against their will.

³⁸ Tong Yu, “Reparations for Former Comfort Women of World War II,” *Harvard International Law Journal* 36, no. 2 (1995): 529-530.

³⁹ Amnesty International, “Still Waiting After 60 Years: Justice for Survivors of Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery System,” October 27, 2005, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA22/012/2005/ja/>

Furthermore, contrary to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's argument, official historical documents contain evidence of forced mobilization by the Japanese military and Government. Such records were acknowledged in the international courts and Japanese courts.⁴⁰

Records of “forced mobilization” of the Japanese military “comfort women”⁴¹

Dutch Government Report⁴²

- In March 1942 in Blora, 20 European women were detained in 2 buildings by a Japanese troop during the Japanese invasion into Java. At least 14 women were raped by soldiers for three weeks.
- In January 1944 in Muntilan detention camp, Japanese soldiers and policemen drafted women and suppressed the riots among detainees with force... 13 of the women were sent to Magelang and were forced into prostitution.
- In April 1944 in Semarang, the Japanese military and civilian policemen arrested hundreds of women... 17 of them were sent to a ‘comfort station’ in Flores Island and were forced into prostitution.

The Submitted Written Evidence and the Judgment in the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Trials)

In Pontianak, the Japanese Naval Special Police Squad captured women on the street in order to supply women to comfort stations. They were forced to undergo a medical checkup and then sent to comfort stations.

- “Report on Enforced Prostitution in Western Borneo, N.E.I., during Japanese Naval Occupation,” July 5, 1946

When the Japanese military slaughtered the residents of Sermata and Roean Islands in Moa Island, they drafted five daughters of the victims to comfort stations.

⁴⁰ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 61-106.

⁴¹ For detailed documents, see: Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 92-106.

⁴² Excerpt taken and modified from Bart van Poelgeest, *Report of a Study of Dutch Government Documents on the Forced Prostitution of Dutch Women in the Dutch East Indies during the Japanese Occupation*, Unofficial Translation (January 24, 1994)

– Affidavit of Lt. Ohara Seidai, January 13, 1946

Recognition in Japanese Courts

Japanese military force abducted and raped Chinese women (including girls) living nearby the camp. They detained the women and raped them repeatedly, thus putting them virtually into the state of ‘comfort women.’

– Judgment on the case of Chinese “comfort women” claiming compensation by Tokyo High Court

In 1942, Japanese soldiers and cooperating Chinese militants assaulted a village in Shanxi, and they abducted, detained, and raped women.

– Judgment on the case of Chinese “comfort women” claiming compensation by Tokyo District Court and High Court

All of the “Comfort Women” Plaintiffs were brought to the comfort stations through deception and forcefully turned into “Comfort Women” by rape. The comfort stations had deep relations with the Imperial Japanese Forces.

– Judgment on the case of three Korean “comfort women” by Shimonoseki Branch, Yamaguchi Prefectural Court⁴³

The Japanese Government’s fixation on denying “coercion” obscures the essence of the Japanese military sexual slavery system, that the Japanese military and Government committed crimes against humanity and systemic violence against women across the Asia-Pacific region through their recruitment and transportation of “comfort women,” as well as planning, institution, supervision, and control of comfort stations. Japanese military “comfort women” were victims of a state-run system of sexual violence.

The comfort stations differed in their establishment, management, and recruitment of the “comfort women” based on the period, location, and whether they were run by the military itself or a commissioned private agent. However, the Japanese military had exclusive authority over choosing sites

⁴³ Translated excerpt from Taihei Okada, Translation, “The Sexual Slavery Case: Judgment of April 27, 1998, Shimonoseki Branch, Yamaguchi Prefectural Court, Japan,” *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 8, no.1 (1999), <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/wilj/vol8/iss1/13>

for comfort stations and deciding who could run the comfort stations. Even in cases when private agents ran comfort stations, they were hired by the military and the daily management was reported to and supervised by the military. The military authorities provided the building and set rules, fees, and running hours. In mobilizing women from colonized and occupied regions, the agents were guided and controlled by the Japanese military and police.⁴⁴

Indeed, the Japanese Government is liable with the responsibilities to conduct investigations to clarify the scale of the war crime and the number of victims and to make an official apology and legal reparations.



“Comfort women” being transported on Japanese military vehicle ©Moriyasu Murase’s album “I Joined the Chinese Front”

⁴⁴ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 61-106.

Hany Nurpratiwi, Hermanu Joebagio and Nunuk Suryani, “Jugun Ianfu: The Construction of Students’ Awareness on Gender,” *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 4, no. 1, (2017) ,
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315363673_Jugun_Ianfu_The_Construction_of_Students'_Awareness_on_Gender

Understanding the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery

Beyond methods of mobilization, design of the Japanese military sexual slavery system, establishment of comfort stations, situation in comfort stations and treatment of victims after the war put legal responsibilities on the Japanese Government to fully disclose the truth of the Japanese military sexual slavery system, make official apology and reparations.

<p>Establishment and management of comfort stations:</p> <p>Comfort stations were established by the Japanese military in colonized or occupied regions across Asia-Pacific, including Japan itself. The Japanese military either used private houses they acquired through invasion or built new buildings.</p> <p>The comfort stations were run directly by the Japanese military or “private owners” regulated by the Japanese military.</p> <p>Rules in comfort stations were set by the Japanese military.</p>	<p>Methods of mobilization:</p> <p>Women were mobilized through abduction or kidnapping, physical force, job fraud, mobilization by officials, soldiers, and private personnel, etc., upon request by the Japanese military.</p> <p>Women who were taken to comfort stations in war zones were transported via vehicles or ships owned and operated by the Japanese military, which required approval.</p>
<p>Situation in comfort stations:</p> <p>Women were subject to repeated sexual violence, even during menstruation, and testing on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) to ensure the safety of the soldiers. Many women were also beaten and tortured. Women did not have freedom to leave from or move around comfort stations.</p>	<p>Post-war treatment:</p> <p>Instead of being sent home safely, women were abandoned in war zones or were killed by the military to conceal the sexual slavery system. Some were disguised as military nurses or captured as prisoners of war by the Allied Forces. Many survivors testify that they struggled to return since they did not know the language in the region or did not exactly know where they were taken to.</p>

Question. What are Japan's "Legal" Responsibilities?

The Japanese Government signed, ratified, or recognized numerous international agreements and conventions and stipulated domestic laws against trafficking of women and children in the early 1900s, before mobilization of Japanese military "comfort women" started. The Japanese Government thus had and continues to have legal obligations to prevent, prosecute, and punish these wrongful acts, and to provide remedy to the survivors, both under international and domestic laws.⁴⁵

List of international conventions that Japan ratified until the 1930s⁴⁶	
1911	Japan ratified the Hague Convention (Convention respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land 1907). Article 46 of its appendix stipulates that women must be protected from rape or forced prostitution during the war, though it did not apply to women in colonies
1925	Japan ratified: -the International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic (1904) -the International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic (1910), which prohibits prostitution of underage women regardless of their consent and of adult women who were taken by fraud or coercion, reserving application to its colonies such as Korea and Taiwan -the International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (1921), reserving application to its colonies such as Korea, Taiwan, leased territory of Kwantung, portion of Saghalien Island and territory in the South Seas
1932	Japan ratified the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 29 Forced Labour (1930)

⁴⁵ Sihyun Cho, "Ilbon'gun 'wianbuo munjee issösö yöksawa pöpchöng ch'aegim" [History and Legal Responsibility in the Japanese Military "Comfort Women" Issue], *Minju buphak* 43, (2011): 82-99.

⁴⁶ "United Nations Treaty Collection," United Nations, accessed August 19, 2020, <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?clang=en>
"Ratifications for Japan," International Labour Organization, accessed August 19, 2020, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:102729

However, until survivors started to openly come forward in 1991 and historical documents that attest to the Japanese military's systematic involvement in the Japanese military sexual slavery system were discovered since 1992, the Japanese Government denied the Japanese military's crimes of organizing and maintaining the sexual slavery system. The Japanese Government's subsequent responses have been criticized for not fully meeting Japan's legal responsibilities for its human rights violations.



Professor Yoshiaki Yoshimi of Chuo University in Japan unveiled documents proving the Japanese military's direct involvement in recruiting “comfort women” for Japanese soldiers during the World War II (*Asahi Shimbun*, January 11, 1992) ©Northeast Asian History Foundation

* Excerpt taken and modified from “An NGO Shadow Report to CEDAW, Japan: The ‘Comfort Women’ Issue,” *United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*, accessed February 20, 2020, https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/comfortwomen_japan_cedaw44.pdf

**Japan’s Legal Responsibility under International Law:
List of International Agreements and Conventions Signed or Recognized
by the Japanese Government in the early 1900s**

The 1907 Hague Convention on Land Warfare and its Regulations

Japan ratified this Convention in 1911. The Convention and Regulations cover the wrongful acts committed to the women in the occupied areas. The women from Japan’s “colonies” (namely Taiwan and the Korean Peninsula) and Japan proper may not be covered by these regulations, but are within the scope of crimes against humanity.

The agreements and conventions concerning suppression of traffic in women in 1910s and 1920s

Japan was a signatory to the following agreements and conventions in 1925:

- The International Agreement for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic of 1904
- The International Convention for the Suppression of White Slave Traffic of 1910
- The International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children of 1921

Japan was required under Articles 2 and 3 of the 1921 Convention to prosecute persons engaged in trafficking of women and children. Japan declared that its colonized territories were not included within the scope *ratione territorii* upon acceptance of the Convention. Most of the “comfort women” were minors, however; as such Japan’s international obligation under this Convention was applied to their cases regardless of the girl’s place of origin. Also, many of the “comfort women” from the colonies were put into sexual slavery in China and other areas that were under Japan’s occupation; as such were also covered by the Convention.

The 1930 International Labour Organization Convention Concerning Forced Labour (ILO Convention No. 29)

Japan ratified this convention in 1932. The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) of ILO repeatedly pointed out that Japan's military sexual slavery until 1945 was in breach of this Convention.

Japan recognized international customary law as expressed in the 1926 Slave Convention

While Japan was not party to this convention, the convention was an expression of international customary law of the time, which had become *jus cogens* by at least the time of WWII. As early as 1872, a Japanese court ruled in favour of a Chinese labourer who tried to flee from coolie trade (The Maria Luz Incident).

The waivers in the San Francisco Peace Treaty and subsequent bilateral peace agreements that the government of Japan keeps as its grounds do not cover the following cases:

The cases of the people from the countries and regions that are not parties to the San Francisco Peace Treaty or have not signed bilateral peace agreements with Japan. This category may include North Korea. Further, "women did not have an equal voice or equal status to men at the time of conclusion of the Peace Treaties, with the direct consequence that the issues of military sexual slavery and rape were left unaddressed at the time and formed no part of the background to the negotiations and ultimate resolution of the Peace Treaties. For example, the sexual damage suffered by women under the Japanese military was not at all addressed in the bilateral negotiation for the 1965 Treaty of Basic Relations between Japan and South Korea. This fact was revealed in 2005, when the South Korean government declassified the whole records and documents of the negotiation process. In contrast, the government of Japan has not declassified all its documents, especially the minutes and internally discussed records related to the claims on the war damages. The lawsuits filed by citizens of Japan in 2006 demanding the declassification of all the documentation related to the bilateral treaty are ongoing.

Japan's Legal Responsibility under Domestic Law

• **The acts committed against “comfort women” were prohibited by Japan’s own domestic law at the time.** Acts of traffic in women and girls were also illegal.

- The Official Order No. 295 of 1872 confirmed the ban on traffic in people and released prostitutes from their debt bondage.

- The Penal Code of 1907 criminalized confinement and trans-border transportation of persons against their will, be it by force or threat, or by deception or use of “sweet words”. (Articles 224-228; effective today through repeated revisions, most recently Act No. 36 of 2006)”

- In 1937, the Supreme Court of Imperial Japan found guilty certain procurers for collecting women in Japan proper with a false promise of a job, sending them to Shanghai and forcing them into comfort stations for Japanese troops.

• **The Government of Japan is liable under Japan’s Civil Code for the wrongful acts committed to “comfort women”.**

When contesting the claims that it is legally responsible for the damage suffered by “comfort women”, the Government of Japan takes up different arguments domestically and internationally. Against the claims of survivors in Japanese courts, the government of Japan includes the following “grounds” that it does not assert to UN organizations and others outside Japan: the principle of State Immunity (the pre-war Japan’s principle which made the State immune of liability for the damages the State unlawfully inflicted upon its citizens) should be applied to the acts committed until 1945; and the technical statute of limitations by which the right to bring a matter to court diminishes after twenty years from the time when the act in question was committed. The government also claims that the San Francisco Peace Treaty and subsequent bilateral peace agreements have settled the victims’ claims finally. Most of the decisions by Japanese courts have accepted these arguments and rejected the claims made by the women survivors.

These arguments of the government of Japan, however, are not regarded as established legal principles even in Japanese courts. Some of the courts have dismissed them. The Tokyo High Court on 18 March 2005 found that the principle of State immunity should not be applied to such cases as

the case of Chinese “comfort women”. The Supreme Court on 12 June 1998 found that the technical statute of limitations for making lawsuits is not applicable for certain cases. The Supreme Court on 27 April 2007 found that only the authority to make a claim, but not the right itself for compensation, was waived in the post-war peace treaties.

Story of Jan Ruff O’Herne (born in Dutch-Indonesia, lived in Australia)



Gil Won-ok, Jan Ruff O’Herne, Wu Hsiu-Mei at a campaign in Australia in 2007 ©The Korean Council

Jan Ruff-O’Herne was training to become a nun in Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) when the Japanese military forced her into the prisoner-of-war camp in 1942. Then she was forced into Japanese military sexual slavery in 1944 and suffered from repeated sexual violence for months in a comfort station named “House of Seven Seas,” which was established by the Japanese military in Java Island, Indonesia.

After seeing Kim Hak-soon publicly testify her experiences, Jan Ruff O’Herne decided to come forward as a survivor and shared her experiences with her family and the Australian media in 1992. She testified at the International Public Hearing on Japanese War Crimes in Tokyo, Japan in December 1992, and at the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery in Tokyo, Japan in 2000. She also published a personal memoir titled *50 Years of Silence*.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Jan Ruff-O’Herne, *50 Years of Silence*, (Sydney: Editions Tom Thompson, 1994).

In 2007, she testified during the U.S. congressional hearing, therefore contributing to the passing of the United States House Resolution 121 which calls for the Japanese Government to take legal responsibilities. Her active movement promoted the truth of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue across Europe and the U.S. Together with Korean survivors Jang Jeom-dol and Gil Won-ok, she engaged in activism for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in Melbourne, Sydney, and other places in Australia and beyond.

O'Herne continued to fight for a just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue until she passed away on August 18, 2019. Through her activism, she raised global awareness of the Japanese military sexual slavery system as a universal human rights issue.

Testimony of Jaherang (Indonesia)

*The following testimony was taken and modified from the Korean Council informational booklet on The 15th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan “To resolve the unrealized justice, the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan,” held on March 8-9, 2018, in Seoul, South Korea.



Jaherang at the 15th Asian Solidarity Conference on March 8, 2018 ©The Korean Council

I was 12 years old at the time. I was taken away from my parents' house to a factory, which was similar to a textile factory, in To'Banga. After working there for five days, I was taken to a truck and dragged to Carruk. During the day, I did laundry and dishwashing, and at night I was dragged to a room in Luma Panjang, a house that had many rooms (a Japanese house built in the form of a long semi-cylindrical shape), and forced to serve the Japanese military soldiers. At that time, even though I did not have my first period yet, I was forced to have sex. If I refuse, I was hit by them as I was told “Baka” (a Japanese swear word of bad intention), and they used condoms every day.

After the Japanese troops were defeated by the Allies, I returned to my parents. Then, my father asked me, “Where were you? You just appear now!” I replied, “I was taken to Carruk by the Japanese military,” and he suddenly got angry and took an ax in his hand by saying that he is going to kill me because I disgraced the family (by lowering his head). Then my mother said, “Do not do this to our child. This child was not wrong. She was forced by the Japanese army” embracing me, and cried and asked my father to let his head cool down. Finally, my dad admitted that he was wrong, then hugged me and forgave me.

About nine months later, I married one of the guerrillas who fought with Abdul Kahar Muzakkar, the leader of the Darul Islam movement in South Sulawes (a movement aiming for the establishment of an Islamic State of Indonesia) and had two children. Years later, my husband abandoned me and married another woman. About two years later, I married a man named Sini’ and gave birth to four children.

I strongly demand the responsibility of the Japanese military which treated me like an animal and urge their apology and reparation for their atrocious actions at the earliest possible moment.

Story of Kang Duk-kyung (South Korea)



Kang Duk-kyung speaking into a megaphone at a protest on May 27, 1992 ©The Korean Council

*The following story was taken and modified from Meehyang Yoon, *25 Years of Wednesdays: The Story of the "Comfort Women,"* Seoul: The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, 2019.

Kang Duk-kyung was from Jinju, South Gyeongsang Province, South Korea. When she was sixteen, her Japanese homeroom teacher sent her to Japan as Women's Volunteer Corps. First, she worked at a factory, but she was always too hungry, and the work was too hard, so she tried to escape. She was caught and forced into Japanese military sexual slavery.

When the war ended, she was pregnant. She could not afford to feed her child, so she decided to leave the child with a catholic-run orphanage while working very hard to earn enough money so they could live together. However, her child soon died of a serious illness. For her entire life she was never able to afford even a room to rent because all her money went to

paying medical bills, including for herself since her body was destroyed at the comfort station.

After coming forward as a survivor, Kang Duk-kyung invested the rest of her life into efforts to resolve the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. She was one of the most fervent participants in the movement. Although she was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer in 1995, she engaged in a wide range of activities to raise awareness of the issue. She testified at the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. She also gave her testimony in Japan while participating in a rally there demanding an official apology and legal reparations from the Japanese Government. At that time, she looked neither like a victim nor like a patient struggling with cancer. She was a passionate human rights activist. She wanted to attend the Wednesday Demonstrations as long as she had even a little bit of strength, even as she was being moved back and forth between rooms in the intensive care unit and general ward of the hospital where she stayed. One day in 1996, she rode an ambulance directly from the hospital to attend the Wednesday Demonstration.

She also diligently practiced painting at the House of Sharing, a shelter for survivors of Japanese military sexual slavery, where art therapy classes for survivors were offered. She is well known for her artworks such as “Stolen Innocence,” “Apologize,” and “Punish the Perpetrators,” which depict her agonizing experiences from the comfort stations. On February 2, 1997, she passed away of lung cancer. However, her artworks left with us travel around the world and continue to condemn the Japanese Government for its brutality and crimes against humanity.



Kang Duk-kyung, *Innocence Stolen*, 1995 ©The Korean Council



Kang Duk-kyung, *Punish the Perpetrators*, 1995 ©The Korean Council

Did the Japanese Government Ever Apologize?

Question. Why do survivors and activists call for official apology and reparations?⁴⁸

The Japanese Government's crimes of organizing the military sexual slavery system were not addressed during the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, and thus their crimes in systematically operating a forced sexual slavery system had not properly prosecuted in the aftermath of World War II. Positioning Japan as an important anti-communist ally in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States pressured Asian allies not to raise issues of reparations for war crimes committed by Japan.⁴⁹

The Japanese Government claims that its legal responsibility was cleared by the San Francisco Treaty and many bilateral treaties between Japan and other victimized countries in Asia. In regards to calls for reparations from the Korean society, the Japanese Government has argued that it already offered apologies and compensations, through the 1965 Treaty between Republic of Korea and Japan, Asian Women's Fund, and 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement.

However, the Japanese Government's argued attempts did not even address the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and/or failed to meet the international human rights principles on redressing survivors of gross violations of human rights, recommendations from the United Nations human rights committees and other international organizations, and call for justice made by survivors and activists since the 1990s.

⁴⁸ The following content mainly focuses on the context of Korean society and is not a full account of the movement for justice taking place in other victimized communities. For more information on movements in other countries, refer to the following sources: Pyong Gap Min, Thomas R. Chung, and Sejung Sage Yim, eds, *The Transnational Redress Movement for the Victims of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery*, (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2020).

The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, *Han'gukchǒngshindaedaech'aek'yōbūihoe 20nyōnsa* [20 Years of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan].

⁴⁹ Na-young Lee, "The Korean Women's Movement of Japanese Military 'Comfort Women': Navigating between Nationalism and Feminism," 74-76.

Keita Takayama, "Globalizing Critical Studies of 'official' Knowledge: Lessons from the Japanese History Textbook Controversy over 'Comfort Women,'" *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 30, no. 5 (2009): 579-580.

List of Japanese Government's Argued Attempts			
Argued Attempts	Background	Measures	NOT an apology because...
San Francisco Peace Treaty	On September 8, 1951, Allied Powers and Japan signed treaty to end hostile relationship	Japan accepts the judgments of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East and other Allied War Crimes Courts	Treaty was signed between Allied Powers and Japan, excluding colonized or occupied countries/regions of Imperial Japan.
1965 Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and South Korea	Korean and Japanese Governments normalized diplomatic ties	Japanese Government gave "economic cooperation fund" to South Korea	The Japanese military sexual slavery issue was not discussed, as official documents released by the Korean Government in 2005 show. The treaty does not terminate individuals' rights to claim damages, as examined by international human rights bodies and confirmed by the South Korean Supreme Court ruling (2018).
1993 Kono Statement	Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono after the Government study on the Japanese military sexual slavery	-Acknowledged the Japanese military's involvement in the forced mobilization of the victims -Led to the creation of Asian Women's	The Kono Statement did not clarify the Japanese military's planning, establishment, and management of the comfort stations and forced mobilization of victims. The statement was not

		Fund	an official state apology approved by the Diet.
Asian Women's Fund	Established in 1995 and dissolved in 2007	Provided "consolation fund" from private donations	Asian Women's Fund was primarily financed through private funding and was not a formal apology and legal reparation from the Japanese Government, as noted in international human rights recommendations including the 2001 UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.67, C.26.). ⁵⁰
1995 Murayama Statement	Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on the 50 th anniversary of the end of WWII	Stated the establishment of the Asian Women's Fund	The Murayama Statement did not clarify the Japanese military's planning, establishment, and management of the comfort stations and forced mobilization of victims. The statement was not an official state

⁵⁰ United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant: Concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, ¶ 4, E/C.12/1/Add.67 (September 24, 2001), available from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2FC.12%2F1%2FAdd.67&Lang=en

			apology approved by the Diet.
2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement	South Korean and Japanese Government announced the treaty on December 28 th , 2015.	<p>-Japanese Government gave 1 billion JPY to South Korean Government, as “consolation fund” to silence the issue “finally and irreversibly” and to “deal with” Statue of Peace</p> <p>-Led to the creation of Reconciliation and Healing Foundation, which was dissolved by the Korean Government on June 17, 2019</p>	<p>The 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement failed to follow the principles of victim-centered approach, or measures of principles to provide redress to the survivors: survivors were not included in the process, as noted in numerous United Nations human rights bodies and experts (see Chronology).</p> <p>Survivors and activists organized one-person protests, press interviews, and international campaigns to annul the 2015 agreement. South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs taskforce (2017) and Supreme Court (2019) confirmed that the 2015 agreement cannot serve as a resolution and was politically motivated.</p>

Question. How did the Japanese Government Respond to the International Call for Justice?

Statute of Limitations?

In the early 1990s, following survivors' legal actions for the Japanese Government's official apology and legal reparations, the Japanese courts admitted to the existence of the Japanese military sexual slavery system and the Japanese Government's responsibilities to make reparations for the survivors. Still, the Japanese courts responded that the Japanese military sexual slavery issue could not be addressed, due to statute of limitations. However, statute of limitations does not apply to cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity, as stated in international laws and treaties including the Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity and Article 29 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.⁵¹

San Francisco Peace Treaty

San Francisco Peace Treaty was a treaty signed between the Allied Forces and the Japanese Government and did not discuss or deal with the damages and war crimes committed by the Japanese Government in colonized and occupied regions. Korea and many other victimized nations were not even signatories in the treaty.⁵²

1965 Treaty on Basic Relations between Republic of Korea and Japan

The Japanese Government argues that the survivors' rights to make individual claims to the Japanese Government are nullified by the Treaty on Basic Relations between Republic of Korea and Japan in 1965. However, the issue of Japanese military sexual slavery was not discussed during the treaty, as the official documents disclosed by the South Korean Government in

⁵¹ "Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity - Main Page," United Nations, accessed March 11, 2020, www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.27_convention_statutory_limitations_warcrimes.pdf

"Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court," International Criminal Court, accessed March 11, 2020, www.icc-cpi.int/resourcelibrary/official-journal/rome-statute.aspx#top.

⁵² Sihyun Cho, "Ilbon'gun 'wianbuo munjee issösö yöksawa pöpchöng ch'aegim" [History and Legal Responsibility in the Japanese Military "Comfort Women" Issue], 82-99.

2005 show.⁵³ Further, the treaty does not terminate individuals' rights to claim damages, as confirmed in the South Korean Supreme Court ruling in 2018.⁵⁴ Research and examinations by the international human rights bodies have clarified the nature of the treaty as relating to "property claims" and strengthened that government treaties do not terminate individual rights to redress and reparations, particularly for victims of gross human rights violations since the 1990s.⁵⁵

The Japanese Government also argues that it had made bilateral agreements with Asian countries after World War II, such as China, Indonesia, etc. However, instead of apologizing and paying legal reparations for colonization, occupation, and initiation of war, the Japanese Government issued grants and long-term loans in the name of economic cooperation in these agreements. These bilateral agreements thus are not legal reparations and apology that aligns with international principles to make redress for victims.

1993 Kono Statement

The Kono Statement in 1993 and Murayama Statement in 1995 partially admitted the Japanese military's involvement with the Japanese military "comfort women," but failed to fully acknowledge the state's responsibilities in recruiting and managing "comfort women." While an appropriate apology should fully accept the responsibilities of the perpetrator, these apologies did not articulate the precise harms committed and evaded legal obligations of

⁵³ To learn more, read the Supplementary Material on "Twisting the Japanese Military 'Comfort Women' Issue into an *Anti-Japan Tribalism* Narrative" in this booklet.

⁵⁴ "(3rd LD) Supreme Court orders Japanese firm to provide compensation for wartime forced labor," *Yonhap News*, October 30, 2018, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20181030006753315>

⁵⁵ Ustunia Dolgopol and Snehal Paranjape, *Comfort Women, an Unfinished Ordeal: Report of a Mission*. (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1994), 162-165. <https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/1994/01/Japan-comfort-women-fact-finding-report-1994-eng.pdf>

United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, *Systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflict: Final report submitted by Ms. Gay J. McDougall, Special Rapporteur*, ¶ 46-55, E/CN.4/1998/13 (June 22, 1998), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/13>

the Japanese Government.⁵⁶ **These statements were made by Japanese Prime Ministers as individuals but were not approved by the Diet or the Government and thus are not official state apologies from Japan.**

**Statement by Yohei Kono on the result of the study on
the issue of Japanese military “comfort women” (Kono Statement):**

August 4, 1993

“As a result of the study [conducted by the Japanese government since December 1991] which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere....”

Asian Women’s Fund

The Asian Women’s Fund, established in 1995, was implemented from a humanitarian standpoint that did not acknowledge Japan’s legal responsibilities. Offering money to survivors based on funds raised by private donations from citizens, the Asian Women’s Fund ignored survivors’ demands for official apology and legal reparations from the Japanese Government. In the legal reparation process, reparations must be directly funded and provided by the Japanese Government and the reason for reparations must be to address legal culpability for the state’s war crime.⁵⁷ The Asian Women’s Fund failed to meet these guidelines and tried to evade

⁵⁶ Amnesty International, “Still Waiting After 60 Years: Justice for Survivors of Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery System,”

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA22/012/2005/ja/>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

the Japanese Government's legal responsibilities by using "consolation" fund from private donations. Furthermore, the Asian Women's Fund created divisions among survivors who accepted the money due to severe poverty and many others who rejected the payment for not addressing the Japanese Government's legal obligation to provide full reparations.⁵⁸

In response to the Asian Women's Fund, survivors and activists held demonstrations, international conferences, and testimonial events to call for the Japanese Government's legal reparations, and gathered their voices through issuing resolutions at the Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. Governments of Taiwan and South Korea gave economic support to the victims, to restate that the survivors were not calling for money but calling for justice.

2015 Korea-Japan "Comfort Women" Agreement

On December 28, 2015, South Korean and Japanese Governments announced the "comfort women" agreement, in which the Japanese Government would provide 1 billion JPY (8 million USD) to establish Reconciliation and Healing Foundation to distribute the fund to survivors. The fund would be provided on the basis that the two Governments will not bring the issue in the international community ever again and the Statue of Peace⁵⁹ will be "dealt with" accordingly.

The 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement was announced without consultation with or participation of the survivors and thus failed to meet survivors' demands, international standards of truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence, and victim-centered approach. By treating the Japanese military sexual slavery issue as merely a diplomatic issue

⁵⁸ Christine Chinkin, "Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery," *The American Journal of International Law* 95, no. 2 (2001): 335. To find more: "An NGO Shadow Report to CEDAW, Japan: The 'Comfort Women' Issue," United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, accessed February 20, 2020, https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/comfortwomen_japan_cedaw44.pdf

⁵⁹ The Statue of Peace was first established to commemorate the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration in Seoul, South Korea, and Statues of Peace are being established around the world by citizens and communities to remember the Japanese military sexual slavery issue.

between South Korea and Japan, the agreement discounted human rights-oriented and victim-centered principles to resolving the issue and ignored redress for survivors in many other victimized countries. Fund from the Japanese Government did not come from recognition of the crimes, admission of responsibilities, or official apology, and thus was not legal reparations for the Japanese military sexual slavery survivors. The Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida himself said to reporters, “They are not reparations.”⁶⁰

Survivors, activists, and the international community have raised concerns about the agreement. United Nations human rights experts pointed out that the 2015 agreement **“does not meet standards of State accountability for gross human rights violations and was reached without a proper consultation process.”**⁶¹ The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11) stated its concern:

“...the Committee is concerned at reports that these efforts do not take a fully victim-centered approach, that the surviving ‘comfort women’ were not adequately consulted and that this solution did not provide unequivocal responsibility for the human rights violations committed against these women by the military before and during WWII.” The Committee also expressed concern at **“statements of some public officials minimizing the responsibility of the Government in respect to ‘comfort women’ and their potential negative impact on survivors.”**⁶²

⁶⁰ “Japan-South Korea Accord on ‘Comfort Women’ Leaves Ambiguities,” *The Mainichi*, December 30, 2015, <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20151230/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

⁶¹ “Japan / S. Korea: “The long awaited apology to ‘comfort women’ victims is yet to come” – UN rights experts,” United Nations Office of The High Commissioner for Human Rights, March 11, 2016, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17209&LangID=E>

⁶² United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Tenth and Eleventh Periodic Reports of Japan*, ¶ 6, CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11 (September 26, 2018), available from <https://undocs.org/en/CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11>

In 2017, the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs Task Force released its review of the 2015 agreement, stating that “a victim-centered approach, which has become the norm when it comes to the human rights of women in time of war, has not been sufficiently reflected and the deal was reached through give-and-take negotiations like an ordinary diplomatic agenda.”⁶³ The task force also revealed undisclosed parts of the agreement, which showed that the Japanese Government asked the Korean Government to not support civic groups that oppose the agreement, to stop using the term “sexual slavery,” and to make detailed plans regarding the Statue of Peace.⁶⁴

The Reconciliation and Healing Foundation dissolved in 2019, after years of opposition by survivors and activists. The Japanese Government has yet to respond to survivors’ decades-long fight for legal reparations, official apology, and redress. The international community continues to call for the Japanese Government to carry out its responsibilities to restore dignity and rights to the survivors. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11) stated:

“28. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure a lasting solution to the issue of “comfort women” with a victim-centered approach, inclusive of “comfort women” of all nationalities, accepting responsibility for its role in the violation of the human rights of these women...”⁶⁵

To date, these recommendations remain unfulfilled, and the world is watching to see if Japan will restore justice for survivors and educate its youth about the history of the sexual slavery system.

⁶³ “(3rd LD) Task force says comfort women deal lacked victims’ views, confirms existence of secret agreements,” *Yonhap News Agency*, December 27, 2017, <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20171227005553315>

Pyong Gap Min, Thomas R. Chung, and Sejung Sage Yim, eds, *The Transnational Redress Movement for the Victims of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery*, 5-6.

⁶⁴ Min-kyung Jung, “Park administration kept parts of ‘comfort women’ agreement secret,” *The Korea Herald*, December 27, 2017, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171227000797>

⁶⁵ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Concluding Observations on the Combined Tenth and Eleventh Periodic Reports of Japan*, ¶ 6, CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11 (September 26, 2018), available from <https://undocs.org/en/CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11>

Excerpts from United Nations Committees' Concluding Observations and Remarks regarding the 2015 Agreement

1. Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/JPN/CO/7-8) on 7 March 2016

“...the Committee regrets the State party has not implemented the aforementioned recommendations and its position that the issue of “comfort women” does not fall within the mandate of the Committee, as the alleged violations occurred prior to the entry into force of the Convention for the State party in 1985. The Committee further regrets that:

(a) Recently, there has been an increase in the number of statements from public officials and leaders regarding the State party’s responsibility for violations committed against “comfort women”; and that the announcement of the bilateral agreement with the Republic of Korea, which asserts that the “comfort women” issue “is resolved finally and irreversibly” did not fully adopt a victim-centered approach;⁶⁶

2. Statement by Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Human Rights Council's 31st session on 10 March 2016)

“...Its [2015 agreement] terms have been questioned by various UN human rights mechanisms, and most importantly by the survivors themselves. It is fundamentally important that the relevant authorities reach out to these courageous and dignified women; ultimately only they can judge whether they have received genuine redress.”⁶⁷

3. Human Rights Experts' position on the 2015 agreement on 11 March 2016

⁶⁶ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Japan*, ¶ 8, CEDAW/C/JPN/CO/7-8 (March 7, 2016), available from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/JPN/CEDAW_C_JPN_CO_7-8_21666_E.pdf

⁶⁷ “Statement by Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to the Human Rights Council's 31st session,” United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, accessed March 10, 2016, <https://ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17200&LangID=E>

“We believe the agreement between Japan and South Korea falls short of meeting the demands of survivors,” said the independent experts on discrimination against women, transitional justice and torture. “An unequivocal official apology recognizing the full responsibility of the then Japanese Government and military, as well as adequate reparations, would protect and uphold the victims’ right to truth, justice and reparation.”

“We are also deeply concerned that the Republic of Korea may remove a statue commemorating not only the historical issue and legacy of the ‘comfort women’ but also symbolizing the survivors’ long search for justice,” they added.

The experts stated that “the Governments of Japan and South Korea should understand that this issue will not be considered resolved so long as all the victims, including from other Asian countries, remain unheard, their expectations unmet and their wounds left wide open.” They underscored that this is now a race against time given the age of the survivors.⁶⁸

4. Concluding Observations of the Committee Against Torture (CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5 on 30 May 2017)

...[The Committee] is concerned that the agreement does not comply fully with the scope and content of its general comment No. 3 and that it fails to provide redress and reparation (including compensation and the means for as full a rehabilitation as possible) or to ensure the right to truth and assurances of non-repetition;

48. The State party should: (d) Revise the agreement of 28 December 2015 between Japan and the Republic of Korea in order to ensure that the surviving victims of sexual slavery during the Second World War are provided with redress, including the right to compensation and rehabilitation, and that they are guaranteed the right to truth, reparation and assurances of non-repetition, in keeping with article 14 of the Convention;⁶⁹

⁶⁸ “Japan / S. Korea: “The long awaited apology to ‘comfort women’ victims is yet to come” – UN rights experts,” United Nations Office of The High Commissioner for Human Rights,

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17209&LangID=E>

⁶⁹ United Nations Committee against Torture, *Concluding observations on the combined third to fifth periodic reports of the Republic of Korea*, ¶ 13, CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5 (May 30, 2017), available from <https://undocs.org/en/CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5>

5. Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/8 on 23 March 2018)

27. The Committee recommends that the State party;

(b) Ensure that the rights to truth, justice and redress of the victims/survivors and their families are fully upheld, including rehabilitation and fair and adequate compensations to be afforded without delay.⁷⁰

6. Concluding Observation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11 on 30 August 2018)

“Comfort Women”

27. While noting information provided by the State party on the efforts to resolve the issue of “comfort women,” including the recent agreement with the Republic of Korea in 2015, the Committee is concerned at reports that these efforts do not take a fully victim-centered approach, that the surviving “comfort women” were not adequately consulted and that this solution did not provide unequivocal responsibility for the human rights violations committed against these women by the military before and during WWII. The Committee is also concerned by statements of some public officials minimizing the responsibility of the Government in respect to “comfort women” and their potential negative impact on survivors.

28. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure a lasting solution to the issue of “comfort women” with a victim-centered approach, inclusive of “comfort women” of all nationalities, accepting responsibility for its role in the violation of the human rights of these women. The Committee requests detailed information in its next periodic report on efforts to achieve resolution of the issue of “comfort women”, including adequate measures to surviving “comfort women” and their families.⁷¹

⁷⁰ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of the Republic of Korea*, ¶ 9, CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/8 (March 14, 2018), available from <https://undocs.org/CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/8>

⁷¹ United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *Concluding observations on the combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of Japan*, ¶ 6,

Question. What about “consolation” fund? Isn’t that an apology?

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence Pablo de Greiff (A/HRC/21/46) highlights that the call for justice should be responded with victims’ rights to truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence, instead of hasty “reconciliation” or “consolation”:

37. The Special Rapporteur emphasizes that, both on the basis of international experience and, more proximately, the resolution that creates the mandate, reconciliation should not be conceived as either an alternative to justice or an aim that can be achieved independently of the implementation of the comprehensive approach to the four measures (truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-recurrence).⁷²

Indeed, the “consolation” fund of the Japanese Government cannot serve as an apology since it did not come from recognition of the war crimes, official and irrevocable apology, reparations, and commitment to non-recurrence. The Japanese Government officials’ continued denial and defamation of survivors show that the “consolation” fund was a hasty attempt rather than a sincere apology.⁷³

After the 2015 agreement, the Japanese Government’s denial and distortion of history became more relentless, interfering with the campaign for Butterfly Fund, which was established to support the survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict, and with the establishment of Statue of Peace. To

CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11 (September 26, 2018), available from <https://undocs.org/en/CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11>

⁷² United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-recurrence, Pablo de Greiff*, ¶ 12, A/HRC/21/46 (August 9, 2012), available from <https://undocs.org/A/HRC/21/46>

⁷³ Linda Sieg, Kiyoshi Takenaka, Chris Meyers and Megha Rajagopalan, “Japanese mayor sparks outrage with sex-slave remarks,” *Reuters*, May 14, 2013, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-japan-comfortwomen/japanese-mayor-sparks-outrage-with-sex-slave-remarks-idUSBRE94D0E720130514>

find more, read the supplementary material on the Japanese Government's interference in this booklet.

**Remarks made by Japanese Government officials that
distort history and deny the crimes against humanity committed in
the Japanese military sexual slavery system**

Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan

“There is no evidence that the Japanese government forcibly made those women as a sex slave. Thus, that is a groundless slander, so we should strengthen our external publicity.” – October 3, 2014

“There is no change in my position that no evidences have been found to prove the so-called forceful mobilization of comfort women among the documents that Japanese governments produced so far.” – January 18, 2016 at the Japanese Diet

Sakurada Yoshitaka, Former Ministerial member of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Ministry of Japan

“Comfort women were prostitutes.” – January 13, 2016

“Comfort women were professional prostitutes. They pretended to be victims. We have been deceived too much by propaganda maneuvers.” – January 14, 2016

Shinozuka Dakashi, General Counselor of the Japanese Consulate in Atlanta, GA, USA

“According the investigation done by the Japanese government in 1990s and 2000s, it is not yet confirmed that 200,000 sex slaves were mobilized. Even the South Korean government has not yet discovered evidences. The number of Comfort Women is not 200,000 and they are neither sex slaves nor forcibly mobilized.” – June 23, 2017

Question. How is Japan educating the Japanese military sexual slavery issue?

Education of the issue is essential to restore the dignity of survivors and to ensure that no more violation of human rights would be repeated. However, attacks of historical revisionists and censorship by the Japanese Government led to complete omission of the issue in Japanese middle school history textbooks since 2012. Failing to educate the future generation in Japan to learn from the history and stand in solidarity for human rights, the Japanese Government is not fulfilling its responsibilities to implement concrete measures to prevent another case of violation of women's human rights.

With survivors, activists and educators in Japan have protested, and United Nations committees have called for the Japanese Government to educate the issue. As of 2020, only two Japanese middle school textbooks that have passed the government authorization process contain descriptions of the Japanese military sexual slavery system.

References to Japanese military sexual slavery erased from history textbooks in Japan

* Excerpt taken and modified from “An NGO Shadow Report to CEDAW, Japan: The ‘Comfort Women’ Issue,” *United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*, accessed February 20, 2020. https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/comfortwomen_japan_cedaw44.pdf

After Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Yohei issued an official statement (the “Kono Statement”) in August 1993, which acknowledged the involvement of the government and military of Japan and the use of force in the “comfort women” system, descriptions of the “comfort women” appeared in all the seven textbooks approved by the Education and Science Ministry for use in junior high schools (the last phase of mandatory education) by 1997. However, references to the “comfort women” issue have been gradually erased. In February 2004, the Minister of Education even stated: “It is wonderful that words like ‘military comfort women’ and ‘forced recruitment’

no longer appear in most textbooks”. This statement has brought to light the stance of the Government of Japan. In the textbooks used in 2006, the phrase “comfort women” was completely gone, and weakened descriptions (without using the phrase) remained in only two textbooks. This means that only 17.3% of students in junior high school had the opportunity to learn anything about the fact of “comfort women” system.

Censorship and neo-colonialist attacks on history textbooks and educators referencing the Japanese military sexual slavery issue

* Excerpt taken and modified from Ching-ja Yang, “The History and Challenges of Education on the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue in Japan,” *Legacy to the Future Generation: How do we educate the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue? – Focus on Korea, Japan, U.S., and Canada* –, June 17, 2019, <http://womenandwar.net/kr/2019-elimination-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict-week-booklets-resolutions/>

...(After the Kono Statement,) historical revisionists (right-wingers) launched a full-scale attack on the textbooks. In January 1997, “Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform (新しい歴史教科書をつくる会)” was officially formed (though it started its activities since the end of 1996), and “Institute of Junior Assembly Members Who Think About the Outlook of Japan and History Education (日本の前途と歴史教育を考える若手議員の会)” – which is now “Institute of Assembly Members Who Think About the Outlook of Japan and History Education (日本の前途と歴史教育を考える議員の会)” – launched in February. The former organization, led by right-wing scholars such as Nobukatsu Fujioka, Kanji Nishiio, Shiro Takahashi, criticized that the Japanese history textbooks were influenced by “self-harming historical approach (自虐史観)” and aimed to create textbooks that record “truth” of the history. The latter organization was a group of right-wing lawmakers of the Liberal Democratic Party, which had Shinzo Abe as the first Secretary General. Since both organizations were formed with a sense of crisis for description of the Japanese military “comfort women” in middle school textbooks published in 1997, both organization started their activities with

the aim to omit the description of Japanese military “comfort women” from textbooks.

...Meanwhile, the description on the Japanese military “comfort women” issue which was included in textbooks by all 7 publishers in 1997, reduced to those published by 3 publishers (4 publishers omitted the issue). This was the result of textbook attack led by the Liberal Democratic Party after the announcement of the Kono Statement in 1993.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party formed a history review committee with key officials and summarized the “Greater East Asia War (a term that right-wingers call the Asia-Pacific War)” from 1993 to 1995. The results can be summarized in four main points:

- (1) The “Greater East Asia War” was a war for Asian Liberation and not a war of invasion. Japan’s war was not a fault.
- (2) “Comfort women,” the Nanjing Massacre, and etc. are fabrications and are not true. Japan did not commit war crimes.
- (3) There is a need for a struggle to eliminate the descriptions on war of aggression and crimes.
- (4) In order to establish the historical perceptions mentioned in (1) and (2) in the people, there is a need to mobilize the scholars to carry out a national movement to revise history.

...In June 1998, Minister of Education Nobuaka Machimura told the Diet that “Textbooks are biased. We will review the process so that the publishers could rectify the textbooks before submitting them for approval. I will also consider rectifying them through an adoption process.” Therefore, in January 1999, the Ministry of Education officials requested the publisher of middle school history textbook to correct its contents and replace its author. It also has been reported that at the end of the same year, there was a call from the Cabinet Secretariat to the owners of middle school history textbook publishers saying that “Description on ‘comfort women’ needs to be carefully dealt with.” Due to such pressures from the government, 4 out of 7 textbooks omitted the description on the Japanese military “comfort women.” In addition, among the 3 publishers that kept the description, Nihon Shoseki (日本書籍) gave the most accurate description through stating: “Young women from across Asia including Korea were forcibly mobilized to the battlefields as Japanese military ‘comfort women.’” However, fierce

attacks from the right-wingers, including the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, reduced the adoption rate of Nihon Shoseki publication in 2002 into half and in 2004, led to bankruptcy of Nihon Shoseki that used to rank the first in adoption rates.

...In the approval process for 2016 edition, a new publisher called Manabisha (学び舎) applied. Manabisha was a publisher established by “History Textbook Society for Learning with Children (子どもと学ぶ歴史教科書の会),” organized by teachers to publish textbooks that encourage students to think freely. In particular, Manabisha textbook described Japanese military “comfort women” that disappeared in the 2012 edition. For such reason, the textbook failed to pass the first process.

The following are some of the descriptions from Manabisha textbook that were pointed out as “defects” and thus cited as reasons for failure:

“Among young women from Korea and Taiwan, there were people who were taken to the battlefields as ‘comfort women.’ The Japanese military made the women move with the military and the women could not act according to their own will.”

“The Japanese government also acknowledged the military’s involvement in the establishment and operation of ‘comfort stations’ and expressed its intention to apologize and reflect on it.”

“The Japanese government states that the reparation issue has been resolved between the nations and will not make compensations to the individuals.”

“This issue has been addressed by the UN Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Congress, and the issue of responsibility for violence against women during wartime is being discussed.”

Question. How can this issue be resolved?

According to international law, states that have committed crimes against humanity of rape and sexual slavery and war crimes have legal obligation to provide reparations.⁷⁴ However, Japan has not taken legal responsibility for the crimes they committed. For the just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue, the Japanese Government should follow international human rights principles to make official apology and legal reparations on the premise of acknowledgment of its war crime.

Therefore, the Japanese Government should: 1) investigate the truth, 2) disclose historical records, 3) fulfill legal responsibilities (irrevocable apology, reparation, compensation, etc.), and 4) educate the issue to prevent recurrence.

United Nations Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur Radhika Coomaraswamy's Report⁷⁵

The Special Rapporteur wishes to make the following recommendations which aim at the discharge of her mandate in a spirit of cooperation with the Governments concerned and at trying to understand the phenomenon of military sexual slavery in wartime within the wider framework of violence against women, its causes and consequences. The Special Rapporteur counts, in particular, on the cooperation of the Government of Japan, which has already shown, in discussions with the Special Rapporteur, its openness and willingness to act to render justice to the few surviving women victims of military sexual slavery carried out by the Japanese Imperial Army.

A. At the national level

The Government of Japan should:

⁷⁴ Amnesty International, "Still Waiting After 60 Years: Justice for Survivors of Japan's Military Sexual Slavery System,"

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA22/012/2005/ja/>

⁷⁵ United Nations Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, submitted in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/85*, ¶ 31-32, E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1 (February 5, 1996), available from <https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1>

- (a) Acknowledge that the system of comfort stations set up by the Japanese Imperial Army during the Second World War was a violation of its obligations under international law and accept legal responsibility for that violation;
- (b) Pay compensation to individual victims of Japanese military sexual slavery according to principles outlined by the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities on the right to restitution, compensation and rehabilitation for victims of grave violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. A special administrative tribunal for this purpose should be set up with a limited time-frame since many of the victims are of a very advanced age;
- (c) Make a full disclosure of documents and materials in its possession with regard to comfort stations and other related activities of the Japanese Imperial Army during the Second World War;
- (d) Make a public apology in writing to individual women who have come forward and can be substantiated as women victims of Japanese military sexual slavery;
- (e) Raise awareness of these issues by amending educational curricula to reflect historical realities;
- (f) Identify and punish, as far as possible, perpetrators involved in the recruitment and institutionalization of comfort stations during the Second World War.

B. At the international level

Non-governmental organizations working at the international level should continue to raise these issues within the United Nations system. There should also be an attempt to seek an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice or the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

The Governments of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea may consider requesting the International Court of Justice to help resolve the legal issues concerning Japanese responsibility and payment of compensation for the sexual slavery.

The Special Rapporteur urges the Government of Japan in particular to take into account and act upon the above recommendations at the soonest possible time, bearing in mind the advanced age of the surviving women, as well as

the fact that 1995 is the fiftieth anniversary of the ending of the Second World War. The Special Rapporteur feels that not only have fifty years passed since the end of the war but that it is time to restore the dignity of those women who have suffered so much.

Question. What are Principles of International Human Rights and the United Nations Recommendations on the issue?

International human rights principles and the international humanitarian law state that **victims of gross violation of human rights and serious violations of international humanitarian law have the right to effective remedy, including the rights to know the truth, causes of the violations, identity of perpetrators, and fate of other displaced/disappeared victims.**⁷⁶

The United Nations Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law(A/RES/60/147) further state that States have the responsibilities to investigate crimes against humanity and to punish the perpetrators:

“In cases of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law constituting crimes under international law, States have the duty to investigate and, if there is sufficient evidence, the duty to submit to prosecution the person allegedly responsible for the

⁷⁶ To learn more: “International Human Rights Principles,” Amnesty International Canada, March 18, 2014, <https://www.amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/international-human-rights-principles>

“Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,” United Nations, accessed March 10, 2020, www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/.

“Convention (III) on Prisoners of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949,” International Committee of the Red Cross, accessed March 10, 2020, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/6fef854a3517b75ac125641e004a9e68>.

“Fostering Victims’ Rights in the Proposed Crimes Against Humanity Convention – Comments to the International Law Commission,” Redress Ending Torture, Seeking Justice for Survivors, March 2018, <https://redress.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CAH-Convention-and-Victims-Rights.pdf>

Eduardo González and Howard Varney, eds., “Chapter 1 The Right to The Truth,” in *Truth Seeking: Elements of Creating an Effective Truth Commission* (New York: International Center for Transitional Justice, 2013), 1-6,

<https://www.ictj.org/sites/default/files/ICTJ-Book-Truth-Seeking-2013-English.pdf>

“Special Rapporteur on the Promotion of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Guarantees of Non-Recurrence,” United Nations Office of The High Commissioner for Human Rights, accessed March 10, 2020,

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/TruthJusticeReparation/Pages/Index.aspx>

violations and, if found guilty, the duty to punish her or him. Moreover, in these cases, States should, in accordance with international law, cooperate with one another and assist international judicial organs competent in the investigation and prosecution of these violations.”⁷⁷

**Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and
Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human
Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law**⁷⁸

20. *Compensation* should be provided for any economically assessable damage, as appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation and the circumstances of each case, resulting from gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law, such as:

- (a) Physical or mental harm;
- (b) Lost opportunities, including employment, education and social benefits;
- (c) Material damages and loss of earnings, including loss of earning potential;
- (d) Moral damage;
- (e) Costs required for legal or expert assistance, medicine and medical services, and psychological and social services.

21. *Rehabilitation* should include medical and psychological care as well as legal and social services.

22. *Satisfaction* should include, where applicable, any or all of the following:

- (a) Effective measures aimed at the cessation of continuing violations;

⁷⁷ United Nations General Assembly, *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*, ¶ 5, A/RES/60/147 (March 21, 2006), available from <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/60/147>

⁷⁸ “Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law,” United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, accessed August 21, 2020, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/remedyandreparation.aspx>

(b) Verification of the facts and full and public disclosure of the truth to the extent that such disclosure does not cause further harm or threaten the safety and interests of the victim, the victim's relatives, witnesses, or persons who have intervened to assist the victim or prevent the occurrence of further violations;

(c) The search for the whereabouts of the disappeared, for the identities of the children abducted, and for the bodies of those killed, and assistance in the recovery, identification and reburial of the bodies in accordance with the expressed or presumed wish of the victims, or the cultural practices of the families and communities;

(d) An official declaration or a judicial decision restoring the dignity, the reputation and the rights of the victim and of persons closely connected with the victim;

(e) Public apology, including acknowledgement of the facts and acceptance of responsibility;

(f) Judicial and administrative sanctions against persons liable for the violations;

(g) Commemorations and tributes to the victims;

(h) Inclusion of an accurate account of the violations that occurred in international human rights law and international humanitarian law training and in educational material at all levels.

23. *Guarantees of non-repetition* should include, where applicable, any or all of the following measures, which will also contribute to prevention:

(a) Ensuring effective civilian control of military and security forces;

(b) Ensuring that all civilian and military proceedings abide by international standards of due process, fairness and impartiality;

(c) Strengthening the independence of the judiciary;

(d) Protecting persons in the legal, medical and health-care professions, the media and other related professions, and human rights defenders;

(e) Providing, on a priority and continued basis, human rights and international humanitarian law education to all sectors of society and training for law enforcement officials as well as military and security forces;

- (f) Promoting the observance of codes of conduct and ethical norms, in particular international standards, by public servants, including law enforcement, correctional, media, medical, psychological, social service and military personnel, as well as by economic enterprises;
- (g) Promoting mechanisms for preventing and monitoring social conflicts and their resolution;
- (h) Reviewing and reforming laws contributing to or allowing gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law.



Victims holding their paintings revealing the crimes of Japanese military sexual slavery and expressing their call for justice at an exhibition in 1995 ©The Korean Council

How Have the Survivors Fought for Justice?

Throughout the past 30 years, the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue developed through different phases to call for official apology and legal reparations from the Japanese Government, support survivors, inform the public of the issue, and transform our society.

Phase 1. 1988~1994 #WithYou, #MeToo, Recognition in the international community

Even after the war ended, many survivors had to experience pain again due to social stigma. The prevailing sexist values of female chastity in patriarchal societies left them to suffer in silence and shame. Many survivors struggled with lasting impacts of physical and psychological trauma for decades.

Researchers and women's organizations helped pave the road to unveiling the history of Japanese military sexual slavery. Yun Chung-ok, a professor at Ewha Woman's University, first undertook research on the issue. Having narrowly missed conscription herself at a young age, she started to delve into the long-silenced stories of women who were taken away. Lee Hyo-jae, another professor at Ewha Women's University who had been instrumental in co-starting the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue alongside Yun, introduced Yun to the Korean Church Women United. Yun shared her research findings at the "Women and Tourism Culture" international seminar organized by Korean Church Women United in Jeju, South Korea in 1988. Her presentation inspired women's human rights activists to investigate the Japanese military sexual slavery issue.⁷⁹

In 1990, 37 women's human rights organizations in Korea gathered to establish The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (now The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance

⁷⁹ The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, *Han'gukchǒngshindaedaechek'yŏbūihoe 20nyŏn* [20 Years of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan], 28-38
Seung-kyung Kim and Na-Young Lee, "Shared History and the Responsibility for Justice: The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan," 193-206.

for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan) to address the issue and demand justice in solidarity with survivors.

On August 14, 1991, Kim Hak-soon became the first survivor to publicly testify her experiences in Korea. Her courage encouraged many other survivors from around the world to come forward and demand justice. The Korean Council established *Chongshindae* (“Comfort Women”) Hotline to receive reports from survivors. Furthermore, the Korean Council organized Wednesday Demonstration and international campaigns to raise global awareness of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and call for the Japanese Government’s official apology and legal reparations.

Wednesday Demonstration

On January 8, 1992, survivors and activists gathered in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul to protest the Japanese Government’s denial of the history of Japanese military sexual slavery in light of the Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa’s visit to South Korea. Ever since, survivors and activists have staged weekly Wednesday Demonstrations.

At first, the Wednesday Demonstration was held by a few survivors and advocates. Some called the survivors “shameful women” and ignored the call for justice. As the movement continued, however, the Wednesday Demonstration has become a space of solidarity among survivors of Japanese military sexual slavery, survivors of sexual violence, workers, and people calling for justice and human rights. Come rain or shine, they gather in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul every Wednesday with young children, students, and citizens who join to stand in solidarity with survivors. The one exception was in 1995 when a Wednesday Demonstration was canceled as an expression of condolence for the Kobe Earthquake that struck Japan. The Wednesday Demonstration has continued as an educational space for peace, justice, and human rights for the 28 years and August 12th, 2020 marked the 1452nd Wednesday Demonstration.



The 1st Wednesday Demonstration on January 8, 1992 ©The Korean Council

7 Demands to Japanese Government from Wednesday Demonstration for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

- 1. Admission of guilt: Admit the military sexual slavery system as a war crime**
- 2. Disclosure: Disclose official documents held by the Japanese government**
- 3. Apology: Deliver an official apology**
- 4. Reparations: Pay legal reparations to survivors**
- 5. Punishment: Punish war criminals responsible for the system**
- 6. Education: Record the sexual slavery system in history textbooks**
- 7. Commemoration: Erect a memorial monument and build an archive**

Changes in the Korean Society to support survivors

Coming forward with their painful experiences and calling for justice, the Japanese military sexual slavery survivors have fought against stigma and oppression that survivors of sexual violence had to suffer in the Korean society. Further, the survivors and supporters have urged the victimized nations to take concrete actions to demand official apology and legal reparations to the Japanese Government and to protect the survivors.

In response to the movement for justice, the Korean Government enacted Act on Livelihood Stability and Commemorative Projects, Etc., for Sexual Slavery Victims Drafted for the Japanese Imperial Army under the Japanese Colonial Rule in 1993 to provide government subsidy to support survivors' livings and to commemorate the survivors. Furthermore, in 2011, the Constitutional Court of Korea ruled that the Korean Government's failure to resolve the issue constitutes unconstitutional negligence and urged government action. In 2018, the Korean Government proclaimed the International Memorial Day for Japanese Military "Comfort Women" on August 14 as a national commemoration day, joining the efforts of civic groups and supporters to remember and inherit the courage of survivors.

Asian Solidarity

As the Japanese military sexual slavery issue affected people across the Asia-Pacific region, survivors and activists have actively built international solidarity for the resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. Starting from the 1st Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan held in 1992, survivors and organizations from the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, China, East Timor, Thailand, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, the U.S., Japan, and North and South Korea gathered to hold the Asian Solidarity Conference on the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. In addition to hearing survivors' testimonies, the conference offered a space for survivors and activists to share their activism and discuss ways to work together for the Japanese Government's official apology and legal reparations.⁸⁰ North and South Korean activists have crossed the borders to

⁸⁰ To see past resolutions of the Asian Solidarity Conference, visit The Korean Council's website at "Resolution of the 15th Asian Solidarity Conference," The Korean Council for

organize various co-statements and events to raise the issue and have led a coalition of both Koreas to demand justice.

International Campaigns

The survivors and activists have held various campaigns at the United Nations and other human rights organizations and gave testimonies and lectures across schools and universities around the world to inform people of the issue, build international solidarity, and raise military sexual slavery and sexual violence in armed conflict as issues of universal human rights.

In 1992, Hwang Geum-joo testified at the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, and the Korean Council has since brought the issue to the international organizations. Kim Bok Dong testified at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria in 1993. Responding to the efforts of survivors and the movement, the issue was discussed at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, Committee on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Committee Against Torture (CAT), Committee on Enforced Disappearance (CED), Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and International Labour Organization Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (ILO CEACR), and more. Many of these organizations issued reports and recommendations urging the Japanese Government to take responsibilities.⁸¹

Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, October 18, 2018,

<http://womenandwar.net/kr/%EC%9E%90%EB%A3%8C%EC%8B%A4/?pageid=6&mod=document&uid=108>

⁸¹ For more information, see “Recommendations on the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery (‘comfort women’) Issue by UN Human Rights Bodies,” The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, 2015, <http://learnwhr.org/wp-content/uploads/Recommendations-by-UN-Human-Rights-Bodies-on-CW-Issue-Korean-Council.pdf>



Hwang Geum-joo testifying at the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in 1992 ©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong testifying at the United Nations World Human Rights Conference in Vienna, Austria in 1993 ©The Korean Council



Moon Pil-gi (South Korea), Jeong Song-myeong (North Korea), and Won Jung-sook (a representative from the North Korean Committee) at an international conference in Berlin, Germany in 1993 ©The Korean Council



Campaign at International Labour Organization (ILO) with Nationwide Network Japan in 1996 ©The Korean Council

Phase 2. 1995~2001 Calling for the Japanese Government's Legal Responsibilities: International Solidarity against Asian Women's Fund, Tokyo International Women's Tribunal

After the 1993 Kono Statement, the Japanese Government established the Asian Women's Fund to give "consolation money" to survivors, instead of official apology and legal reparations. Survivors and activists organized an international conference against the Asian Women's Fund in Tokyo, Tokyo Declaration, Wednesday Demonstrations, and other various international actions to protest the Asian Women's Fund. While some survivors received the "consolation money" due to economic difficulties and/or lack of support from their own governments or communities, many survivors, The Korean Council, and international human rights organizations opposed the Japanese Government's attempt to evade its legal responsibilities to make official apology and reparations behind the "consolation money" provided by the Asian Women's Fund. The Taiwanese Government offered financial support equivalent to the Asian Women's Fund to each survivor, followed by the Korean Government who also offered similar financial support for survivors.⁸² The Korean Council and citizens organized a fundraising campaign to deliver economic aid to survivors, to express that the survivors' fight for justice is not a demand for money, but for justice.



Survivors and activists at the International Conference against Asian Women's Fund "Reparations to War Survivors!" held on December 3-4, 1995 ©The Korean Council

⁸² The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, *Han'gukchǒngshindaedaeche' aek'yōbūihoe 20nyōnsa* [20 Years of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan], 202-208.



Tokyo Declaration against the Asian Women's Fund on May 14-18, 1996 ©The Korean Council



Survivor Kim Eun-rye holding a picket saying “Obituary to the Asian Women’s Fund” at Wednesday Demonstration on January 15, 1997 ©The Korean Council

Women's International War Crimes Tribunal (2000)

From the 1990s, survivors have filed lawsuits in the Japanese courts to seek official acknowledgment and legal responsibilities. However, the Japanese Government continued to deny its responsibilities and the Japanese courts dismissed the lawsuits filed by the survivors. The survivors and activists have tried to bring the issue to the international courts, including the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 1994. However, the Japanese Government failed to respond to the calls, and the international courts were in the stages of developing gender-based perspectives and understandings of sexual violence during conflict.⁸³ To restore the dignity of the survivors before it is too late, the survivors and activists of all victimized countries gathered together to hold a people's tribunal, the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal.⁸⁴

In 2000, survivors, activists, and legal experts from Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Philippines, Taiwan, China, Indonesia, East Timor, and Netherlands working for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue organized the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal. Survivors and former Japanese military soldiers gave their testimonies, and various written documents and legal arguments were presented. The Tribunal found

⁸³ Notably, the Shimonoseki branch of the Yamaguchi Prefectural Court ruled that the Japanese Diet was constitutionally obligated to introduce a law for compensating Japanese military sexual slavery survivors. An earlier Chapter in this booklet "Was There NO Forced Mobilization, as Abe and Revisionists Say?" included excerpts of the Shimonoseki ruling, which acknowledged the central role of the Japanese military in the establishment and management comfort stations. For more information about the Shimonoseki ruling and its significance, refer to the following sources: Taihei Okada, Translation. "The Sexual Slavery Case: Judgment of April 27, 1998, Shimonoseki Branch, Yamaguchi Prefectural Court, Japan," *Pacific Rim Law & Policy Journal* 8, no. 1 (1999): 63-108.

Etsuro Totsuka, "Commentary on a Victory for Comfort Women: Japan's Judicial Recognition of Military Sexual Slavery," *Pacific Rim Law and Policy Journal* 8, no. 1 (1999): 47-61

To find a list of survivors' efforts to seek redress and reparations through the courts, refer to: Stephanie Wolfe, *The Politics of Reparations and Apologies* (New York: Springer New York, 2014), 254-255.

⁸⁴ The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal modeled on the Russell Tribunal, a people's tribunal on the U.S-Vietnam War. The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal took a step further in being primarily organized by women from victimized countries, compared to the Russell Tribunal which was organized primarily by European intellectuals. See: Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 259.

Japanese Emperor Hirohito and the Japanese Government guilty for its war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Although the Tribunal was an international civil tribunal without legal jurisdiction over the Japanese Government, the Tribunal brought together survivors from across the world as well as former Japanese soldiers to testify and demonstrated the injustices, the need to punish perpetrators, and the responsibilities the Japanese Government should take for their crimes.⁸⁵ The Tribunal provided gender perspective that the courts lacked in addressing the sexual violence and gender-based violence cases, and served as an exemplary international human rights case for researchers.⁸⁶ The Tribunal also connected the Japanese military sexual slavery survivors' stories to those of other survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict through a public hearing on sexual violence in recent armed conflicts on the fourth day of the tribunal. Survivors from Rwanda, Kosovo, and other countries testified their experiences and joined hands with Japanese military sexual slavery survivors. In doing so, the tribunal aimed to end the cycle of impunity and prevent sexual violence against women in armed conflicts.⁸⁷

The last two paragraphs of the judgment read:

The Crimes committed against these survivors remain one of the greatest unacknowledged and unremedied injustices of the Second World War. There are no museums, no graves for the unknown "comfort woman", no education of future generations, and there have been no judgment days for the victims of Japan's military sexual slavery and the rampant sexual violence and brutality that characterized its aggressive war.

⁸⁵ Yayori Matsui, "Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery: Memory, Identity, and Society," *East Asia* 19, no. 4 (2001): 119-140. Christine Chinkin, "Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery," 336-341.

⁸⁶ Chin Sung Chung, *Ilbon'gun sŏngnoyeje* [Military Sexual Slavery of Imperial Japan], 279-280.

⁸⁷ Yayori Matsui, "Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery: Memory, Identity, and Society," 120.

Accordingly, through this Judgment, this Tribunal intends to honor all the women victimized by Japan's military sexual slavery system. The Judges recognize the great fortitude and dignity of the survivors who have toiled to survive and reconstruct their shattered lives and who have faced down fear and shame to tell their stories to the world and testify before us. Many of the women who have come forward to fight for justice have died unsung heroes. While the names inscribed in history's page have been, at best, those of the men who commit the crimes or who prosecute them, rather than the women who suffer them, this Judgment bears the names of the survivors who took the stand to tell their stories, and thereby, for four days at least, put wrong on the scaffold and truth on the throne.⁸⁸



Photo from the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal held in Tokyo, Japan on December 8-12, 2000 ©The Korean Council

⁸⁸ To read the full judgment: "The Women's International War Crimes Tribunal Judgment," Violence Against Women in War Research Action Center, December 4, 2001, http://vawwwrac.org/judgement_e01.pdf

To see more archived information, refer to: Women's Active Museum on War and Peace, "Women's International War Crimes Tribunal Archives," May 10, 2020, <https://archives.wam-peace.org/wt/en/>



North and South Korean survivors rejoicing and testifying together at the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal ©The Korean Council



Legal experts of North and South Korea led a joint prosecution during the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal and held a press conference ©The Korean Council

Phase 3. 2001~2015 Remembrance and Solidarity: International Resolutions, Statue of Peace, War and Women's Human Rights Museum, Butterfly Fund

After the 2000 Women's International War Crimes Tribunal, the Japanese Government still refused to take concrete actions to redress survivors who were passing away. To pressure the Japanese Government into action, campaigns to adopt resolutions at national parliaments took place. The survivors and activists traveled across borders to give testimonies and lectures, and to hold various campaigns at universities, organizations, and governments.

The activism for justice on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue has become an international movement for peace and human rights. Throughout the movement, Japanese military sexual slavery survivors have transformed to become activists for women's human rights and peace.⁸⁹

International Resolutions

From 2007, the efforts of survivors and citizens in solidarity led to the adoption of resolutions calling for the Japanese Government's official apology and legal reparations in the national parliaments of the United States, Netherlands, Canada, European Parliament, South Korea, Taiwan, and regional assemblies in Japan.⁹⁰ Resolution at the European Parliament, especially, called for: **“the Japanese National Assembly (Diet) to take legal measures to remove existing obstacles to obtaining reparations before Japanese courts; in particular, the right of individuals to claim reparations against the government should be expressly recognized in national law, and cases for reparations for the survivors of sexual**

⁸⁹ Na-young Lee, “The Korean Women's Movement of Japanese Military ‘Comfort Women’: Navigating between Nationalism and Feminism,” 86-88.

⁹⁰ “H.Res.121 - A Resolution Expressing the Sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan Should Formally Acknowledge, Apologize, and Accept Historical Responsibility in a Clear and Unequivocal Manner for its Imperial Armed Forces' Coercion of Young Women into Sexual Slavery, known to the World as ‘Comfort Women’, During its Colonial and Wartime Occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands From the 1930s Through the Duration of World War II,” United States Congress, July 30, 2007, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/110th-congress/house-resolution/121>

slavery, as a crime under international law, should be prioritized, taking into account the age of the survivors.”⁹¹

United States House Resolution 121

Resolved, that it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan –

- (1) should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces’ coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as “comfort women”, during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II;
- (2) Would help to resolve recurring questions about the sincerity and status of prior statements if the Prime Minister of Japan were to make such an apology as a public statement in his official capacity;
- (3) should clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the “comfort women” for the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces never occurred; and
- (4) should educate current and future generations about this horrible crime while following the 22 recommendations of the international community with respect to the “comfort women”.



On February 15, 2007, Kim Gun-ja and Lee Yong-soo from Korea and Jan Ruff O’Herne from the Netherlands testified about their experiences in the Japanese military sexual slavery system before the United States House of Representatives ©The Korean Council

⁹¹ “Joint Motion for a Resolution,” European Parliament, December 12, 2007, <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=P6-RC-2007-0525&language=EN>



Kim Ok-seon testified at Duke University in March 2007 ©The Korean Council



During the campaign for Canadian Parliament Resolution, Jang Jeom-dol testified at the University of Toronto, with other survivors from China and the Philippines in 2007

©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong at a campaign in front of the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, Germany in 2015 ©The Korean Council



Gil Won-ok, Wu Hsiu-Mei, and Jan Ruff O'Herne at a campaign in front of the Japanese Consulate General in Sydney, Australia on March 7, 2007 ©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong campaigning in Paris, France in 2013 ©The Korean Council

Remembrance: Statue of Peace and War and Women's Human Rights Museum

As survivors pass away due to age, remembering the survivors' stories, and continuing their call for justice became crucial to the movement in the 2000s. The Korean Council established the Statue of Peace to commemorate the 1,000th Wednesday Demonstration and the War and Women's Human Rights Museum for future generations to learn about the history of Japanese military sexual slavery and join in the movement for its just resolution.



Photo of the Statue of Peace, established at the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration ©The Korean Council

War and Women's Human Rights Museum

To educate the history of Japanese military sexual slavery issue and remember the survivors' courageous voices and movement for resolution, the Korean Council and citizens organized a 9-year-long fundraising campaign and established the War and Women's Human Rights Museum on May 5, 2012. The museum also introduces the sexual violence committed by the Korean military during the U.S.-Vietnam War and sexual violence in armed conflict across the world, to deliver the message of peace and human rights that the survivors called for.

In addition to the War and Women's Human Rights Museum in Seoul, South Korea, several museums dedicated to remembering the stories of survivors and spreading messages of peace and women's human rights have been established around the world, including the Ama Museum in Taiwan, Women's Active Museum on War and Peace in Japan, Chinese "Comfort Women" Museum in Shanghai Normal University and Nanjing Museum of the Site of the Lijixiang Comfort Stations in China, House of Sharing Museum of Sexual Slavery by Japanese Military in Gyeonggi Province, South Korea, and Heeum Museum of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan in Daegu, South Korea.



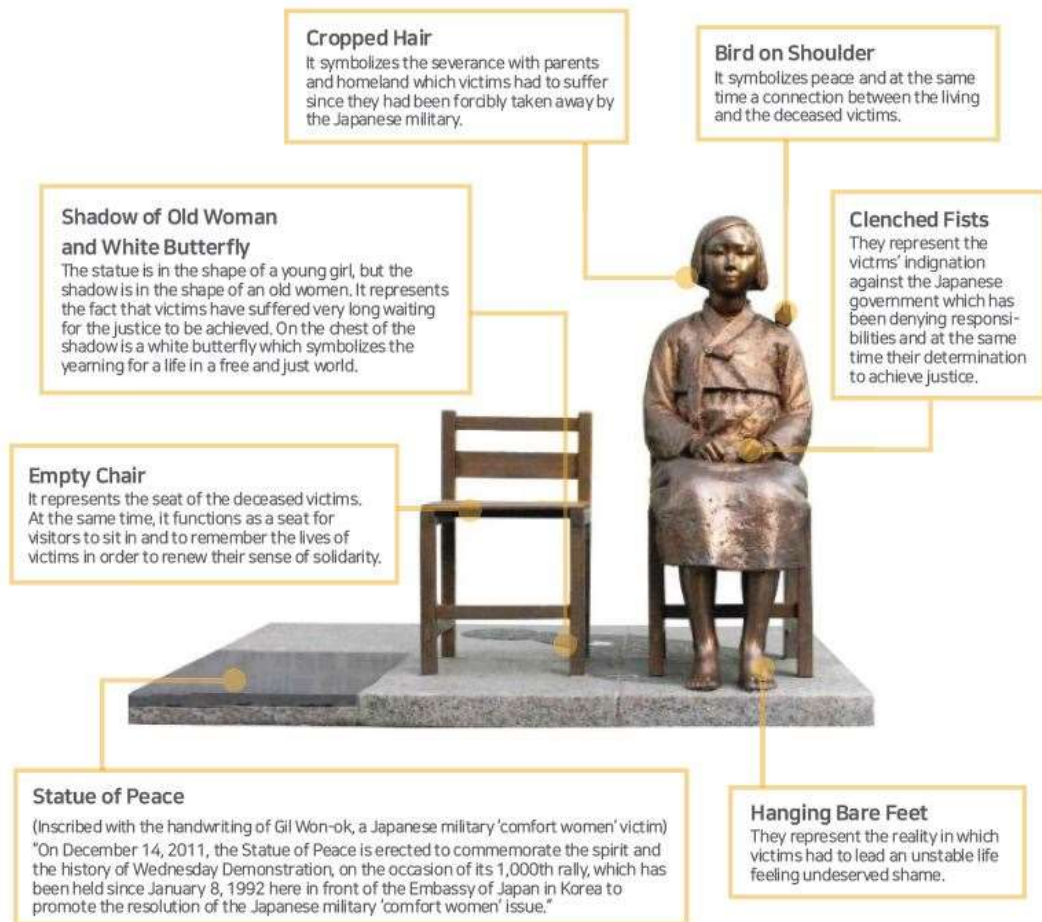
Photos of War and Women's Human Rights Museum ©War and Women's Human Rights Museum

Statue of Peace

In front of the Japanese Embassy, a bronze statue was established to commemorate the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration and honor survivors' activism. The Statue of Peace, also known as the Peace Monument, comprises of a statue of a seated girl with a shadow shaped like a grandmother.

The Statue of Peace represents the victims when they were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese military, and the shadow cast on the floor represents survivors in their current state, as older grandmas. The girl's tightly clenched fists symbolize the determination to continue fighting for the resolution of the issue. The short hair, which looks as if it was torn away, indicates the severance of victims from their family and homeland because of Japanese imperialism. A small bird sits on the girl's shoulder and connects the victims who passed away with those still alive. The girl's bare feet are raised at the heel rather than being comfortably positioned, which symbolize many victims who were unable to return to Korea and the suffering that survivors had to endure even after their return.

Despite the Japanese Government's framing of Statue of Peace as an "anti-Japanese" effort, many of these statues have been built through organizing led by diverse local grassroots organizations that recognize the importance of remembering the history and educating the issue as one of universal human rights. The Statue of Peace is now established around the world in Korea, Japan, the United States, Australia, the Philippines, Canada, and Germany, symbolizing survivors' fight for justice and prompting wider public awareness of the history.



Symbols of the Statue of Peace ©The Korean Council

Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Memorials and Statues of Peace Abroad ⁹²				
Region	City	Date of Establishment	Location	Form
Japan	Osaka	1977	Nozaki	Comfort Women Memorial

⁹² Not including memorials established in Korea. For a Korean list of memorials established in Korea and abroad, visit the Korean Council website:
 “P’yŏnghwabi kŏllim chiwŏn kungnae kŏllimhyŏnhwang” [Statue of Peace Status of Establishment in Korea], The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, accessed August 31, 2020, <http://womenandwar.net/kr/peace-statue/#domestic>;
 “P’yŏnghwabi kŏllim chiwŏn haeoe kŏllip’yŏnhwang” [Statue of Peace Status of Establishment abroad], The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, accessed August 31, 2020, <http://womenandwar.net/kr/peace-statue/#international>

	Chiba	around 1985	Tateyama	Comfort Women Memorial
	Okinawa	1997	Tokashiki	Comfort Women Memorial
		September 7 2008	Miyako Island	Comfort Women Memorial
China	Shanghai	October 22 2016	Shanghai Normal University	Korean, Chinese Statue of Peace
	Hong Kong	July 7 2017	Central IFC 2nd Floor (in front of the Japanese Embassy office)	Korean, Chinese, Filipino Statue of Peace
	Tainan	August 14 2018	Kuomintang Office	Memorial Statue
Philippines	Manila	April 22 2003	Liwasang Bonifacio (Plaza Lawton)	Memorial Statue
		December 8 2017	Baywalk Roxas to Rizal Antipolo	Memorial Statue / Removed
	Boracay	July 28 2018	Nelia Sancho's private land on Caticlan Jetty Port, Malay, Aklan	Memorial Statue
	Laguna	December 28 2018	Mary Mother of Mercy, San Antonio, San Pedro	Statue of Peace / Removed
United States	New York	June 16 2012	Veterans Memorial in	Memorial Statue

			Nassau County on Long Island 1	
		January 29 2014	Veterans Memorial in Nassau County on Long Island 2	Memorial Statue
		October 13 2017	Museum of Korean American History (MOKAH)	Statue of Peace
	New Jersey	October 23 2010	Palisades Park, Bergen County	Comfort Women Memorial
		March 8 2013	Memorial Island, Bergen County	Memorial Statue
		August 4 2014	Liberty Plaza, Union City	Memorial Statue
		July 19 2017	Trinity Episcopal Church, Cliffside Park	Memorial Statue
	Michigan	August 16 2014	Korean Cultural Center	Statue of Peace
	Virginia	May 30 2014	The Comfort Women Memorial Peace Garden, Government Center in Fairfax County	Memorial Statue
	Washington D.C.	October 27 2019	In front of the Korea Times Building, Annandale (7601 Little River Turnpike # 300, Annandale)	Statue of Peace
	Georgia	June 30 2017	Blackburn Park, Ashford,	Statue of Peace

			Dunwoody	
	California	December 1 2012	Garden Grove AR Galleria, Orange County	Memorial Statue
		July 30 2013	Central Park near Glendale Public Library, Glendale	Statue of Peace
		September 22 2017	Saint Mary's Square Park, San Francisco	Memorial Statue (Women's Column of Strength)
	Texas	December 11 2019	Korean Restaurant BORI, Houston	Statue of Peace / Temporary Exhibition
	Connecticut	March 1 2020	Korean Community Center	Statue of Peace
Canada	Toronto	November 18 2015	Korean Canadian Cultural Association	Statue of Peace
Australia	Sydney	August 6 2016	Ashfield Church	Statue of Peace
	Melbourne	November 14 2019	Korean Society of Victoria Australia	Statue of Peace
Germany	Regensburg	March 8 2017	Nepal Himalaya Pavilion Park	Statue of Peace
	Frankfurt	March 8 2020	Koreanische Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Rhein-Main	Statue of Peace

Butterfly's Movement for Peace

Through the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue, the survivors connected with citizens who stood in solidarity and other survivors of wartime rape and sexual violence around the world. They were not alone, and the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict has continued to affect many communities.

On International Women's Day, March 8, 2012, survivors Kim Bok Dong, Gil Won-ok, and the Korean Council held a press interview to establish the **Butterfly Fund** to support survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict around the world. Kim Bok Dong and Gil Won-ok promised that when the Japanese Government makes legal reparations, they would donate the whole amount to support other survivors. Citizens around the world joined to follow their cause. The Butterfly Fund has supported survivors of sexual violence committed by Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War, Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) Insurgency in Uganda, armed conflicts in Kosovo, Nigeria, Northern Iraq (Yazidis), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and more.⁹³



Survivors in Democratic Republic of Congo attending adult literacy classes supported by the Butterfly Fund in 2018 ©The Korean Council

⁹³ To learn more about survivors of Lord's Resistance Army Insurgency in Uganda, watch mini documentary *Scarlet Letter in Uganda*, and *KIM BOK DONG* (2020) at <https://youtu.be/llQG110XvfY>



Survivors of LRA Insurgency in Uganda making bags in 2019 ©The Korean Council



Vietnam Butterfly Peace Trip participants in 2019 deliver flowers of Kim Bok Dong and Gil Won-ok to a memorial erected to remember the history of massacres and sexual violence committed by Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War ©The Korean Council

Shelter for survivors and Peace in Korea

To support survivors in recovering from trauma, the Korean Council held Human Rights Camps and established a shelter, Peaceful Our Home, in Seoul. Furthermore, to achieve true liberation for survivors who could not return home due to the division of Korea, the Korean Council continued the efforts to build solidarity between North and South Korea.



Korean survivors and activists at Human Rights Camp in 2000 ©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong and Gil Won-ok at Peaceful Our Home on April 26, 2018, celebrating Kim Bok Dong's birthday. ©The Korean Council



Survivors and activists from North and South Korea at the Asian Regional Symposium Demanding Liquidation of Japan's Past held from May 3rd to 4th, 2002 in Pyongyang, North Korea ©The Korean Council



Gil Won-ok, who is originally from Pyongyang, North Korea, now resides in South Korea. She could not return home due to the division of Korea, and her last wish is to visit her home where she used to live with her family. Gil Won-ok and Rhee Sang-ok (North Korean survivor) greet each other at the 8th Asian Solidarity Conference in 2007 ©The Korean Council

Phase 4. 2015~Present Fighting Denial and Expanding Survivors' Voices: International solidarity for annulment of the 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement, Statue of Peace

Recommendations made by the United Nations and resolutions adopted in countries such as the United Nations, Netherlands, Canada, the European Parliament, South Korea, Taiwan, and regional assemblies in Japan have urged the Japanese government to issue an official apology, provide legal reparations, and recognize the human rights violation committed in the Japanese military sexual slavery system. However, the Japanese Government has failed to provide official apology and legal reparations to address the crimes committed in its establishment, operation, and management of the military sexual slavery system. Survivors, despite various difficulties due to age, are still carrying on their fight for justice and redress.

In 2015, the South Korean and Japanese Governments abruptly announced the 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement. Survivors, who are in their nineties, came out to the streets again to call for the annulment of the 2015 agreement, dissolution of the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation, and the Japanese Government's official apology and legal reparations. After the 2015 agreement, the Japanese Government outspokenly interfered with the movement to restore the survivors' dignity and human rights. The Japanese Government protested against the international movement for Statue of Peace in the U.S., Germany, and the Philippines, even leading to forced removal of some of the statues. The neo-colonialist, right-wing groups have become more active, organizing events even at the United Nations, discrediting the reports of the UN Special Rapporteurs and recommendations of the human rights committees on the issue.



In the cold, bleak winter, Korean survivors gathered at the 1,213th Wednesday Demonstration to call for the annulment of the 2015 agreement on January 13, 2016
©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong holding one-person protest calling for the dissolution of the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation established by the 2015 agreement, on a rainy day of September 3, 2018 ©The Korean Council

The movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue fought for annulment of the 2015 agreement and against the Japanese Government's continued denials and distortions of history. In addition to campaigning across the world, various films, books, and artworks have been created to deliver survivors' stories and message for justice. To continue the survivors' legacies, the Korean Council also awards Kim Hak-soon, Kang Duk-kyung scholarships to students and awards Gil Won-ok Women's Peace Prize to support activists working for women's human rights and peace in Korea and Kim Bok Dong Peace Prize to honor activists working for the elimination of sexual violence in armed conflict.

Survivors, by breaking the silence on Japanese military sexual slavery history, taught us more than historical truth. They also championed the value we need to cherish and preserve human rights. As peace and human rights activists, their stories and activism continue to inspire people around the world to fight for an end to war and violence against women.



The 1st Gil Won-ok Women's Peace Prize Ceremony. Ku Su-jeong of the Korea-Vietnam Peace Foundation received the prize in 2017 ©The Korean Council



Kim Bok Dong presenting the 1st Kim Bok Dong Peace Prize to Acan Sylvia Obal, survivor from Uganda on August 14, 2018 ©The Korean Council



Survivors from DR Congo and Uganda, teachers, and activists who participated at the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict Teachers' Workshop and Symposium giving solidarity speech at the 1392nd Wednesday Demonstration on June 19, 2019 ©The Korean Council



The 28th anniversary of Wednesday Demonstrations, held on January 8, 2020, was attended by students, citizens, and activists from different cities and nations ©The Korean Council



Survivors and children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo commemorate the 28th anniversary of the Wednesday Demonstration, holding Butterfly Fund pamphlets ©DRC REMED and The Korean Council

Testimony of Ahn Jeom-soon (South Korea)

*The following testimony was taken and modified from the Korean Council informational booklet on The 15th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan “To resolve the unrealized justice, the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan,” held on March 8-9, 2018, in Seoul, South Korea.



Ahn Jeom-soon attending the unveiling ceremony of Statue of Peace in Nepal Himalaya Pavilion, Germany in 2017

©Suwon Peace Butterfly

Ahn Jeom-soon was born in Mapo, Seoul, South Korea. Her father passed away when she was little, so her mother had to take care of children under a difficult economic situation. Although she was young, she helped her mother by babysitting other people's children and taking on chores.

One day in 1942, there was a village announcement saying, “all girls under a certain age, come gather in the front of the big mill.” After all girls gathered, they took the girls' weight. Then, girls who were over certain

weight were taken. Although her mother cried and protested saying, “Why are you taking my daughter?” it was useless.

After three years of suffering in the comfort station, she was abandoned on the battlefield. She walked and walked again. She finally reunited with her mother and was ill for 3 months.

On August 31, 1993, her story came to be known by her youngest nephew’s report. However, even after the report, she had denied speaking up and revealing her face to the public. Eventually, she started being actively engaged in the movement since 2002.

She became a history teacher by telling her own experience not only to the citizens in Japan but also to labor union activists from the International Labour Organization. On May 3, 2014, Suwon Peace Butterfly was established. Since then, she has stood with activists in the local community.

On November 25, 2017, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, she received a Women’s Human Rights award from the 1 million citizens of Korea, which expressed appreciation of her continuous struggle to realize justice for all survivors of sexual violence against women in armed conflict.



1,020th Wednesday Demonstration on May 2, 2012 ©The Korean Council

Why Should We Remember the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue?

While the Japanese military sexual slavery system is unique in the state's direct responsibilities and planning in establishing and operating a military sexual slavery system, it is also intimately connected to universal human rights and women's human rights issues around the world – the issues of sexual violence in armed conflict, feminist movements, postcolonial trauma, and sexual slavery. In breaking the silence on the history of Japanese military sexual slavery, survivors have been the forerunners of the #MeToo movement. Their testimonies and activism have exposed grave crimes against humanity that violated women's human rights and brought to light the underrepresented stories of sexual violence that remained silenced in patriarchal societies.

Remembering the stories of Japanese military sexual slavery survivors will help us create a peaceful world where no more women have to suffer from sexual violence in armed conflict, as survivors have hoped for. Lack of reflection on history of violence against women led to another violation of human rights: After the end of World War II, the U.S. military continued to use the Japanese military sexual slavery system or set up new comfort stations in Japan and Korea.⁹⁴ With the culture of impunity left unaddressed, women continue to suffer from sexual violence in wars and armed conflicts around the world, such as the massacres and sexual violence committed during the U.S.-Vietnam War by Korean and U.S. soldiers, during the Kosovo War and the Balkan conflicts, in northern Iraq against the ethnic minority Yazidis, in Uganda by the LRA insurgency, among many others. The Japanese military sexual slavery issue is connected to the larger international issue of sexual violence in armed conflict that is still perpetuated today. Crimes against humanity and violence against women

⁹⁴ "U.S. troops used Japanese brothels after WWII – American military ignored Japan's sex slave abuses, new records show," *NBC News*, April 27, 2007, http://www.nbcnews.com/id/18355292/ns/world_news-asia_pacific/t/us-troops-used-japanese-brothels-after-wwii/#.XmG4R6gzaUk
Sang-Hun Choe, "South Korea Illegally Held Prostitutes Who Catered to G.I.s Decades Ago, Court Says," *The New York Times*, January 20, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/20/world/asia/south-korea-court-comfort-women.html>
Tim Shorrock, "Welcome to the Monkey House – Confronting the ugly legacy of military prostitution in South Korea," *The New Republic*, December 2, 2019, <https://newrepublic.com/article/155707/united-states-military-prostitution-south-korea-monkey-house>

need to be resolved and rape culture and culture of impunity should be dismantled for sexual violence in armed conflict to be no longer repeated.

As survivors who courageously shared their experiences are passing away without receiving any official apology or legal reparations from the Japanese government, the Japanese military sexual slavery issue needs to be remembered so that the history is not forgotten, silenced, and repeated.

In her speech at the European Parliament for the resolution on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue on November 6, 2007, Gil Won-ok said,

“Even after the liberation, I was ashamed about my past for a very long time, so I avoided meeting people. But I steeled my nerves and confessed to all that happened. And during the Wednesday Demonstrations, I met many children who were growing up. Seeing those children, I have big homework to do. My earnest wish was ‘at least I cannot let children suffer again what I had suffered.’ For that, above all, war must not occur. And the truth must be correctly disclosed. Though it is hard for me, I thought I needed to let you know through my experiences what Japan did and what they continue to do.”⁹⁵

Her words signify the importance of remembering the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in building a peaceful world without war and violence against women.

⁹⁵ Meehyang Yoon, *25 Years of Wednesdays: The Story of the “Comfort Women” and the Wednesday Demonstrations*, (Seoul: The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, 2019), 201-202.

Testimony of Kim Bok Dong (South Korea): From Survivor to Activist



Establishment ceremony of the 1st Statue of Peace abroad in Glendale, California, where Kim Bok Dong attended ©The Korean Council

“I am a survivor of Japanese military sexual slavery. I fight in front of the Japanese Embassy every Wednesday, demanding the restoration of our dignity and human rights. And I understand how much the women across the world who are survivors of sexual violence in conflict like us still suffer. I want to support them.”

– Kim Bok Dong during a press conference regarding the establishment of the Butterfly Fund on International Women’s Day, March 8, 2012

“Although I suffered as a Japanese military sex slave, as a Korean citizen, I apologize to the women who suffered sexual violence by the Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War. I will support your living throughout your life with the Butterfly Fund. We should all work together to ensure a world without war for our future generations. I urge every country to join in the efforts.”

– Kim Bok Dong in a message of apology and solidarity to Vietnamese survivors of sexual violence by Korean soldiers, March 8, 2014⁹⁶

*The following testimony was taken and modified from the Korean Council informational booklet *on The 15th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan – To resolve the unrealized justice, the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan*, held on March 8-9, 2018, in Seoul, South Korea.

When Kim Bok Dong was 14 years old (15 in Korean age), men in Japanese military uniform and head of the village came to her house and told her mother, “We need to send girls to the factory that makes military uniforms, so hand over your daughter. Shouldn’t you dedicate your daughter to the country since you don’t have a son? If you don’t do even this, you’ll be a traitor and won’t be able to live here.” Accordingly, she was taken away, passing through Taiwan before arriving at Guangdong, all the while expecting to arrive at a factory. However, a military officer examined her and the women who were drafted along with her, and they were each assigned rooms in a comfort station, where their nightmare began.

She tried to escape because she was so scared, but she got caught and was beaten. She realized at some point that her whole face was numb. Each room had a number on the door; the women were thus forced to work, as sex slaves, while they were watched at all times. Since then, she was taken to Hong Kong, then Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia, constantly dragged around, until she finally returned home after 7 years.

One day, she saw a public service announcement on TV about reporting and registering as a survivor of the Japanese military sexual slavery during wartime. She hesitated for a few days and then called. Since then, she has been working to hold the Japanese Government accountable for war crimes. She attended the human rights conference in Vienna with the

⁹⁶ “Obituary for Kim Bok-dong halmoni,” The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, January 29, 2019, <http://womenandwar.net/kr/obituary-for-kim-bok-dong-halmoni/>

Korean Council in 1993, where she testified to the wrongdoings of the Japanese military and demanded the Japanese Government admit to the war crimes and sincerely apologize.

She started living at Peaceful Our Home since 2010, a shelter for survivors operated by the Korean Council. She has continuously participated in Wednesday Demonstrations, and fought for peace and human rights, traveling abroad to countries such as Japan and the United States, and elsewhere.

In 2012, she actively worked to promote the War and Women's Human Rights Museum, a museum on the Japanese military sexual slavery and wartime sexual violence issues. On March 8, 2012, on International Women's Day, she declared that she would contribute the total amount of reparation she receives to survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict if she receives proper legal reparation from the Japanese government. The Butterfly Fund, created by Kim Bok Dong and Gil Won-ok, supports survivors of sexual violence during armed conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Vietnam, Uganda, and others. With special consideration to the Vietnamese survivors of sexual violence by Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War, Kim Bok Dong extended her apologies and promised to support as a fellow survivor. As a war survivor, she has been working to create solidarity on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and to share the pain and scars of other war survivors. Her eagerness to stand in solidarity with the marginalized led her to donate her life-long savings to fund students attending Korean schools in Japan (*Chosen gakko*) as well as victims of natural disasters and earthquakes in Japan and Korea and to support the fights of U.S. military "comfort women" and laborers.

Through her activism, Kim Bok Dong raised global awareness on the issues of Japanese military sexual slavery and fostered dialogues on the prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict internationally. Survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda address Kim Bok Dong as "our hero", "our mama", and "our hope". She received Women of Courage Award by the Glendale City Council, California, the U.S. (2010), "100 Heroes Pour la Liberte de la Presse" by the

Reporters Without Borders and AFP (2015), Human Rights Award of Korea by the Korean National Human Rights Commission (2015), Women's Human Rights Award by the Foundation for Justice and Remembrance for the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (2017) and was selected for the Seoul Hall of Fame (2017) and the Gender Justice Legacy Wall by Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice (2017). Even after she passed away, her legacy was remembered and commemorated posthumously by the Tji Hak-soon Justice & Peace Award (2019), the Women's Movement Award (2019), and Amnesty International Korea's Special Media Award (2020).

Since the 2015 agreement, she has encouraged others to continue the fight for justice, saying "What I want is a sincere apology, not money. This agreement must be invalidated. Let's not rely on the government, let's solve the problem on our own. Let's hold hands all together and fight for justice until the Japanese government admits its war crimes, officially apologizes, and makes legal reparations." As an activist in Wednesday Demonstrations, press conferences, and other protests, Kim Bok Dong was unparalleled in her passionate and tireless fight for justice.

Kim Bok Dong passed away on January 28, 2019, but she left a lasting legacy of hope, peace, and human rights. Continuing Kim Bok Dong's legacy, the Korean Council awards Kim Bok Dong Peace Prize to support activists working for the elimination of sexual violence in armed conflict.

To learn more about Kim Bok Dong, watch her interview with Asian Boss (https://youtu.be/qsT97ax_Xb0), and watch the documentary film *My Name is Kim Bok Dong* (2019) available on Netflix (<https://www.netflix.com/kr-en/title/81252857>).

Conclusion

The movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery was made possible through the incredible courage of the survivors who came forward and shared their testimonies on the war crimes and gross human rights violations, and the tenacious will of countless researchers and activists who listened to the victims, resonated with them, and never ceased to investigate and expand the voices of victims to imagine a world in which peace and human rights is a reality.

Through the movement, victims became survivors, and activists. Their voices were not contained to speak of the brutalities they had survived but expanded to speak up for pains of others – survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict around the world, students of Korean schools in Japan (*Chosen gakko*), trade union workers, families of the Sewol Ferry Disaster, and more. Their voices and solidarity of researchers, activists, and citizens allowed the international community to respect the survivors and human beings and to pay attention to the voices of survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict.

As survivors passed away, all of us in solidarity contemplated on ways to deliver the message for justice to the future generations. The War and Women's Human Rights Museum was established, Statues of Peace are established around the world, seminars, lectures, and student groups for the issue are organized. Through these efforts, we experienced that voices of victims do not disappear when they pass away but leave the next person with a trace of their life, pain, hope, and legacy. For future generations to come, it is our responsibility to collect and record these traces: memories of halmonis and those who were next to them.

In June 2020, we lost the Peaceful Our Home Manager, who had dedicated her life to support survivors at the shelter at the Korean Council. Losing her was a loss to our legacy: who will remember halmonis' voices, footsteps, scents, and living breathes more vividly, and share them with those of us who could not meet halmonis in person? Who will be the witness and testifier to the lives of survivors to enliven their voices?

As much as we long for all of those who have left, we believe there is a trace that we can follow. The collections of testimonies, researches, photos, videos, voices are what we can trace. All of us who encounter these traces are in contact with survivors and countless others who stand with them, and thus are witnesses and testifiers to the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and movement for justice.

We hope this informational booklet helped to encounter small traces of victims, survivors, researchers, and activists in the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. Per our slogan for the 8th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” – **Voice of Victims, We Remember Forever, Resonate Endlessly, and Expand Infinitely!** – our next hope is that you are ready to join the movement for justice with us. Our arms are always open, as voices of victims are always waiting for you to come and listen.

In solidarity,

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

Supplementary Materials

Japanese Government's Interference with the Movement for Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue

The Korean Council's NGO report submitted to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (October 2019)

1. Interference with the Butterfly Fund, a fund to support victims of sexual violence in conflict and their children

The Butterfly Fund was established on March 8, 2012, following the Japanese military “comfort women” victims Kim Bok-dong and Gil Won-ok’s hope to support victims of sexual violence in conflict, and has supported victims in Democratic Republic of the Congo, Vietnam, Uganda, Palestine, Yazidis from Northern Iraq, and Nigeria.

- 1) In May 2019, the Korean Council sought and visited organizations that support victims of sexual violence by Boko Haram in Nigeria. The Japanese Embassy contacted these organizations to argue that the Japanese military “comfort women” issue is already resolved and to defame the activities of victims and the Korean Council. During the interview with the Korean Council activist, a leader of the organization received a call from the Japanese Embassy. A leader from one of the organizations supported by the Butterfly Fund in Uganda shared that the Japanese Embassy had continuously contacted the organization, arguing that the Japanese military “comfort women” issue is already resolved and promising monetary support for building schools in the region in return of severing the relation with the Korean Council.
- 2) In May 2019, the Korean Council sought and visited organizations that support victims of sexual violence by Boko Haram in Nigeria. The Japanese Embassy contacted these organizations to argue that the Japanese military “comfort women” issue is already resolved and to defame the activities of victims and the Korean Council. During the interview with the Korean Council activist, a leader of the organization received a call from the Japanese Embassy.

- 3) A representative(also a survivor) from one of the organizations supported by the Butterfly Fund in Uganda shared that the Japanese Embassy had continuously contacted the organization, arguing that the Japanese military “comfort women” issue is already resolved and promising monetary support for building schools in the region in return of severing the relation with the Korean Council.
- 4) The Korean Council decided to open a center to provide a shelter, a school, and farming land for improvement of victims’ livelihood. For the project, the Korean Council picked a partner organization, one of Ugandan beneficiary organizations of the Butterfly Fund. In June 2019, when the Korean Council held an international symposium on the issue of wartime sexual violence, we announced that the project would initiate along with the Ugandan organization. So the Korean Council made a trip to Uganda twice in 2019. On the second visit, we were planned to hold small ceremony to celebrate the establishment of the center with Ugandan war victims and their children on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence against Women. Right after we finished a small ceremony for the center, mayor of the town personally called the representative of Uganda partner organization threatening that they could kill her if she continues the project with the Korean Council. Few hours later, high-ranking government officials from the presidential office, state government and municipal government called for a meeting with activists of the Ugandan partner organization, and the Korean Council regarding the center. In the meeting, every single government official condemned the representative of the partner organization, who is also a victim of sexual violence during the Uganda Insurgency by insisting that her testimony was inconsistent and they would cancel registration of her organization and close the organization's bank account. One of the government officials held an English document and kept saying that they would not allow us to bring a war between Korea and Japan to Uganda because of the shelter. The officials did not allow us to either respond or explain. We strongly believe that there was a heavy pressure from the Japanese government because the Ugandan officials seemed so obsessed with the Statue of Peace, which we never planned to build. Even after we left Uganda after long discussion with the Ugandan organization about how we could continue the center, unidentified government agent

threatened the representative. The Uganda officials even took an issue with the name of our organization, which the word ‘Japan’ is included, insisting to not to use Japan. Later we also learned that the Japanese government has provided official development aid for over 50 years. After all, the Korean Council had to stop the project for the sake of the representative and other victims in Uganda.

2. Infringement on Freedom of Movement, Right to Travel, and Arbitrary Detainment of the Korean Council Activist

Meehyang Yoon, former representative of the Korean Council, was detained without proper explanation during her visit to Japan in 2017 and 2019.

1) On August 11, 2017, arbitrary detainment in Kansai Airport, Osaka

Yoon visited Japan for a lecture scheduled on 12 and 13 August, with invitation from the Japanese civil society “Comfort Women” Resolution Movement. When Yoon was looking for her baggage after clearing the security check, the airport security called Yoon and took her to an interrogation room without proper explanation. The airport security prohibited her from use of phone calls, interrogated her schedule in Japan, and purpose of visit for more than an hour.

2) On June 7, 2019, arbitrary detainment in Narita Airport, Tokyo

Yoon visited Japan for a lecture on the life of Kim Bok-dong, with invitation from the Japanese civil society Kibotane Fund. Yoon was detained in an interrogation room without proper explanation for two hours.

3. Interference with movement to establish memorial statues for Japanese military “comfort women” victims

Statue of Peace, a memorial statue to remember and educate the Japanese military “comfort women” victims’ courage and movement for just resolution of Japanese military “comfort women” issue, was first established in commemoration of the 1,000th Wednesday Demonstration for Resolution

of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue on December 14, 2011, and since has been established in various locations in South Korea, U.S., Canada, Australia, China, and so forth by citizens and human rights activists who seek to remember the history of grievous violation of women's human rights and aim to educate the history to educate the value of peace. Yet, the Statue of Peace and the movement for its establishment had been subject to opposition and threats from ultra-national Japanese organizations and Japanese Government.

- 1) In Glendale, California, the Statue of Peace was established in presence of the victim and human rights activist Kim Bok-dong on July 30, 2013. Frank Quintero, former Mayor of Glendale, has been subject to thousands of hate speech and threatening emails since the established of the statue. In February 2014, Japanese ultra-nationalist organization GAHT-U.S. Corporation filed a lawsuit demanding removal of the Statue of Peace arguing that Glendale infringed on the United States' ability to conduct foreign affairs. During the trial, the Japanese Government submitted written statements that the Statue of Peace interferes with the diplomatic principles between Government of Japan and the U.S. and had lobbied for removal of the statue. When the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the case, Suga Yoshihide, Foreign Minister of Japan, explicitly expressed his concern. The Statue of Peace in Glendale has faced vandalism of racial slurs, animal feces, and paper bag over the head, etc.⁹⁷
- 2) In Sydney, Australia, the Statue of Peace was established in presence of the victim and human rights activist Gil Won-ok and daughter of Dutch victim and activist Jan Ruff O' Herne in August 2016. A group called Australia Japan Community Network (AJCN) filed a complaint to Australia's Human Rights Commission arguing that the Statue of Peace stirs anti-Japanese feeling and racial discrimination, and even carried on a fundraising campaign for movement against the Statue of Peace.⁹⁸ The Australia's Human Rights Commission dismissed the case.

⁹⁷ <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/supreme-court-declines-case-over-lawsuit-remove-comfort-women-memorial-n740996>

⁹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-38362304>

- 3) In Southfield, Michigan, the Statue of Peace was established in August 2014, after almost three years of movement by the citizens. The original site in plan for the Statue of Peace was Southfield Public Library, yet, it had been suddenly turned down, due to opposition from the Japanese Consulate and businesspeople in Detroit.
- 4) In Japan, exhibition of the Statue of Peace (a.k.a. Peace girl statue) was banned for months during Aichi Triennale 2019. The exhibition was hosted by Japan's Aichi Triennale organization and Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art in Nagoya. Although it was open on August 1st, the host announced to close exhibition of the Statue three days later the opening of the exhibition through the press announcement. In the press conference, Governor of Aichi prefecture said that they had to close down 'Freedom of Exhibition', which includes the Statue of Peace due to safety concerns, explaining that they received dozens of threats by phone, email, and fax. The mayor of Nagoya, Aichi prefecture, also mounted pressure on governor of Aichi prefecture by saying that government funding should not support the display of the statue, which "tramples on the feelings of Japanese citizens."

According to the Japan Times⁹⁹, the Cultural Affairs Agency pulled a more than \$700,000 grant for the Triennale. The agency cited procedural inadequacies and stated that the Aichi government did not provide enough information about the programming when applying for the subsidy. Right after closure of display of the Statue, some Korean artists withdrew their artworks and other participating artists pulled their works. Japan Pen club was also announced a statement by calling such decision is censorship and repression of freedom of expression. On September 30th, Triennale organization and Aichi prefectural museum of Art in Nagoya reached an agreement to reopen the exhibition. The exhibition was opened for a week from October 8 to 14 with limitation of number of visitors at a time. They only allowed 30 people at a time through lottery and taking videos and posting the image of the exhibition on social media were prohibited.

⁹⁹ <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/09/30/national/organizers-festival-host-agree-reopen-nagoya-comfort-women-exhibition/#.XINXunKweUI>

- 5) In 2017, Korea Verband, a sister organization based in Berlin, Germany, donated a small version of the Statue of Peace to Ravensbrück Memorial, located in Brandenburg, Northern Germany. When the Korean Council went to visit the museum with Gil Won-ok halmoni, a victim of the Japanese military sexual slavery, in May 2017, the statue was displayed at the information center. However later in 2017, the statue was withdrawn due to demand from the Japanese embassy. Although both the museum and the state government of Brandenburg didn't confirm us whether there was a pressure from the Japanese embassy, we strongly believe that the Japanese embassy must have been involved in the process of withdrawal of the statue considering the Japanese government's behavior shown in the past.
- 6) On August 3rd, 2019, Gallery Gedok, a Berlin museum for female artists, begun to display the Statue of Peace at an exhibit. But the Japanese embassy in Germany sent an official letter to the museum two days before the start of the exhibit. Although the exhibitions was continued as it planned, through the letter, they claimed the issue of Japanese military sexual slavery was ultimately and irreversibly resolved by the two countries agreement reached in 1965.
- 7) On late October 2019, Armenian genocide memorial organization of Germany invited a representative of Korea Verband for a lecture on the issue of Japanese military sexual slavery. The lecture was funded by civic education center of the State government of Berlin. However, the Japanese embassy sent the very same official letter, which was sent to the Gallery Gedok two months ago. Although the lecture went on as it planned, the organization was very surprised saying there was never a case before. Korea Verband had to explain all correct information about the issue itself and why the Japanese government's claim was wrong.

**[Appendix 1.] The Japanese government's obsessive "comfort women" lobbying in the U.S. ... 11 million USD spent on 49 cases (July 18, 2019)
Released by Newstapa – Independent media based in Seoul, Korea**

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CgfZEqcFA>

Below is an English translation of the clip

[0:21] Last March, former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Shinsuke Sugiyama was appointed as the Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. Sugiyama is notorious for his public denial of the forced recruitment of "comfort women" on global platforms. In 2016, as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, he relentlessly defended the Abe administration's stance on "comfort women" in the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

Shinsuke Sugiyama / Then Japanese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (February 16, 2016)

So-called "forceful taking away" of comfort women by the military and government authorities could not be confirmed in any of the documents that the Government of Japan was able to identify.

In 2017, in his visit to South Korea as Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sugiyama pressed that the 2015 "Comfort Women" Agreement struck between the Abe and Park Geun-hye administration must be followed through.

Appointed as the Ambassador to the U.S. last March, Sugiyama had a grand mission in mind: to dismantle the Statue of Peace in the U.S. In a press conference before appointment, he announced that he will "travel around the U.S. and explain the Japanese government's position in person" in order to remove statues commemorating wartime "comfort women." Newstapa investigated whether Sugiyama indeed act upon this resolve.

U.S. Department of Justice "Foreign Agents Registration Act" (FARA) Website

FARA, short for Foreign Agents Registration Act, is a site run by the U.S. Department of Justice to keep track of lobby activities. Here, we found evidence of Sugiyama's lobbying efforts.

February 2018 Lobbying Contract

At the time of Sugiyama's appointment as the Ambassador to the U.S., the Embassy of Japan in the U.S. signed a contract with a renowned lobby firm called Forbes-Tate.

First Half of 2018 Lobby Report

This is the lobby report that Forbes-Tate submitted to FARA after the contract was signed. It documents that last June, the firm lobbied regarding the "Comfort Women" exhibit held in the Capitol Visitor Center.

Communication with the congressional staff regarding Comfort Women exhibit in Capitol Visitor Center and Senate confirmations

This exhibit was hosted by the Korean American Association of Greater New York (KAAGNY). Initially, a lot of congressmen promised their support, but near the end, many of them disavowed that promise.

Kim Min-sun / Then President of KAAGNY

We expected around ten congressmen to join the exhibit, but with pressures from Japanese lobbyists, a number of them dropped out, and six congressmen ended up attending.

We expected around ten congressmen to join the exhibit, but with pressures from Japanese lobbyists, a number of them dropped out, and six congressmen ended up attending.

Behind the significant downsizing of the first Statue of Peace exhibit to be held in the U.S. was the lobbying efforts of the Japanese government. This brings us to ask: how exactly, for how long, and on what scale has the Japanese government been lobbying the U.S. government and politicians on the "comfort women" issue? Newstapa worked with the investigation team at

Danbi News at the Graduate School of Journalism at Semyung University to research all of Japan's lobby activities reported to FARA.

We searched for "comfort women" and all congressional resolutions related to "comfort women" and found a total of 49 submissions made by law firms and lobby firms that signed contracts with the Japanese government.

Japanese government: 49 lobby activity reports that mention "comfort women"

Kim Hak-soon's First public testimony as "comfort women" victim

Findings show that lobbying activities have continued until, most recently, June 2019, since 1992, the year when the "comfort woman" issue was brought to the attention of the UN Human Rights Commission and a year after Kim Hak-soon testified for the first time that she was forced into sexual slavery.

We also researched how much money the Japanese government poured into lobbying on "comfort women." To lobby on the "comfort women" issue, the Japanese government hired a total of seven companies, including renowned PR firms, law firms, and lobby firms. From 2001, when Japan ramped up its lobbying on "comfort women," till now, the Japanese government has spent 11 million USD only on signing contracts. In Korean Won, which amounts to 13 billion KRW.

Contracts amount to at least 11 million USD (Approx. 13 billion KRW)

If we analyze by date, it shows that the Japanese government fervently lobbied the U.S. government every time the "comfort women" issue became a major topic of discussion within the U.S. or on the global platform. In 2000, about 30 House Representatives, including Rep. Lane Evans, submitted the first resolution to demand a formal apology and compensation for Japan's war crimes.

In 2000, approx. 30 House Representatives submit first resolution to demand formal apology for Japan's war crimes

Subsequently in March 2001, the Japanese government signed a contract with Hogan, a renowned law firm, which is worth 140,000 USD over a 5-month period. Lobby reports indicate that the lobbyists at Hogan twice tried to contact Rep. Evans. Resolutions demanding that Japan issue a formal apology were submitted to Congress on multiple occasions, but such attempts were thwarted each time. However, in 2007, a resolution submitted by Rep. Michael Honda finally passed the House.

[5:48] At this time, the Japanese government struck a year-long 290,000 USD deal with the lobby firm Hecht and expanded lobbying to congressmen regardless of how actively they are involved in the “comfort women” issue, as well as lobbying to the media. Apart from congressional resolutions, the Statue of Peace became one of the most sensitive topics for the Japanese government. On July 2013, the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance attended the opening ceremony of the Statue of Peace in Glendale, CA with Japanese military sexual slavery victim, Kim Bok Dong.

[CNN] Apology or not, for the "comfort women," the new statue is about justice. About awareness and recognition in the history books for what they suffered, during a terrible time in history.

[6:33] At this time, the Japanese government signed an 180,000 USD lobby contract with Hecht and contacted regional congressmen. Similarly, the Japanese government had obsessively tried to interfere when the “comfort women” special exhibit opened at the Capitol Visitor Center this past year. Rep. Carolyn Maloney of the Democratic Party, who actively worked for exhibition, stated that she was pressured publicly as well.

[7:01] *Kim Min-sun / Then President of KAAGNY*
Rep. Carolyn Maloney's office received a lot of threat calls and letters. A Japanese newspaper in New York printed her picture along with extremely negative things about her, almost at a threatening level. She received a lot of pressure saying that she should not do this (the Statue of Peace exhibit).

First Half of 2003 lobby report

The Japanese government’s “comfort women” related lobbying utilized in-person meetings with U.S. politicians, calling, or emailing them. When

sensitive issues arose, the contact frequency increased to what could only be described as obsessive.

Japan's lobbying intensifies in 2013 while Glendale Statue of Peace is under discussion

Especially in 2013, when the founding the Glendale Statue of Peace was in discussion, lobbyists hired by Japan contacted influential politicians, including Republican House Representatives, ten times over the course of five months.

Not only politicians, but also Asia experts were important targets of Japan's lobbying. In July 2013, when establishing the Glendale Statue of Peace was actively under discussion, Japan's lobbyists contacted Michael Green, former special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Asia at the National Security Council (NSC) during the Bush administration, ten times over 18 days. Currently, Green is senior vice president for Asia and Japan Chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a conservative U.S.-based think tank. Green has been writing in the JoongAng Ilbo, a major daily newspaper in South Korea, on Northeast Asian affairs since 2006. He also participates every year in the debate forum co-hosted by CSIS and JoongAng Ilbo. Moreover, he has often appeared on Korean major media as the expert opinion. What can explain this irony that Japan's major lobby target and fund recipient parades in Korea as an expert of Northeast Asian affairs, spreading Japan's political agenda, and the Japanese government spends enormous sums of money to lobby obsessively on the "comfort women" issue?

[9:22] *Tessa Morris-Suzuki / Professor at Australian National University (Video Interview)*

When the Abe Government came to power again in 2012, this has always been an important issue on Abe's agenda to deny the (U.S.) House Resolution. Because that asked Japan to recognize the facts and to teach them in schools. And clearly, the Japanese Government is not doing that. And the next step from the Japanese Government was to try to extend that internationally and to put the same sort of pressure on politicians or people doing research around the sexual slavery issue in other countries.

[10:01] *Japan expert “The Japanese government’s ‘comfort women’ lobbying intensified in the past 5-6 years”*

Professor Morris-Suzuki observed that the Japanese government has intensified its lobbying on the “comfort women” issue since five to six years ago, accompanied by an increase in lobby spending.

Yoon Meehyang, representative of the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan also stated that Japan’s lobbying efforts are intensifying and called on citizens to help bring justice.

In solidarity, we have to fight against the lobbying forces of the Japanese government to inform people internationally of what actually is the truth and the voice for justice. After the ‘Comfort Women’ Agreement in 2015, the Japanese government has expanded its lobbying efforts. They are continuing to try to erase the history of the past 30 years that Kim Bok Dong and other halmoni’s have fought for human rights and peace. We have to know about this reality and ask, “Why is the Japanese government trying to erase and deny history? What history do we have to remember?” I think the Japanese government actually is giving us an opportunity to grow and learn from their mistakes.

[11:10] Newstapa is planning to report further on lobby contacts the Japanese government made to U.S. politicians and the concrete impact these efforts had.

This was Kim Ji-eun from Newstapa.

Twisting the Japanese Military “Comfort Women” Issue into an *Anti-Japan Tribalism** Narrative

The following article was published in the Yearly Newspaper of the Korean Council, No. 29 (2019), in response to the arguments made by historical revisionists and neo-colonialists.

Kim, Chang Rok

Kyungpook National University Law School Professor

*In 2019, Lee Young-hoon et al. who hold neo-colonialist views on the Japanese colonization of Korea published a book defaming the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue through distortion of historical truth and research data, mirroring the Japanese right-wing’s arguments.

Anti-Japan Tribalism is a tragedy. I noticed the repetition of the words: “hate,” “madness” and “historical novel” throughout the book and as I finished reading, I began to wonder who would truly fit the term, “historical novelist full of mad hatred,” which the authors use to denounce Jo Jung-rae, the author of the historical novel *Arirang*. What grabbed my attention was the 3rd part of the book, titled “Comfort Women, a Bastion of Tribalism.”

Japan is not responsible?

The authors (main author Lee Young-hoon, principal of Rhee Syngman School) try to erase Japan’s national responsibilities for the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery system. They argue that the “patriarchal family system (288)” and the “brokers (319)” were the issue. This is not a false statement. Imperial Japan did in fact implement and take advantage of the patriarchal family system and it was the brokers who followed the orders from Imperial Japan, thus putting these two factors at fault. Regardless, behind all this was the Imperial Japan that imposed “sexual slavery,” and Japan needs to take responsibilities as a nation.

Surprisingly, the facts that the authors acknowledge in the book are enough evidences to lay the responsibilities on the Japanese government. In the book, authors state that “the Japanese army installed the comfort station as part of an attached facility of the military base,” that the comfort stations

were installed in almost every area where nearly 2.8 million Japanese soldiers were stationed (300),” that “in any case, the operation of the comfort stations were under the close control of the military (302),” that “Japanese military stationed in Southeast Asia requested the Imperial Japanese Army’s Joseon (Korea) headquarter and the Imperial Japan’s Joseon (Korea) government-general to send women,” that the Joseon military headquarter contacted the brokers in Joseon (Korea) (313),” and that “for the women to receive ID and travel documents to be transported by the Japanese military ship, the cooperation of the government-general was essential (314).” These are the reasons why Japan needs to take state responsibilities for its military sexual slavery system.

This shouldn’t be an issue as there was no coercion?

Authors argue that there was no “slave hunting (308)” and Ju Ik-jong, teacher at the Rhee Syngman School, states that “it was not the Japanese state power that took away the women as comfort women (366).”

Such far-fetched argument is just another version of a deceitful trick that the Abe Shinzo government mobilized to emasculate the Kono Statement (1993). The Kono Statement acknowledges the fact that the comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods wherein a great number of comfort women existed,” and that “the then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women,” and that “the women lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.” Additionally, it acknowledges the system as a colonial tool as it states, “The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule in those days, and the recruitment, transfer, control, etc., were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.” Likewise, the Kono Statement admits Japan’s state responsibility for the Military Sexual Slavery system.

To Abe administration that strongly believes that Japan is a “beautiful country” that does not have any wrongdoings, the Kono Statement is unacceptable. However, there are strong evidences such as official documents by the Japanese government. Therefore, the strategy devised by the Abe administration is to fabricate the “recruitment” part of the story to emasculate the Kono Statement. By diminishing the definition of “coercion” as “being invaded and forcibly dragged out from one’s home,” Abe administration repeatedly argues that “no evidence of large-scale coercion by

government authorities or the military can be found in sources discovered by the government.” In sum, Abe administration attempts to fabricate the following chain of arguments: “No evidence of forced drafting and recruitment” → “No coercion” → “No issue.” Such attempt of the Abe administration not only constitutes a logical fallacy itself, but also violently ignores the victims’ testimony while not disclosing all documents and evidences that the Japanese government holds. Furthermore, as discussed below, “coercion” is not a prerequisite for state responsibility in the first place.

It wasn’t “Sexual Slavery?”

Lee admits that the victims “escaped” the comfort station and “endured” their lives as “comfort women (322).” Ju acknowledges that “the comfort women could not return home as they felt embarrassed and shameful (346),” and that “just because there was no overt kidnapping and violence in the process of the comfort women recruitment, does not mean that the women volunteered to become comfort women.” He additionally admits, “who in the world would want to become a comfort woman” and that “when the women arrived at the comfort station and found out that they had to live as comfort women, it was too late for them to resist (367-368).”

Regardless, Lee argues that the victims were not “slaves with no rights” and that they were not in a “state of hopeless imprisonment (326, 328),” and even claims that they were “doing business” with their “own choice and will (325).” Ju claims that the “comfort women were not slaves as they were not imprisoned like the African slaves who could not escape from the American cotton farms” and therefore argues that “sex worker” is more of an appropriate term to describe the victims rather than “sex slave.” Thus, Ju argues that although the women had to escape and endure the embarrassment, they were not slaves. In other words, he seems to claim that these women cannot be seen as slaves as they were not shackled and whipped to work.

However, the victims were clearly in the state of slavery in legal terms. According to international law, “slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised (Convention to Suppress the Slave Trade and Slavery, 1926, Article 1, (1)).” According to research by Professor Abe Kohki, international human rights law scholar, “the essence of slavery is domination over a person and domination in this context refers to the act of depriving one’s

freedom or autonomy.” He adds, “for example, even if there was a humane side, if it was authorized as another form of domination, the nature of slavery is still present.” He further states, “as clearly shown in the Convention, slavery refers to a ‘status or condition,’ and the method and purpose as to how and why one was reduced to such status do not matter. Even if one was forcibly mobilized, if the situation does not meet the conditions of slavery, one would not be considered a slave. On the other hand, even if one voluntarily puts oneself into a situation that meets the conditions of slavery, then one would be considered a slave.” He concludes, “from the beginning of drafting the Slavery Convention to present day, such perception of slavery remains unchanged in international law.”

Even with the limited amount of facts selectively admitted by Lee and Ju, the victims of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery system were slaves as indicated in the Slavery Convention as they were severely deprived of freedom and autonomy. The fact that they were forced into sexual intercourse makes them “sex slaves.” This is why the Japanese military “comfort women” system has come to be viewed as a “sexual slavery” system in the 1994 International Commission of Jurists Report, 1996 UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women Radhika Coomaraswamy Report, 1998 UN Special Rapporteur on systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during armed conflict Gay J. McDougall Report, 2005 Amnesty International Report, 2007 and 2013 UN Committee against Torture recommendations, 2014 UN Human Rights Committee concluding remarks, as well as in the resolutions of the United States and other national congresses.

This issue is the result of viewing the early 20th century through the late 20th century lens?

Ju states that “the idea that the military of a country established comfort stations on the front line so that the soldiers could satisfy their sexual desires through the comfort women should be unthinkable to today’s audience. However, this is because we are projecting the standard of the late 20th century onto the early 20th century (373).”

However, as discussed earlier, even in accordance with the 1926 Slavery Convention which codified earlier common law, Japan’s “comfort women” system was a crime. Even the court in Japan (Yamaguchi Regional Court, Shimonoseki Branch, April 27, 1998), clarified that the Japanese

military “comfort women” system was “not only highly susceptible of violating the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children (1921) and Forced Labour Convention (1930) in effect at the time, but also an act wherein under-aged women in colonized and occupied regions were taken to comfort stations against their own will through coaxing and coercion, which were under direct or indirect involvement of the Japanese military, and were forced to have sexual intercourse with the Japanese military by policy institutionalized by the Japanese military. This was an extremely inhumane and abominable act, even viewed through the standard of civilization of mid-20th century.”

Why not talk about the U.S. Military “Comfort Women?”

Lee argues, “why are people silent about the more sorrowful and expanded ‘comfort women’ for the United States military (391)?” and he denounces those who have fought to resolve the Japanese military “comfort women” issue by calling them “violent tribalists (334).” In the early 1990s, when the victims broke the 50 years of silence and spoke up, only a few people empathized with their pain. A few people supported the victims and called for restoration of victims’ dignity on the streets, lecture halls and international conference halls. Their call spread to the international community and “sexual violence in armed conflict” became a case of serious human rights violations. Their call also spread nationally, leading to the resolution of the “comfort women” for the United States military stationed in Korea.

On February 8, 2018, the Seoul High Court “finally” acknowledged the Korean government’s responsibility to make reparations for the U.S. military “comfort women” victims. The ruling includes, “while the illegality of the ‘comfort women’ for the United States military cannot be regarded in the same light as the illegality of the so-called Japanese military ‘comfort women’ victims who were forcibly dragged by the state to brothels to carry out prostitution despite not having the intention to be in prostitution,” showing that the call for resolution of the Japanese military “comfort women” issue led to the recognition of the South Korean government’s responsibility for the U.S. military “comfort women.”

What is Lee trying to do, denouncing the people who have fought to resolve the Japanese military “comfort women” issue through raising the intertwined U.S. military “comfort women” issue? He claims that “life as a

comfort woman was, at the end of the day, their choice and will to do so” and that “comfort women was a profession to run a business in comfort station (325),” then whether the victims were “comfort women” for the Japanese military or for the United States military would not matter for him in the first place. Perhaps that is why he uses a quite self-introductory sentence, “our life itself is hypocritical (269).”

It was resolved with the 1965 Agreement?

Although Ju agrees that “the issue of colonial damage was not officially dealt with” in the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and the Economic Cooperation between the Republic of Korea and Japan in 1965 (hereinafter the 1965 Agreement), Ju states that “if the comfort women issue were to be regarded as a damage from colonization, South Korea would certainly have discussed them.” He adds, “since the comfort women issue was not even mentioned during the talk, the issue did not exist (341-342).”

This is distortion and sophistry. Since the 1965 Agreement did not deal with the “issue of colonial damage,” the issue of “comfort women” which was a “colonial damage” had no place in the talk to begin with. Just because it was not mentioned in the talk wherein the issue of “colonial damage” was not dealt with, does not mean that the issue of Japanese military “comfort women” system does not exist.

Ju additionally argues that “when South Korea agreed to normalize diplomatic relations with Japan in 1965, Korea and Japan agreed that both nations and their citizens would not be able to make any claims in the future and this has been stipulated in text as the Agreement on Settlement (373).” In other words, he claims that the Japanese military “comfort women” issue cannot be called into question today. However, what does the Japanese military “comfort women” issue that was not even mentioned have to do with the 1965 Agreement?

When it comes to the 1965 Agreement, the Japanese military “comfort women” system, the inhumane crimes directly related to illegal colonization of Korea, was not the subject of the 1965 Agreement that did not address the responsibilities of colonization. In other words, as the Japanese military “comfort women” issue was not even mentioned in the 1965 Agreement, the issue remains unresolved until today and Japan needs to carry out its responsibilities.

What is behind Lee and followers?

Lee strongly denounces *Arirang*, “In *Arirang*, there are no values or ideology that leads humanity to an advanced society (32).” Then what are Lee’s values and ideology? Lee worships “freedom (379).” However, the only “freedom” that can be identified in his book is the “freedom to choose to become a sex slave and to run a business.” What kind of “freedom” allows him to distort the pains of victims whose rights have been severely violated due to the crimes against humanity into “profession” or “business?”

In September 2004, when his remark on TV faced criticism, he visited the victims to apologize, kneeling in front of the victims and listening to 50 minutes of their cries. He pleaded, “I agree that you were sex slaves during the Japanese colonization, and I will do my best to bring historical redress.” He added, “I will take this opportunity to participate in lessening the pain of the halmonis. I will do my best, taking your tears to my heart.”

Then 15 years later, Lee who pleaded to do his best now distorts “comfort women” issue into a “bastion of tribalism” by arguing “freedom to run a business.” This is perhaps the biggest tragedy of *Anti-Japan Tribalism*.

The Korean Council Response to Lee Yong-soo halmoni's Press Conference

On May 7, we were utterly heartbroken watching the press conference of Lee Yong-soo, Japanese military “comfort women” victim and human rights activist with 30 years of experience. Regarding this, the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereafter the “Korean Council”) issues the following statement.

First and foremost, we deeply apologize to those who have been in steadfast solidarity with the Korean Council for 30 years to seek redress for the survivors of the Japanese military “comfort women” issue. We feel immense sorrow for the unintended but nevertheless painful shock and damage this caused our supporters.

The Korean Council has long worked to justly resolve the Japanese military “comfort women” issue, as well as to seek justice for survivors of ongoing wartime gender violence globally. We are keenly aware that this work was made possible by the relentless courage of victims themselves, such as Kim Hak-soon and Lee Yong-soo. Even when no one listened, the victims have always spoken up as strongest advocates of themselves, and thus, of the movement for the redress of Japanese military “comfort women.”

Given this context, we hereby issue a response to rectify misinformation and clarify some confusions that we worry may harm the 30-year movement formed through the collective effort of the victim-activists and the countless supporters in Korea and around the world.

1. First, donations are used to manage the shelter for survivors open since 2003 as well as to financially support the survivors living all over the country. The Korean Council was established in 1990, and in 1991, after the survivor-activist Kim Hak-soon's first testimony of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army, a hotline was established for survivors to get in touch with the Korean Council. In 1992, the Korean Council launched the *Chongshindae Halmoni* Livelihood Support Fundraising National Steering Committee to raise funds to support the many survivors who

were experiencing financial strain. At the time, we provided 2,500,000KRW each to 62 survivors. Simultaneously, the Korean Council organized and successfully campaigned to pass a legislation in 1993 so that the Korean government provides financial and medical support for the survivors.

In 1995, despite opposition from the survivor-activists, including Kim Hak-soon, the Japanese government attempted to “deal with” the issues of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army by evading state responsibility. The Japanese government introduced the Asian Women’s Fund, a private organization managed by individual volunteers. In response, the Korean Council launched a national fundraising campaign, joined by both the Korean government and individual donors, and delivered 44,125,000KRW each to 156 victims living within Korea and overseas. After the announcement of the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement which attempted to improperly “close” the issue with a “consolation money” of 1 billion JPY, eight survivor-activists, including Lee Yong-soo, refused the consolation money and continued their fight for justice. For this work, these eight survivor-activists received the Korean Council’s Women’s Rights Award, which included a prize of 100 million KRW for each award recipient. The prize came from the funds raised during the second half-year period of 2017 through the Million People Fundraising Campaign organized by the Korean Council.

2. Donations were used to raise awareness in the international community, such as the United Nations (UN), and to forge international solidarity to promote the historical truth and to restore human rights for victims. Since Hwang Geum-joo’s testimony at the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights in 1992, the Korean Council has supported Kim Bok Dong’s testimony at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, Yong-soo Lee and other survivor-activists’ testimonies for the ratification of the U.S. House Resolution 121 in 2007, and Lee Yong-soo’s participation at the Conference for Peace and Prosperity in the Asia-Pacific held in the Philippines in 2019 and more. Additionally, the funds were used to organize the Asian Solidarity Conference, which was formed among women from nations both responsible for and victimized by war crimes, held since 1992. Funds were also used to bring the

Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery to fruition in 2000 to raise public awareness in the international community.

3. The donations contribute to the broad range of our work: the Wednesday Demonstration, which started on January 8, 1992 and has continued for 29 years, lawsuits demanding the Japanese government to issue a formal apology and make legal reparations, producing and promoting creative, educational content to rectify distortion and denial of history that still continue to interfere with restoration of honor and human rights for the survivors, various commemoration projects such as establishing Statues of Peace around the world following the construction of the Statue of Peace in 2011 to celebrate the 1000th Wednesday Demonstration, the Butterfly Fund which supports survivors of wartime violence globally, publishing numerous educational materials, testimonials, and other related documents, and offering scholarship to raise future generations of social change leaders. The funds were also used to establish the War and Women's Rights Museum in 2012 which preserves the historical truth of the Japanese military "comfort woman" issue, remembers the courageous movement by the survivor-activists, and continues to raise awareness about wartime gender violence among domestic and global audiences.

The use of funds stated above is monitored regularly through financial auditing and is being made public through disclosure procedures.

4. Lee Yong-soo halmoni has considered Yoon Mee-hyang a daughter and close colleague of 29 years since the first call that Lee made to Korean Council through the "comfort women" hotline in 1992. When Yoon decided to resign as Chair of Board at the Korean Council on March 20 and run for office, we can only imagine the whirlwind of joy, sorrow, and disappointment Lee must have felt in sending away a cherished family member. This news came at a difficult time when the survivors, who have long led the movement with Lee, were passing away one by one. The Korean Council sees and shares Lee's pain and vow not to take this lightly. The staff activists at the Korean Council also emphasize that our gratitude and admiration for the survivor-activists are deep and unshakeable.

In the past 30 years of the Japanese military “comfort women” redress movement, the Korean Council and the survivors, including Lee Yong-soo, have fostered love and care that is thicker than blood. Even in times when the Japanese government denied justice for the survivors and put blame on them, we were able to survive because of each other, through our shared rage, sorrow, laughter, and dreams for a hopeful future.

5. We remember Lee Yong-soo’s relentless bravery when she came all the way from Daegu at the age of 90 to join the Wednesday Demonstrations. Saying she was at the “perfect age to become an activist,” Lee vowed to fight for the resolution of the “comfort woman” issue until the very end. We remember the day Lee Yong-soo emceed the Wednesday demonstration organized by the survivor-activists themselves. That day, she fearlessly spoke up against the Korean government’s decision to deploy troops to join the Iraq War. We remember Lee Yong-soo who warmly welcomed two Japanese military “comfort women” survivors visiting from the Philippines at a Wednesday Demonstration in November 2019. We remember her courage when she strongly condemned Yun Byung-se, Foreign Affairs Minister of Korea when the 2015 Japan-South Korea “comfort woman” agreement was announced. We are enlivened by the hope that human rights activist Lee Yong-soo will continue and expand the legacy of Kim Hak-soon who had cracked open the door of justice. Thus, it is our sincerest wish that the recent statements by Lee Yong-soo will not be taken out of context and used to damage the honor of the survivor-activists or the history of their movement.
6. Lastly, we take these recent events as a serious and valuable opportunity to reflect on the potential shortcomings of the Korean Council and to strengthen our commitment to justly resolve the issue of sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army. We will continue to build on the 30 years of movement history, through which the Korean Council and the survivors grew into one tight-knit family. We will humbly listen to those who push and challenge us and strive to forge the path toward brighter futures.

May 8, 2020

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military
Sexual Slavery by Japan

Translated by volunteer

The Korean Council Statement on the Current Situation

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery (Chair of Board Lee Na-young, hereinafter the Korean Council) strongly condemns the attempts to distort the 30 years of movement for justice with the Japanese military “comfort women” victims, and to threaten the survivors’ honor and human rights.

Yesterday (May 11), the Korean Council held a press conference to rectify unsubstantiated or blatantly misinformed accusations against the Korean Council. We provided as much and detailed information as we can about our finances and our various past and ongoing initiatives.

However, spearheaded by Chosun Ilbo, select media such as JoongAng Ilbo, Dong-A Ilbo, and Korea Economic Daily (Hankyung) have knowingly overlooked or taken out of context the information provided in yesterday’s press conference to continue creating a distorted narrative on the Korean Council as morally corrupt beyond repair.

Moreover, media named above are intentionally creating a schism among the victims and Korean Council activists by using quotes from former officials under the Park Geun-hye administration who are responsible for the deceitful 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement (in short, 2015 Korea-Japan agreement). These reports characterize Yoon Mee-hyang, former Chair of Board of the Korean Council, as a liar while deflecting the government officials’ own responsibility in this agreement. At the time, the Korean Council had requested meetings with the Park administration, given the lack of information being conveyed to the Korean Council while devising the agreement was in the works. The officials interviewed for a recent media report conflated these requests for transparency and communication as the “15 meetings through which victims were consulted” to devise and announce the 2015 Korea-Japan agreement.

On May 11, on two occasions, the Korean Council issued statements to request the news reports to be corrected and the select media to stop false reporting. Despite these requests, certain media have gone lengths to

intensify spreading false information, such as “drink money” and “misappropriation of donations.”

Such media coverage is utterly deplorable, and the Korean Council is determined to rectify such blatant misinformation (See <Attachments> below).

The Korean Council considers that the false reporting regarding the 2015 Korea- Japan agreement is politically motivated to undermine the 30-year history of the movement fighting for sexual slavery victims’ human rights. The 2015 Korea-Japan agreement has been thoroughly exposed as a silencing act of the victims’ testimonies and of historical truth. Currently, then leading proponents of the 2015 Korea-Japan agreement are twisting the words of the Korean Council and victims to reproduce media discourse that serves their malicious political agenda.

Since November 16, 1990, when 37 women’s human rights organizations gathered together to establish the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, not a single day went by without distortion of historical facts and denial of war crimes by the Japanese government and attempts at interfering and thwarting the Korean Council’s efforts to restore justice for the victims by colluding parties both in and outside Korea.

Determined to resolve the issue before more victims pass away, the Korean Council has long fought to urge the Japanese government to take responsibility for its war crimes and to protect the victims’ honor and rights from the attacks of malicious parties distorting the historical truth.

Recently, Japanese historical revisionists, colluding with several researchers and the far-right in Korea, have denied responsibility for colonization and war violence and even the existence of the victims. Further, we have reached a moment where these groups are intruding and demanding a halt to the Wednesday Demonstration, which has served as a space for peace, human rights, and intergenerational solidarity for the past 29 years.

The Korean Council faces this reality with gravity and solemnly commits to continue our call for justice.

The Korean Council will grow our 30-year movement, made possible because of steadfast solidarity with our supporters around the world. Sometimes as our biggest cheerleaders and sometimes as our harshest critics, our supporters hold us accountable to our work, now and always. With unshakeable faith, the Korean Council will continue our fight for restoration of human rights and dignity for the Japanese military “comfort women” victims.

May 12, 2020

The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

Translated by volunteer

Statements from the 8th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” International Solidarity Demonstration

Weekly Update

Eight International Solidarity Demonstrations have been held since August 14, 2013, when the 1087th Wednesday Demonstration was proclaimed as Day of International Solidarity Action upon the 1st International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women.” Today’s 8th International Solidarity Demonstration is joined by 118 co-hosting organizations from 33 cities in 11 countries.

First, we deeply apologize again to many citizens around the world who have stood in solidarity with this movement, and especially to halmonis, Japanese military “comfort women” victims-survivors and women’s rights activists, for the concerns caused by “the Korean Council issue.” We are sincerely sorry for hurting your feelings. We would like to express our deep gratitude to citizens who have defended the meaning of the movement and truth and held onto the Korean Council despite groundless speculations and disparagements. We also extend our solidarity to people who are suffering from the continuous spread of COVID-19 and ongoing floods.

I will present a brief report on the prosecution investigation and media reports that have been continuing since May 7, 2020.

The prosecution investigation started with a focus on indiscriminate groundless accusations by conservative groups and suspicions raised by the media. On May 20 and 21, the Korean Council office, War and Women’s Human Right Museum, and Shelter Peaceful Our Home were searched, and the investigation has continued since then. We stayed up all night answering dozens of written questions and attended investigations all day as references multiple times a week. As the direction of the investigation changed and the scope of the investigation expanded, in addition to the staff in charge of accounting at the Korean Council, the staff in charge of victim support, care workers, bereaved families of victims, donors, and many others who once had connections with the Korean Council responded prosecutors’ phone calls and request for meetings to cooperate with the investigation. We cooperate as

much as possible in the summoning and questioning, despite seemingly incomprehensible processes such as coercive investigation attitudes and unreasonable investigations.

Public criticism of the Korean Council's fault was very painful and difficult, but it also provided an opportunity to look back and reflect on the past. However, some media have divided victims from activists, and activists from bereaved families. They have misrepresented "suspicions" raised by themselves as "confirmed corruption" and biased "opinions" as "truths," thus seriously undermining the morality and sincerity of the organization and the movement. In response, the Korean Council applied to the Press Arbitration Commission for mediation to protect the historical truth and the legitimacy of the movement from irresponsible media reports and to demand a more responsible and mature attitude from Korean media. We sought correction and compensation for damages from 8 articles from 7 media companies in the first application and 5 articles from 4 media companies in the second application. Among them, 11 articles were made subject to mediation or compulsory arbitration, including deletion of articles, corrections of articles, inclusion of counterclaims, and corrections of titles.

In the process, Son Young-Mi, Director of Peaceful Our Home, a shelter for Japanese military "comfort women" victim-survivors, passed away at her house in Paju on June 6. Even after she passed away, some media and politicians have continued to sway public opinion like witch hunts through rash judgments, unfounded speculations, transfer of responsibility and doxing, and approaching bereaved families and activists in manners that violate human rights.

It was terrible. It must have been a time of shock and pain not only for activists at the Korean Council, but also for everyone who has participated in this movement. However, we could not just express our emotions of injustice and anger, or just protest and explain. We are going back to the early spirits and minds of the beginning stages and reflecting on what we had lacked and missed. We are making efforts to continue the history and meaning of the movement, but also gather the minds of victim-survivors and citizens again to make a new leap forward. We are seeking

specific measures for a future-oriented structure for the Korean Council for teenagers and youth, sustainable activism, and expanded solidarity.

First of all, we are preparing measures to improve the accounting management system. the Korean Council commissioned consultation for improvement of the accounting management system to the Public Accountants Network [Malkeun] in July and received the final report. The purpose was to enhance the accuracy and reliability of the foundation's accounting disclosures by improving and supplementing the accounting, tax, public disclosure, and internal control procedures. [Malkeun] suggested the following directions for improvement:

- ① Increase in work efficiency: The 2019 accounting, tax, and public disclosure works and the current accounting management of the foundation in 2020 have been evaluated as overall satisfactory. However, since it is difficult to meet all internal and external levels of demand with limited human resources, [Malkeun] suggested reducing the workload concentrated on certain aspects and balancing the accounting, tax, and public disclosure tasks to increase work efficiency.
- ② Maintenance of internal control procedures: To complement potential weaknesses in internal management that may arise from increased work efficiency, [Malkeun] suggested organizing and supplementing key internal control procedures related to accounting.
- ③ Improvement in accuracy and sufficiency of accounting disclosure data: [Malkeun] suggested seeking to improve the accuracy and sufficiency of accounting disclosure data by preparing measures to strengthen communication with internal and external stakeholders.

Secondly, we created the Introspection and Vision Committee to organize improvement measures based on inspection and diagnosis of the structure and activities of the Korean Council and to inherit the history and meaning of the movement for resolution of Japanese military sexual slavery issue in an advanced manner.

We would like to briefly explain the organization and purpose of the Introspection and Vision Committee and the details and direction of its

activities thus far to mark the 8th International Solidarity Demonstration and the 1452nd Wednesday Demonstration Press Conference. Choi Kwang-ki, a member of the committee, will give a presentation.

I sincerely ask you to share us good opinion and join us on the difficult road we are taking again. the Korean Council will believe in the power of citizens and move forward with humility.

August 12, 2020

Lee Na-young,

Chair of Board, The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan

Introspection and Vision Committee Statement

The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan's works towards resolution of the Japanese military "comfort women" issue started with the Wednesday Demonstration on January 8, 1992, and have continued to the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereinafter the Korean Council) with fierce nation-wide protest against the 2015 Korea-Japan "comfort women" agreement on December 28, 2015.

Not a single moment in the 30-year history on this path was easy. I stand here today to restore the essence of this movement and to stand in solidarity, feeling a sense of crisis from the recent groundless suspicions against the Korean Council.

The Korean Council established the "Introspection and Vision Committee" to gather the hearts of citizens who stand with the victim-survivors and to move forward.

The Introspection and Vision Committee consists of 13 members, including experts and representatives from women's human rights, human rights, and civic groups. From the first meeting on June 24 to the fourth meeting on August 4, we have discussed the details and direction to inherit, develop, and regenerate the movement by the Korean Council.

First, the Introspection and Vision Committee began with four purposes:

1. Prepare measures to improve the accounting management system of the Korean Council
2. Prepare improvement measures through review and diagnosis of the structure and activities of the Korean Council
3. Provide direction and vision to the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue
4. Provide measure on communication with citizens

In the course of the discussion, we confirmed that the seven tasks of the Wednesday Demonstration - 1) the Japanese Government's admission of

war crimes, 2) fact-finding, 3) official apology, 4) legal reparations, 5) punishment of those responsible, 6) establishment of memorials and historical archives, and 7) history education, - which were presented since the beginning of the demonstration, remain unsolved. We also confirmed that the Korean Council's efforts to connect the Japanese military "comfort women" issue with the issues of Japanese colonial rule, wartime sexual violence, armed conflict and militarism, daily sexual exploitation, and the importance of women's human rights and peace, were proper. We confirmed once again that the meaning of the movement should not be undermined from ruthless continuation of anti-historical and anti-human rights behaviors that shake the dignity and honor of the victims.

In addition, we look back on whether we are taking our full responsibility for the warm hearts of the long-time supporters of the Korean Council and those who have begun to stand in solidarity amidst the crisis. With more victims who have passed away than those who survived, we reflect on how desperate we have been to promote the youth and future generation who will lead the movement. We deeply reflect on Lee Yong-soo halmoni's worries and thoughts that we should pay more attention to education for future generations to correct history.

Introspection and Vision Committee continues discussions on improving the deficiencies through internal diagnosis and external consultation, building on the aforementioned diagnosis. We discussed accounting and organizational restructure as a priority for reflection.

1. We conducted an external consulting to establish an efficient accounting management system. Based on these results, we will work to improve our accounting management system.
2. We will propose a more open and democratic decision-making structure, a more efficient and responsible organizational restructuring.

Through a thorough internal diagnosis, we will work towards the specific goals below.

1. We will continue to work towards the seven demands that we have been working on for 30 years with the victim-survivors: 1) the Japanese

Government's admission of war crimes, 2) fact-finding, 3) official apology, 4) legal reparations, 5) punishment of those responsible, 6) establishment of memorials and historical archives, and 7) history education

2. We will strengthen research activities that will academically support this movement and work together to develop educational contents and programs for future generations.

3. We will improve the structure of sponsorship for all citizens to participate and seek sustainable solidarity with domestic and international organizations.

4. Following the activities that have created international standards for women's human rights to prevent the recurrence of wartime sexual violence, we will join forces to develop the movement into an international women's peace movement.

5. We will listen to and reflect your opinions in the process of the above-mentioned work. Focusing on sponsors, solidarity groups, civic groups and researchers, and above all, related organizations that have been with the victim-survivors, we will hold national tour meetings. We will run to wherever we call, listen to your words, and make a direction for improvement of the Korean Council together.

We will carefully move one step at a time, engraving the stern reprimand and encouragement of the victim-survivors who gave everything to this movement, citizens who have become regular members and have gathered their hearts in spite of reckless suspicions, and supporters from around the world.

Just as hope is born in a desperate moment, we will run with you: remembering our firsts and imagining a new start to the movement, which began 30 years ago with the low and small voice of the late Kim Hak-soon halmoni.

Members of the Introspection and Vision Committee on August 12, 2020

1452nd Wednesday Demonstration Press Conference for Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue Statement

29 years ago on August 14, Japanese military sexual slavery victim Kim Hak-soon became a testifier of history, many victims gained courage, and the whole world enraged with the warm crimes committed by the Japanese Military. The victims, who had been forced into silence for a long time without being able to open up their pain, gradually took courage and came forward to the world one by one. Victims from not only Korea but also regions colonized and occupied by the Japanese imperialism, including China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Australia, have stood up. They spoke up as victims of war crimes, testified to crimes committed by the Japanese Military during the war, and finally shouted for the Japanese Government to apologize and make reparations for the wrongdoing.

To commemorate and stand with the courage of victims, victims and activists working for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue proclaimed August 14 as the International Memorial Day for Japanese Military "Comfort Women" at the 11th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Japanese Military "Comfort Women" Issue in 2012. Since then, countless citizens around the world held various campaigns to create a peaceful world. Through the movement, victims became activists. This year, we commemorate the 8th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military "Comfort Women."

Despite such a long-standing calls and recommendations from citizens of the world and international organizations to sincerely apologize for and make reparations for the crimes of Japanese military sexual slavery, the Japanese Government remained unmoved and is instead making a tremendous effort to wipe out its shameful history by attacking the victims again. Also, historical denialists in Korea constantly defame the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and attack the victims and activists, in its motive to stir up a fight. In particular, historical denialists have now invaded Pyeonghwa-ro, a symbol of persistent struggle of halmonis, putting all kinds of obstacles to the Wednesday Demonstration.

Commemorating the International Memorial Day amidst the attacks against both the movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and victims, push us further to reflect on its meaning.

It is difficult to imagine how lonely and rough the fight against the perpetrator Japanese Government must have been, in a patriarchal society that blames a victim of sexual violence more than the perpetrator. However, halmonis were not broken. They held the hands of those who stood with them, continued to reach out to other victims and the marginalized. We will also continue on this path, ever so vigorously.

We remember the halmonis' saying that our children should live in a peaceful world. We resonate with halmonis' voices to make a world without war and a world without victims of wartime sexual violence. We will listen to the halmonis' voices, respond, expand and unite endlessly for a just solution.

We demand:

One, Japanese Government, make official apology and legal reparations to Japanese military sexual slavery victims!

One, immediately stop attacks against the Japanese military sexual slavery victims and the movement for resolution!

One, Korean Government, fulfill responsibilities as a victimized nation to restore the honor and human rights of victims!

August 12, 2020

Participants at the 8th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military "Comfort Women" International Solidarity Demonstration and the 1452nd Wednesday Demonstration Press Conference for Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue

118 organizations of 11 countries (Korea, Japan, the Philippines, the United States, Australia, Germany, Canada, Indonesia, South Africa, France, and Multinational organizations)

Further Readings on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue and Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

- International Committee of the Red Cross – Article 27 of the Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949

<https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/ihl/b0d5f4c1f4b8102041256739003e6366/ffcb180d4e99cb26c12563cd0051bbd9>

This convention provides rights of civilians during conflict, and notes that women are to be especially protected “against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault.”

- OHCHR – Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of Prostitution of Others (1951)

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/TrafficInPersons.aspx>

The systematic recruitment of women for the purpose of sexual slavery is a crime against peace and a crime of slavery of forced prostitution against this international convention.

- International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

<https://www.icty.org/en/features/crimes-sexual-violence>

This tribunal recognized and convicted individuals for sexual violence, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

- Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1994/45

<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/commission/country52/53-add1.htm>

After her visit to North Korea, South Korea, and Japan, the Special Rapporteur defined the Japanese military “comfort women” as a case of military sexual slavery, and thus as a war crime that calls for the Japanese Government’s apology and reparations.

- Amnesty International - Still waiting after 60 years: Justice for survivors of Japan’s military sexual slavery system (2005)

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ASA220122005ENGLISH.PDF>

A comprehensive report that provides an understanding of the Japanese military sexual slavery. The report clearly demonstrates the Japanese Government's denial of this situation, as well as its legal irresponsibility.

- An NGO shadow report to CEDAW 44th Session 2009, New York Japan The “Comfort Women” Issue (2009)

https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/comfortwomen_japan_cedaw44.pdf

Japanese NGO report expressing the immediate need for Japan to apologize to the victims of this system of sexual slavery and to take immediate action. The report explains how the Asian Women's Fund failed to serve as “reparation.” There is also a table referring to the historical references in history textbooks in Japan, and a list of resolutions on the subject of “comfort women” by various international instruments.

- UN News – Japan’s stance on ‘comfort women’ issue violates victims’ rights – UN official (2014)

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/08/474572-japans-stance-comfort-women-issue-violates-victims-rights-un-official>

High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, says that Japan “has failed to pursue a comprehensive, impartial and lasting resolution” to address the rights of “comfort women” and calls the Japanese government must seek a comprehensive, impartial and lasting resolution to the issue.

- Amnesty International – 70 years on, the “comfort women” speaking out so the truth won’t die (2015)

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/09/70-years-on-comfort-women-speak-out-so-the-truth-wont-die/>

An article with photographs and testimonies of the victims from South Korea and the Philippines, and their ceaseless fight for justice.

- OHCHR- Japan / S. Korea: “The long awaited apology to ‘comfort women’ victims is yet to come” – UN rights experts (2016)

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17209&LangID=E>

Ms. Eleonora Zielinska, Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, Mr. Pablo de Greiff, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, and Mr. Juan E. Méndez, Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment criticize the 2015 agreement and remind the Government of Japan of its obligations under CEDAW.

- Amnesty International – Japan Submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (2016)

<https://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=56a886340&skip=0&query=comfort%20women>

Amnesty International is calling on the Japanese authorities to agree to full and effective reparations for anyone who has suffered harm as a result of the sexual slavery system, whether surviving or deceased victims and their families. Protective measures must be put in place and victims must have free access to justice. The duty to remember must be respected by including the stories of comfort women in educational and history textbooks.

- Coalition against Trafficking in Women – Standing with survivors of Japan’s wartime sexual slavery (2017)

<https://catwinternational.org/2017/11/standing-with-survivors-of-japans-wartime-sexual-slavery/>

This document states that the 2015 agreement is insufficient attempt to resolve the issue and highlights the victims' struggle to have their rights recognized.

- Human Rights Watch – World Report 2017 (2017)

<https://www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?page=search&docid=587b583b4&skip=0&query=comfort%20women>

A report on Japan contains information on the Japanese military “comfort women”. The NGO cites the CEDAW affirming the need to review the 2015 agreement by taking into account the testimonies of victims, regardless of their nationalities.

- Task Force on the Review of the Korea-Japan Agreement on the Issue of “Comfort Women” Victims – Report on the Review of the Korea-Japan Agreement of December 28, 2015 on the Issue of “Comfort Women” Victims

http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_5674/view.do?seq=319637&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=victim&srchTp=0&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1&titleNm=

The South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued task force results after a review of the 2015 agreement, concluding that the 2015 agreement fails to serve as a resolution for the Japanese military “comfort women” issue.

- Amnesty International’s submission to the honorable judges of the Seoul central district court concerning the case of Kwak Ye-nam et. al. V. Japan (2016 GA-HAP 580239)

https://amnesty.or.kr/wp-content/uploads/bcp-attach/Amnesty-Submission-to-the-Honorable-Judges-of-the-Seoul-Central-District-Court_12-11-2019_final-1.pdf

21 female victims and family members of the victims filed a lawsuit for damages against the Japanese government before the Seoul Central District Court in December 2016. Japan had called for the invocation of the principle of State immunity, which refers to the principle that prohibits national courts from trying cases against another State. However, in cases of crimes against humanity, as in the Japanese military “comfort women,” state immunity or statute of limitations cannot apply.

- International Commission of Jurists – Comfort Women, an Unfinished Ordeal: Report of a Mission

<https://www.icj.org/wp-content/uploads/1994/01/Japan-comfort-women-fact-finding-report-1994-eng.pdf>

“This is the story of people everyone tried to forget. The matter has been raised before many fora, including those of the United Nations. Much has appeared on the subject in the media.

Yet very little concrete action has been taken to provide relief to the victims: the Comfort Women from Korea, the Philippines, and other countries in Asia, whose numbers range between 100,000 and 200,000. Why human rights violations on such a massive scale were not discussed in any meaningful way for more than 40 years is inexplicable. It is for this reason that the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) sent a mission in April 1993 to the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to Japan. The mission inquired into the circumstances concerning sexual services obtained from Korean and Filipino women by the Japanese military during World War II." (p. 7)

- Education for Social Justice Foundation – “Comfort Women” History & Issues: Teacher Resource Guide and Student Resource Guide

These resource guides published by Education for Social Justice Foundation provide resources for students and teachers who would like to learn more about the Japanese military sexual slavery issue. The resource guides include historical overviews of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue, the movement for redress, and the testimonies, and worksheets and discussion questions adaptable to classroom settings.

Chronology¹⁰⁰

Year	Japanese Government	Movement for Justice/ International community/ Korean Government
1910	Japan colonized Korea	
1911	Japan ratified the Hague Convention (Convention respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land 1907). Article 46 of its appendix stipulates that women must be protected from rape or forced prostitution during war, though it did not apply to women in colonies	
1925	Japan ratified: -the International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic (1904) -the International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic (1910), which prohibits prostitution of underage women regardless of their consent and of adult women who were taken by fraud or	

¹⁰⁰ “e-Museum of the Victims of Japanese Military Sexual Slavery,” Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of Republic of Korea, <http://www.hermuseum.go.kr/eng/PageLink.do>
 “United Nations Treaty Collection,” United Nations, https://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?clang=_en
 “Ratifications for Japan,” International Labour Organization, https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:11200:0::NO::P11200_COUNTRY_ID:102729

	<p>coercion, reserving application to its colonies such as Korea and Taiwan</p> <p>-the International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children (1921), reserving application to its colonies such as Korea, Taiwan, leased territory of Kwantung, portion of Saghalien Island and territory in the South Seas</p>	
1932	<p>The First Shanghai Incident took place and Japanese military comfort stations were installed</p> <p>Japan ratified the ILO Convention No. 29 Forced Labour (1930)</p>	
1930s-1945	<p>Japanese military established comfort stations and mobilized women from colonized and occupied regions in Asia-Pacific</p> <p>-1937 Sino-Japanese War and expansion of the Japanese military sexual slavery system</p> <p>-1937 Nanjing Massacre and establishment of comfort stations</p> <p>-1941 Japan's Kwantung Army carried out special military exercises and mass-mobilized Korean "comfort women"</p>	

	<p>-1942 Japanese Ministry of War revised the Military Penal Code (February 20, 1942) to punish those who commit rape in Japanese territory or battlefields, although the soldiers who committed rape in China were rarely punished</p> <p>-Japanese Ministry of War Report (September 3, 1942) demonstrated plans to establish more than 400 comfort stations in Northern China, Central China, Southern China, Southeast Asia, Western South Pacific, and Southern Sakhalin</p>	
1945	<p>World War II ended in Japan's defeat, and Korea was liberated</p> <p>-MacArthur reports that around 150 Korean "comfort women" who had been captured and detained by the U.S. military in Okinawa returned to Korea on a ship in November</p>	
1946	<p>International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Tokyo Trial) was established but did not find the Japanese Emperor Hirohito guilty of war crimes in its final judgment in November 1948.</p>	
1948	<p>A Dutch war crimes tribunal held in Batavia (Jakarta), Indonesia found Japanese soldiers and civilians guilty of sexual abuse against Dutch "comfort women," which was classified as a class-C Crime (crimes against humanity), but most other countries did not have hearings on the Japanese</p>	

	military sexual slavery system	
1965	Republic of Korea and Japan signed the Treaty on Basic Relations	
1975		Testimony of Bae Bong-gi, survivor living in Okinawa, was released in local newspapers
1988		<p>Yun Chung-ok, Kim Hye-won, and Kim Sin-sil researched the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in Fukuoka and Okinawa and wrote a report called “Along the Footsteps of the Chongshindae (‘Comfort women’)”</p> <p>Yun Chung-ok presented the Japanese military sexual slavery issue at the International Seminar on “Women and Tourism Culture” organized by Korea Church Women United (KCWU) in Jeju, South Korea in April</p>
1990		<p>Hankyoreh Newspaper published Yun Chung-ok’s “Report following the footsteps of the Chongshindae (‘Comfort women’)”</p> <p>The Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery was founded in July</p> <p>The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan was founded by 37 women’s human rights organizations in Korea on November 16</p>
1991	In response to the lawsuit filed by Kim Hak-soon and other survivors, Chief	Kim Hak-soon gave the first public testimony as a Japanese military sexual slavery survivor in

	<p>Cabinet Secretary Kato stated during a conference on December 6: “it is difficult for the Japanese Government to deal with the ‘comfort women’ issue since records proving the involvement of the Government could not be found,” despite the U.S. military documents and testimonies of survivors and former Japanese soldiers.</p>	<p>Korea on August 14</p> <p>Chongshindae (“Comfort women”) Hotline was established in September</p> <p>The Korean Council and advocates requested the Korean National Assembly and relevant government agencies to conduct investigations and construct memorials for survivors</p> <p>International symposium “Peace in Asia and the Role of Women” was held in Tokyo, Japan (1st) and Seoul, South Korea (2nd) gathered voices of women from North, South Korea, and Japan to cooperate for resolution of the issue</p> <p>Kim Hak-soon and other survivors filed a lawsuit against Japan in the Tokyo District Court (Case of Korean survivors of the Asia-Pacific War claiming reparations - lost)</p> <p>Korean Government requested the Japanese Government to clarify Kato’s remarks and conduct investigation on the issue</p> <p>The Korean Council delivered an open letter to protest Kato’s remark</p>
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1992	<p>Professor Yoshimi Yoshiaki of Chuo University announced his findings of Japanese military documents showing the military's direct role in the establishment of comfort stations and the recruitment and management of victims of Japanese military sexual slavery, discovered in the Library of the Defense Research Institute of the National Defense Agency. The Asahi Shimbun published his findings</p> <p>The Japanese Government announced the results of its 1st investigation on Japanese military sexual slavery issue, recognizing direct and indirect involvement of the Japanese military, but argued that there was no evidence that the women were taken "by force"</p>	<p>Wednesday Demonstration for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue started in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, Korea on January 8, in light of Japanese Prime Minister Miyazawa's visit to South Korea</p> <p>The Korean Council and other international NGOs raised the issue of Japanese military sexual slavery to the UN Human Rights Committee, UN Commission on Human Rights, and the UN Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery</p> <p>Kim Hak-soon received the Woman of the Year Award at the Korean Women's Conference on the International Women's Day</p> <p>Hwang Geum-joo testified at the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in August</p> <p>1st Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan was held in Seoul, Korea in August, with survivors and organizations from Korea, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Japan</p> <p>3rd "Peace in Asia and the Role of</p>
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		<p>immaterial compensations such as serving the peaceful causes and justice</p> <p>Survivors filed a lawsuit in Shimonoseki Branch of Yamaguchi District Court (Shimonoseki Trial)</p>
1993	<p>The Japanese Government announced the results of its 2nd investigation on “comfort women,” acknowledging the partial use of force by government officials and the military in the process of recruitment, transportation, and management, but avoided answers on legal responsibilities</p> <p>Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono released the Kono Statement</p>	<p>1st volume of testimonies, <i>The Forcibly Drafted Korean Comfort Women</i>, published in Korean by The Korean Council and Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery and translated into Japanese and English</p> <p>4th “Peace in Asia and the Role of Women” was held in Tokyo, Japan, with women from North, South Korea, and Japan</p> <p>Kim Bok Dong (South Korea) and Jang Soo-weol (North Korea) testified at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, Austria</p> <p>Korean Government enacted Act on Livelihood Stability and Commemorative Projects, Etc., for Sexual Slavery Victims Drafted for the Japanese Imperial</p>

		<p>Army under the Japanese Colonial Rule (Title of Act changed in 2017 to Act on Protection, Support, and Commemorative Projects for Sexual Slavery Victims for the Japanese Imperial Army)</p> <p>The Korean Council and civil society organizations announced the Asian Solidarity Statement to oppose Japan’s permanent membership into the United Nations Security Council without resolving the issue</p> <p>UN Human Rights Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities appoints Special Rapporteur on the situation of systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices during periods of armed conflict Linda Chavez (changed to Gay McDougall in 1997), and started to investigate the issue</p> <p>As Japanese Emperor Akihito visited Germany, the International Conference on “War and Violence against Women” was held in Germany, where survivors and activists from North, South Korea, Philippines, Netherlands, Germany, and Yugoslavia attended</p> <p>Pyongyang International Forum on</p>
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		the Treatment of Post-War Issue of Japan gathered voices of survivors and activists from South, North Korea, the Philippines, and Japan
1994	<p>Japanese Justice Minister Nagano stated that “comfort women” were prostitutes during a meeting with Kyodo News Agency on May 4</p>	<p>UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) issued a report (A/49/38)</p> <p>International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) published an investigative report, “Comfort Women, An Unfinished Ordeal: Report of a Mission” and called for Japan’s apology and legal reparations.</p> <p>The Korean Council and Korean-Japanese Lawyers Group filed a complaint to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)</p>
1995	<p>Prime Minister Murayama announced the Murayama Statement, still vaguely referring to issues of the war of aggression</p> <p>The Japanese Government established the Asian Women’s Fund, which offered “consolation money” from private donations instead of official apology and legal reparations</p>	<p>The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan received the 3rd Civil Human Rights Award from Seoul Bar Association</p> <p>4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, China Code of Conduct included recommendations for complete compensation for survivors and punishment of criminals on the issue (147 [e])</p> <p>Survivors and activists organized an international conference in Tokyo, Tokyo Declaration,</p>

		<p>Wednesday Demonstrations and protests against the Asian Women's Fund</p> <p>UN Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy investigated the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in North and South Korea and Japan</p> <p>The 1st collection of testimonies by Korean survivors residing in China, <i>Forcefully Dragged Korean Military Comfort Women to China</i>, was published by The Korean Council and Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery</p>
1996	<p>Senator Okuno Seisuke, chairman of the Federation of Councilors for a Brighter Japan, remarked that the women were not mobilized "by force" but joined voluntarily to make money</p>	<p>UN Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy submitted a report (E/CN.4/1996/53/Add.1)</p> <p>ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>Korean survivors sent a letter to Japanese Prime Minister and Chairman of Asian Women's Fund Hashimoto to call for the Japanese Government's direct</p>

		reparations to the survivors
1997	<p>Asian Women’s Fund officials visited Korea in secret and gave “consolation money” to 7 Korean survivors, ignoring the request from other survivors and South Korean Government for legal reparation, and was criticized by survivors, activists, and the South Korean Government</p> <p>Japanese military sexual slavery issue first appeared in Japanese middle school textbooks, following the Kono Statement</p> <p>Japanese right-wing, historical revisionist organizations, Nippon Kaigi (Japan Conference), Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform, and Institute of Junior Assembly Members Who Think About the Outlook of Japan and History Education (of which Prime Minister Shinzo Abe served as the 1st Secretary-General) formed to erase the issue from history textbooks</p>	<p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>2nd volume of testimonies, <i>The Forcibly Drafted Korean Comfort Women</i>, published by The Korean Council and Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery</p>
1998	Shimonoseki Branch of the Yamaguchi District Court ruled that Japan should pay compensation to survivors	UN Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy submitted a

		<p>report (E/CN.4/1998/54)</p> <p>In opposition of the Asian Women's Fund, Korean Council and the Government provided financial aid to the survivors through fundraising and government support</p> <p>UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (renamed to UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in 1999) Special Rapporteur on systemic rape, sexual slavery, and slavery-like practices during armed conflict Gay J. McDougall submitted a report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/13)</p>
1999		<p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>3rd volume of testimonies, <i>The Forcibly Drafted Korean Comfort Women</i>, published by The Korean Council and Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery</p> <p>California Assembly adopted AJR27(relative to the war crimes committed by the Japanese military during World War II) to urge the Japanese Government to officially apologize and make immediate reparation to the survivors</p>

2000		<p>UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Special Rapporteur on systemic rape, sexual slavery, and slavery-like practices during armed conflict Gay J. McDougall updated the 1998 report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/2000/21)</p> <p>15 survivors from South Korea, Taiwan, China, and the Philippines filed a lawsuit against the Government of Japan in the U.S. District Court of Washington, D.C. (lost)</p> <p>9 survivors including Kim Eun-rye, Moon Pil-gi, Kim Sang-hee, Lee Yong-soo, Hwang Geum-joo, Kim Soon-deok received the 2000 Human Rights Award for Women of Dignity and Honor from Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues in Washington D.C., U.S.</p> <p>Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery was held in Tokyo on December 8-12, with survivors from 9 countries (North and South Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, East Timor, the Netherlands, and Japan) and founded the Japanese Emperor Hirohito guilty of crimes against humanity</p>
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2001	<p>Kim Soon-deok testified in the United States press release after the introduction of H.Con.Res.195</p> <p>4th volume of testimonies, <i>The Forcibly Drafted Korean Comfort Women</i>, published by The Korean Council's 2000 Women's International War Crimes Tribunal Korea Committee Testimonials Team</p> <p>5th volume of testimonies, <i>The Forcibly Drafted Korean Comfort Women</i>, published by The Korean Council's 2000 Women's International War Crimes Tribunal Korea Committee Testimonials Team and Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery</p> <p>UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) issued concluding observations on Japan (E/C.12/1/Add.67)</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>UN Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy submitted a report (E/CN.4/2001/73)</p>
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2002		<p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>500th Wednesday Demonstration was held on March 13</p> <p>“Asian Regional Symposium Demanding Liquidation of Japan’s Past” held in Pyongyang, North Korea called for Japan to take responsibilities, with participants from North, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, U.S., and Indonesia including Lee Yong-soo and Moon Pil-gi</p>
2003	<p>Japanese Government refused to accept UN recommendations on reparations for the survivors and distortion of history in textbooks from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights</p> <p>Japan’s Supreme Court dismissed Shimonoseki Decision and case of Song Shin-do</p>	<p>The Korean Council raised the issue to the UN Commission on Human Rights and UN CEDAW</p> <p>The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan opened <i>Peaceful Our Home</i>, a shelter for survivors</p> <p>U.S. Congress and Senate issued join resolution calling for the Japanese Government’s official apology and reparations</p> <p>UN CEDAW released a report (A/58/38)</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning</p>

		<p>Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>UN Commission on Human Rights Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Radhika Coomaraswamy submitted a report (E/CN.4/2003/75/Add.1)</p> <p>2nd collection of testimonies by Korean survivors residing in China, <i>Forcefully Dragged Korean Military Comfort Women to China</i> published by Korea Research Institute for Military Sexual Slavery</p>
2004		<p>International Solidarity Council Demanding Settlement of Japan's Past held the Seoul Conference. In May, North Korean survivor Lee Sang-ok made her first visit to South Korea after the division of Korea</p> <p>Amnesty International included the issue in their campaign on violence against women</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>6th volume of testimonies, <i>Stories That Make History</i>, published by The Korean Council</p>

2005		<p>Global campaign "Justice to Japanese Military 'Comfort Women!'" for 60th anniversary of Korean Liberation launched in January</p> <p>Campaign for Korean survivors residing in China to restore their Korean nationalities</p>
2006		<p>Korean Council and Amnesty International in Australia organized "Justice to Japanese Military 'Comfort Women'" campaign in August</p> <p>UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance Doudou Diène released a report (E/CN.4/2006/16/Add.2)</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p>
2007		<p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p> <p>UN Committee against Torture (CAT) issued conclusions and recommendations to Japan (CAT/C/JPN/CO/1)</p> <p>U.S. House Resolution 121 adopted on July 30, followed by</p>

		<p>resolutions adopted by the Netherlands, Canada, European Union, Republic of Korea, Taiwan parliaments, and regional assemblies in Japan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -U.S. House of Representatives adopted House Resolution 121 on July 30 - South Korean Parliament adopted Resolution calling on the Government of Japan to issue a formal apology and render compensation to survivors of military sexual slavery for the restoration of survivors' dignity on October 27 -House of the Netherlands adopted the Motion by Van Baalen and co-sponsors on the subject of the "comfort women" on November 8 -Taiwan Legislative Council adopted Resolution urging the Japanese government's prompt solution to the Japanese military sexual slavery issue on November 11 -House of Commons of Canada adopted Motion by Olivia Chow on November 28 -European Parliament adopted Resolution on Justice for the 'Comfort Women' on December 13
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2008	<p>Wednesday Demonstration won Feminist Movement of the Year Award for International Women's Day</p> <p>Japanese military sexual slavery survivor Gil Won-ok won the 5th Seoul Women's Award</p> <p>UN Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) issued a report on Japan (A/HRC/8/44)</p> <p>UN Human Rights Committee on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) issued concluding observations on Japan (CCPR/C/JPN/CO/5)</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p>
2009	<p>UN CEDAW released concluding observations on Japan (CEDAW/C/JPN/CO/6)</p> <p>Regional assemblies in South Korea adopted resolutions</p>
2010	<p>UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Rashida Manjoo released a report (A/HRC/14/22)</p> <p>UN High Commissioner for Human</p>

		<p>Rights Navi Pillay called for resolution of the issue at the end of Japan visit</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p>
2011		<p>The Constitutional Court of Korea ruled that the Korean Government's failure to resolve the Japanese military sexual slavery issue constitutes unconstitutional negligence and urged government action</p> <p>1000th Wednesday Demonstration was held on December 14, during which the Statue of Peace was unveiled.</p>
2012	<p>Osaka Mayor Hashimoto remarked that there is no evidence that the women were assaulted, threatened, and forcefully taken by the Japanese military on August 21</p> <p>Prime Minister Noda remarked that there is no evidence that Japan forcibly mobilized the women on August 27</p> <p>Shinzo Abe took office again as Prime Minister</p> <p>The term "comfort</p>	<p>Kim Bok Dong and Gil Won-ok announced the establishment of Butterfly Fund to support survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict across the world on International Women's Day and started supporting survivors in the Democratic Republic of Congo</p> <p>War and Women's Human Rights Museum opened on May 5</p> <p>Glendale, California, U.S. declared July 30 as the "Comfort Women" Memorial Day</p> <p>UN Working Group on the UPR issued a report on Japan</p>

	women” was completely erased in middle school textbooks	(A/HRC/22/14) ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan
2013	<p>Osaka Mayor Hashimoto remarked that “comfort women were necessary” on May 13 and denied “use of force” in conscription of the women on May 19</p> <p>-Kyoto City Council adopted a resolution calling for Hashimoto’s apology</p> <p>Japanese Government and right-wingers opposed the establishment of the Statue of Peace in Glendale, U.S.</p>	<p>South Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family urged the Japanese Government’s repentance and resolution. UN recommended Japan to educate the issue</p> <p>1st Statue of Peace abroad was erected in Glendale, California, U.S. on July 30</p> <p>1st International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” was commemorated by actions in solidarity, an international symposium, and 1087th Wednesday Demonstration in August</p> <p>-UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Rashida Manjoo gave a message of solidarity during the international symposium</p> <p>The Korean Council and Amnesty International organized a side event titled “Justice for the survivors of Japan’s wartime system of military sexual slavery” and survivor Kim Bok Dong testified during the 24th UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) session on September 11</p>

		<p>-UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence Pablo de Greiff called for resolution of the issue during the Korean Council side event</p> <p>Butterfly Fund started supporting Vietnamese survivors of sexual violence by South Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War</p> <p>UN CESC issued concluding observations on Japan (E/C.12/JPN/CO/3)</p> <p>UN CAT issued concluding observations on Japan (CAT/C/JPN/CO/1)</p>
2014		<p>Butterfly Fund organized the 1st Vietnam Butterfly Peace Trip to learn about sexual violence committed by the Korean soldiers during the U.S.-Vietnam War in February</p> <p>UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issued concluding observations on Japan (CERD/C/JPN/CO/7-9)</p> <p>UN CCPR issued concluding observations on Japan (CCPR/C/JPN/CO/6)</p> <p>UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay called for resolution of the issue</p>

2015	<p>South Korean and Japanese Government announced the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement on December 28 and created the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation to implement the agreement</p>	<p>UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein called for resolution of the issue via statement at the Yonsei University, South Korea in June</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p>
2016	<p>Japanese Government maintains its argument that the 2015 agreement is the “final and irreversible” resolution, despite survivors’ demands and concerns of human rights organizations</p> <p>Prime Minister Abe stated that “Japan does not have the slightest intention on writing apology letters to ‘comfort women’ survivors” on October 3</p>	<p>Survivors and activists protested against the 2015 Agreement, and Foundation for Justice and Remembrance was established for annulment of the 2015 Agreement and just resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue in June</p> <p>UN CEDAW, High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, and UN Human Rights Experts expressed concern on the 2015 agreement and called for resolution of the issue</p> <p>-UN CEDAW released concluding observation on the issue and the 2015 agreement in March (CEDAW/C/JPN/CO/7-8)</p> <p>-UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein raised concerns about the 2015 agreement in his statement during the 31st UNHRC session in March</p> <p>-UN Human Rights Experts (Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group</p>

		<p>on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice Eleonora Zielinska, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence Pablo de Greiff, and Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment Juan E. Méndez called for resolution of the issue in March</p>
2017	<p>Japanese Diplomatic Bluebook expressed regret on the establishment of Statue of Peace in Busan and demanded fulfillment of the 2015 agreement</p>	<p>UN Committee against Torture (CAT) report on Korea expressed concern on the 2015 Korea-Japan agreement in May (CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5)</p> <p>Gil Won-ok and the Korean Council organized campaign in Germany in May</p> <p>Kibotane Fund (Seed of Hope Fund), a Japanese foundation dedicated to educating the Japanese military sexual slavery issue to youth, was established in June</p> <p>Petitions collected from 100 Million Signatures Campaign for the Resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery Issue were delivered to the Japanese Embassy in Seoul in September</p> <p>The Korean Council organized a pre-session during the 28th UNHRC session for UPR on South Korea and Japan in October</p>

		<p>1 Million Citizens' Fundraising Campaign was launched to support survivors Japanese military sexual slavery who refused the “consolation money” from the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement, and Women's Human Rights Award Ceremony with 1 Million Citizens awarded Women’s Human Rights Award to all 239 survivors in Korea in November</p> <p>Butterfly Fund started supporting organizations that support survivors of LRA insurgency in Uganda</p> <p>Seoul National University Chung Chin Sung Research Team released video footages of Japanese military “comfort women” discovered in National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)</p> <p>Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a review task force for the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement and announced that the 2015 agreement cannot be a resolution</p>
2018		<p>15th Asian Solidarity Conference for Resolution of the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan titled "To Resolve the Unrealized Justice, the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan" was held in Seoul in March</p> <p>The Korean Council commemorated</p>

		<p>the 6th International Memorial Day for Japanese Military “Comfort Women” with survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict from Kosovo, Uganda, Congo, and Syria -UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Rashida Manjoo gave a message of solidarity during the International Memorial Day international symposium</p> <p>-1st Kim Bok Dong Peace Prize awarded to Acan Sylvia Obal, a Ugandan survivor and activist</p> <p>The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and the Justice and Remembrance Foundation for the Just Resolution of the Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, established in opposition of the 2015 Korea-Japan “comfort women” agreement, merged to form The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan</p> <p>Citizens including Kim Bok Dong held one-person protests for dissolution of the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation, which was established from the 2015 agreement</p> <p>Korean Council organized “Truth & Justice: Remembering ‘Comfort</p>
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		<p>Women’’ exhibition and campaign in the U.S. in September</p> <p>UN Working Group on the UPR, UN CERD, UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) observations on Japan (A/HRC/37/15, CERD/C/JPN/CO/10-11, CED/C/JPN/CO/1) and UN CEDAW on Korea (CEDAW/C/KOR/CO/8) expressed concern on the 2015 agreement</p> <p>ILO CEACR concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour published individual observation on Japan</p>
2019	<p>Japanese Government’s continued to defame survivors, distort history, and hamper with survivors’ movement for justice and initiated trade war with South Korea:</p> <p>-Japanese Government has interfered with the movement for restoration of survivors’ dignity, including the Butterfly Fund to support the survivors of sexual violence in armed conflict and the establishment of Statue of Peace internationally, including during the Aichi Triennale</p>	<p>Korean Government dissolved the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation on June 17, reflecting the results of the review task force</p> <p>The Korean Council held a press interview condemning the Japanese Government’s interference with exhibitions on the Japanese military sexual slavery issue and movement for the establishment of Statue of Peace</p> <p>The Korean Council awards 2nd Kim Bok Dong Peace Prize to Vasfije Krasniqi-Goodman, a Kosovar survivor and activist</p> <p>1400th Wednesday Demonstration</p>

		<p>on August 14</p> <p>Documentary Film <i>My Name is Kim Bok Dong</i> was released on August 8, and went on screen tours at the 42nd UNHRC in Geneva, Switzerland, and U.S. cities such as Washington D.C., Chicago, LA, and San Francisco, visiting universities such as Georgetown, George Mason, Princeton, Brown, Boston, and Yale</p> <p>The Korean Council and Yale STAND with Comfort Women held the International Conference on ‘Comfort Women’</p> <p>The Korean Council activists visited Gulu, Uganda to research and interview survivors of the LRA Insurgency in Uganda in February and November</p> <p>The Korean Council and 7 other NGOs submit a List of Issues Prior to Reporting document to UN HRC raising concerns about the lack of action to resolve the Japanese military sexual slavery issue</p>
2020		<p>30th anniversary of The Korean Council and movement for resolution of the Japanese military sexual slavery issue</p> <p>28th year of the Wednesday Demonstration commemorated with international solidarity actions on January 8</p>

		<p>8th International Memorial Day on Japanese Military “Comfort Women” commemorated with campaigns and butterfly festival under slogans #RememberForever #ResonateEndlessly #ExpandInfinitely.</p>
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A to Z Guide for Just Resolution of the Japanese Military Sexual Slavery Issue

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