

**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
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Republic of Korea

Comfort Women - Wartime Prostitution Issue

Lai Đại Hàn - Issue of Wartime Violence against Women

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Recommendations

1. Comfort Women --- Wartime Prostitution Issue

1. The agreement on 28 December 2015 between Japan and the Republic of Korea has to be implemented with sincerity and responsibility of the both countries.
(The revision of the agreement would generate the revision of “Kono Statement.”)
2. The Committee should not hinder the implementation of agreements between nations which are the outcome achieved through immense diplomatic efforts.
3. The Korean government and media have to inform the public of the falsehood of the inscription of the stone monument erected by Mr. S.Y., the author of “My War Crimes.”¹
4. Withdrawal of the serious false articles on the comfort women reported by Asahi Shinbun (Asahi newspaper) should be known to the world, especially to the Korean government and people.

2. Lai Đại Hàn --- Issue of Wartime Violence against Women

The government of the Republic of Korea has to provide redress and reparation, and ensure the right to truth and assurances of non-repetition to the Vietnamese victims, so called Lai Đại Hàn issue.

1. Comfort Women ---- Wartime Prostitution Issue

1-1. The agreement on 28 December 2015 between Japan and the Republic of Korea² has to be implemented with sincerity and responsibility of the both countries.

< Summary >

It is an international fundamental rule that agreements once reached between governments are not broken or easily revised whether there are changes of government or not.

Japan has implemented the agreement till now and despite of many changes of governments, Japan has respected “the Kono Statement³” and “the letters of apology from several Japanese prime ministers⁴” which are regarded as a kind of diplomatic agreement

If the revision of the agreement on 28 December 2015 is allowed, the revisions of “the Kono Statement”, “the letters of apology from the Japanese prime ministers” and the pros and cons of consolidation payment have to be allowed as well.

“The Kono Statement” is nothing but a political and diplomatic compromise between Japan and the Republic of Korea rather than a statement on the historical facts researched by the both countries.

Japanese government issued “the Kono Statement” which uses intentionally vague expressions at the request of the Republic of Korea to impress systematic coercion as if it had existed, recognizing it doesn’t reflect facts but putting priority on a political and diplomatic satisfaction. However, this satisfaction didn’t last longtime.

“The Kono Statement” began to be disseminated in the world not as a political compromise but as a statement on the historical facts. As a result, Japanese human rights as a whole nation have been violated and the dignity of Japanese nation has been immensely impaired.

< Details >

- 1) The term ‘Comfort Women’ is an awkward English translation of Japanese ‘Ianfu’ which was a euphemistic expression of state-regulated prostitutes for the army. Almost all the public documents, public interrogation documents or private documents discovered till now, tell they were generally very well remunerated.
- 2) Japanese government has taken efforts for diplomatic compromise in the past in the form of agreement, statement or letter of apology, at the request of Korea. On 28 December 2015 the both countries reached the agreement as a final solution on the Issue, which has been welcomed by the US government. However, the new Korean government asks Japan to revise the agreement and ceased the activity of consolidation payment offered by Japan while the Japanese government has implemented the agreement with sincerity. A Korean NGO as well asked UN human rights committee to issue recommendations for revision of the agreement.
- 3) Agreements between nations have not to be easily revised or to be easily broken as a matter of course. Japanese government has revised or broken neither “the Kono Statement” nor letters of apology although “the Kono Statement” is nothing but a political and diplomatic compromise rather than a statement on the historical facts researched by the both countries. Although no evidence of systematic coercion and involvement of Japanese army with coercion has discovered till now, “the Kono Statement” uses intentionally vague expressions at the request of Korea as if there had existed systematic coercion and involvement of Japanese army with coercion. “The Kono Statement” has been disseminated in the world not as a political compromise but as a statement on the historical facts. As a result, Japanese human rights as a whole nation have been violated and the dignity of Japanese nation has been immensely impaired.
- 4) If the agreement on 28 December 2015 is allowed to be revised or broken, “the Kono Statement”, the letters of apology from the Japanese prime ministers and the pros and cons

of consolidation payment have to be revised or repealed as well.

1-2. The Committee should not hinder the implementation of agreements between nations which are the outcome achieved through immense diplomatic efforts.

The Committee should not hinder the implementation of the Agreement on 28 December 2015 between Japan and The Republic of Korea which is the outcome achieved through immense diplomatic efforts.⁵ And the Committee should not easily make the evaluation for the agreements once reached between governments.⁶ It is an international fundamental rule that the agreements must not be broken or easily revised despite of changes of government

1-3. The Korean government and media have to inform the public of the falsehood of the inscription of the stone monument erected by Mr. S.Y., the author of “My War Crimes.”⁷

< Summary >

Mr. S.O.⁸, a Japanese nationality and resident in Japan, was barred leaving the Republic of Korea for seven months by indictment without arrest for the damage of property (a stone monument). He rewrote the inscription of the stone monument “privately” erected in Korea by Mr. S.Y. who had confessed coercion of hundreds of Korean women, but later admitted his confession was a fabricated story. Mr. S.O. rewrote the inscription at the request of the eldest son of Mr. S.Y. who fears the fabricated inscription of his father damages good relation between Japan and Korea.⁹ The thing which amazes Mr. S.O. is that the falsehood of the confession of Mr. S.Y. is not informed to the public at all in Korea. To say furthermore, it seemed to be banned to inform.

The Korean court examined neither the truth of the inscription nor the reason why Mr. S.O. rewrote, and the allegation for this part of Mr. S.O. was not even translated from Japanese into Korean in the court.

But finally as he could confirm his assertion on the falsehood of the inscription was included in the decision, he withdrew the appeal.

According to Japanese media, the previous false inscription is again set on the monument. The Korean government has to verify which the truth is, by inquiring Japanese government and below-mentioned Asahi Shinbun.

The Korean government and media have to inform to the public the falsehood of the inscription. As a matter of course the inscription rewritten by Mr. S.O. at the request of the heir of Mr. S.Y. has to be maintained.

< Details >

- 1) Mr. S.Y. confessed the coercion of 200 Korean women during the World War II in his book “My War Crimes” published in 1983. He erected a stone monument of apology for coercion and requisition in South Korea in the same year. This incident gave shock to the Japanese government and Japanese nation. So called “The Comfort Women Issue” was born. But later he admitted his confession had been a fabrication in 1995. By then “the Kono Statement” and letters of apology from prime ministers had been already issued.
- 2) The eldest son of Mr. S. Y., who lived with his father till his father’s death in 2000, has had deep concerns regarding increase of erections of comfort women monuments in USA and aggravation of relation between Japan and Korea because of this issue. He has deeply felt responsibility on his father’s fabrication. He determined removal of the stone monument of apology or rewrite of the inscription. He was certain that removal or rewrite of the stone monument would not be a problem since the monument is a private property of his late father.¹⁰
- 3) Mr. S.O. accepted the request of the son of Mr. S.Y. to rewrite the inscription and was wholly entrusted by the son. He went to South Korea at the end of March 2017, and achieved the change of the inscription of apology with the inscription of memorial. At the beginning of April, Mr. S.O., entrusted by the son, sent a letter to the administration of the national memorial cemetery in Korea, which notifies;
 - I changed the inscription of the monument erected by Mr. S.Y. on 15 December 1983, entrusted by the heir of Mr. S.Y.,
 - The reasons are as follows;
 - The inscription doesn’t tell the truth,
 - Japanese Asahi Newspaper withdrew on 11 September 2014 the article on the erection of the monument of Mr. S.Y. on 24 December 1983 with apology of the top as the article doesn’t tell the truth,
 - The heir of Mr. S.Y. doesn’t want leave the inscription to be falsehood as it gives negative influence to the relation between Japan and Korea.
- 4) Korean police ordered Mr. S.O. to come to South Korea. Despite the worries of concerned people in Japan, Mr. S.O. decided to go to South Korea, convinced it is indispensable to assert in the court about the falsehood of the inscription. He was barred leaving the Republic of Korea for seven months by indictment without arrest for the damage of property (the stone monument). He was convicted guilty with probation. The Korean court examined neither the truth of the inscription nor the reason why Mr. S.O. rewrote, and the allegation for this part of Mr. S.O. was not even translated from Japanese into Korean in the court. He had no intention to reject the sentence. His only concern was whether his assertion about the falsehood of the inscription was included in the decision or not. He appealed. But finally he withdrew the appeal as his assertion on the falsehood of the inscription was included in the

decision.

- 5) However, the inscription rewritten by Mr. S.O. was removed, and the false inscription is again set on the monument. This is the violation of the will of the heir of Mr. S.Y. and prevents the good relation with Japan. The Korean government and media have to inform to the public the falsehood of the inscription. As a matter of course the inscription rewritten by Mr. S.O. at the request of the heir of Mr. S.Y. has to be maintained.

1-4. Withdrawal of the serious false articles on the comfort women reported by Asahi Shinbun (Asahi newspaper) should be known to the world, especially to the Korean government and people.

<Summary>

The Japanese newspaper “Asahi Shinbun” has to inform the world, especially the Korean government and the Korean people, of the withdrawal of their false articles on the comfort women issue related to the confession of Mr. S.Y. in English, in Korean, in Chinese and in other languages if necessary,

< Details >

- 1) Asahi Shinbun, one of the Japanese leading newspapers, reported many articles related to the confession of Mr. S.Y. on coercion of hundreds of Korean women during the World War II , which appeared in his book published in 1983. Later in 1995, he admitted his confession was a fabrication.
- 2) In August 2014, Asahi Shinbun withdrew 16 articles related to Mr. S.Y. and admitted there was a confusion of women’s volunteer corps with comfort women in reports. In September, Asahi Shinbun expressed apology for the delay of withdrawal. Over twenty years Asahi left false information scattered in the world. The silence of Asahi Shinbun over twenty years caused a serious dissemination of falsehood. Furthermore Asahi Shinbun has not yet notified the withdrawal in its English version. The symbolic effect by having left false information scattered in the world for a long time is the Korean reaction to the aforementioned inscription rewritten by Mr. S.O.
- 3) The Japanese newspaper “Asahi Shinbun” has to inform the world, especially the Korean government and the Korean people, of the withdrawal of their false articles on the comfort women issue related to the confession of Mr. S.Y. in English, in Korean, in Chinese language and in other languages if necessary,

2. Lai Đại Hàn-----Issue of Wartime Violence against Women

The government of the Republic of Korea has to provide redress and reparation (including compensation and the means for as full rehabilitation as possible), and ensure the right to truth and assurances of non-repetition to the Vietnamese victims, so called Lai Đại Hàn issue.

According to a civil group "Voices of Vietnam"¹¹, "Thousands of Vietnamese women were victims of systemic sexual violence at the hands of South Korean soldiers during the Vietnam War."

And according to a civil group "Justice for Lai Dai Han"¹², "Allegations are continuing to emerge that during the Vietnam War a number of Vietnamese women suffered sexual exploitation at the hands of some of the South Korean soldiers serving alongside US forces, and that as a result, many of these women bore children. These children of mixed blood are known as the Lai Dai Han and live today in the shadows. "

Vietnamese women exploited in this way and their Lai Dai Han children are seeking justice for a lifetime of pain and prejudice.¹³ They have to be heard, to receive the acknowledgement and to be respected as they deserve. Due to the passage of time, the number of surviving alleged women victims is falling, but the number of their surviving children is estimated to run into the thousands.

In Vietnamese "Lai" means the mixed parentage and "Dai Han" comes from the pronunciation of 大韓 (the abbreviation of 大韓民國 – the Republic of Korea). So in total it means "children of Vietnam and South Korean's mixed parentage".

End

¹ **S. Y.** 「私の戦争犯罪」(My War Crimes)(San-ichi Shobo,1973)

² Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion (December 28, 2015) http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000364.html

³ Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the result of the study on the issue of "comfort women"(August 4, 1993) <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html>

⁴ Establishment of the AW Fund, and the basic concept of its projects “Letter from Prime Minister to the former comfort women” <http://www.awf.or.jp/e2/foundation-02.html>

⁵ Comments by the Government of Japan regarding the Concluding observations on the third to fifth periodic reports of the Republic of Korea issued on 12 May 2017 (CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5)

8. From the perspective of recovering the honor and dignity and healing the psychological wounds of the former comfort women, it is extremely important that the projects based on the agreement continue to be implemented steadily. The Government of Japan asks the Committee to observe the implementation of the agreement and not to hinder the implementation of the agreement, which is the outcome achieved through immense diplomatic efforts of the Government of Japan.

⁶ CAT/C/KOR/CO/3-5

47. The Committee:(a) While welcoming the agreement reached at the meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Republic of Korea held on 28 December 2015 and taking note that 38 victims of sexual slavery during the Second World War are still alive, 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;

⁷ S.Y.「私の戦争犯罪」(My War Crimes)(San-ichi Shobo,1973)

⁸ S. O.「韓国検察取り調べの一部始終」(All About Investigation by the Korean Prosecutors) in Monthly Hanada, September 2017,pp72

⁹ Japan forward May 15, 2017 “Son of Comfort Women Perjurer Yoshida Removes

“Unbearable” Apology Inscription” <https://japan-forward.com/son-of-comfort-women-perjurer-yoshida-removes-unbearable-apology-inscription/>

Japan forward June 30, 2017 “Japanese Detained in South Korea for Covering Stone Slab Bearing False Claims on Comfort Women” <https://japan-forward.com/japanese-detained-in-south-korea-for-covering-stone-slab-bearing-false-claims-on-comfort-women/>

¹⁰ Miki Otaka,「父の謝罪碑を撤去します 慰安婦問題の原点「吉田清治」長男の独白」(I remove the

stone monument of apology of my father. Monologue of the eldest son of Mr. S. Y.)(Sankei-Shuppan, June 2017)

¹¹ Voices of Vietnam <http://vietnamvoices.org/>

¹² Justice for Lai Dai Han <https://laidaihanjustice.org/>

¹³ Independent (Monday 11 September 2017) “Vietnamese women raped in wartime seek justice for a lifetime of pain and prejudice”
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/vietnam-war-women-seek-justice-mothers-raped-south-korean-soldiers-war-untold-stories-a7940846.html>