

## Resolutions around the globe after 2007

### A. Region: The Netherlands

Motion by Van Baalen

House of the Netherlands

Adopted on November 8, 2007

The House, having heard the debate, considering that Japan is a strategic partner in Asia, with whom the Netherlands has been maintaining relations for 400 years, 150 years of which diplomatic relations by 2008, and with whom our country wants to shape a common future; taking the view that Japan should publicly take full responsibility, without any reserve, for the system of forced prostitution as operated in the years before and during the Second World War, and for the suffering thus caused to the so-called comfort women and about which no doubts can and should be raised; observing that the Japanese government, by means of the so-called Kono statement from 1993, has acknowledged the fate of the comfort women, has expressed their regret towards the victims and has accepted responsibility with this statement, but at the same time observing that the Japanese government and Japanese members of parliament have, on various occasions, distanced themselves from this, as is shown by the statements by the then prime minister Shinzo Abe last March which were later retracted, and by the advertisement of members of the Japanese House of Representatives in the Washington Post earlier this year on the same subject; having read the letter which the chairman of the Japanese House of Representatives wrote on 7 November last in reply to the letter of the chairman of the House of 26 June last about the advertisement in the Washington Post and in which he distances himself from said advertisement; considering that certain teaching materials in Japanese schools do insufficient justice to the acknowledgement of the Japanese war crimes, among them the treatment of the comfort women; considering that Japan, via the Asian Women's Fund, has offered forms of compensation to the former comfort women, partly financed by public funds, but that this compensation was granted by a private organisation; entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to abandon any statement which devalues the expression of regret from 1993 and to take full responsibility for the involvement of the Japanese army in the system of forced prostitution; entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to make an additional gesture by offering the comfort women still alive today some form of direct moral and financial compensation respectively for the suffering caused; entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to encourage that all teaching materials in Japanese schools provide a factual picture of the Japanese role in the Second World War, including the fate of the comfort women; and proceeds to the order of the day.

Van Baalen Wilders Van der Staaij

Van Gennip Peters Thieme

Van Dam Voordewind Verdonk

Van Bommel Pechtold

## **B. Region: Canada**

Journals No. 26

Motion by Olivia Chow

House of Commons of Canada

Adopted November 28, 2007

Moved that, in the opinion of the House:

- i. during its wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands, from the 1930s through the duration of World War II, the Imperial Armed Forces of Japan officially commissioned the acquisition of young women for the sole purpose of sexual servitude, who became known as “comfort women”;
- ii. some Japanese public officials have recently expressed a regrettable desire to dilute or rescind the 1993 statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the “comfort women”, which expressed the Government's sincere apologies and remorse for their ordeal;
- iii. Japan has made progress since 1945 in recognizing and atoning for its past actions, and for many decades has been a major contributor to international peace, security, and development, including through the United Nations;
- iv. the Canada-Japan alliance continues to be based on shared vital interests and values in the Asia-Pacific region, including the preservation and promotion of political and economic freedoms, support for human rights and democratic institutions, and the securing of prosperity for the people of both countries and the international community; and
- v. the Government of Canada should therefore encourages the Government of Japan to abandon any statement which devalues the expression of regret from the Kono Statement of 1993; to clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the ‘comfort women’ for the Japanese Imperial Forces never occurred; to take full responsibility for the involvement of the Japanese Imperial Forces in the system of forced prostitution, including through a formal and sincere apology expressed in the Diet to all of those who were victims; and to continue to address those affected in a spirit of reconciliation.

### C. Region: Europe

European Parliament

Resolution on Justice for the 'Comfort Women' (sex slaves in Asia before and during World War II)

December 13 2007 P6\_TA(2007)0632

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in 2007,
- having regard to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children (1921), to which Japan is a signatory,
- having regard to ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour (1930), ratified by Japan,
- having regard to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women and Peace and Security,
- having regard to the report by Gay McDougall, UN Special Rapporteur on Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slave-like Practices during Armed Conflict (22 June 1998),
- having regard to the conclusions and recommendations of the 38th session of the UN Committee Against Torture (9-10 May 2007),
- having regard to the Report of a Study of Dutch Government Documents on the Forced Prostitution of Dutch Women in the Dutch East Indies During the Japanese Occupation, The Hague (2004),
- having regard to the resolutions on the comfort women adopted by the US Congress on 30 July 2007, and by the Canadian Parliament on 29 November 2007,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the government of Japan, during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s until the end of World War II, officially ordered the acquisition of young women, who became known to the world as ianfu or "comfort women", for the sole purpose of sexual servitude to its Imperial Armed Forces,

B. whereas the "comfort women" system included gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation, and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death or eventual suicide, in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century,

C. whereas the dozens of "comfort women" cases brought before Japanese courts have all ended in the dismissal of plaintiffs' claims for compensation, despite court judgments acknowledging the Imperial Armed Forces' direct and indirect involvement, and the State's responsibility,

D. whereas most of the victims of the "comfort women" system have passed away, and the remaining survivors are 80 or more years of age;

E. whereas over the past years numerous high-ranking members and officials of the Japanese Government have made apologetic statements on the "comfort women" system, while some Japanese officials have recently expressed a regrettable desire to dilute or rescind those statements,

F. whereas the full extent of the sexual slavery system has never been fully disclosed by the government of Japan and some new required readings used in Japanese schools try to minimise the tragedy of the “comfort women” and other Japanese war crimes during World War II,

G. whereas the mandate of the Asian Women's Fund, a government-initiated private foundation whose aim was the implementation of programmes and projects to compensate for the abuse and suffering of the “comfort women”, came to an end on 31 March 2007,

1. Welcomes the excellent relationship between the European Union and Japan based on the mutually shared values of a multi-party democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights;

2. Expresses its solidarity with the women who were victims of the “comfort women” system for the duration of World War II;

3. Welcomes the statements by Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono in 1993 and by the then Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama in 1995 on the “comfort women”, as well as the resolutions of the Japanese parliament (the Diet) of 1995 and 2005 expressing apologies for wartime victims, including victims of the “comfort women” system;

4. Welcomes the Japanese Government's initiative to establish, in 1995, the now-dissolved Asian Women's Fund, a largely government-funded private foundation, which distributed some “atonement money” to several hundred “comfort women”, but considers that this humanitarian initiative cannot satisfy the victims’ claims of legal recognition and reparation under public international law, as stated by the UN Special Rapporteur Gay McDougall in her above-mentioned report of 1998;

5. Calls on the Japanese Government formally to acknowledge, apologise, and accept historical and legal 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 until the end of World War II;

6. Calls on the Japanese Government to implement effective administrative mechanisms to provide reparations to all surviving victims of the “comfort women” system and the families of its deceased victims;

7. Calls on the Japanese parliament (the Diet) to take legal measures to remove existing obstacles to obtaining reparations before Japanese courts; in particular, the right of individuals to claim reparations from the government should be expressly recognised in national law, and cases for reparations for the survivors of sexual slavery, as a crime under international law, should be prioritised, taking into account the age of the survivors;

8. Calls on the government of Japan to refute publicly any claims that the subjugation and enslavement of “comfort women” never occurred;

9. Encourages the Japanese people and government to take further steps to recognise the full history of their nation, as is the moral duty of all countries, and to foster awareness in Japan of its actions in the 1930s and 1940s, including in relation to “comfort women”; calls on the government of Japan to educate current and future generations about those events;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, to the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Japanese Government and Parliament, the UN Human Rights Council, the governments of the ASEAN States, to the governments of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan and Timor-Leste.

#### **D. Region:** The Republic of Korea

Summary of a resolution that demands Japan's formal apology and full compensation to wartime "Comfort Women" for the sake of restoration of their honor and dignity

Presented by Shin Hak Kyun

8 October 2008 Bill No. 1125

The South Korea Parliament passed a resolution condemning Japan and demanding Japan to compensate and officially apologize to hundreds of thousands of women from Korea and other Asian/Oceanic countries who were abducted and were forced to serve frontline Japanese imperial soldiers as sex slaves during World War II.

The South Korea Parliament was inspired by similar resolutions first adopted in 2007 by the United States House of Representatives and subsequently by the Netherlands, Canada and the European Union, demanding the Japanese government's sincere apology and compensation. It was also inspired by the international recognition of the necessity of an awareness campaign for future generations in order to pass on a record of the negative legacy.

It should be noted that several Japanese local governments such as the Takarazuka and Kiyose City Councils, etc. have also adopted resolutions and written statements since March 2008, demanding that Japan take full responsibility for committing the abuse of war-time "Comfort Women." The South Korea Parliament supports these recent movements.

The UN Conference for Human Rights was held in Vienna in 1993. Since then, a wide range of recommendations aiming for a solution to the "Comfort Women" issue have been continuously presented by the UN Commission on Human Rights and various other international organizations. As of June 2008, the Japanese government has not accepted these recommendations. The South Korea Parliament declares the deepest concern about the Japanese government's failure to officially acknowledge its responsibility for these crimes.

The majority of the surviving comfort women are now in their late 70s or older and their numbers continue to diminish as the condition of their health deteriorates. The South Korea Parliament adopted a resolution for the sake of restoring the honor and dignity of the comfort women with the detailed statement shown below.

1. South Korea Parliament demands that Japanese government officially give a full apology to these women from many Asian and Oceanic countries who had been sexually enslaved for the Japanese imperial soldiers since 1930s until the end of WWII for the restoration of the honor and dignity of the war victims.

2. In order to restore the substantial human rights and dignity of these "Comfort Women," the South Korean Parliament demands that the Japanese government admit these crimes against humanity and allow school textbooks to carry facts about the "Comfort Women" so that those inhumane acts will not be repeated. It also calls for the Japanese government to provide adequate and effective compensation to the comfort women which should be promoted by decisive action, such as having the Japanese Diet establish related regulations.

3. For "Justice for the Comfort Women," the South Korean Parliament demands that the South Korean government play an active and evidential role in ensuring that the Japanese government officially apologizes, provides compensation and allows for the teaching of the true story in

history textbooks by accepting the recommendations of international bodies including the UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, etc.

## E. Region: Taiwan

Legislative Branch

Documentation of: 7th period, 2nd session, 8th meeting

Drafted by Sue-Ying Huang, Li-Huan Yang, Ching-Te Lai, Men-An Pan

5 November 2008

### PROPOSAL

Twenty-eight members of the Legislative Branch, including Sue-Ying Huang, Li-Huan Yang, Ching-Te Lai, and Men-An Pan, have issued the following proposal. It documents that “we ask that the Government of Japan should officially recognize its historical responsibility on its war-time sexual slavery system, make a sincere apology and due compensation directly to victims alive thereby recovering their dignity and realizing their justice, and henceforth, sincerely observe the proposal by the UN Human Rights Council and educate the relevant historical truths to the present and the future generations forever.”

### RATIONALE

1. The Japanese military forcibly put a number of women into sexual slavery through recruitment, abduction, threatening, and cheating at the sites occupied by the Japanese military during the WWII. The Government of Japan has not yet officially recognized, and even denied its historical responsibility for this sexual slavery, thereby damaging the dignity of the victims. The continued Japanese refusal of apology and compensation further defames the victims whose trauma has not yet healed.
2. It has been sixty-three years since the end of the WWII. The Government of Japan must take necessary action to resolve the remaining problems resulting from the sexual slavery by the Japanese military, and to compensate the victims for the defamation and the damage inflicted upon them.
3. The victims in Taiwan are all in their 80s and/or 90s. While they are alive, it is necessary that the Government of Japan resolve the problem of compensation, which will enable the recovery of the dignity and secure the human rights of the victims. The House Resolution 121, passed in the U.S. House of Representatives on July 2, 2007, states that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery. Upon the passage of this resolution in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Legislative Branch of Taiwan sincerely hopes that the human rights issue of “comfort women” has to be diligently observed by the international milieu of justice. We pay special attention to the serious situation in which the Government of Japan has not resolved the “comfort women” issue, and thus, demand the Government of Japan should attend to the problem, to legislate to take its historical responsibility, and to provide compensation directly to the victims.

Signed by Cheng-Er Lin, Yi-Shih Lin, Hung-Chih Lin, Chieh-Jung Lin, Hsueh-Chang Lu, Chin-Chu Wong, Hsiu-Chu Hung, Tsai-Feng, Huang Ho, Shen-Liang Liu, Wen-Chi Kung, Chieh Chen, Ying Chen, Fu-Hai Chen, Ken-Te Chen, Ting-Fei Chen, Fong-Chi Chu, Shao-Ping Lin Hsu, Jen-Fu Yang, Yi-Hsiung Chiang, Ching-Chih Wu, Chia-Chun Chang, Kuo-Tung Chi, Li-Yun Chao, Tian Yu