

Aug 23, 2017

United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization
7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
FRANCE

Mr. Boyan Radoykov
Chief of Section
Universal Access and Preservation

OPEN LETTER

Re: Request for mediation with the Proposer of “The Voices of Comfort Women”

Dear Mr. Radoykov,

We, the four organizations represented by the four signatories below, made a proposal (No.2016-76) to the Memory of World Register, organized by UNESCO, and are aware that there are the two proposals on the “Comfort Women” currently being reviewed by UNESCO.

We understand that, according to information from concerned organizations or individuals, there is a possibility that some of our nominated documents overlap with documents included by another proposal, “the Voices of Comfort Women.” Should this be the case, our findings and those of the “the Voices of Comfort Women” appear to be contradictory with each other, even though the two proposals at least they are based on the shared documents.

In many occasions, UNESCO has asserted that it does not make historical judgments or interpretations of history. However, provided the same documents are nominated for the two proposals having contrary findings, UNESCO’s decision on either proposal for inclusion on the Memory of World register would have significant implications on historical judgments or its interpretations on a specific historical event, especially in the case that the one is registered to the Memory of World register while the other is rejected.

We do not wish at all that our proposal would generate negative impressions to the world on the Memory of the World Programme. Therefore, we would like to respectfully request UNESCO to mediate about the differences between the two proposers to clarify the categorization and interpretation of the documents overlapping, which we consider indispensable. The following possibilities should be carefully considered upon the mediation.

We would like to add that aforementioned request for meditation is completely in accordance with the views presented in the progress report of the IAC Chair concerning the review of the Memory of the World Programme, which was made available on the website of UNESCO.

Scenario 1

A possibility that documents irrelevant or inconsistent with the principal findings of the proposals are included

We completely understand that UNESCO has no intention to make historical judgments or its interpretations. On the other hand, UNESCO must carefully examine whether the Summary at the section 1 in the nomination form explain and describe the contents of nominated documents correctly and objectively, since the main objective of the nomination should be written in the Summary. Furthermore, UNESCO must strictly examine whether any documents which are irrelevant or inconsistent with their arguments are mixed in the documents nominated. If a decision is made to inscribe such documents, such decision can be regarded as a distortion or destruction of the value of precious primary source.

Scenario 2

A possibility that two or more proposers nominate same documents under incompatible categories

Provided that the same documents are nominated by two proposers for incompatible findings, UNESCO is required to handle the examination of such nomination proposals with utmost care and impartiality as well as rational, logical and transparent manners. However, this must not be easy at all. Besides, any decision can be regarded as an official judgment of the UN system upon a certain historical event. Especially in the case that one proposal is registered and another is rejected, UNESCO's decision would lead to confusions and contestations among concerned member states and their people. Such outcome should be avoided by all means.

We request UNESCO to pay utmost attention in examining these two proposals in the above-mentioned two scenarios. It is necessary for UNESCO to clarify the intentions or reasons of the each proposer why the particular documents are selected especially those of the documents overlapping for the both proposals

We propose dialogues with the proposer of “the Voices of Comfort Women”, with a sincere hope that such dialogues would contribute to the examination being undertaken by UNESCO.

The dialogues are the most important tool in accordance with the spirits of UNESCO, and we consider that engaging in such sincere dialogues with the proposer of “the Voices of Comfort Women” is indispensable for fostering mutual understanding. This is to say that to make a decision of inscription or non-inscription on the register in absence of the dialogues that we are proposing in this letter goes against the spirits of UNESCO and would be inadmissible.

At the end of this letter, we would like to appeal again the goal of the Memory of the World Programme is neither to distort nor to destruct the precious primary sources but to safeguard and provide access to documentary heritage.

Respectfully Submitted,

References :

Extracts of the resolution adopted by the 201st Session of Executive Board, May 2017;

3. Welcomes the progress achieved by IAC on the MoW review
5. Welcomes the IAC Chairs progress report contained in the Annex (201 EX/5 Part I (H)) and encourages the IAC to continue working on the statutes and guidelines along the lines of this report and its recommendations.
6. Request the Director General to present the final report on the MoW review by the IAC to the Executive Board at its 202nd session.
* 201 EX/5 Part I (H)
- (7) Questioned nominators will be given more time for dialogue to the concerned parties even before submission to the RSC. Dialogue may be mediated.
(c) If no agreement has been reached, continued dialogue among the concerned parties may be encouraged for one more cycle (i.e. maximum of four years).

Signature

Kase Hideaki
Chairman, the Alliance for Truth about Comfort Women

Signature

Koichi Mera,
Representative, the Study Group for Japan's Rebirth

Signature

Kazunobu Oyama
Chief Director, the Institute of Research of Policy of Media and Broadcasting

Signature

Yumiko Yamamoto
President, Japanese Women for Justice and Peace

Appendix: List of the documents possibly nominated by the aforementioned two proposers

List of the documents possibly nominated by two proposers

"the Voices of Comfort Women" and *"Documentation on "Comfort Women" and Japanese Army discipline"*(No.2016-76)

A series of US documents related to Comfort Women owned by and in the custody of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Item	Summary/ Excerpts
Japanese Prisoner of War Information Report No.49 on Oct. 1, 1944 Of United States Office of War Information	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 Myitkyina 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 703 of these girls to Burma in 1942.
ALLIED TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER SECTION (ATIS) South West Pacific Area 21 Interrogation Report	<p>No.24: PW saw both Japanese and Korean women in brothel at RABAUL</p> <p>No.25:PW stated that there were two brothels to his knowledge in RABAUL. They contained a total of about 100 Korean and Japanese girls.</p> <p>No.27:PW stated that there are brothels at RABAUL occupied by Japanese and Korean women.</p> <p>No.28:PW had not suffered from disease. Not many soldiers had diseases now-a-days as women in brothels are periodically examined. Brothels are controlled by the Military Authorities and were located in all the principal toons. PW had only been to the ones in Manila. There are 5 or 6 houses there, each with about 10 girls, Korean, Filipinos and Chinese. PW had heard that there were brothels in DAVAO and RABAUL. Brothels were plainly marked in Japanese "IANJO" so were easy to locate.</p> <p>No.30: PW stated that there was an official Army brothel in BELAWAN in which two native women from NARUMONDA and six Chinese women served. Great precautions were taken against VD.</p> <p>No.31:Brothels are provided in the army, and at DAVAO he had seen Korean, Formosan, and native women in them.</p> <p>No.34:In SHANGHAI, brothels with Korean girls were under Army control but he had not visited any. He had heard that one was to be established at MINDANAO</p> <p>No.37:Whenever troops were stationed in a locality in numbers, brothels were immediately established by both the Army & Navy. Korean and Chinese women usually employed but occasionally suitable native women, would be controlled. Profits go to the Services.</p> <p>No.46:There were brothels in MANILA and DAVAO, containing Korean women. Although these establishments were authorized by the Army, PW thought that profits went to the proprietors.</p> <p>No.48:Brothels were provided in the Army and contained mostly Japanese and Korean women. PW (?) a number of men who had contracted VD but most of them (?) after treatment.</p> <p>No.50:The brothels at RABAUL were under Military control and were staffed by Japanese women.</p> <p>No.52:Brothels were provided by the Army in FRENCH INDO-CHINA, (Japanese women); CHINA (Japanese and Chinese women) and RABAUL (nationality of inmates unknown).</p> <p>No.53:The Army provides Brothels in which Chinese, Koreans, Formosans and Japanese, but no native women are to be found.</p> <p>No.57:PW had never been wounded and had never had a disease.</p> <p>There were approximately 20 brothels in RABAUL, 5 in KOKOPO area and the remainders were in the town. Inmates were all Japanese women. The brothels were mainly patronized by the officers; men could rarely gain admittance. Prices were officers ¥ 5 and men ¥ 1.</p> <p>No.60:Brothels in field operational areas were started and controlled by the Army. He could give no details of the women employed in brothels at RABAUL. He had heard of 2 cases of venereal disease in the Army but such cases were uncommon.</p>

Item	Summary/ Excerpts
<p>ALLIED TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER SECTION (ATIS) South West Pacific Area 21 Interrogation Report</p>	<p>No.60:He had heard that there were brothels in RABAUL and believed there were run by civilians under RIKUJO KINMU (Land Duty) Units. The women in them were “played out” Japanese. No.67:Chinese coolies were not allowed to visit the brothels in RABAUL. They were maintained by the Military and inmates were Koreans. No.78:PW apparently had no views but was able to state that he had heard that there were naval brothels in RABAUL stuffed by Japanese girls from 20 to 25 years of age. They were professionals from Japan. No.94: PW insisted that the Army did not run brothels but rarely supervised and those run by civilians under an arrangement whereby supervision began with the war and ended immediately after cessation of hostilities. No.104:Although brothels were provided by the Army, there was only one woman to about 2000 troops, consequently only officers were accommodated. No.573:Brothels in PI – MANILA Some were under Army jurisdiction. Others run by civilians were out of bounds, and MPs who tried to keep soldiers away, frequented thee places themselves. Girls at civilian houses were usually half-caste SPANISH-FILIPINOS and prices YEN 10-20. Those at Army controlled houses were YEN 2-3 with JAP and KOREN girls. Despite the differences in prices civilian houses were more popular, as they were less crowded.</p>
<p>ATIS Prisoner of War Interrogation Report in 1943</p>	<p>RABAUL Japanese War Prisoner PROSTITUTION There are three houses of prostitution in the town of RABAUL, with a total of about ten prostitutes. Since the area is under jurisdiction of the Japanese Army, three brothels must have the permission of the military to operate. The military rents the buildings to the brothel keepers. The prostitutes (Chinese, Koreans, and some Indonesians) ranged in ages from 20 to 25. PW does not believe that they were sent to RABAUL by the Government, but that they had already been established there before the occupation. The girls are inspected weekly by the Army Medical Corps If they have contracted any diseases, they are not permitted to work until they are well again. The price which the soldiers pay differs in the area, but the average is about Yen 2.50, which was the price at RABAUL. PW states that prices were higher in Japan; about twice the amount. The price includes a stay or approximately one hour, tea and tea cakes, use of the wash ? and prophylaxis treatment. However, prophylaxis is also supplied free of charge by the Army. Contraceptives (SAKKU) are compulsory, but these are not furnished by the Army. Beer, liquor, and food are served at these houses at exorbitant prices. Although men are given a physical examination from time to time , they are not examined for venereal disease. However if a soldier contracts a disease he is hospitalized until he recovers, being treated by injections in arm daily. The punishment is very light for not reporting symptoms, and although they do not lose their rating or pay while hospitalized, their chances for promotion are impaired but not made impossible. Intercourse with native women on the island is prohibited by military law.</p>
<p>ATIS Bulletin No. 1483-</p>	<p>DALIAO, PHILIPPINE Oct. 5, 1944 Diary of a Japanese officer ----for the first time since leaving SOUTH CHINA, we saw JAPANESE girls clad in Kimono and holding a parasol. Can there be more pleasure and amusement for us than this? These girls are Army prostitutes had landed here one step ahead of us. ---</p>
<p>ATIS the Research Report No. 120</p>	<p>The Japanese insure one form of amusement by locating their brothels in forward areas. One prisoner of war has stated that brothels are immediately established where there are any large number of troops. Majority of the women of the Japanese brothels are Japanese, Korean and Chinese. Although the Japanese apparently waste no time in establishing their brothels, it appears that the demand greatly exceeds the supply. This condition practically excludes the enlisted personnel and only officers are able to take advantage of these places of business. There appears to be quite a bit of difference of opinion among prisoners of war as to who owns and controls the brothels. The statement of a prisoner of war who was a brothel owner in BURMA and several lists of brothel regulations which have been captured in South West PACIFIC Area indicate that brothel are privately owned but under military supervision. Information available indicates that the venereal rate among Japanese troops in South West PACIFIC Area is exceedingly low.</p>

Item	Summary/ Excerpts
South East Asia Translator and Interrogation Center (SEATIC) Bulletins	<p>No.116:March 3, 1945 BURMA Nearly all camps along the railway line had comfort stations ordinarily staffed by Koreans and Chinese. In Mandalay, it was also possible to buy beer, Sake, cigarettes, and other luxuries.</p> <p>No.131:Apr. 28, 1945 BURMA Comfort Girls: There had been some comfort girls in MAYMYO, but PW had never been able to afford to visit them. The rates were Yen 3.50 and Yen 5.00, with half rates for half time. Out of PW's Yen 24 a month, he saved Yen 10-, and the rest went on cheroots, etc.</p> <p>No.186:July 12, 1945 BURMA At MEIKTILA too, there were 5 houses of prostitution but he never visited there so does not know anything about the comfort girls.</p>

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration
<https://www.archives.gov/>
 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001, U.S.A

Japanese Women for Justice and Peace (JWJP)
 Email: JapanNetwork1@gmail.com
 URL: <http://nadesiko-action.org>