

Oct. 31, 2017

**Statement concerning the decision of UNESCO's Memory of the World Register on
"Documentation on 'Comfort Women' and Japanese Army discipline"**

----United Nations mark a great turning point on the Comfort Women Issue----

UNESCO's Memory of the World Register publicized the decision, Oct. 30, 2017, that the examination has been suspended for the two proposals, namely the proposal, Documentation on "Comfort Women" and Japanese Army discipline, made by our four Japan-US groups, The Alliance for Truth about Comfort Women, The Study Group for Japan's Rebirth(USA), The Institution of Research of Policy of Media and Broadcasting, Japanese Women for Justice and Peace, and the proposal, "Voices of Comfort Women", and dialogues for the two proposals are promoted. We issue a statement on this decision as follows.

Understanding the significance of this decision as a great first step made by a very important international organization which acknowledges different arguments related to the comfort women issue such as ours, we sincerely welcome the decision and are pleased to participate the dialogue.

As you are aware, there are two proposals on the comfort women issue. The one is "Documentation on 'Comfort Women' and Japanese Army discipline", made by our four Japan-US groups, and the other is "Voices of Comfort Women" made by "International Solidarity Committee", consisting of eight different countries.

According to the announcement, it seems that IAC recognizes the two proposals are a confrontation too political to be reached at the conclusion in the current situation.

There was complicated and confused history in the past concerning the comfort women issue. However no primary sources have been discovered to prove systematic coercion or sexual slavery, and a written confession of systematic coercion by the army has finished to be a fabricated story.

This has come to be obvious by a serious joint research of Japanese and Korean governments and by a long term independent research of USA congress. These researches have reconfirmed comfort women were commercial prostitutes at the wartime. Furthermore regulations requesting for serious hygiene standard and good manner to both soldiers and comfort stations have been discovered.

Therefore we have come to a conclusion that the comfort women system was a state-regulated prostitution for the army and nominated public documents discovered by the researches, on the base of the conclusion, for UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

On the other hand, the proposal made by "International Solidarity Committee", consisting of eight different countries, asserts comfort women system was sex slavery.

In the process of the examination of UNESCO, we explained about the result of the government verification study on "Kono Statement", which shows "Kono Statement" was not intended to be a description of the fact on the comfort women, but rather a political compromise. We presume our explanation influenced UNESCO's decision that the two proposals are a political confrontation.

Though each argument of the two proposals is completely contrary of each other, some documents overlap to support each argument. Also inappropriate expressions such as Holocaust are seen in their proposal.

Therefore, we request UNESCO to mediate a dialogue between the two nomination proposers. We hope dialogues make it possible to clarify and to verify the documents of each side and to contribute to the study and research of the comfort women issue.

Now UNESCO reviews the Memory of the World Programme. The main points of the review are to exclude political aim and to rely on dialogues among concerned parties in case of problem.

Final Report of IAC on the review process of MoW programme at the 202 session, Oct. 16, calls upon the Director-General, the members of the IAC, and all stakeholders of the MoW Programme to abide by the principles of dialogue, mutual understanding and respect and to avoid further political tensions concerning the MoW Programme.

Taking account of such environment, we consider the decision of UNESCO is appropriate.

We wish necessary measures to concretize dialogue will be taken.

End

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