

Solidarity to End Comfort Women Fraud

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**Statement to Honorable Mayor of Mitte District**

Dear Honorable Mayor of Mitte District,

Allow us to write to you for the first time.

Thank you in advance for taking your precious time to read our statement. We are history scholars and social activists from South Korea.

We, as a civic group, have been speaking against the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery, which established a girl statue in front of the Japanese Embassy in the Jongno-gu District, Seoul.

We have been holding rallies and asking to stop their Wednesday demonstrations and to remove the comfort girl statue since the end of 2019.

We came all the way from South Korea to Germany because assertions made by the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance and the Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (The Korean Council) regarding the comfort women issue turned out to be all lies after we examined closely sources related to the comfort women issue and statements made by former comfort women themselves, and their false assertions unfortunately led to the unhappy situation in which the Republic of Korea was branded as a country that spreads deception.

In the Republic of Korea, ever since a Korean woman named Kim Hak-sun claimed on August 14, 1991, to be a victimized Japanese military comfort woman, assertions made by the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance have become the dominant point of view. They assert that the comfort women issue deals with the fact that the Japanese military forcibly abducted young girls, sexually abused them daily, coerced them into sexual slavery and even

murdered them in extreme cases.

Moreover, on December 14, 2011, they celebrated the 1,000th memorial of the “Wednesday demonstration” and established a statue of a girl called “Statue of Peace” on the pedestrian walk across the Japanese Embassy. Around this statue, many people gather and condemn Japan for the war crimes.

Since then, there have been 150 of the same statues installed domestically and more than 30 overseas. One of them sits right here in Mitte District.

The inscription on the pedestal of the Mitte statue reads, “During World War II, the Japanese military forcibly abducted women and made them sexual slaves throughout Asia and the Pacific region. We pay great respect to those survivors who courageously campaign to prevent the brutal war crimes from ever being repeated.”

That is exactly what the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance has been advocating.

The Korean Council that led the establishment of the comfort girl statue compares the comfort women to the victims of the Holocaust and promotes the view that the comfort women were victims of the Japanese military war crimes who were brutally killed.

However, the allegations made by the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance and the Korean Council are entirely false.

The 1998 Gay McDougal Report of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights defined war crime as “systematic rape, sexual slavery and slave-like practices during armed conflict committed by the enemy or occupation forces.”

Therefore, in the region where international conflict or armed conflicts are ongoing, abduction, rape and murder of women of the enemy side are considered war crimes.

However, at that time, Korea was not occupied by Japan, it was part of the Japanese empire, with full rights. In addition, comfort stations were legal prostitution facilities set up and run to prevent war crimes from being committed against women in the occupied regions, so comfort women were sex workers who contracted with the master of the comfort station, prepared various papers, obtained permission to work there and earned money in exchange

for their services.

Most of their customers were Japanese military servicemen and the women who worked there posted their Japanese business name on the front door. This fact alone suffices to prove that they cannot be compared at all to the Holocaust victims.

The Japanese military were required to pay the fixed fares and follow the service hours set according to the comfort station regulations. Comfort women received a fixed portion out of the money paid by the Japanese military customers and divided between the house master and the working women. ]

Some comfort women earned so much money that they could afford to buy jewelry like rubies, jade and diamonds, while others sent money home to cover the living expenses or school fees for their family members.

The assertions that comfort women were victims of wartime sexual violence, Japanese military sexual slaves or could be compared to the Holocaust victims are all fallacies.

The comfort girl statue called “Statue of Peace”, a symbol of the comfort women movement, is also a product of a lie.

The statue of the girl is a manifestation of fallacy and hatred reflecting the false recognition of the comfort women and the anti-Japanese enmity maintained by the sculptor of the statue.

The sculptor stated in his note, “I wanted the cruel history to be remembered that during the Imperial Japanese colonial days, budding Korean girls and young women were forced or deceived into becoming sexual slaves in the battleground and in extreme cases were murdered, victims of brutal and merciless crimes.”

However, this was not at all true, either.

Particularly, the sculptor depicted young girls in their early or middle teens, who were allegedly temptingly deceived by the Japanese military and forcibly taken to the battlefield, he used his own eleven-year old daughter as a model and shaped the statue as a thirteen to fifteen-year old girls.

However, according to the law at that time, girls in their early teens were not allowed to work as comfort women. It is just flabbergasting to hear the assertion of the statue promoters that the Japanese military at war in the Second Sino-Japanese War and in the Pacific came all the way to Korea and abducted young girls in their early teens.

In order to become a Japanese military comfort woman, it was necessary for a woman to conclude contract with the master of the comfort station and then report in person to the police department in charge to have the identification paper issued, otherwise she could not leave the country. Then, upon arrival at the destination, she had to report to the local consulate/police department and submit various papers before she was able to obtain the permission to work as a comfort woman.

These strict procedures clearly indicated that criminal means of seduction, kidnapping or abduction could never have worked to get comfort women.

Therefore, the epitaph inscribed on the “Statue of Peace” was entirely fabricated information, aiming to plant enmity against Japan.

The Korean Council claims that the statue of the girl is a symbol of peace, but peace cannot be established on the basis of a fallacy.

Fallacy only breeds hatred and hatred inevitably invites struggle and conflict. Particularly, to teach false history to the very young generation about to grow up is nothing but a criminal act.

We would like you to consider if children having learned history filled with fallacy and hatred will be able to have bright and beautiful future.

People educated through lies will have a questionable future.

Naturally, sad history remains history and we must remember it, reflect on it and learn from it.

However, the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance and the Korean Council have been totally involved in distorting the reality of comfort women’s lives and have been spreading hatred against Japan with all their might.

And the statue of a girl, called Statue of Peace, is nothing but a tool of malicious racist propaganda.

We strongly demand that the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance and the Korean Council cease promoting lies. Their lies caused the Republic of Korea to be branded as a liar state by the international community and we fear that we may face the sad situation of being globally isolated.

Honorable Mayor of Mitte District, we sincerely hope from the depth of our hearts that you and the people of Mitte District will see through the Korean Councils' lies and awaken to the truth about the comfort women issue.

We politely ask you not to allow the display of the girl statue, a symbol of fallacy and hatred.

We truly love our Republic of Korea as its citizens.

Thank you so very much.

END