



Washington Coalition for Comfort Women Issues, Inc.

워싱턴지역 정신대문제 대책위원회

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Emperor and Empress of Japan,

You are recognized around the world as moral and spiritual leaders of the Japanese people, as well as for your efforts to advance world peace. This letter is a heartfelt appeal to you to exercise your moral and spiritual leadership to speak clearly to your people about one of the cruelest offenses perpetrated during World War II. This offense remains unresolved today.

As you are aware, during that conflict a very large number of women and girls in Asia were forced into the government sanctioned system of sexual slavery and rape operated for the Imperial Army and Navy. These women and girls are known by the euphemism 'Comfort Women.' Many thousands of them were killed during the war. The survivors were for decades treated with shame and contempt in Japan and in their home countries.

This offense remains a deep source of pain and anger throughout Asia and the world. That is because Japanese government leaders continue today to use tricks of language and double-talk to refuse to frankly acknowledge the wartime government's direct, central role in this terrible crime. For example, past prime ministers have stated that they regret that women and girls had a bad experience during the war. But these ministers specifically refuse to acknowledge the wartime government's central responsibility for the crimes committed against these women. Some refuse to even admit a crime took place.

The failure to honestly apologize to Comfort Women by admitting the moral, spiritual, and legal responsibility of the wartime government is today a global human rights issue. This is reflected in US House of Representatives Resolution 121 in July, 2007 as well as in similar National Assembly resolutions of Canada, the Netherlands and the European Parliament in 2008.

We have the honor to bring to your attention the urgent need to encourage the Japanese people and government to resolve for good this long-standing issue and redress the pain and suffering of those Comfort Women who are still alive.

Sincerely,

Christine Choi
President

cc: Naoto Kan, Prime Minister of Japan
Ichiro Fujisaki, Japanese Ambassador to the US
Mike Honda, US Congressman
Hillary Rodham Clinton, US Secretary of State