

RESOLUTION

Nearly 100 women representing six countries at the Conference of Asian Solidarity with the nine former comfort women in South Korea met August 10-11, 1992 at the Christian Academy House in Seoul in relation to the issue of drafted comfort women. The following resolution was adopted by the conference and this meeting will be continued next year in order to exchange information with the hope that the representatives from North Korea and China will be able to participate in the future.

Resolution:

We, the participants of the Asian Solidarity with the "Comfort Women" Drafted for Sexual Service by Japanese Military, have affirmed the following resolution based on the reality of the complete negation of the drafted women's human dignity and sexual enslavement being forced by colonial authority and invasion by war.

These realities of the "comfort women's issues" are cruel crimes in the history: rape, assault, torture, and murders were repeatedly conducted by the imperial army of Japan through the organized system of the Tenno ideological fascism. This is to prove that the patriarchal militarism is the crime against humanity violating and subjugating women. Thus, solving the problems related to the comfort women's issues is very important for preventing the same mistakes of the past and for building peace.

Japan has not repented of its sin committed in the war and has avoided its responsibility for the war victims. Moreover, Japan recently passed the Peace Keeping Operation Bill in the national

Diet, which will open a way to send its military troops overseas. We are very much concerned about this fact as the revival of Japanese militarism.

In order for Japan to become a true neighbor with other Asian countries, Japan should re-evaluate its past history and take responsibility for solving various problems related to past wars, especially related to issues of the "comfort women".

Women of North-South Korea, China/Taiwan, Thai, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan have affirmed the necessity of solidarity among individuals and organizations in order to create measures to solve these problems. That conference decided to form the Asian Solidarity Conference on the Drafted Comfort Women. In addition, the participants from six countries adopted the following resolution:

1. The government must continue to seek facts related to the comfort women in Asian countries who became the victims of the Asia Pacific War.
2. The government should discover the realities of former "comfort women" and apologize to the victims and their families and offer meaningful compensation and reparation.
3. We ask the United Nations and other international human rights organizations for cooperation in order to bring a solution to the comfort women issue.
4. We make solidarity with other Asian countries who could not attend the conference and pursue the purpose of the conference.
5. We make all effort for human rights of women and peace building in the world.

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PEACE IN NORTHEAST ASIA

The following is a summary of "the message" presented at the International Christian Conference for Peace in North-East Asia on August 7-8 in Seoul, Korea.

At the invitation of the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK), 61 participants from 8 countries, representing Asian churches and councils of churches in Asia and the United States met in Seoul, Korea, to discuss the regional and global implications of the Peace-Keeping Operations (PKO) Law of Japan. Approved on June 15, 1992 by the Diet under highly controversial circumstances, the PKO law has caused serious concern around Asia and within Japan itself. We have gathered in solidarity with the National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ) whose General Secretary, the Rev. Munetoshi Maejima, called the PKO law "the most serious turn of events in Japan's entire post-war political history."

We express to our hosts, the NCCCK, our deep appreciation for taking the initiative to convene this significant conference to examine the manifold issues of the PKO. We recall with gratitude the swift response of the churches in opposing the PKO bill when it was introduced in April by the Government of Prime Minister Kiichi

Miyazawa. In this regard, we applaud the courageous leadership of the NCCJ and the international ecumenical solidarity expressed through such ecumenical institutions as the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), the Japan North America Commission for Cooperative Mission (JNAC), the National Council of Churches (NCCs) in Korea, Philippines and Taiwan. Yet again, the ecumenical movement has inserted itself in the forefront of the struggle for peace and justice. We offer thanks to God for this prophetic witness.

It is our fervent prayer and hope that churches and Christians from around the world will take up the PKO issue as a matter of urgency. For it is not only a Japanese concern of the remilitarization of their society. Nor is it simply a question of upholding the integrity of Japan's Peace Constitution of 1947. At stake is whether the community of nations has the necessary will to shape a post-cold-war order based on disarmament, respect for human rights and a common pursuit for harmonious relations free of want, suffering or poverty. At state, too, is whether, finally, after a history of confrontation and warring madness, the human family can fulfil Prophetic Isaiah's vision of beating swords into lasting plowshares. We see the PKO law as a Kairos moment for the ecumenical movement to intensify its commitment to peace with justice and to spare no effort to build a network of resistance to

the PKO law for the sake of all God's people.

With such tasks in mind, we offer the following insights and recommendations about the PKO law and commend them to the churches and the ecumenical institutions for careful study and appropriate action:

INSIGHTS

a) **Unconstitutional Law:** Article 9 of Japan's Peace Constitution proclaims that "the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as a means of settling international disputes....In order to accomplish the aim...land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained." The PKO law sets the legal precedent for allowing the dispatch of the Self Defense Forces (SDF) beyond Japan's territorial borders for the first time since the end of World War II. This, therefore, brings it in direct contradiction to the Constitution as well as to the SDF mandate of 1954 stipulating that they cannot participate in collective military operations with the military forces of other nations.

b) **Manifestation of Japanese Racist Ideology:** The basic doctrine of the Tenno (Emperor) ideology is that the Japanese individual and national state identity are one and the same. Since the Tenno embodies all political, religious and military power, he becomes the *raison d'être* for the entire Japanese society. Furthermore, the Tenno's legitimate realm is not only the Japanese territory but in fact it extends to the entire world. Thus, Japan's military invasion was perceived not as conquest but rather acquisition of what already belonged to the Tenno. This ideology led to the scheme of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. This was intentionally

developed as the vehicle for Japanese industrialization and imperialist expansion. It therefore is a form of structural racism. Japan's economic prosperity is a direct result of such an ideology. It is based on the massive exploitation of the natural resources of the "Third World".

c) **Remilitarization:** Consistent with the Tenno System, Japan has followed a steady path towards rearming itself. Hiding under the U.S./Japan Mutual Security Treaty of 1952 and using such misleading terms as Self Defense Force, Japan has built up an "army without arms" and has a defense budget that today ranks number two behind the U.S. With an annual growth rate of 4%, its defense budget for the five-year period starting from 1991 is approximately US\$ 176 billion. The PKO law is part and parcel of a process of turning Japan into a "suitable military power" for the enhancement of its current economic hegemony.

d) **Transforming Japan into a Regional Power:** The end of the Cold War era marked a critical watershed in Japan/US security alliance. Instead of making the 1952 Treaty obsolete, the 1991 Gulf War transformed the latter into a global proposition. According to the provisions of the Treaty, US troops in Japan may only be deployed for activities in the so-called Far East. However, for the Gulf War, they were sent directly from Japan. Though Japan contributed US\$ 13 billion to the Coalition Forces in the War, it became extremely sensitive to the Western criticism that it did not send its boys to help defend the oil fields. Using this as a convenient pretext, Japan sent minesweepers to the Gulf in April, 1991. This was the first overseas mission for the so-called SDF.

e) **Emerging US/Japan Global Partnership:** The PKO law must

Korea (300 million dollars) replaced any individual request for compensation.

On December 6, 1991 three former so called "comfort women" along with 35 of the former Japanese soldiers of South Korea, brought a lawsuit against the Japanese government for the humiliation they had suffered at the hands of the said government. On April 13, 1992 six more former "comfort women" joined in the prosecution of the same lawsuit.

Instead of hiding in the dark, an unknown number of women who were enslaved as prostitutes to military personnel, known as "comfort women", are appealing the crimes against humanity "so as not to ignore or forget the massive injustices perpetrated in times past, for it goes without saying that those who forget the past will repeat the same violations in the future."

Forms and the Violence of Militarism

The issue should be dealt with from a "human rights" perspective rather than from the perspective of the shame which comes to surround women who have lost their virginity because of the violations perpetrated by enslaved men in army uniforms. In this context, the women are enabled to speak out about their bitter experiences without becoming the victims of excessive discrimination.

However, this same violence against women in this and other patriarchal societies of the East still exists in the sex industry. In its many and pervasive forms, the sex industry continues even to this day, stretching across the globe into every corner of the world. Under Japan's unannounced but, in effect, aggressive economic invasion of other Asian nations, women's human rights have been truncated and not allowed to mature. The chauvinism of

technological prowess and the economic gap between Japan and other Asian nations and peoples, once again has produced the conditions which encourage trafficking of women, while at the same time destroying all of creation, including these self-same women.

As in times past, during the rampages of the Pacific War and, for that matter all wars, countless numbers of women have died from sexually transmitted diseases. So also today, the AIDS epidemic, which is becoming increasingly endemic to third world countries, will be encouraged and strengthened by the economic wars being waged against them, in the name of international trade and development. The victims of this disparity in economic viability and opportunity are the women who are placed in the most powerless positions in society, and who have no choices, when it comes to protecting themselves from disease.

Meantime, women's groups issued various statements regarding "comfort women." The JWCTU statement along with 12 other appeals were taken by women's representatives to the Prime Minister's office.

The government disclosed 127 materials (70-Self Defense Force and 52-International Affairs) on July 7, 1992. However the materials from both the Labor and Police ministries of the government did not present any materials. Women groups held a press conference and issued "A Letter to the Government of Japan" asking that they continue the survey of the past material and open it to the public. by Aiko Carter

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jungles without knowing how the war ended.

Women's Actions

On May 8, 1990 on the occasion of the President Roh Tae Woo's visitation to Japan the Church Women United issued the statement regarding the Japanese government's apology and compensation for war victims.

The first inquiry regarding "comfort women" issues in the Diet was presented by the Upper House member Yasuko Takemura on May 30, 1990 when she asked whether the government was going to make a survey on the subject.

On June 6, 1990 once again, when the Upper House member Shoji Motooka asked the same question, Mr. H. Shimizu, the Labor Ministry of the Japanese Government answered that the recruitment of the "comfort women" was conducted by private organizations and, therefore, was not the responsibility of the state; thus the government could not make any inquiry. Women in Korea, as well as in Japan, were surprised at the irresponsible attitude of the government. The thirty seven women's groups of South Korea sent a protest letter to Prime Minister Kaifu and a Japanese women's group was organized supporting networks with the comfort women in South Korea.

On December 18, 1990 Upper House member Sumiko Shimizu asked the same question to Mr. Nakayama, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who repeated the same answer as that of the Labor Minister. On April 1, 1991 the government's answer was changed to the government did not have resources to answer and did not know anything about the subject.

On May 28, 1991 the Korean Council for the Women Drafted by Sexual Service by Japan sent an "Open

Letter" to the Japanese government. The Embassy of Japan in Seoul responded that the Japanese government has no intention of recognizing these "comfort women" because of the lack of information on the subject. The women's group continued a demonstration at the Embassy of Japan in Seoul, Korea.

On January 16, just before the Prime Minister Miyazawa's visitation to South Korea, a newspaper reported the discovery of materials related to the "comfort women" from the Self Defense Force Library in Tokyo. This material was to prove the Japanese Military involvement in setting up and administration of the "comfort women" system. Prime Minister Miyazawa could no longer ignore the matter and apologized to President Roh when he met him in Seoul.

From February 28 to March 4, 1992 women's groups in Japan jointly received 28 women from South Korea, who were on a journey for and with the "Comfort Women". This was organized by the Church Women United in Korea. It became an opportunity for all who were involved in hosting them to discover a part of the hidden history of women.

The individual survey has continued. Many books on the subject were published by the Koreans and Japanese in order to disclose the past women's history.

Legal Action at Tokyo District Court

The signature collection for appealing to the government to establish legal means of providing compensation to the war victims has started. The fund raising for the court struggle has been initiated by Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union and other women's groups, when the government repeatedly said that Article 2 of the 1965 Japan-Korea Treaty indicates Japan's economic aid

seen also in the context of the qualitative changes in the Japan/US security alliance brought about by the needs of the post-Cold-War era. The US attempt to forge a new world order under its military hegemony necessitates that the economically powerful Japan cooperate militarily and financially on a global scale. In a policy statement entitled "America in Asia: Emerging Architecture for a Pacific Community", US Secretary of State James Baker, explicitly spelled out the key role of the Japan/US alliance in the "new Pacific partnership". He said the two countries must fulfill the promise of the global partnership as enunciated by President George Bush at the Japan/US summit in 1990. In the January 2, 1992 Tokyo Declaration, Bush and Miyazawa said that this "alliance relationship" was the political basis on which the two countries would cooperate, each shouldering its role and responsibility, to ensure the peace and security of the world. The PKO law is therefore inseparably connected with this political/military alliance relationship. It potentially turns Japan militarily also into a global power.

f) Non-Repentant Japan: Japan still has not reconciled itself with its Asian neighbors because of the atrocities it committed in this century, particularly during World War II. The slavery and degradation of the "comfort women", the conscription to the war and the factories, the rape and massacre of the people and the whole-sale destruction of cultures and languages are some of the examples of its ignominious role for which it has not apologized. Unless Japan can come to terms with and make appropriate compensation for these crimes, it will never be fully welcomed into the community of nations. Its aspirations to play a constructive international role will never be fulfilled.

g) Ongoing Military Flashpoints: The region of Asia, despite the end of the Cold War, remains one of the most highly militarized areas of the world. The division of Korea, the unresolved territorial issues of the Kurile Islands and the Spratly Island, the yet unresolved conflict in Kampuchea, the insurgency in the Philippines and the unresolved future of Taiwan and the many racial/ethnic conflicts across Asia, are all potential flashpoints for military confrontation. History has amply demonstrated that the use of force will never provide the basis for an enduring peace. Comprehensive, politically-negotiated solutions should be promoted as a matter of policy by all governments.

h) Culture of Violence: Violence is both personal and corporate. It is evil and structurally permeated in social, cultural and political life of all nations giving rise to war, militarism, sexism, patriarchy, racism and economic dominations. Furthermore, this culture of violence has caused collective egoism, ethnocentrism, national chauvinism and interventionism. The PKO law and the peace-keeping forces perpetuate the existing ineffective way of resolution of conflicts rather than provide a promising conducive international climate for genuine peace and harmonious relations among all parties to the conflict.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Given that the first mission of the SDF is to participate in the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), an ecumenical team should visit Cambodia to observe the actual operations of the UN.

2) More analysis of the true meaning of the PKO must be widely disseminated by the ecumenical movement as part of their educational responsibility with a view to promoting effective

advocacy and international ecumenical solidarity opposing the PKO law and the negative aspects of the evolving new Japan/US global partnership.

3) The establishment of as many nuclear free zones as possible must be a high priority of the international community. Towards this end, all nations, including Japan, China, Russian, USA, North and South Korea and Taiwan, must subscribe to the non-proliferation regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and open all their facilities for IAEA inspection.

4) A major international ecumenical conference should be convened as soon as possible in order for a broader and more in-depth discussion on the PKO law and its implications. This would provide another important occasion for ecumenical contribution to the widening search for a new world order.

5) Churches should provide resources and develop educational material for sharing information about the "comfort women" issue. They should also be encouraged to mount a campaign to pressure the Japanese government to carry truthful accounts in Japanese textbooks about Japan's role in this century and to refrain from "sanitizing" its shameful history. These efforts will enable Japan ultimately to be liberated to participate responsibly as a major player in the community of nations especially in Asia.

6) Churches must continue to use their rich theological and biblical resources to promote justice for all peoples especially for the "least of this earth" such as migrant workers and the poor. Their peacemaking ministry should include a critique of the patriarchal influences in the shaping of the existing world order.

August 8, 1992

"COMFORT WOMEN" CONTESTING HISTORY

Historical Understanding

As a part of the rest and relaxation (R&R) program for Japan's WWII imperial army, so-called "comfort women" were organized by the Japanese fascist government in January of 1938 after the massive "Rape of Nanjin". For more than one month after Nanjin was occupied by the Japanese military machine, rape and killings continued day and night. This particular case of military barbarism is well known and fully accepted as historical fact outside Japan, but there are those in Japan who, even to this day, deny the historicity of the incident and in so doing interfere with the need of the Japanese people to deal honestly with the crimes of their militaristic past. During the war the Japanese people were happy about the news of Japan's victory and control over Nanjin, China. For the purpose of sustaining a high military morale and also as a means of providing extra income for the military machine itself, the "comfort women" system was established and came to be deeply pervasive throughout the war theater.

The Japan's Purpose of "Comfort Women"

It is said that the first brothel was started in Shanghai, China with 100 women being brought from Kita Kyshu and from the Korean Peninsula. Twenty women out of 100 were about 35 year-old Japanese women while 80 of them were Korean women under 20 years of age.

The Jugun Ianfu or "Comfort Women" phenomenon was not only a deeply inhuman form of social disorganization in which me

consistently and pervasively violated women, but it was, and is, a crime of extreme cruelty that was perpetrated by Japan's imperial army during times of war so as to enhance the invasion and subjugation of other Asian nations. As a part of Japan's colonial policy, between 80,000 and 200,000 women were seized under false pretenses and, in the name of Emperor Hirohito. They were used in the profit-oriented brothels of Japan's extensive sphere of imperial conquest. At that time the Japanese women were encouraged to have many children so that the future soldiers for the imperial army would be expanded.

A military record in 1941 indicates that the military figured 20,000 women would be needed for 700,000 soldiers. Ms. Sumiko Shimizu, an Upper House member, questioned the purpose of "comfort institutions" as the government's action at one of the Diet sessions on March 21, 1992. Mr. Arita, of the Government Committee, answered based on the old materials that Japanese soldiers at the battlefield created anti-Japanese feelings among the indigenous peoples, and could no longer sustain security in the area. Thus, it was necessary to establish places for soldiers and for their health administration. Ms. Shimizu pointed out that the materials from the Department of Defense said the purpose of the "comfort women" was to arouse soldiers' fighting spirit, to sustain military rules, and prevent crimes and venereal diseases.

Brothels were regulated under military control, which managed the total operation. Old records revealed that such brothels were used by soldiers who received military-issued coupons. The brothel managers paid special taxes to military headquarters. Okinawan records showed that a 12 percent tax was included in the price for soldiers and officers.

Sociological and Psychological Pressure

Under the strict and deeply pervasive traditions of Confucian patriarchy which exist in lands of the East Asia it was, and is today, almost impossible for women to talk openly about having been violated sexually especially when said violence was perpetrated under the radically inhuman conditions of war. As a result of the pressures of this deeply imbedded tradition, these memories of radical violence have been, for most of their victims, forever frozen within the human psyche, never to see the light of day. After 47 years they are able to speak out about their experiences while the government of Japan intended to hide the historical realities of the past.

Those who survived being "comfort women" each have a story to tell. What we are discovering is that those women from other Asian nations who did not obey military orders were tortured and then forcibly taken to Japan, China, and other Asian nations; to all the locations that Japanese soldiers were sent. It is thought that the "comfort women" were even given a military rank (insignias having yellow stars on a red background) but the fact is that social ranking and discrimination was encouraged and pervasive among the women with Japanese prostitutes at the top of the social scale and Koreans, Taiwanese/Chinese and other Asians following below in said order.

They were not counted as human beings, but were transported in much the same manner as the weapons and ammunition of war. This is the reason we cannot find comfort women-related information today. They were counted as the military horses or some other form of weapon. These women were killed by the military who feared the military secrets would leak out if they were captured or some were left alone at the battlefield or