

LETTER OF REQUEST To Prime Minister Hosokawa

We, the Association for Anti-Prostitution Activity, have been working on the issue of "forced military sex slaves" for a number of years, and by various means have pressed the Diet, successive cabinets and other government officials to seriously address the issue.

At a press conference right after your inauguration into office, you described the last war Japan fought as a war of aggression. We greatly welcomed the statement, hoping that it might help our nation come a step closer to resolving the issue. We deeply regret today, however, that you have since stepped backward by repeating your predecessors' words: "The issues of post war compensation have been long settled." Even the previous Cabinet of Prime Minister Miyazawa stated, in the words of his Chief Cabinet Secretary, "The government acknowledges the involvement of the military, and will seriously consider ways of expressing our feelings of apology and remorse," when it released materials from its investigation into the problem of the military sex slaves. The new cabinet of yours must be more serious about assuming responsibility in this regard.

Today, this issue is receiving much attention from the world community. The Sub-commission of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, for instance, adopted a report submitted by Mr. Theo van Boven, its Special Rapporteur from a Study Concerning the Right to Restitution, Compensation and Rehabilitation for Victims of Gross Violations of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. It also recently appointed Ms. Linda Chavez as a new rapporteur on the question of systematic, organized rape, sexual slavery and other related subjects during wartime. Women in countries such as Korea that were victimized by Japanese military aggression are making claims for compensation in court. If Japan is to seek a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council before resolving the problems of war responsibility and war reparations, it would be a stance none of us can tolerate. We, as citizens of this nation, hereby strongly request that your cabinet adopt policies and programs that will help Japan win the genuine trust of the international community. We further request that your cabinet make every effort to resolve the cases of forced military sex slaves with an understanding that it was a gross violation of human rights, next to murder.

We urge the government of Japan, through your power and leadership, to:

1. Sincerely apologize and provide compensation as quickly as possible, considering the age of many of the victims of sexual slavery;
2. Continue to investigate the facts regarding the issue, devote all necessary efforts to that purpose, and clarify the government's official stance by, for example, publishing a comprehensive report of researches into this grave matter;
3. Emphasize education by improving history instruction and establishing a war memorial museum, so that the same crimes will not be repeated by anyone, including our own future generations;
4. Invite Ms. Linda Chavez, the U.N. Special Rapporteur, to Japan as soon as possible and assist her research in every way;
5. Understand that forced military sexual slavery, an unprecedented state crime in world history, originates from a legal system and social customs that have long openly allowed patronage of prostitution while not recognizing women's human rights, and, therefore, move to protect human rights by revising laws and regulations whenever and wherever necessary.

Signed by THE ASSOCIATION FOR ANTI-PROSTITUTION ACTIVITY (AAPA) on Oct. 13, 1993

Akebonokai

The Salvation Army

New Japan Women's Association

National Federation of Regional Women's Organizations

National Council of Women Consultants

The Council of Women's Institute for Ex-Prostitutes in Japan

Tokyo Young Women's Christian Association

Tokyo Society of Social Workers for Women Clients

Japanese Nursing Association

Women's Committee of the National Christian Council of Japan

Christian Women's Temperance Union in Japan

National Council of Youth Associations in Japan

Japan Women's Council

Federation of Japanese Women's Organizations

League of Women Voters of Japan

Japanese Women's Democratic Club