

日本に謝罪と 補償求める決議

韓国国会は二十四日、今年六月以降続発した日本近海での韓国漁船の拿捕事件に対し、日本政府に謝罪と補償を求める決議を全会一致で採択した。決議文は、「日本が一方的に引いた新領海線により漁船を拿捕したのは国際法上の義務に違反する」とし日本を非難している。

十四日午前の記者会見で、元従軍慰安婦への償い事業を実施している「女性のためのアジア平和国民基金（略称・アジア女性基金）」（原文兵衛理事長）の事業に協力していた日本の女性運動家が、韓国政府から入国禁止措置を受けたことを明らかにした。与謝野副長官は「基金事業にかかわる問題から生じたのである」として引き続き韓国側の理解を求めるべく、韓国政府に再考を促したいと述べ、措置を撤回するよう求めていく考えを示した。

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Japan to ask Seoul not to bar activist

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Japan will ask South Korea to reconsider a decision to ban a Japanese woman from entering the country if the action is based on her involvement in helping pay seven Korean former "comfort women" through a government-backed Japanese fund, a government spokesman said Thursday.

"If this decision was made because of the fund project, we will ask the South Korean government to reconsider the entry ban," Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kaoru Yosano said at a press conference.

Yosano made the com-

ments when asked about Seoul's decision to bar Keiko Usuki from entering the country, reportedly because of her role in securing lump-sum payment from the government-backed Asian Women's Fund in January for seven women who were forced into sexual slavery for Japanese troops before and during World War II.

The women are euphemistically known as comfort women.

The payments were made despite the South Korean government's objections to such women receiving money from a private fund rather than di-

rectly from the Japanese government.

South Korea says the Japanese government itself should take responsibility for the comfort women issue, while Tokyo has refused to pay direct state compensation to the women.

Yosano said the Japanese government has yet to learn of the reasons for South Korea's decision.

The private fund paid ¥2 million in lump-sum "solatium" payments, raised from public donations in Japan, and ¥3 million from government coffers for medical and welfare services to each of

the seven women in January.

Usuki, 49, a representative of a nongovernmental organization, helped bring the former comfort women's plea for compensation to the attention of the Asian Women's Fund, government sources said.

The fund was initiated by the Japanese government in July 1995 and has pooled donations from Japanese businesses and individuals.

Historians estimate that as many as 200,000 women, mostly from the Korean peninsula, which was then under Japanese colonial rule, were sent to frontline brothels.