

Speech by Assemblyman Kim Won Woong Republic of KOREA.

(Following is the speech to be made by Assemblyman Kim at the "Comfort Women Seminar" cosponsored by WCC and IFOR) ~~and IADL~~

My name is Kim Won Woong and I would like to express my sincere appreciation to ~~IFOR~~ ^{the Korean Council} and ~~"Comfort Women Council"~~ (and Korean Foreign Ministry) for helping me participate in the 50th session of the Human Rights Committee of the UN.

Recently, I formed, together with three colleagues of mine, "Assemblymen's group ^{on} of comfort women issue". My colleagues and myself had hoped that the Korean and Japanese governments would solve this issue properly with sincere efforts. However, they had been insincere and deceitful about this issue all along.

And, we realized that we hadn't paid enough attention to this issue and that there should be political efforts to solve this problem. That's why we formed the "Assemblymen's Group ^{on} of comfort women issue. It's truly my pleasure to have this opportunity ^{to be here} of being with you.

As you all know very well, the comfort women (sex slaves for Japanese military force) were deliberately, consistently and in a large scale, enslaved to sexually serve the Japanese military personnel from the early 1930s till 1945, which is heinous, inhumane war crime ^{unprecedented} ~~unprecedented~~ in ^{the} world history.

Nevertheless, Japanese government refused to deal with this serious war crime sincerely and fully reveal the materials related with this crime.

The Japanese government suspended its efforts after the second report of August, 1993 which confirmed only a part of the crime and tried to get over with this issue only with a few words of apology and a small amount of "consolation money ^{in lieu} ~~by way~~ of compensation."

Furthermore, on February 7, Japanese ^{Prosecutor's Office} ~~prosecutions~~ refused to accept the bill of complaint, despite the fact that the Japanese government itself admitted that it used force in the course of recruiting the comfort women and there was a precedent of punishing those involved with forcefully recruiting Dutch Women as sex slaves for Japanese military personnel.

The Japanese government should realize that if it continues to refuse to solve this issue legally and try to get over with it by paying a small amount of ^{consolation} money, it proves that it is still treating the victims as ^{prostitutes} ~~comfort women~~ and have no intention at all to be a responsible member of this world community, thereby humiliating the conscientious Japanese people.

The Japanese government should prove itself to be ethical as a member of world community by showing penitence in action about the war crimes of the past, before demanding a bigger say in international community ~~commensurate~~ with its economic power and seeking stronger military power. Unlike Germany, Japan has not punished any war criminal, and even refused to pay compensation to newly confirmed war victims. I strongly urge the Japanese government to change its attitude about this issue.

After the second world war, Europe established laws and systems of punishing war criminals. Thanks to such efforts, it could immediately ^{establish tribunal} ~~hold a trial~~ ^{regarding} about the ^{massive organized} ~~group~~ rapes occurred in Bosnia.

I am sure that the proper solution to this issue will provide a very important milestone to improve the human rights in Asia which has insufficient realization and systems for human rights.

The Assemblymen's Group on Confront Women Issue will do its best to legally solve this issue, continue to urge the authorities concerned to be sincere in dealing with this matter, and seek to have all the facts known and recorded correctly in ^{the school} textbooks ~~of the students~~.

At the same time, ^{as a way of} ~~we will seek to~~ enhance ^{ing} awareness ^{among} of the students about this issue, ^{by} ~~our~~ performances of "Silent Elegy" in schools. ^{a play about this issue,} ~~we are discussing~~ ^{the possibility of} ~~with the Ministry of Education about~~

Above all, we will try our best to contribute to working out measures to solve this matter in close cooperation with governments, ^{other} politicians and private sectors.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to help us ~~positively~~ for the solution of this issue.

Thank you very much.