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Sex slave for Japanese

Maria Rosa Luna Henson (above), now 65, weeps as she reveals her 50-year-old secret: how she became at 15 a "comfort woman" for Japanese troops in WW II. After the war, she got married (left) but kept her secret from her husband, parents and children. Her husband died in the 1950s and left her with three children. Philippine Inquirer photo

RP gov't to back redress of WWII 'comfort women'

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will not do anything about it," Padilla said. However, President Ramos has said he was still awaiting recommendations from the Department of Justice and Foreign Affairs and the National Commission on the Role of Women before taking action on the issue. "We are not shooting from the hip," Ramos said.

At press time the agencies were given until Sept. 24 to submit their proposals.

NOT COVERED BY REPARATIONS

Padilla expressed optimism that Japan would be receptive to the women's demands. "They have already apologized and they may apologize again and give some compensation," he said.

He emphasized that the compensation was not covered by the \$400 million in war reparations Japan paid the Philippines.

"Comfort women" was the euphemistic term used by the pre-1945 Japanese government for about 200,000 women it had recruited by

force to provide sexual services for their soldiers during the war. The women, aged 12 to 17, came from all over Asia.

Japan acknowledged and apologized for the forcible recruitment recently when a Korean woman filed in July a suit against the Japanese government.

Henson, now known as "Lola Rosa," came forward two weeks ago after a strong appeal by women's rights groups.

Henson's disclosure contradicted a study by University of the Philippines history professor Ricardo Jose concluding that there were no Filipinos among the so-called "comfort women."

Following Henson's public claim, however, an agency was organized to air the same appeal nationwide and to provide assistance and counseling to those who might follow in Henson's suit.

Task Force on Comfort Women is led by Nelia Sancho, whose radio appeal convinced "Lola Rosa," now 65, that it was time unburden herself.

RP gov't to back redress of WWII 'comfort women'

by **CHERIE M. QUEROL MORENO**
Managing Editor

Fifty years after her ordeal, Maria Rosa Luna Henson may yet receive help and redress for allegedly having been forced into prostitution by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II.

The Philippine government will support former "comfort women" in their bid to seek compensation from the Japanese government,

said acting Foreign Secretary Tomas Padilla.

"We will seek some kind of compensation for these poor kabayans of ours," Padilla told *Philippine News* sources in Manila.

"They (the Japanese government) know they did something wrong and it's easy to say I'm sorry, but there must be some kind of compensation," he added.

"No government can just say we

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