

# Korean Civil Society Organizations: Accomplishments and Expectations

Written by Thomas J. Ward and William D. Lay

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## Korean Civil Society Organizations: Accomplishments and Expectations

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THOMAS J. WARD AND WILLIAM D. LAY, MAR 2 2019

**This is an excerpt from *Park Statue Politics: World War II Comfort Women Memorials in the United States*.  
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Japan's Axis ally, Nazi Germany, committed crimes against humanity in its annihilation of Jews and other minorities between 1941 and 1945. Through the Nuremberg Trials, many of the perpetrators were brought to justice. Koreans have on more than one occasion drawn parallels between the treatment of the comfort women and the Holocaust. After the Nuremberg Trials, German Chancellor Willy Brandt offered unqualified apologies and billions of dollars of aid and compensation to the victims of the Holocaust. Germany has paid more than \$90 billion in compensation and reparations to Holocaust survivors and their families.<sup>[1]</sup> Koreans seek comparable recognition of guilt and acceptance of accountability from Japan for the criminal wrongs committed against the comfort women, and they want to revisit the 1965 agreement that released Japan from addressing Korean claims that remain outstanding. On their website, the Korean-American Forum of California, one of the most influential American CSOs supporting the comfort women, displays a photo of German Chancellor Willy Brandt on his knees before a monument built to commemorate the hundreds of thousands of Jews from the Warsaw ghetto who perished in the Holocaust.<sup>[2]</sup>

### **The Genesis and Role of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan in Seeking a Solution**

Conceived of and founded in 1990 by Ms. Yun Chung-Ok, a former Professor of English Literature at Ewha Women's University, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (referred to as the "Korean Council") began its activities in November 1990. Professor Yun, a contemporary in age to the generation of Korean women and girls recruited into the comfort women system, first became active in comfort women support activities in the 1980s. Her initial focus was the Japanese sex tourism in Korea that had grown since the mid-1970s. The Korean Council describes itself as becoming "vocal in the late 1980s," and its role as that of "confronting the Japanese and Korean governments, raising public awareness of this issue within the international community, and caring for the former 'comfort women.'"<sup>[3]</sup>

Professor Yun, born in 1925, taught at the Ewha Women's University. She said that she has felt a special closeness to the comfort women. Yun recounts that, in the period of the war, her parents had her stop her studies and kept her at home. They feared that she might also be abducted and forced into sexual servitude as a comfort woman.<sup>[4]</sup> In one of its early documents, the Korean Council outlined seven areas that Japan needed to address regarding the comfort women:

- Acknowledge the crime of the Korean women drafted for sexual slavery by Japan!<sup>[5]</sup>
- Reveal the whole contents of the crime of military sexual slavery!
- Apologize formally about the crime of military sexual slavery!
- Erect memorial tablets for the victims of military sexual slavery!
- Pay reparations for the survivors and the bereaved families!
- Record the crime of military sexual slavery by Japan in school textbooks and to educate younger

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- generations about the crime in its entirety!
- Punish the criminals![6]

On January 8, 1992, the Korean Council began holding demonstrations every Wednesday in front of the embassy of Japan in downtown Seoul and calling for justice for the comfort women. Those demonstrations have continued up to the present time. On December 14, 2011, the occasion of the 1000<sup>th</sup> such demonstration, they installed and dedicated a comfort women statue in a park in front of the Japanese embassy in downtown Seoul. The statue sparked a sharp reaction from Japan including a formal protest citing Article 22(2) of the Vienna Convention, which guarantees respectful treatment of any nation's diplomatic missions abroad. The article provides that a "receiving State is under a special duty to take all appropriate steps to protect the premises of the mission against any intrusion or damage and to prevent any disturbance of the peace of the mission or *impairment of its dignity*." [7] Japan argued that the comfort women memorial statue represented an "impairment of its dignity" that could cause Japan's embassy staff to feel unfairly demeaned and threatened.

Observing Japan's reaction to the statue and the storm that followed, Koreans must have understood that they had struck a nerve. Koreans grasped that the vindication that they sought for the comfort women might best be achieved through first prevailing in the court of public opinion and not just through legislation or a court order. They apparently recognized that the erection of comfort women statues and memorials both in Korea and abroad might conveniently accelerate the realization of their goals.

On March 1, 2014, in a speech marking the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the Korean Independence movement, Korean President Park Geun-hye threatened the Japanese government with "isolation" if they continued to avoid accepting responsibility for the comfort women system and the suffering that its victims endured.<sup>[8]</sup> On June 23, 2014, Korea Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Cho Tae-yong summoned Japan's Ambassador to Korea Koro Bessho, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Seoul to protest Japan's plan to possibly revise the Kono Statement. Mr. Cho told Mr. Bessho that the international community recognized Japan's responsibility for the sexual enslavement of the comfort women and that if Japan continued to seek ways to avoid responsibility, it would lead to further marginalization of Japan from the international community. Cho stated that "the more the Abe government attempts to undermine the Kono Statement, the more its credibility and international reputation will be damaged."<sup>[9]</sup>

While the Korean Foreign Ministry announced plans to provide more information on their website on the comfort women and also to take other steps through the development of a white paper on the subject, the comfort women memorials in the United States and elsewhere abroad have proven to be the most effective tool in stigmatizing Japan as cruel and unrepentant toward the comfort women.<sup>[10]</sup> Indeed, one can make the argument that the proliferation of comfort women memorials in small towns and cities in the United States does foster "isolation" and also damages Japan's "credibility and international reputation" as had been threatened by Park and Cho.

## Korean Council Terminologies in Korea versus the United States

As it moved from the Korean to the English-speaking world, the Korean Council chose to opt for far more aggressive language in approaching the comfort women issue. The Korean name of the organization itself is **한국학중앙연구원** or **한국학중앙연구원**, which translates into English as "The Council for Establishing Policies with Respect to Problems Related to the Korean Mentality." But rather than using this rather nebulous name, the Council adopted a novel translation of the Korean organizational name and it became the "Korean Council for Women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan." In English, the Council is insistent on the use of the term "sex slave," while, in the Korean literature, it uses the term "**위안부**" or "**위안부**" ("wianbu" in Korean or "ianfu" in Japanese), meaning "comfort or consoling woman." C. Sarah Soh has taken a critical stance toward the advocacy focus of the Korean Council, finding the organization's approach to be inadequate. Soh's writing conveys her empathy for the victims of Japan's comfort station system and her disgust for what they endured. In her book *The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan*, Soh shares the testimonies of several of the system's tragic victims. However, she also raises issues relevant to the positions taken by the Korean Council. Soh refers to the attitudinal underpinnings towards women within Japanese and Korean culture and argues that these views facilitated the system's emergence and acceptance at the time by the larger society.<sup>[11]</sup>

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## The Role of the Korean Council in Ending the Asian Women's Fund

The Korean Council played the key role in blocking the "atonement project"[12] of the Asian Women's Fund (AWF) in Korea. The fund was an attempt by the Japanese government, in conjunction with private citizens, to offer reparations to the surviving comfort women beginning in 1995. In addition to offering compensation, the AWF website also told the story of the comfort women and pointed to Japan's culpability in the creation and implementation of the system. The Korean Council viewed the AWF as an attempt by Japan to avoid taking direct governmental responsibility for this criminal activity. The Korean Council also opposed this initiative by Japan because the funds, while including a direct government contribution, also consisted of donations from private individuals, thus making it less than an official act of reparation.

To persuade comfort women to spurn Japan's offer, the Korean Council lobbied the government of Korea to provide a surrogate payment to the comfort women in lieu of the proposed AWF payment. At the Korean Council's urging, the Korean government agreed to provide surviving comfort women with a modest monthly stipend to supplement the meager income that these women had available to them. The Korean Council, widely seen as the spokesperson for the surviving comfort women, called upon Japan to admit "legal responsibility for the crimes of sexual slavery" and to take steps to prosecute and punish those responsible for such crimes.[13]

The Korean Council has played an important role in the creation of the House of Sharing, a living complex created for surviving comfort women to spend the final chapter of their lives and share their stories with the many who visit the house both from within Korea and from abroad. The Korean Council has also gathered testimonies of the women who were enlisted in the system and made those available as a publication.[14]

The Korean Council was led by educated women, many of whom were associated with Ehwa Women's University, one of Korea's most prestigious institutions of higher education. Their social status and the academic prestige of the Council's leadership required Korea's politicians to pay attention to them.

## The Korean Council's Response to the December 28, 2015 Agreement

Almost immediately following the announcement, the powerful Korean Council rejected the deal as "shocking." *The New York Times* reported that Lee Yong-soo, a surviving comfort woman, criticized it for falling "far short of the women's longstanding demands that Japan admit legal responsibility and offer formal reparations," and announced her intention to "ignore it completely." In the United States, the Korean-American Civic Engagement (KACE), which played a pivotal role in informing the American public about the comfort women issue and has advocated for the building of memorials in the United States, expressed "grave concerns" about the deal and expressed its resolve to continue to "educate future generations about the comfort women issue." [15]

The Korean-American Forum of California (KAFC) labeled the agreement a "sham." The Forum argued that, through the agreement, the parties were "erasing the history, as if to make it something that never happened." The Forum also expressed concern that removing the statue in Seoul would lead to removing the statue in Glendale, California, which is a replica of the Seoul statue.[16]

Representative Mike Honda described the deal as a "historic milestone" and a "step in the right direction," yet he expressed disappointment that it does not include "a formal and official apology issued by the Japanese Diet" and accused Japan of "attempting to whitewash its historic past." [17] Japan's leaders also faced strong internal opposition for failing to secure a commitment for removal of the statue in Seoul, although a government source reported that removal of the Seoul statue was an implied precondition set by the Abe administration for funding.[18] Prime Minister Abe's wife paid a visit to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine one day after the signing of the accord.[19]

On Korea's side, there are still deep reservations about the agreement. Professor Kim Tae Hyun, the director of the new Reconciliation and Healing Foundation which was created through the December 2015 settlement to provide support to the surviving comfort women, was attacked and sprayed in the face with red pepper spray by a young man immediately following the opening ceremony of the Foundation on July 28, 2016.[20] On the positive side, on June

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18, for the first time, it was reported that one of the surviving Korean comfort women indicated that she would accept compensation from Japan and consider this chapter closed. Those involved in negotiations with Korean civil society groups, and with the Korean Council in particular, viewed this development positively and expressed their view that if two-thirds of the comfort women were to accept, it would then become possible to negotiate with the Korean Council as well and close this chapter of history.[21]

Based on initial responses to the December 28<sup>th</sup> accord, which both countries worked to complete before the end of 2015 due in part to its historical significance as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the original Japan-Korea peace accords, the agreement represents a step forward; however, in hindsight, it is clear that it failed to heal the divide. Korean civil society groups' discontent, along with President Park Geun-Hye's impeachment, led to a political reversal regarding the agreement, just as civil society groups' efforts led previously to the downfall of the Asian Women's Fund.

The United States remains pivotal in the heated exchanges that affect Korea, Japan, and East Asian security. On March 31, 2016, President Obama hosted a Nuclear Security Summit with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Korean President Park Geun-Hye. The three leaders recognized the grave importance of collaboration among the three nations, which, as President Obama pointed out, share a "strong commitment to a rules-based order, one in which all countries, regardless of size, act according to shared norms and shared principles." [22] Due to the issue's divisive impact, before taking sides, leaders need to ascertain that they have sufficient background on this important issue or they should refrain from taking a public position.

On May 11, 2017, almost one year and half after the "settlement" and following the humiliating December 2016 impeachment of Korean President Park Geun-Hye, *The Japan News* reported that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe urged newly inaugurated Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in to "steadily implement the 2015 bilateral agreement" on the comfort women settlement. But President Moon respectfully expressed reservations, explaining that because "some people in South Korea have cautious stances on the comfort women agreement, history issues need to be resolved in a wise manner for the development of both countries." [23] He referred to those reservations even though 34 of the 45 surviving comfort women had already agreed to accept compensation from the December 2015 settlement fund provided by Japan. [24]

President Moon's comments reflect the strong dissatisfaction expressed both by some of the surviving comfort women and by CSOs such as the Korean Council. The Korean Council maintains that the process to reach the December 2015 bilateral agreement had failed to provide an opportunity for input from the comfort women themselves and that the actions taken by the Park Geun-hye government had actually "pushed the victims into deeper despair." They also pointed out that the agreement contradicted the guidelines for resolving the problem that had been set forth by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). [25] Moon has, nevertheless, promised to continue to work with Japan in building a joint response to the threats posed by North Korea's build-up of its nuclear arsenal and missile delivery systems. He indicated that discussions regarding settlement of the comfort women issue would be addressed in a separate track of bilateral deliberations. [26]

The leading role played by Korean CSOs in driving the agenda of the comfort women cause was further punctuated by the December 2016 dedication of yet another comfort women memorial in Korea, this time directly in front of the Consulate General of Japan in Busan, the largest Japanese government complex outside of Seoul. This defiant act led Japan to recall temporarily both its Ambassador to Korea as well as the Busan Consulate General. On February 14, 2017, when the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs requested that the district of Busan remove the statue; the district claimed not to have jurisdiction because it had been placed there not by the government but by a citizens' group. [27]

## **Silence on American GI Sexual Improprieties: A Deliberate Blind Eye or an Unplayed Chess Piece?**

While the Korean Council and its founder Yun Chŏng Ok associated Japanese sex tourism in Korea with the earlier suffering of women under the comfort station system, [28] the Council has not been vocal about the prostitution camp

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towns presently surrounding U.S. military bases in Korea. Those supporting the erection of comfort women statues in the United States likewise do not address this issue.

The women who served as prostitutes for the U.S. military in these camp towns were originally heralded by the government of Korean President Park Chung-hee as “Western Princesses” because, in their work as sex workers, they brought needed foreign currency reserves to Korea’s national treasury. One might justifiably ask, in light of this oversight, whether the main intention of the Korean Council’s activities was to support the comfort women or whether it was meant to support the Korean government and, in the process, demean and embarrass Japan.

The Korean Council has demanded that the government of Japan block all attempts to question the Korean Council’s version of the plight of the comfort women. They hold that speech that dismisses the testimonies of the comfort women serves “to re-traumatize the victims through such repeated denials.”[29] The Council has also insisted that future generations of Japanese be educated about this shameful chapter of Japan’s history in school textbooks to assure that such a tragic injustice not repeat itself in the future.

Korea’s leadership has learned both to listen to, and to recognize the importance of, civil society in continuing to “push the envelope” for justice for the comfort women. Both the Korean government and Korean and Korean-American CSOs played an important role in H. Res. 121 gaining wide support in 2007. The Korean-American community has conducted extensive outreach efforts to American political leaders apprising them of their narrative of the comfort women. These efforts help to explain why H. Res. 121 eventually gained wide acceptance.

## **The Role of Korean-American CSOs in the Comfort Women Issue in the United States**

Since 2010 memorials have been erected to the comfort women in locations across the United States, including New York, New Jersey, Texas, Michigan, California, Georgia, and Virginia. Brookhaven, Georgia, an Atlanta suburb, dedicated a comfort women statue in May 2017. That statue originally was supposed to have been located at the Center for Civil and Human Rights in downtown Atlanta; however, the Center withdrew its support, most likely because of complaints by Japanese groups.[30] The back and forth between Korean and Japanese groups has happened repeatedly with each new effort to establish a memorial.

Local governments have been the main supporters of comfort women monuments. Funding has originated primarily from the Korean-American community in the United States.[31] For its part, the Japanese government has worked to attempt to stop or slow the proliferation of memorials in many venues in the United States, charging that they misrepresent history.[32] Nevertheless, many Japanese-Americans, including former U.S. Congressman Michael Honda, do not concur. Congressman Honda spearheaded the 2007 U.S. House of Representatives Resolution 121, calling upon the Japanese government to apologize for sexual slavery during WWII.[33]

## **The Benefit Derived from Korean-American CSO Involvement in the Comfort Women Issue**

When Chang Joon “Jay” Kim was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992, he became the first Korean-American ever to serve in the United States Congress.[34] Korean-Americans have not made further inroads on the federal legislative level since that time. Nonetheless, the favorable response by a number of local American politicians to the plight of Korea’s comfort women has not only made the comfort women issue a hot topic, but has also helped to tell Korea’s story and increase the profile of Korean-Americans, allowing them to establish important alliances. The Korean American Civic Engagement (KACE), a prominent CSO that has supported the comfort women memorials, is committed to boosting political clout for Korean-Americans in the United States. In its charter, KACE expresses admiration for the successful garnering of political influence that Americans of other ethnic origins, notably Jewish-Americans, have achieved in the United States. KACE teaches its supporters that there are important lessons to be learned from the Jewish-American community[35] and, in the cases of Fairfax, Palisades Park, and Glendale, supporters of the comfort women cause have pointed to parallels between the treatment of comfort women under Japan and the treatment of Jews during the Holocaust.

Beyond the vindication of the comfort women, Korean-Americans have other salient issues for which they seek

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federal support, including care for Korean-American seniors, opposition to efforts to decrease the annual number of work visas issued to Koreans, and interest in preserving the United States' commitment to protecting the Republic of Korea from an attack by Pyongyang. They have also called for the removal references to the "Sea of Japan," the body of water located between the West Coast of Japan and the East Coast of Korea, in American textbooks. They want to replace "Sea of Japan" with "East Sea," a change which has already been affirmed by the state legislature of Virginia and been signed into law by Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe.[36] Nevertheless, resolution of the comfort women issue remains the principal interest of the Korean-American community.

## **The Korean-American Forum of California (KAFC)**

While various Korean-American CSOs have promoted the comfort women memorials, no American organization has gained more prominence than the Korean-American Forum of California (KAFC). KAFC has drawn a parallel between the plight of the comfort women and the Holocaust[37] and seeks comparable self-effacement from Japan, as was shown by post-WWII Germany. The December 28, 2015 agreement between Japan and Korea did not provide this, and KAFC strongly condemned the settlement, warning that the removal of the comfort woman statue in Seoul could lead to the removal of the statue in Glendale as well. Sylvia Yu Friedman, researcher and author of *Silenced No More: Voices of Comfort Women* (2015), characterized the December 28 agreement as "just the beginning," and pointedly observed that comfort women survivors want an apology like "the one that Willy Brandt gave at the Holocaust memorial." [38]

KAFC is headed by Ms. Phyllis Kim, who has been at the forefront of the debate surrounding the comfort women statue and memorial that were set up in the Central Park of Glendale, California. KAFC has supported efforts to establish similar memorials in other California small towns. Kim and KAFC also played a key role in the passage of legislation in July 2016 that required California schools to introduce students to the history of the comfort women in its tenth grade history curriculum.[39] With California's reputation as a trendsetter, it is expected that this addition to the curriculum will spread to other states as well.[40] Ms. Phyllis Kim has gained international attention for her efforts in making this happen, and she was invited to participate as a representative in the December 2016 opening of the Ama Museum in Taipei, which is Taiwan's first museum in honor of the comfort women.

## **Palisades Park: The First American Comfort Women Memorial**

The first targets of Korean-American CSOs have been municipalities with significant Korean-American populations. In October 2010 the Borough of Palisades Park, under Mayor Frank M. Rotundo and then Deputy Mayor Jason Kim, a Korean-American, dedicated a stone monument to the comfort women on the grounds of the Palisades Park public library. This was the first comfort women memorial in the United States. Palisades Park, located in New Jersey near the George Washington Bridge, had a population of approximately 20,000 at the time of the 2010 U.S. Census. More than half (10,115) of the residents identified as being of Korean heritage.[41] The monument in Palisades Park cost a little more than \$2,000, which was covered by the Korean American Voters Council. The Palisades Park memorial features an etching of a Korean woman cowering before a Japanese soldier and a giant sun, with an inscription reading:

In memory of the more than 200,000 women and girls who were abducted by the armed forces of the government of Imperial Japan 1930–1945 known as 'comfort women.' They endured human rights violations that no peoples should leave unrecognized. Let us never forget the horrors of crimes against humanity.[42]

## **The Payoff for Installing a Comfort Women Memorial**

In conjunction with foundations and municipalities in Korea, Korean-American CSOs have invited some American officials to visit Korea. In October 2012, for instance, Palisades Park, New Jersey Mayor James Rotundo spent five days in Korea. His travel and four days of hotel expenses were paid for by the Asian Institute for Policy Studies, a non-partisan independent think tank, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in South Korea. While in Korea he visited the House of Sharing near Seoul, home to surviving comfort women.[43] While there, he called for an apology by Japan at the highest level, pointing to Japan's direct responsibility for what happened.[44] Following the 2013

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dedication of a memorial in nearby Hackensack, New Jersey, it was reported that Bergen County Executive Kathy Donovan, like Mayor Rotundo, had also been invited to visit Korea, and she also met with comfort women there.[45] Donovan's airfare and hotel were covered by the Korean city of Dangjin, a sister city of Bergen County.[46]

## **A Comfort Women Statue Rebuffed in the Nation's Capital**

In December 2016, there was a dedication ceremony for a comfort women statue on the capitol grounds in Washington, DC. While supporters were permitted to proceed with the unveiling on the Capitol Mall on December 10, 2016, they were obliged to remove it the following day and continue to seek an appropriate permanent location for the monument.[47] On May 14, 2014, nearby Fairfax County, Virginia inaugurated a monument near its 9/11 memorial. The dedication reads as follows:

In honor of the women and girls whose basic rights and dignities were taken from them as victims of human trafficking during WWII. Over 200,000 women and girls from Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Netherlands and East Timor were forced into sexual slavery and euphemistically called 'Comfort Women' by Imperial Japanese forces during WWII. We honor their pain and suffering and mourn the loss of their fundamental human rights. May these 'Comfort Women' find eternal peace and justice for the crimes committed against them. May the memories of these women and girls serve as a reminder of the importance of protecting the rights of women and an affirmation of basic human rights.[48]

In explaining the Fairfax County memorial, Grace Han Wolf, who is of Korean descent and a member of the Herndon City Council, as well as a key player in gaining support for the memorial, described Japan's treatment of the comfort women as "a war-crime that happened a long time ago that not many people know about, yet it happened, much like the Holocaust happened." [49] She downplayed the memorial having an anti-Japan focus. Wolf maintained that its intent was to raise awareness of the larger issue of human trafficking and explained, "We don't really perceive ourselves as anti-Japanese nor particularly pro-Korean. We were really careful to position it (the monument) that way because we didn't want it to become just about that," Wolf said. "The 'Comfort Women' is one of many sad stories about human trafficking, which disproportionately affects Asian women and children. So we really took a pan-Asian approach." [50]

## **The Korean Council's Unchanging Demands**

The Council condemned the December 2015 settlement almost immediately after the agreement was signed. In June 2014 at the 12<sup>th</sup> Asian Solidarity Conference on the Issue of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, the Council reaffirmed that in order to resolve injustices and wrongdoings that the victims of the Japanese military comfort women system endured, the Japanese government should accept and recognize the following facts and responsibilities:

- That the Japanese government and Military proposed, established, managed and controlled military facilities known as "comfort stations."
- That the women were forced to become "comfort women / sexual slaves" against their will, and were kept in coercive circumstances in the "comfort stations" . . .
- That there were various forms of victimization of women from the colonies, occupied areas and Japan who suffered sexual violence by the Japanese military, that the scale of victimization was extensive, and that the suffering continues today.
- That it was a serious violation of human rights, which contravened a variety of both domestic Japanese as well as international laws of the time.

The Council has further called upon the government of Japan to take the following measures for reparation:

- Apologize to the individual victims in a manner that is clear, official, and cannot be overturned.
- Make compensation to victims as proof of apology.
- Accounting of the truth:

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Full disclosure of all documents possessed by the Japanese government;

Further investigation of documents within Japan and internationally;

Hearings of survivors and other related persons within Japan and internationally;

- Measures to prevent further occurrence:

Implementation of school and social education including references in textbooks used in compulsory education;

Implement commemorative activities;

Prohibit statements by public figures based on incorrect historical recognition, and clearly and officially rebut similar kinds of statements . . . [51]

## American School Children Are Mandated to Learn about the Comfort Women

Democrats and Republicans alike are in the hunt for Asian-American support and patronage; they represent America's new "swing vote." [52] Korean-American numbers are notably growing due to immigration. They represent a key demographic for voter registration and election outreach. [53] In venues where Korean-American support can make the difference in an election outcome, local politicians may feel they need to pay special attention to this constituency and many do. One of the best examples of this was the July 2016 announcement by the California Department of Education of the history that they would include the study of the comfort women system in the curriculum of all California tenth graders. [54]

## Notes

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[2] Michiko Gingery et al. vs. City of Glendale, 9, No. BC556600, (S.C. Cal. Sept. 18, 2014).

[3] Hee Soon Kwon, "The Military Sexual Slavery Issue and Asian Peace" (paper presented at The First East Asian Women's Forum, October 20-22, 1994), Macalester College, <https://www.macalester.edu/~tam/HIST194%20War%20Crimes/documents/comfort%20women/KoreanWomen.htm>.

[4] Kwon, "The Military Sexual Slavery Issue and Asian Peace."

[5] Exclamation points appear in the original document.

[6] Kwon, "The Military Sexual Slavery Issue."

[7] *Vienna Convention, United Nations Treaty Series*

[8] "South Korea Warns Japan over Comfort Women Review," *BBC News*, March 1, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-26394850>.

[9] "(2<sup>nd</sup> LD) Seoul Summons Japanese Envoy over Review of Sex Slave Apology," *Yonhap News*, June 23, 2014, <http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2014/06/23/77/0301000000AEN20140623002952315F.html>.

[10] "(2<sup>nd</sup> LD) Seoul Summons Japanese Envoy over Review of Sex Slave Apology."



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- [11] Soh, *The Comfort Women*, 40–41, 92–106, 197–207.
- [12] “Atonement Project of the Asian Women’s Fund,” Asian Women’s Fund, <http://awf.or.jp/e3/index.html>.
- [13] “Written Submission by the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan” (written submission, United Nations, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Japan, 15 February – 04 March 2016), [http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/JPN/INT\\_CEDAW\\_NGO\\_JPN\\_22816\\_E.docx](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/JPN/INT_CEDAW_NGO_JPN_22816_E.docx).
- [14] Keith Howard and Young Joo Lee, *True Stories of the Comfort Women: Testimonies Compiled by the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan and the Research Association on the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan* (London: Cassell, 1995).
- [15] Jonathan Soble and Choi Sang-Hun, “South Korean and Japanese Leaders Feel Backlash over Comfort Women Deal,” *New York Times*, December 29, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/30/world/asia/south-korea-japan-comfort-women.html>.
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