
The “Comfort Women” Issue and the Asian Women’s Fund

Asian Women’s Fund

Foreword

Eight years have passed since the Asian Women's Fund was established.

The term "comfort women" refers to those who were forced to provide sexual services to officers and men of the former Japanese military at "comfort stations" during wartime in the past. This victimization, done with the involvement of the former Japanese military, gravely stained the honor and dignity of these women, and inflicted on them incurable physical and psychological pain.

On 4 August 1993, the Chief Cabinet Secretary expressed the Japanese Government's sincere feelings of remorse and apology to all who had suffered as wartime comfort women. Measures that would offer atonement were then sought. In July 1995, the Asian Women's Fund was established as a way to offer the atonement of the Japanese Government and people through projects conducted in cooperation between the Japanese Government and the people.

By September 2002, the Asian Women's Fund had completed projects in the Netherlands, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan, offering the atonement of the Japanese Government to victims who had been forced to become comfort women. The women also received a letter from the Japanese Prime Minister, expressing feelings of apology and remorse and the determination to ensure that such a tragedy would never occur again.

Although there is no way to bring back their youth, we believe that the letter and projects of atonement offered some solace to the victims, who are now advanced in years, in recovering their honor.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Indonesia, support has been given for projects conducted by that Government to develop social welfare facilities there for elderly people over a period of approximately 10 years, starting on 25 March 1997. The projects are now being implemented.

The Asian Women's Fund has also organized activities to ensure that the comfort women issue will serve as a lesson of history, and to raise awareness of the issue. The activities have been based on a determination that, through historical research and education, the Japanese people will never forget the issue or repeat the same mistakes.

The Asian Women's Fund is publishing this booklet to make known what it has learned about the comfort women issue and to report on the results of its projects. We hereby express our gratitude to many people who offered support and assistance to the projects both in Japan and overseas. We also, express our deep-felt appreciation to the many Japanese people who made contributions to the Fund which made this project possible.

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1. Who Were the “Comfort Women”?

The so-called “wartime comfort women” were those who were taken to the “comfort stations” of the former Japanese military during wartime in the past, and forced to provide sexual services to officers and soldiers.

The comfort stations were first established at the request of the Japanese military authorities, as part of war efforts in China. According to military documents, private agents first opened brothels for officers and men stationed in China, around the time of the Manchurian Incident in 1931. When the war spread to Shanghai after the First Shanghai Incident in 1932, the first naval comfort station was established for a Japanese naval brigade posted there. The number of comfort stations increased rapidly after the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937.

It was apparently Yasuji Okamura, at that time the Vice Chief of Staff of the Shanghai Expeditionary Force, who first promoted the establishment of comfort stations for the Japanese army. There were apparently a number of reasons given for their establishment: Japanese military personnel had raped Chinese civilian women in occupied areas on numerous occasions, and the military hoped to prevent a worsening of anti-Japanese feelings on the part of the Chinese people; there was a need to prevent the spread of venereal diseases among officers and men, as otherwise military effectiveness would be reduced; and it was also feared that contact with Chinese civilian women could result in the leaking of military secrets.

It has been reported that Naosaburo Okabe, who had served under Okamura as Senior Staff Officer of the Shanghai Expeditionary Force, was also involved in organizing the comfort station system. A written notification of warnings he sent on 27 June 1938, while acting as Chief of Staff of the North China Area Army, reads in part as follows:

“According to various reports, the trigger causing such potent anti-Japanese sentiment is the widespread diffusion of news about rapes committed by Japanese military personnel in various areas. In fact, {these rapes} have fomented unexpectedly profound anti-Japanese feelings.” (Quoted from Yoshimi, Yoshiaki, “Comfort Women”, 2000, Columbia University Press; p54-55)

And, elsewhere in the document:

“Along with strict controls on soldiers’ individual behavior of the aforementioned type, the provision of facilities for sexual comfort as quickly as possible is of great

importance, {as it will} eliminate cases in which people violate the prohibition {on rape} for lack of facilities.” (Quoted from Yoshimi, Yoshiaki, “Comfort Women”, 2000, Columbia University Press; p55)

Thus, comfort stations were established as a result of decisions made in those days at the expeditionary military headquarters.

When the stations were constructed, the military would often designate certain people as business agents and commission them to bring women from the Japanese homeland. A written request dated 21 December 1937 from the Chief of Police at the Shanghai Consulate-General of Japan to the Chief of Marine Police in Nagasaki reads, in part:

“The relevant organizations carefully considered ways to provide comfort to the officers and men and... it was agreed during meetings among members of the Army Officers’ Bureau at this Consulate and the military police... to establish... military comfort stations (in actual fact, brothels) at various locations on the front, as part of the installations there.”

The Chief of Police at the Shanghai Consulate-General sent a specific request to relevant authorities in Japan that they facilitate the work of agents after they arrived in Japan to recruit women. In early 1938, agents canvassed in different parts of Japan, hoping to employ 3,000 women to serve in the Imperial Army’s comfort stations in Shanghai. Their efforts were criticized by the police in different parts of Japan, who equated the agents’ efforts with kidnapping unsuspecting women and said that they were tarnishing the honor of the Imperial Army.

The reaction of the Director of the Police Bureau of the Home Ministry was to issue a memorandum on 23 February 1938, stipulating that all recruited women had already to be involved in prostitution in Japan, be at least 21 years of age, and obtain permission from their parent or guardian to go overseas. On 4 March the same year, the Adjutant of the Army Ministry issued a notice with the following instructions:

“In recruiting women domestically to work in the military comfort stations to be set up in the areas affected by the China Incident {the contemporary Japanese term for the expansion of hostilities in China into a full-scale ground war in August 1937}, it is feared that some people have claimed to be acting with the military’s consent and have damaged the honor of the army, inviting the misunderstanding of the general public....In the future, armies in the field will control the recruiting of women and will use scrupulous care in selecting people to carry out this task. This task will be

performed in close cooperation with the military police or local police force of the area.” (Quoted from Yoshimi, Yoshiaki, “Comfort Women”, 2000, Columbia University Press; p58-59)

The stipulation that the women must be at least 21 was made because the International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children, which Japan had ratified, prohibited the prostitution of minors.

As the number of comfort stations increased rapidly, the Home Ministry and the Army Ministry found themselves increasingly involved in the issue. A document compiled within the Police Bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs, dated 4 November 1938, contains a request that agents be designated in different prefectures to recruit 400 women: 100 from Osaka Prefecture, 50 from Kyoto Prefecture, 100 from Hyogo Prefecture, 100 from Fukuoka Prefecture, and 50 from Yamaguchi Prefecture. The recruitment, which was to be carried out in a top-secret fashion, was in response to a request from two men: (i) Arifumi Kumon, who was a Major in the army’s aviation squad and a staff officer in the Furusho’s Army of the South China Expeditionary Force, and (ii) the head of the Enlistment Division of the Army Ministry. Their request was: “Please help... sending... about 400 women for the purpose of prostitution... at comfort stations of the Southern China Expeditionary Force.”

Right from the beginning, there were also requests for comfort women from Taiwan and Korea. The above-mentioned document from the Police Bureau of the Home Ministry, dated, 14 November 1938, states: “Arrangements have already been made through the office of the Governor-General of Taiwan to transport about 300 women from Taiwan.”

According to research by Zhu Delan, after the Japanese navy occupying the island of Hainan sent a request, in 1939, to the naval office in Taiwan, the office asked Taiwan Takushoku Co., Ltd., to become involved. The company, which was established in order to promote Japanese state policy, constructed comfort station buildings on Hainan, chose agents, and gave them money. The agents, who were Japanese, then took women in their employ to Hainan. These women were destined to become comfort women, and were “at least 21 years old and already involved in prostitution.” In this case, it would appear that the rules in effect in the Japanese homeland were also applied when recruiting in Taiwan, although whether they were always followed is unknown. Because in ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children in 1925, the Japanese government excluded the colonies from its application.

When recruiters commissioned by the military were assisted by the police in Korea, it is not known whether they followed the Police Bureau's rules, as set out in the above-mentioned memorandum of February 1938. It is natural to assume that, in the beginning, the women sent from Korea were already involved in prostitution, but that, over time, women from poor families mainly came to be taken. They were enticed or coerced in a variety of ways. There is clear evidence that, even in the early days, some were told lies about what their work would be. Some women were coerced into going against their will, either through deceit or force. It is also known that many women taken from Korea were under the age of 21, something not allowed in the Japanese homeland. Some were no more than 16 or 17, and had been in no previous contact with the world of prostitution. They were chosen because, being young and innocent, they would be free of venereal disease. It was also assumed that, because they were Korean, they would have no contact with Chinese people, meaning there was little chance they would divulge military secrets. It would seem that, right from the beginning, rules followed in the Japanese homeland were ignored in Korea, and that perhaps no attempt was made to enforce the rule.

After the Pacific War broke out on 8 December 1941, Japan attacked Singapore, the Philippines, Burma and the East Indies (Indonesia). The military occupation swept south, spreading comfort stations with it. As the occupation widened, it appears that there was a definite change in the way women were recruited for the comfort stations in the new southern territories. A 14 January 1942 reply from the Minister for Foreign Affairs contained the following sentence: "Because it would not be advisable to issue passports to such types of people going abroad, they should be issued military certificates and transported on ships commissioned by the military."

It appeared that the transport of comfort women to those territories came to be under the control of the Japanese military without any intervention of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Home Ministry, and the police. As a result, the rules set out in the above-mentioned Home Ministry memorandum did not apply.

Sometime between the end of February and the beginning of March 1942, the commander of the Taiwan Army received a message from the Southern Army General Command requesting "50 native comfort women, or as close to that number as possible, to be sent" to Borneo. The commander ordered the military police to conduct a survey and choose three agents. The three agents recruited the women and took them to Borneo.

We can assume that the Southern Army General Command also requested that the Headquarters of the Korea Army send Korean women. According to documents compiled by the U.S. military, the Japanese military headquarters in Seoul contacted agents in May 1942, asking the possibility of recruiting women for “comfort services” in Burma. The agents agreed to do so. The military designated certain agents and apparently had them recruit women. Then, 703 Korean women left Korea.

In one documented case, a Korean couple, operating a restaurant in Seoul, were contacted by the military police headquarters. They agreed to take on the job of gathering women and girls and recruited 20 Koreans. With the payment of 300-1000 yen in the currency of that time to their parents, the couple believed that they bought these girls and that they became the couple’s own property. This could be considered as the advance payment by which these girls were bound. It seems that the advance payments indicated, as far as the couple was concerned, that they had control over the women and girls. According to information given by the women and girls, at the time of recruitment, twelve of the twenty recruits were under 21 years of age — one was 17, three were 18, seven were 19, one was 20, and eight were 23 or older. If this information is correct, it would seem to be clear that the conditions stipulated by the Police Bureau in 1938 for recruitment in Japan were ignored.

It appears that the women and girls were not clearly told they would be required to serve as comfort women.

“The nature of this ‘service’ was not specified, but it was assumed to be work connected with visiting the wounded in hospitals, rolling bandages, and generally making the soldiers happy. The inducement used by those agents was plenty of money, an opportunity to pay off the family debts, easy work, and the prospect of a new life in a new land — Singapore. On the basis of those false representations many girls enlisted for overseas duty and were rewarded with an advance of a few hundred yen.” (Page 203, Volume 5 of *Seifu Chousa “Juugun Ianfu” Kankei Shiryou Shuusei (Compilation of Government-collected Documentary Materials Relating to Wartime “Comfort Women” by the Asian Women’s Fund)*)

In such cases the agents tricked them, basically recruiting them against their will.

One can assume that, at times, during the Pacific War, the Southern Army General Command would request the Japanese Armies in Korea and Taiwan to make arrangements; the military police would then choose agents, and the agents would recruit women there and transport them south on ships commissioned for military use. In many cases, the fact that they would become comfort women was

concealed from them. During the Pacific War, women were also gathered in Japan to be sent as comfort women, as they had been before.

Women in the Philippines, the East Indies (Indonesia) and elsewhere were also forced to become comfort women. It is well known that at Semarang, Indonesia, some Dutch women internees were coerced into becoming comfort women. In the Philippines, violence against women was frequent. In many cases, a woman would first be raped, then taken away, confined in a military facility, and raped continuously for a certain period. The facilities were not officially recognized by the military as comfort stations, but they served the same purpose for the local military.

Research by Aiko Kurasawa shows that the recruitment of comfort women in Indonesia was often done through the heads of residential districts or neighborhood groups. The general pattern seems to have been that village officials would receive a request from the occupying forces, and would act on the request. We can assume it was not uncommon for women to be taken against their will.

A report on comfort stations on Celebes indicates that 18 stations in rural areas were all staffed by comfort women native to the island. According to the report, there were different types of comfort stations. In relation to one type of the station, an army colonel and a navy lieutenant were mentioned as responsible for a few stations managed by the squad. Other comfort station was managed by a Japanese civilian and supervised by military headquarters. Also, there was a case of the management by local people and its supervision by the head of the garrison. The report's references to comfort women invariably gave the impression of "prostitutes working under their own volition" or "women who wanted to be recruited." However, the report was compiled at the request of the prosecutor in charge of court-martials conducted by the Dutch military, so the testimony of the accused Japanese may have been colored by a desire to escape punishment.

In Indonesia, like in the Philippines, some squads brought women forcibly to facilities they had constructed on their own, and used the facilities like a comfort station.

Women at comfort stations were forced to render sexual services to many officers and men, their human dignity trampled upon.

The records of a prisoner-of-war interrogation conducted by the US military include the claim that, at a comfort station run by a Korean in Myitkyina, Burma, the women were free to go on outings, participated in sports, and had picnics, giving the impression that the comfort woman had an elegant lifestyle. However, we can

assume that the Korean manager was exaggerating in an attempt to evade being held responsible during the interrogation. In no way could life at warfront comfort stations have been considered elegant.

As the war situation deteriorated for Japan, life at the comfort stations generally became even more miserable. The women were forced to follow the military time after time, and had no freedom whatsoever. When the Japanese military began retreating from one place to another in Southeast Asia, the women were either abandoned or destined to share their fate with defeated military.

2. How Many Comfort Women Were There?

No survey has been done to determine accurately how many women were taken to the comfort stations of the former Japanese military, what proportion of them were from Korea, or how many did not return from the battlefields.

First of all, there are no documents with comprehensive data one could use to determine the total number. We can assume that such documents were never compiled. There are, however, various opinions on the total number of comfort women, all based on estimates made by researchers.

Estimates vary, depending on the basic assumption applied and the related methodology selected by the person conducting the research. One method is to take the total number of military personnel stationed overseas during the Pacific War, then postulate how many personnel there would have been per comfort woman. This method includes consideration of the replacement rate for comfort women, since some were brought to replenish the numbers of others being repatriated. The method, first used by Ikuhiko Hata, was adopted by Yoshiaki Yoshimi in his published writings and is now accepted by many researchers.

Taking the case of the 21st Army in 1939, Yoshimi estimated 1 comfort woman for every 100 military personnel. He put the total number of personnel at 3,000,000 men, giving 30,000. Yoshimi then multiplied this number by a replacement rate of 1.5, to give a total of 45,000 comfort women.

Then taking a different tack, Yoshimi applied common saying used among agents to estimate 1 comfort woman for every 30 military personnel. This gave 100,000, which he multiplied by a replacement rate of 2.0 to give 200,000 comfort women.

These two calculations yield a low of 50,000 and a high of 200,000, giving us a rough idea of how many comfort women there were.

A scholar of China published different estimates in 1999, taking the second figure calculated by Yoshimi (100,000) but multiplying it by replacement rates ranging from 3.5 to 4.0, to arrive at a range of from 360,000 to 410,000 comfort women. These numbers, too, are of course based only on hypotheses.

Ikuhiko Hata, in his first book (1993), posits 1 comfort woman for every 50 military personnel, and a replacement rate of 1.5. With the number of military personnel stationed overseas at 3,000,000, the calculation yields $60,000 \times 1.5 = 90,000$ comfort women. In 1998, he published a paper repudiating Yoshimi's figures and

the calculation method he himself had used in his first book, but his second book (1999) reinstates the calculation method because, “however mediocre it may be, it seems to be the most trustworthy.” However, in the second book, he reduces the number of military personnel from 3,000,000 to 2,500,000, and posits 1 comfort woman for every 150 military men (after considering the fact that there were 200,000 licensed prostitutes in Japan and a potential total of 30 million customers). Using these figures, Hata calculated 16,000 women multiplied by a replacement rate of less than 1.5 to yield 20,000 comfort women.

Obviously, these calculations all depend on both the estimated number of military personnel per comfort woman and the replacement rate. Here, it is worth mentioning this written record: “Brought in a group of comfort women — 1 woman for 100 soldiers.” This record from an April 1939 report of the head of the medical squad of the 21st Army in Shanghai, appears in a memo in the *Operations Journal* of Setsuzo Kinbara, Chief of the Medical Affairs Section in the Medical Affairs Department of the War Ministry.

If we use this ratio of 1 comfort woman per 100 military personnel, and if we estimate that on average a soldier went to a comfort station once a month, we could posit that each comfort woman was visited by five soldiers in one day, with an average 10 days off per month. Since women would sometimes have been unable to work because of sickness, we can accept these estimates as being close to actual numbers.

When discussing the ethnic origin of the women, Kim Il Myon asserts that “80 to 90%” of all comfort women were Korean, for a total of 170,000 to 200,000 Korean comfort women. However, no statistics exist to back up any of these estimates. A careful reading of all available documents shows that many of the women were indeed from Korea, but probably not the overwhelming majority. After all, many of the women were Japanese.

G.J. McDougal, the Special Rapporteur for the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, presented a report to the Sub-Committee on 22 June 1998 entitled *Contemporary Forms of Slavery: Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices During Armed Conflict*. The report has an appendix entitled *An Analysis of the Legal Liability of the Government of Japan for ‘Comfort Women Stations’ established during the Second World War*. The appendix includes the following passage: “Between 1932 and the end of the Second World War, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Imperial Army forced over 200,000 women into sexual slavery in rape centers throughout Asia.” “Only about 25 per cent of these women are said to have survived these daily abuses.” These

numbers are based on “a 1975 [sic.] statement by Seijuro Arafune, Liberal Democratic Party member of the Japanese Diet, that 145,000 Korean sex slaves had died during the Second World War.”

It would not be appropriate to label all comfort stations as “rape centers.” Furthermore, as explained above, there are no grounds for stating definitively that there were more than 200,000 comfort women. And there is certainly no basis for the categorical assertion that 145,000, or about three-quarters of the supposed total number, died, and that all of these were Korean.

McDougal’s data came from a paper by Karen Parker and Jennifer Chew. However, Parker had simply written that she had heard the figure from a Japanese woman who was a Diet member. The Diet member’s data came from a speech by Seijuro Arafune, made on 20 November 1965 at a constituents’ meeting at Chichibu City, Saitama Prefecture. Part of the speech, which was quite inflammatory, went as follows:

“During the war, Koreans were told that they were now Japanese. This was to persuade them to place money in deposit accounts. They deposited 110 billion yen, and the money was all lost at the end of the war. Now they are demanding that the money be returned. They say, ‘Give us back Korea’s wealth, the wealth Japanese bureaucrats held on to during 36 years of rule.’ They say Koreans were drafted by Japan during the war and taken from Korea to work, and those who worked well were used as soldiers, and 576,000 of those soldiers are now dead. There are claims that 142,000 Korean comfort women are dead, killed by the Japanese military’s sexual abuses. Now they are demanding pensions for a total of 900,000 victims. At first, 5 billion dollars was claimed as compensation, but the sum has been whittled down and now they say they are willing to settle for 300 million dollars.”

During the Korea-Japan Treaty negotiations (up to 1965), representatives of the Republic of Korea stated that 1,032,684 Koreans had been recruited to serve as laborers, soldiers, and personnel attached to the Japanese military, and that 102,603 of these had been injured or had died. At the time, no mention was made of comfort women.

None of Arafune figures have any basis whatsoever. It is most unfortunate that Special Rapporteur McDougal, who held a responsible position working for a United Nations organization, relied on such an untrustworthy source.

The same Chinese scholar learned of Arafune's speech from the paper written by Kim Il Myon, accepted it, and used the figure of 142,000 Korean comfort women to estimate that there were 200,000 Chinese comfort women, out of the 360,000 to 410,000 he estimated to have existed in total. This mistaken conjecture, too, is simply based on Arafune's inflammatory remarks.

We can, of course, assume that many comfort women who survived were unable to return to their own countries. All nurses who survived probably returned, but it is known that some comfort women were ashamed of the situation they had been forced into, and did not return.

The Pacific War ended on 15 August 1945, but the cessation of hostilities did not bring peace of mind to the surviving victims. Those who gave up the idea of returning to their own home places/countries decided to remain in a foreign land, staying there for the rest of their days. In many cases, those who returned home were suffering from injuries and went on to lead miserable lives, unable to forget past cruelties. Many suffered from physical disabilities and venereal disease, and were unable to bear children. Others could not marry. And those who did eventually marry often had to conceal their past, unable to tell others of the pain they felt in their hearts. This would have been one of the heaviest burdens to bear.

The women have lived for more than half a century after the war, suffering practically as much as they did during the several years they spent in military comfort stations.

3. How did the Comfort Women Issue Come to Light?

It cannot be said that people in Japan were completely unaware that there were comfort women during wartime. Those who went to war knew, at least to some extent, that they existed. But there was almost no awareness of the issue as a social problem. Beginning around 1965, those interested in Japan-Korean relations generally knew that there had been comfort women, and that their experiences were the cruelest outcome of Japan's colonization of Korea. But the victims were thought of only as people who were part of history.

When a campaign for girls to join a girls volunteer labor corps (during the war, girls were mobilized to work at factories mostly munition industries) was launched in Korea in 1943, toward the end of the war period, the rumor spread that corps members would be forced to become comfort women. The Governor-General's office denied the rumors, saying they were being spread maliciously and intentionally without foundation, but this only caused people to believe the rumors even more. This shows that the existence of the comfort women system was not unknown in Korea in 1945. Even after liberation, however, the issue was probably something people preferred not to discuss.

The issue was finally taken up and discussed openly in the Republic of Korea after democratization in 1987. Yun Chung-Ok published an article giving information on the issue in the *Hankyoreh Newspaper* in January 1990. The issue gained prominence at a time when greater attention was being paid to the history of Japanese-Korean relations and demands for an apology.

The issue suddenly hit a nerve among the people in the Republic of Korea after a government representative on the House of Councilors' Budget Committee replied to a question of a Diet member as follows, on 6 June 1990:

"After listening to elderly people and piecing together what they say, it appears that the wartime comfort women were taken by private entrepreneurs to different places, going where the military went. Frankly, even if one were to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances, it would not yield any results."

In the Republic of Korea, this answer was strongly criticized for denying the involvement of the Japanese state and military, and for denying the possibility of an inquiry being held. On 17 October 1990, 37 women's organizations in the Republic of Korea joined forces with a group studying the volunteer corps, issued a declaration criticizing the response of the Japanese Government's representative, and presented the Japanese Government with six demands: (i) acknowledge that

the comfort women were forcibly taken away; (ii) issue a public apology; (iii) conduct an investigation to discover what really happened and disclose the findings; (iv) construct a monument to commemorate the victims; (v) pay compensation to the victims or their surviving heirs; and (vi) establish educational programs to raise awareness of the history behind the issue.

These demands were widely reported in Japan around the end of the year, and the issue was again raised in the Diet. But the decisive moment came when one victim, Kim Hak Soon, came forward in Seoul in the summer of 1991 and demanded that Japan take responsibility. Ms. Kim was the only complainant to use her own name in a lawsuit demanding compensation for Pacific War victims. The lawsuit was lodged in December 1991.

These developments created a shock in Japan, and a movement promoted mainly by women quickly gained ground in the country. On 10 January 1992, Yoshiaki Yoshimi, a Chuo University professor, announced the existence of documents proving the involvement of the Japanese military. One of these documents was the written notification of warnings quoted above, drawn up by Naosaburo Okabe, the Chief of Staff of the North China Area Army. Yoshimi's revelations caused a sensation, and the Japanese Government also came to launch a full-scale inquiry.

The results of the inquiry were released in two parts, the first on 6 July 1992 by then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Koichi Kato, and the second on 4 August 1993 by then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono, when he issued a statement on this matter (Appendix 1). The Councillors' Office on External Affairs, Cabinet Secretariat released the results of its study in a report (Appendix 2) that presented information from documents held by institutions in Japan and abroad, and from testimony given during hearings with relevant people in Japan and victims in Seoul. The report listed pertinent documents and other materials: 117 in the Defense Agency's National Institute for Defense Studies; 54 in the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; 4 held by the then-Ministry of Health and Welfare; 2 held by the then-Ministry of Education; 21 in the National Archives of Japan; 17 in the National Diet Library; and 19 held by the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono's statement (see Appendix 1) outlined what the Government had learned through its inquiry, and announced decisions taken as a result. Part of the statement read as follows:

"Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the

establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing, coercion, etc. and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.

“Undeniably, this was an act, with the involvement of the military authorities of the day, that severely injured the honor and dignity of many women. The Government of Japan would like to take this opportunity once again to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women. It is incumbent upon us, the Government of Japan, to continue to consider seriously, while listening to the views of learned circles, how best we can express this sentiment.

We shall face squarely the historical facts as described above instead of evading them, and take them to heart as lessons of history. We hereby reiterate our firm determination never to repeat the same mistake by forever engraving such issues in our memories through the study and teaching of history.”

This statement represented the Japanese Government’s understanding and stance regarding the comfort women issue. Once the statement had been made, vigorous debate continued for some time on how to express the Government’s feelings of apologies and remorse.

The victims who came forward were very instrumental in highlighting the issue in society at large. As of November 2002, the Government of the Republic of Korea had registered as victims 207 people from among those who have come forward and notified the Government. Seventy-two had died as of November 2002. In Taiwan, it has been reported that 36 of all registered victims are still alive.

But it is essential not to forget that those who came forward are just a very small fraction of all of the victims. Many have already passed away, and others do not wish to identify themselves.

4. Establishment of the Asian Women's Fund, and the Basic Nature of Its Projects

In 1994, a coalition Government headed by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama was inaugurated in Japan. The coalition was formed by the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, the Socialist Party, and the New Party Sakigake. On 31 August 1994, the Prime Minister issued a statement looking ahead to the 50th anniversary of the end of the war (Appendix 3), expressing once more his "profound and sincere remorse and apologies" with regard to the comfort women issue, and stating his desire to find "an appropriate way which enables a wide participation" of Japanese people in order to share such feelings of apology and remorse.

Following up on the Prime Minister's statement, the three ruling parties launched a "Project To Deal with Issues Fifty Years After the War," and established the Sub-committee To Address the Wartime Comfort Women Issue. The sub-committee then began examining the issue.

The ruling parties and members of the government administration examined the stance taken by the Japanese Government until then. The Government's position has always been that the issues of reparation, material restitution and the right to claim compensation for events in the war had already been dealt with by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, bilateral treaties and other relevant accords, and that Japan had acted in accordance with those treaties and accords. The opinion was stated that, for this reason, Japan could not offer compensation to individuals. Some members of the ruling parties objected strongly and said Japan should pay compensation to individuals. The disagreement subsided due to the need for a quick resolution, and on 7 December 1994 the First Report on the So-called Wartime Comfort Women Issue was released (Appendix 4).

The report stated, "Japan must, from a moral standpoint, ...fulfill its responsibility" for the so-called comfort women issue, "showing the atonement of the Japanese Government and people, through expressions of apology and remorse to the former so-called wartime comfort women." The report proposed the following specific measures: that the three ruling parties establish a Fund which would encompass the participation of the Japanese people; that the Fund implement measures for former comfort women; that the Fund support activities which aim to raise awareness of, prevent, address and resolve contemporary problems offending the honor and dignity of women, such as violence against women, in order to ensure that past mistakes are never repeated; and that the Government cooperate with the Fund to the greatest extent possible, including the provision of financial support.

Respecting the report's recommendations, the Government decided to acknowledge moral responsibility for the comfort women issue, establish a Fund in cooperation with the people of Japan, promote projects expressing the atonement of the Japanese Government and people to the former comfort women, and promote other projects aimed at the resolution of contemporary problems faced by women.

As a first step, the government budget for fiscal 1995 set aside 480 million yen to subsidize the Fund's expenses. Then on 14 June 1995, Chief Cabinet Secretary Kozo Igarashi explained the proposed objectives of Josei no Tameno Ajia Heiwa Yuko Kikin (the name was provisional at the time, in English, Asian Peace and Friendship Foundation for Women), announced the names of proponents who would call for the Fund's establishment (Appendix 6), and defined the Government's role as follows: (i) the Fund will call for donations from a wide spectrum of Japanese society as a way to enact the Japanese people's atonement for the former comfort women; (ii) the Fund will support those conducting medical and welfare projects and other similar projects which are of service to former comfort women, through the use of government funding and other funds; (iii) when these projects are implemented, the Government will express the nation's feelings of sincere remorse and apology to the former comfort women; and (iv) the Government will collate historical documents relating to the comfort women, to serve as a lesson of history. The Chief Cabinet Secretary also clearly stated that the Fund would, through the use of government funding and other funds, support those who undertook projects aimed at resolving contemporary problems, such as violence against women.

On 18 July 1995, Prime Minister Murayama's statement regarding the Fund (Appendix 8) and the Fund proponents' "Appeal for Donations for the Asian Women's Fund" (Appendix 7) were made public at a press conference. The following day, 19 July 1995, the first Directors' meeting was held, and the Josei no Tameno Ajia Heiwa Kokumin Kikin (in English, National Fund for Asian Peace and Women), or in short, the Ajia Josei Kikin (in English, the Asian Women's Fund), was officially established. At the end of that month, Bunbei Hara, the previous President of the House of Councilors, was chosen as the Fund's President.

The year 1995 was the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, and on 15 August full-page advertisements in the morning editions of six national newspapers covered Prime Minister Murayama's Statement regarding the Fund and the Fund proponents' appeal. Also, before noon on this day, a statement by Prime Minister Murayama on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war (see Appendix 10) was released. The new statement reflected decisions taken by the Cabinet, and included these words:

“During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan followed mistaken national policies and took the road to war, ensnaring the Japanese people in a fateful crisis and inflicting, through colonial rule and aggression, great damage and pains on people in many countries, especially in Asia. Regarding in all humility these irrefutable facts of history, and in the hope that no such mistake will be made in the future, I express once more my feeling of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology.”

On that day, the Fund received 14.55 million yen in donations. By the end of the month, 37.78 million yen had been donated. Donations reached 133.75 million yen by the end of 1995, more than 200 million by March 1996, more than 300 million by April, and more than 400 million by June of that year.

The Government of the Republic of Korea welcomed the Fund’s establishment with such comments as “there is an element of public support for some projects, involving financial resources from the government budget”; “there was a straightforward expression of remorse and apology, given by the state to those concerned”; and “statements included a clearly expressed desire to discover what happened and to use that information as a lesson of history.” These were welcomed as “sincere measures.”

However, many activist groups in the Republic of Korea demanded that the Japanese Government apologize and provide compensation, and stated that victims should not receive “remuneration” from “a private organization.” This led to the Government of the Republic of Korea changing its stance. After that, the activist groups insisted that war crimes were at the heart of the issue, and called on the Japanese Government to recognize its legal responsibility and punish those responsible. The groups brought these demands to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other organizations.

On 4 January 1996, Dr. Radhika Coomaraswamy, Special Rapporteur of the UN Commission on Human Rights on Violence against Women, presented a report on investigations of the comfort women issue conducted in North Korea, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Her report, annexed to a report to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, regards the comfort women issue as “military sexual slavery,” and asserts that the Japanese Government should accept legal responsibility for the violation of international law. The Special Rapporteur wrote that the Japanese Government had accepted moral responsibility for the existence of the comfort women, and that she “considers this a welcome beginning.” She also wrote that she saw the Asian Women’s Fund “as an expression of the Japanese Government’s moral concern for the fate of ‘comfort women.’” However, she stated that this did not exempt the Government from “the legal claims of ‘comfort women’ under public

international law.” In addition, she called on the Japanese Government to accept legal responsibility, pay compensation, make a full disclosure of documents and materials in its possession, issue a public apology, raise awareness by amending educational curricula to reflect historic realities, and punish perpetrators as far as possible.

Against this background, members of the newly established Asian Women’s Fund — the proponents, Directors and Advisory Committee members — collaborated in discussions aimed at developing a framework for Fund projects. Then, after discussions with relevant government officials, decisions were taken regarding the fundamentals for Fund projects. These fundamentals were detailed in the second pamphlet entitled “*Jyugun Ianfu*” ni Sareta Katagata eno Tsugunai no Tameni (*For the Atonement to Those Women were Forced to become ‘Comfort Women’*), which was published in September 1996.

Based on the recognition by the Japanese government of its moral responsibility and its clear expression of remorse and apology, it was decided that the Asian Women’s Fund together with the government implements the national atonement projects participated by both the government and the people of Japan. The projects were to be implemented for former comfort women who had been recognized as such by the authorities of the relevant country or region, or by private organizations commissioned by the authorities

The projects expressing the atonement of the Japanese Government and people have three major elements. The first element is the provision of “atonement money” from the Japanese people to former comfort women. The money, 2 million yen per person, comes from Japanese people’s donations.

Secondly, the former comfort women are presented with a letter from the Prime Minister of Japan. (see Appendix 11). The letter indicates that at the heart of the comfort women issue is the fact that the honor and dignity of women were gravely affronted with the involvement of the former Japanese military, acknowledges moral responsibility for these facts, and expresses heartfelt feelings of apology and remorse to all those who underwent many painful experiences and suffered incurable trauma. The letter also states a resolve to face up squarely to history and accurately convey that history to future generations. The letter is presented to each former comfort woman by the Asian Women’s Fund, together with a letter from the President of the Fund (see Appendix 12), to indicate even more clearly to the victims the position of the Japanese Government and people.

The third element is medical and welfare support projects. These projects are implemented to fulfill the moral responsibility that the Japanese Government has

acknowledged, and involve the disbursement of a total of about 830 million yen from government funds over a 5-year period, for victims' medical care and welfare. The amount provided in each country or region was adjusted to take into account the cost of living there — the equivalent of 3 million yen per recipient was decided upon for the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, and 1.2 million yen per recipient for the Philippines. Although the program is applied differently in the Netherlands, the amount provided was equivalent to 3 million yen per recipient.

Projects to learn from history also form a fundamental part of the Fund's activities. A Committee on Historical Materials on Comfort Women was established within the Fund to promote the collection and publication of materials relating to the comfort women issue.

The Asian Women's Fund began with projects in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan. During its first two years of operation, the Fund received donations totaling 400 million yen, but the amount grew more slowly thereafter. In August 2000, the 6th year of operation, the total amount of donations had reached 448 million yen. The Fund therefore decided on a bold measure, launching its "Campaign 2000" in September 2000 as a way to call for more donations. Since then an additional amount of more than 116 million yen has been donated, making a total of 565 million yen as of October 2002.

The projects began in August 1996 in the Philippines, in January 1997 in the Republic of Korea, and in May 1997 in Taiwan. Each project had the time span of five years, and all were concluded by September 2002. A total of 285 victims received atonement money in those countries and region. Thus, 5 million yen more was disbursed than the amount donated by the Japanese people. To make up the difference, the Fund disposed of some endowments that had been established through donations from the private sector, making it possible for a total of 570 million yen to be provided as atonement money to the victims.

Atonement projects were also implemented in the Netherlands, beginning in July 1998. In that country, the Fund's projects took on a different character, offering only medical and welfare support and the Prime Minister's letter. The projects were implemented for 79 people there, and were concluded in July 2001.

In Indonesia, the Fund is supporting the development of welfare facilities for the elderly, including former comfort women, using financial resources from the Japanese Government. The Indonesian Government requested that the projects be implemented in this way, rather than through measures benefiting individual former comfort women directly.

5. Projects in the Netherlands

(a) Background

The former Netherlands East Indies is present-day Indonesia. The Japanese military occupied the Dutch colony in 1942 during the Pacific War, then placed Dutch nationals in internment facilities and prisoner-of-war camps (90,000 civilians, 40,000 military personnel). Some members of the Japanese occupation forces forcibly took Dutch nationals from both inside and outside of the internee camps to comfort stations in Semarang and elsewhere in Asia, and compelled them to render sexual services to Japanese officers and men. After the war, some Japanese officers who had forcibly taken interned women to comfort stations were tried in military tribunals in Indonesia as Class B and Class C war criminals, and some of them were then executed.

When the Netherlands signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty, in accordance with Article 14 of the Treaty, it waived all reparation claims, claims to material restitution and the right for claim both at national and individual levels. The position was that, although Japan had an obligation to pay reparations, it was not possible to obtain payment in light of the need to maintain the possibility for Japan's economic survival.

With regard to the persons who had suffered hardships as prisoners of war, Japan paid compensation under Article 16 of the Treaty through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). However, the interned civilians were not subject to the provisions of Article 16, and from the point of view of civilian sentiment, this situation was not acceptable. In this regard, on 7 and 8 September 1951, just before the Netherlands signed the San Francisco Treaty, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands Dirk Stikker exchanged letters with Prime Minister of Japan Shigeru Yoshida, and both sides came to an agreement under which the Governments of the Netherlands stated that it did not consider that waiving reparations claims under Article 14(b) of the Treaty would extinguish the right of individual Dutch nationals to claim compensation. In response to this, the Japanese Government stated that it did not consider that the private right to claim of nationals of the Netherlands would immediately become non-existent, but that, under the Peace Treaty, allied nationals would not be able to obtain satisfaction regarding such claims, although there were certain types of private claims of allied nationals which the Japanese Government might wish to deal with voluntarily.

The Stikker-Yoshida Agreement eventually led to the signing, on 13 March 1956, of the Protocol between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Relating to Settlement of the Problem Concerning

Certain Types of Private Claims of Netherlands Nationals. The Government of Japan tendered the amount of 10 million dollars “voluntarily” to the Government of the Netherlands “in order to express sincere remorse and regrets for the irreparable pain suffered by the Dutch Nationals.”

In this way, the Peace Treaty legally settled the post-war issues between Japan and the Netherlands, and the above-mentioned Protocol between the two countries confirmed that the Government of the Netherlands would not make any claim against the Japanese Government. Despite the measures set out in the Protocol, however, the incurable physical and psychological trauma suffered by the victims during World War II still remained.

Thus, for example, the Foundation of Japanese Honorary Debts (JES, established in the Netherlands in 1990) demanded that the Japanese Government recognize legal responsibility and pay compensation. It began a campaign demanding about 20,000 dollars per person. JES also took up the issue of comfort women. The standpoint of JES was that only the Japanese Government was directly responsible for compensation.

Immediately after the Asian Women’s Fund was established in 1995, the Foreign Ministry of Japan began preparations to facilitate implementation of Asian Women’s Fund projects in the Netherlands. Because the right to claim reparation for war damage had been already settled through the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Government of the Netherlands urged Japan to speak directly with those concerned. As the result, discussions took place with those who were related to the JES.

It appeared that in choosing the type of projects to be implemented, the wishes of the Governments of the Netherlands was taken into account, and that it was carefully considered how to achieve a balance with the types of projects already being discussed for other countries. During the discussions, payments to individual victims were requested by the Dutch side. After long negotiations, it was agreed that medical and welfare assistance was to be provided for the individuals and the total amount of the fund from the Japanese Government was to be 255 million yen.

In order to implement the above projects, from the Dutch side an organization had to be erected. Under Dutch law, an organization must have the legal status and independence to work together with other parties and to operate independently. General of Army (ret.) G.L.J. Huyser was willing to establish such a foundation, namely, Project Implementation Committee in the Netherlands (PICN). As the first chairman of the PICN, General ret. Huyser signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the PICN and the AWF on 15 July 1998. On behalf

of the AWF, Tatsuo Yamaguchi, then the Vice-President signed the MOU. On the same day, the then-Prime Minister of Japan, Ryutaro Hashimoto sent a letter to Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Willem Kok (See Appendix 14), expressing the Japanese Government's feelings of apology and remorse for the comfort women issue. The letter, as explained below, was said to have brought former comfort women a great solace.

(b) Project implementation

In accordance with the MOU, the AWF was to grant 255 million yen to the PICN with the purpose to improve the living conditions of Dutch victims, as a way to express the feelings of atonement of the Japanese Government and people. All of this money would be provided from Japanese Government funds. It was decided that the entire amount of 255 million, with the exception of a maximum of 10 million yen for administrative expenses, would be used for victims wishing to participate in the project.

In August 1998, the PICN launched the projects by placing advertisements in newspapers and other media in the Netherlands and in different parts of the world. The application deadline was set for 15 March 1999, and applications were received from 107 people. The PICN followed strict standard criteria when examining the applications, and approved 79 people as project recipients. Conditions for approval included Dutch nationality at the time, and that the victim had been forced through physical means into prostitution by Japanese occupying forces during World War II. Other factors considered included location, frequency, nature of trauma, and causes of illness, etc.

Victims approved as recipients were provided with goods and services valued at an average of approximately 50,000 guilders (3 million yen) per person. In implementing the project, the PICN first listened to the victims' wishes regarding types of medical and welfare services, and designed programmes based on those wishes. In order to realize the individual programme, financial support was then given to individual recipients.

Following the request made by the PICN, a copy of the letter in English from Prime Minister Hashimoto addressed to Prime Minister Kok of the Netherlands was delivered to each victim in April 1999. It repeated the contents of the letter of apology that the Japanese Prime Minister had written to victims in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. The letter began with this sentence: "The Government of Japan is painfully aware of its moral responsibility concerning the issue of so-called wartime comfort women." The letter also points out that the Asian

Women's Fund implements the projects in order to express the national atonement on the issue and that the Government cooperates with the AWF. It is further made clear that the purpose of the medical and welfare projects in the Netherlands is to "express atonement of the people of Japan." The official statement issued in 1995 by the then-Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama was incorporated into the content of the letter and the words "apology and remorse" were repeated twice conveying clearly the thoughts behind the medical and welfare projects in the Netherlands.

In November 1998, Mrs. Marguerite Hamer - Monod de Froideville became the President of the PICN to succeed General of Army (ret.) Huyser, who then became PICN Main Advisor.

Many victims, who received financial support from the projects together with a copy of the Prime Minister's letter, sent messages to President Mrs. Marguerite Hamer - Monod de Froideville. These messages included such sentiments as:

- "I value Mr. Hashimoto's apology. I sent a copy to my sister to have it translated. While I was on holiday with the Reuma Fonds (Rheumatism Fund), my husband called me to tell me about the letter."
- "I am greatly satisfied with Mr. Hashimoto's letter. Finally there is some form of recognition after all those years. My emotions make me tremble. Thank you once again for your efforts."
- "I am very pleased with the statement made by the Japanese Prime Minister. "
- "I herewith thank you in advance for everything you have done for me and will do. Not only this financial compensation, but also the recognition of all the misery I had to endure as a 15 year-old girl. It salves the open wound, which I have endured throughout my life. "

President Mrs. Marguerite Hamer - Monod de Froideville conveyed the content of these letters to the Japanese Embassy, and said that "despite the fact that pain from the past still remained, the recipients' reactions generally indicated that the projects had brought some solace, and especially that Prime Minister Hashimoto's letter had given the victims a kind of satisfaction, because it communicated the understanding of their pain."

In November 1999, it was reported that a Japanese textbook publisher had applied to the then-Ministry of Education to change an entry in its junior high school textbook for social studies by removing the word "forcibly" from the following sentence: "They were forcibly sent as comfort women to the warfront." When this was made known in the Netherlands, PICN President Mrs. Marguerite Hamer - Monod de Froideville, in the name of the victims and the members and advisors of

the board of PICN, sent a letter dated 15 November 1999 to the Ambassador of Japan in the Netherlands, strongly objecting to the application made by the textbook publisher. The news, she wrote, "had been met by an extremely emotional response from the victims, and was a great shock to their sensitivities." She went on to say that "if the textbook entry was watered down, the victims' feelings would be even more gravely hurt." Changing the entry, she wrote, would go against the words in Prime Minister Hashimoto's letter, turning them into a falsehood. It would also make it possible to say that the very existence of the Asian Women's Fund and the PICN represented a sham, and would result in future generations of Japanese not having a correct understanding of Japan's history during the World War II period. A copy of her letter was sent to the Asian Women's Fund.

In response, the Japanese Government explained that Japan's textbook authorization system is based on respect for freedom of expression, gave examples of the many other entries in Japanese textbooks, and reconfirmed the Japanese Government's position concerning the interpretation of history, which had been indicated in Prime Minister Murayama's statement.

On 13 July 2001, a ceremony was held in The Hague to mark the conclusion of atonement projects in the Netherlands. At the ceremony, PICN president Mrs. Marguerite Hamer - Monod de Froideville said:

"Although the Project was established not until 53 years after the end of the War, and although no money in the world can ever compensate for what they had to endure in their young days, yet it did indeed bring a sort of peace to the victims, and a kind of justice to them, which they needed. Their lives really have been improved thanks to the AWF, not only because of the financial compensation in the form of the Project money, but also because of the recognition of the wrong doings of the past Mr. Hashimoto's letter has conveyed to them."

Also at the ceremony, deep appreciation to the PICN was delivered through messages sent by President of the Asian Women's Fund Tomiichi Murayama and Minister of Foreign Affairs Makiko Tanaka.

6. Projects in the Philippines

(a) Background

In December 1941, Japanese military forces landed on the island of Luzon in the Philippines, a US territory. Manila quickly surrendered, and a military government was installed on 3 January 1942. Filipinos mounted a vigorous guerrilla offensive and organized a resistance movement to oppose Japanese military rule. The Japanese forces waged a cruel campaign in an attempt to suppress the guerrilla opposition. Of the 381 cases of Class B and Class C war crimes brought before post-war military tribunals in the Philippines, almost half involved massacres of local civilians (138 cases) or rapes (45 cases).

Military comfort stations were constructed in Manila and other occupied cities in the Philippines. Japanese, Korean and Chinese women were sent to the stations. Many from the Philippines were also cajoled by other means to become comfort women. It would also appear that, in parts of the Philippines occupied by the military, a number of women were raped and abducted through violent means, then confined and forced to provide sexual services. In many of these cases, their fathers or husbands were killed in front of the women and their other family members.

After the war, the Philippines signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty, legally resolving issues between Japan and the Philippines with regard to reparations, material restitution and the right to claim for war damage. Then in 1956, Japan and the Philippines signed a Reparations Agreement, in accordance with Article 14 (a) 1 of the Peace Treaty. Under that Agreement, Japan provided the Philippines with services and goods valued at the equivalent of 550 million dollars.

In June 1992, radio announcements urged those forced to become comfort women by the Japanese military to come forward. Ms. Maria Rosa L. Henson decided to do so after hearing a broadcast. She met with Ms. Nelia Sancho and other human rights activists, and gave an account of her experiences. She gave her first press interview on 18 September 1992. She said that during the occupation, after being raped the first time, she joined the guerrilla resistance movement, then was captured, raped again, taken by order of Japanese military headquarters and confined with other women for nine months, during which time she was raped time after time.

Ms. Henson was assisted by LILA-Pilipina, a private organization established by Ms. Sancho. This organization, which had launched a campaign calling on the Japanese Government to apologize and pay compensation, was contacted by about 200

victims. Supported by LILA-Pilipina, Ms. Henson and 18 other former comfort women filed a lawsuit at the Tokyo District Court in April 1993, demanding that the Japanese Government issue an apology and pay compensation. The plaintiffs, known as *lola* (a Tagalog word meaning “grandmother,” or “elderly lady”), eventually increased in number to 46. The lawsuit failed at the District Court and High Court levels. On 25 December 2003, the Supreme Court rejected the appeal.

At first, LILA-Pilipina was opposed to the Asian Women’s Fund when it was established in 1995. But some *lolas*, including Ms. Henson, indicated a desire to benefit from the Fund’s atonement projects. LILA-Pilipina came to the decision that accepting the Fund’s atonement money and continuing with the lawsuit were compatible with one another. A committee was established within LILA-Pilipina to support *lolas* who had decided to accept benefits from the Asian Women’s Fund.

Completing the government application for benefits was a complicated process, because of the documentation that had to accompany the application: the applicant had to attach a description of conditions at the time when she was forced to become a comfort woman, a photograph, an affidavit from the local government or non-governmental organization(NGO) identifying as a former “wartime comfort woman” based on the knowledge of the war time period, her birth certificate, and her marriage certificate.

The consultative entity on the Philippine side with ultimate responsibility for the atonement projects was a task force of the Philippine Government called the Special Committee to Address the Comfort Women Issue. This Special Committee was composed of government officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. The task force gave authority for the authentication of former comfort women to the Department of Justice, and gave authority for the implementation of the medical and welfare support projects to the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Application forms and documentation were submitted to the Department of Justice, and their examination then began.

Those recognized as former comfort women were provided with a letter of apology from the Japanese Prime Minister. The letter was sent from the Embassy of Japan in the Philippines via the Philippine foreign ministry. The Asian Women’s Fund presented atonement money to the women. In addition, medical and welfare support projects, funded by the Japanese Government and valued at an equivalent of 1.2 million yen per recipient, were implemented through the Philippine Government’s Department of Social Welfare and Development.

(b) Project implementation

On 13 August 1996, the Asian Women's Fund announced information on its projects in Philippine newspapers. The following day, a ceremony at a Manila hotel was held to mark the provision of atonement project benefits to three of the four people approved as beneficiaries so far: Maria Rosa Henson, Anastasia Cortez and Rufina Fernandez. On behalf of the Prime Minister, the Ambassador of Japan presented the letter to them, and Ms. Makiko Arima, Vice-President of the Asian Women's Fund at the time, presented each of them with information on the contents of atonement projects. Ms. Henson spoke in front of more than 100 reporters gathered there, expressing her deep happiness that she was seeing the results of a dream she had thought would never come true. Ms. Cortez spoke next, saying she had suffered for more than 50 years, but was glad to have obtained justice and assistance. Ms. Fernandez expressed her thanks for the Japanese Prime Minister's apology, and said it was the apology that had persuaded her to be present that day. During the press conference, when asked whether recent events had made it possible for her to forgive, Ms. Henson replied that she had been asked that question many times since coming forward in September 1992, and that she had indeed forgiven — that if she had not forgiven, God would not forgive her.

Later, the three women said they were glad to have used some of the money given in atonement to undergo physical examinations at a major hospital — it was the first such chance they had had. The medical and welfare support projects were designed in accordance with such requests of elderly people.

The projects began in the Philippines in January 1997, after the Philippine Government's Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Asian Women's Fund signed a Memorandum. The Fund's financial resources were used to hire social workers and provide services in accordance with the wishes of individual victims. These services included the provision of wheelchairs and pharmaceuticals, barrier-free renovations, and nursing-care services. Ten social workers had been hired by the end of 1999, to provide one social worker for about 10 victims. The social workers pay regular visits to the *lolas* they are assigned to, and carefully monitor the physical and psychological health of the elderly former comfort women and any changes in their living conditions. In this way, the young social workers also have opportunities to learn from a generation of women who experienced the war, and to think about war and peace, and about women's rights.

Applicant authentication was done by public prosecutors attached to the above-mentioned Department of Justice of the Philippine Government. Interviews were

held after receipt of applications, then the documents were verified, further detailed questions were posed, and each application was either approved or rejected.

Many former comfort women in the Philippines married after the war and live with their children and grandchildren. Many who did not marry live with members of their extended family, which often includes one or more nephews, nieces, brothers and sisters. Many who received atonement money said they had lived in poverty, dependent on family members or neighbors for a long time, and the atonement money had made it possible to return the favor before they died. In many cases, the only money they spent on themselves was for visits to the doctor, using the rest for their family members and/or neighbors. Family members reported that some of the atonement money was used for such purposes as constructing a small house or a concrete floor to replace old flooring ruined by a leaky roof, buying rice seedlings and having their family grow rice, buying a refrigerator and more nutritious food for their mothers, and buying a wheelchair for outings. One woman used part of the money to open a store selling miscellaneous items.

Ms. Cortez, who had received Fund benefits with Ms. Henson in August 1996, bought a house and land, renovated the house, and added rooms for her family to live with her. She had a phone installed and purchased a VCR and a large TV. She opened up a small shop facing the street to sell everyday items to students going to and from school. She said that when she was 20 her husband, a soldier in the Philippine army, had been made a prisoner of war by the Japanese army, but escaped and returned to her. However, he was quickly recaptured, and they were both taken away together by Japanese forces. Her husband was killed in the Santiago Fortress, and she was kept there and frequently raped by Japanese officers and soldiers over a period of five months. Later she remarried — her second husband was a policeman who had helped her. She has six children and 25 grandchildren, and lives with four of her children.

LILA-Pilipina eventually decided to help former comfort women who were planning to receive Fund project benefits. Some people dissatisfied with this decision formed a new group, Malaya Lolas. However, in January 2000 the members of this group, too, submitted applications to the Asian Women's Fund. The Asian Center for Women's Human Rights (ASCENT), headed by Ms. Indai Sajor, took the position to respect the wishes of the comfort women and cooperate with those who wish to accept the projects.

The application deadline was 12 August 2001. All approved applicants received Fund benefits, and projects in the Philippines have since been concluded.

7. Projects in the Republic of Korea

(a) Background

In 1965, Japan and the Republic of Korea signed the Korea-Japan Treaty, settling financial issues regarding colonial rule and establishing diplomatic relations. At that time, Japan agreed to provide the Republic of Korea with economic assistance in the form of 300 million dollars in grant aid and 200 million dollars in loans (without expressing remorse or apologies for the damage and suffering caused by colonial rule), while the Republic of Korea waived all claims for material restitution and the right to claim compensation. As a result, it was recognized that issues between the two countries and between their nationals, regarding material restitution and the right to claim compensation, were “completely and finally” resolved.

However, this conclusion met with dissatisfaction in the Republic of Korea. After the comfort women issue became a matter of contention in the 1990s, the Government of the Republic of Korea established a committee to authenticate former comfort women, and had authenticated 207 as of November 2002. The Government provides these women with a fixed monthly sum to subsidize their living expenses. Of the 207 authenticated people, 72 had died, 135 were still alive, with 2 of them residing outside the country, as of November 2002.

The Government of the Republic of Korea initially showed a favorable stance toward the establishment of the Asian Women’s Fund. But the stance changed to disfavor, basically because one non-governmental organization supporting the victims, the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan, or “Chongdaehyop,” mounted a vigorous campaign against the Asian Women’s Fund, and because of criticism in the media, as well.

The former comfort women varied considerably in their attitudes. Some criticized the Fund and repudiated it. Others were dissatisfied that the Fund was involved, but still wanted to accept project benefits. Those who had publicly stated they intended to accept benefits were criticized, and pressure was applied against them. Some of these women reluctantly issued another statement repudiating the Asian Women’s Fund.

The Korean Council promoted a vigorous campaign, taking its cause to the UN Commission on Human Rights and working in solidarity with similar groups in other countries. The campaign was influential in bringing the comfort women issue to the attention of the international community. At the heart of the Korean Council’s campaign are calls for the

Japanese Government to acknowledge legal responsibility, apologize, pay compensation, and punish those responsible.

(b) Project implementation

The Asian Women's Fund's position was that it wished to implement projects in the Republic of Korea for victims so authenticated by the Government of that country. In August 1996, a Team for Dialogue composed of members of the AWF Advisory Committee visited the Republic of Korea, met with about a dozen victims, and explained the Fund's projects to them. Of the victims who met with the Team for Dialogue, Kim Hak Soon and two others stated that they repudiated the project of the Fund. Many of the others took the position that it would be hard to view the Fund's measures as sincere, considering that the amount was only 2 million yen per person.

In December 1996, Ms. Kimiko Kaneda (not her real name) announced that she appreciated the Fund's efforts and intended to accept its project benefits. Pressure was applied against her to refuse them, but soon another six victims announced that they too would accept benefits. On 11 January 1997, representing the Fund, its Director, Teruko Kanehira, gave seven of the victims the Prime Minister's letter at a hotel in Seoul.

After the ceremony, Ms. Kanehira gave explanatory materials to different media in the Republic of Korea, explained details regarding project implementation, and outlined the Fund's basic position. However, the media in that country, with only a few exceptions, criticized the Fund's project implementation. The Korean Council also protested, and strong pressure was applied against the seven victims who had received Fund benefits.

Both the victims and the Fund found it hard to bear the fact that the atonement money and other benefits had led to pressure being applied on the victims who received them. The Fund therefore froze its projects temporarily and took steps hoping to improve conditions for project implementation in the Republic of Korea.

However, a campaign was mounted to collect private donations within the Republic of Korea, to persuade women to refuse Fund project benefits. The donations were used to provide victims with a fixed amount of assistance money. The seven victims who had accepted benefits from the Fund's atonement projects were excluded from the program.

After some difficult reflection, on 6 January 1998 the Asian Women's Fund placed advertisements explaining its projects in four newspapers in the Republic of Korea, including the *Hankyoreh* and the *Hanguk Ilbo*, and announced it was resuming its projects. Soon after, the Fund received word from some victims that they wished to receive benefits, and resumed project implementation.

Kim Dae Jung became President of the Republic of Korea in March that year. In May, the new administration decided that, although it would not demand state reparations from the Japanese Government, it would pay 31.5 million won (at the time, about 3.1 million Japanese yen), plus an additional 4.18 million won from capital collected by the Korean Council ("Chongdaehyop,") as living expense subsidies to each former comfort woman who vowed to refuse Asian Women's Fund project benefits. The Government of the Republic of Korea paid this sum to 142 people, but did not pay it to 11 people — the seven who had accepted Fund benefits in the early stages, and four others who did not sign the written oath because they had accepted Fund benefits.

In June 1998, the Asian Women's Fund sent a letter signed by Fund President Bunbei Hara to the President of the Republic. The letter stated the belief that atonement money from the Fund and living expense subsidies from the Republic of Korea were different in nature, and requested that the Government acknowledge it should be possible to accept both. However, the position of the Government of the Republic of Korea did not change.

Realizing there was no change in the project situation, the Fund decided to halt its projects of atonement in the Republic of Korea at the beginning of 1999, and change the project objective to group medical care. At the same time the Fund decided to issue payments to victims who had already begun the application process. The Fund began negotiations with the Korean side. However, it eventually became clear that the Fund would be unable to obtain the cooperation of the Korean side, even with a new project objective. As a result, the Fund gave up hope of pursuing a new project objective, and placed the projects in the Republic of Korea in a state of suspension, in July 1999.

Those who had accepted Fund project benefits sent their thanks, such as: "I never thought that during our lifetime I would receive apologies from the Prime Minister and money. I know they express the feelings of good will of the Japanese people. Thank you very much."

Another person needed money for a medical operation, and decided to accept Fund project benefits. At first she said she did not want to meet a Fund representative.

But she eventually did, and when the representative read the Prime Minister's letter aloud to her she raised her voice, broke down in tears, hugged the representative, and began to speak through her tears about her experiences as a comfort woman and the suffering she had endured after returning to her own country. Understanding the situation, we felt apology and remorse expressed by Japanese Government and people were accepted.

The seven who initially accepted Fund benefits, and the others who did so confidentially, were placed in a psychologically painful situation because of the strong influence of activist groups that regard the Fund's atonement projects in the Republic of Korea as a way for the Japanese Government to avoid responsibility. The Fund kept up its efforts to ensure that all those who accepted atonement project benefits would be socially accepted, but unfortunately the current situation shows that these efforts did not bring positive results.

During the time the projects remained in a state of suspension, the 10 January 2002 deadline for applying for project benefits, as initially announced in newspaper advertisements, drew closer. Believing it should make one final effort, the Fund decided not to terminate the projects on the 10 January deadline but to leave them in suspension. But after negotiating with some people, the Fund realized that it could not change the situation a great deal in the short term, so it lifted the project suspension on 20 February, and terminated projects in the Republic of Korea on 1 May 2002.

Asian Women's Fund projects were concluded in the Republic of Korea without obtaining the full understanding of activist groups or the Government there. Even so, many more victims than we had first predicted agreed to accept the Prime Minister's letter of apology and benefits from the Fund's atonement projects, and for this we are grateful.

8. Projects in Taiwan

(a) Background

In the Japanese colony of Taiwan during World War II, many men were conscripted as either soldiers for the Japanese army or civilian laborers for the military. At the same time, women were summoned by the military or police to work in places like hospitals, kitchens and factories. In those days, if Taiwanese people disobeyed the Japanese military and police, they would be putting their lives at grave risk.

The women were either sent overseas, to Hainan, the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Burma and other places, or sent somewhere in Taiwan, to facilities attached to military ports or munitions factories. Many of them were forced to work as comfort women. In a number of cases, women were victimized while their husbands or fiancés were away, conscripted into the army. Almost none of these victims could tell their husbands what had happened after the men returned from the front. They were burdened by the secret for decades.

Taiwan was liberated from Japanese rule after World War II, and the Government of the Republic of China, having lost the civil war between Nationalist and Communist forces, crossed over to Taiwan. Under the 1952 Treaty of Peace between Japan and the Republic of China, the state of war between Japan and China terminated. The Republic of China waived all reparation claims, claims to material restitution and the right for claim both at national and individual levels. The Treaty stipulated that negotiations regarding the right of Taiwan, a former Japanese colony, to claim compensation were to take place between Taiwan and Japan. But negotiations were not held for a long time and, in 1972, when diplomatic relations between Japan and China were reestablished, diplomatic relations between Japan and Taiwan were severed.

In 1992, the Taiwanese Comfort Women Investigation Committee was established by Taiwan's Legislative Yuan (similar to a parliament), administrative departments in charge of foreign and interior, the Academia Sinica and the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation. The Committee then began investigating the issue.

The Committee delegated the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation to be the sole entity serving as a focal point for efforts to resolve the comfort women issue in Taiwan, and commissioned it to: (1) identify former comfort women; (2) handle information on individuals; and (3) act as an agent in transmitting to them government subsidies for their living expenses. This situation, in which these three tasks were concentrated in a single organization, was very different from

arrangements established in other countries. The Foundation demanded that Japan pay state compensation and strongly opposed the Asian Women's Fund, and this stance had considerable impact on the victims.

According to local media reports in April 2002, 36 Taiwanese women identified as victims were still alive at that time. Taiwan authorities pay identified victims 15,000 Taiwanese dollars (about 60,000 Japanese yen) per month to subsidize their living expenses.

In July 1999, nine Taiwanese who were victimized as comfort women filed a lawsuit at the Tokyo District Court against the Japanese Government, demanding 10 million yen per person. In October 2002, their demands were dismissed and the claimants appealed this decision. In February 2004, Tokyo High Court supported the decision of the first trial and dismissed their demands again. The claimants decided to appeal to a higher court.

On a few occasions since March 1996, at the Legislative Yuan members (similar to members of parliament) have signed documents calling on the Japanese Government to acknowledge legal responsibility, apologize, and pay compensation.

(b) Project implementation

The Asian Women's Fund's intention was to implement projects in Taiwan for victims identified by the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation.

When a Dialogue Team from the Fund paid its first visit to Taiwan in January 1996, it held discussions with the Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation and four victims. The victims indicated an interest in the Fund's projects, but the Foundation maintained its stance that the Japanese government should pay state compensation, and therefore cut off all contact with the Fund. After that, the Fund was unable to meet victims through the auspices of the Foundation. In August 1996, a victim who was resident of Taiwan came to Japan and said she hoped to receive atonement money from the Fund and the Prime Minister's letter, but she was pressured in a variety of ways to withdraw her request.

A Taiwanese lawyer named Rai Hau Min, Senior partner of the Formosa Transnational Law Office, who supported the Fund's activities from a humanitarian point of view, began cooperating with the Fund. Mr. Lai believed that the wishes of each individual former comfort woman should be respected. The Fund initiated projects in Taiwan by placing advertisements in three major Taiwanese newspapers in May 1997, and designated the Formosa Transnational Law Office as the location

where benefit applications were processed. Medical and welfare support project benefits in Taiwan were fixed at 3 million yen per person.

The Taipei Women's Rescue Foundation, which had opposed the Asian Women's Fund ever since its projects began, reacted by distributing approximately 500,000 Taiwan dollars (equivalent to about 2 million Japanese yen) to each victim who submitted a signed oath that she would refuse benefits from the Asian Women's Fund. The distributed money came from profits earned through auctions held mainly by the Foundation. Then in February 1998, members of the Legislative Yuan applied pressure on the Taiwanese authorities and had them pay each victim 500,000 Taiwan dollars (about 2 million Japanese yen) as an advance, supposedly to be repaid later by the Japanese Government as "compensation."

Many of the victims live in poverty, and almost all are prone to illness. Many inquiries were received from people expressing a desire to obtain atonement money and medical and welfare project benefits from the Asian Women's Fund. However, victims who were pressured by people advising them not to accept benefits felt anxious, believing that if they accepted benefits from the Fund their living expense subsidies would be terminated.

In accordance with the victims' wishes, and to remove their anxiety about what could happen if they received Fund benefits, the Fund promoted its projects under the central proviso that their receipt of benefits would not disadvantage them in any way. The fact that the lawyer, Rai Hau Min, was present to ensure that the Fund's projects were promoted in a careful manner based on law, was extremely important.

Fortunately, in spite of the difficult situation, the Fund was able to provide atonement project benefits to a considerable number of former comfort women. The recipients expressed delight upon receiving them. The atonement money and medical and welfare support projects were of great help to the victims, of course, but it was the Japanese Prime Minister's letter of apology, which accompanied those benefits, that made an especially strong favorable impression on the victims, stronger than we had anticipated.

Some of the victims who received the Prime Minister's letter held it close to their hearts, saying haltingly with emotion, yet with big smiles on their faces, such things as "I never thought I would see this day, as long as I lived"; and "So in the end, the Japanese people did not betray us." One woman expressed her feelings of joy in a song she improvised. Some people used the atonement money to repair their homes, something they had dreamed about for many years, while others used it to buy medicine that had been too expensive for them until then. Some used the

money to improve their living conditions in this way, while others used it for some extravagance they had never been able to enjoy before, such as buying their children something they knew they would like. On the other hand, there were some victims who, right to the end, continued to express fears about receiving atonement project benefits, and who never did decide to receive them.

On five different occasions during and after 1997, the Fund placed notices in Taiwanese newspapers, in order to clearly explain that receiving atonement money would not cause victims to lose their right to file a lawsuit claiming state compensation, and to print the full contents of the Japanese Prime Minister's letter of apology. The aim of these measures was to facilitate a correct understanding on the part of the victims and those associated with them of the objectives and nature of the atonement projects.

The five-year period for project benefit applications has ended in Taiwan, and Asian Women's Fund projects concluded there on 1 May 2002.

9. Projects in Indonesia

(a) Background

Present-day Indonesia was a Dutch colony when it was occupied by Japan, and achieved independence after the war. As mentioned previously, it appears that in some cases in Indonesia, women were recruited with the collaboration of heads of residential districts and neighborhood groups, with village officials complying with requests from the occupying forces. We can assume that in some cases women were taken against their will. Some Japanese squads used violent means to bring women to facilities they had constructed on their own, and used the facilities like a comfort station.

The comfort women issue began receiving considerable attention in Indonesia in 1992, and it was in that year that women first came forward. The Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Yogyakarta (LBH), or Legal Aid Institute, began registering them in 1993. Later, in 1995, the Communication Forum of the Ex-Indonesian Heiho also began registering former comfort women. A very large number of women were registered. In addition to former comfort women, among those registered were women who had been raped or severely mistreated in other ways.

After the Japanese Government had conferred with the Government of that country, Minister of Social Affairs Ign Soewignjo announced on 14 November 1996 that the Indonesian Government's position on the comfort women issue was as follows:

- for the people of Indonesia, the comfort women issue represents a dark, unforgettable side of their history, and it is important that every effort be made to learn from this lesson to prevent such an occurrence from ever happening again;
- the Government empathizes with the endless psychological and physical trauma and pain of the women who were victims of violence;
- however, the Government, representing a people imbued with the Pancasila philosophy, does not intend to introduce measures or policies strongly colored by emotion, and will work hard to protect the honor of women who were victimized and their families;
- the Government of Indonesia is of the understanding that the question of war reparations, material restitution and the right to claim from the Japanese Government was settled by two accords signed in 1958 — the Treaty of Peace Between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia, and the Reparations Agreement Between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia;
- in Indonesia, the Asian Women's Fund should promote projects and assistance programs related to the comfort women issue through the Indonesian

Government (primarily through the Department of Social Affairs), not through any other organization or individual.

Based on this position, the Indonesian Government expressed a desire for assistance in developing welfare facilities for the elderly, rather than for projects benefiting individual former comfort women. This conclusion was reached primarily because: (i) it would be extremely difficult to authenticate former comfort women; (ii) it was important to protect the honor of the former comfort women and their families; and (iii) the question of war reparations from Japan to Indonesia had already been settled by accords, specifically the Treaty of Peace.

In December 1996, this decision was explained to visiting Fund executives by high-ranking officials in Indonesia's Department of Social Affairs and the office of the State Minister for the role of women. Some Fund members expressed a strongly held opinion that atonement money should be provided to individual former comfort women, but the Fund eventually agreed, consenting to decisions taken by both countries' governments. As a result, 50 facilities to be built within 10-year period in the regions where former "wartime comfort women" seem to exist.

(b) Project implementation

The Fund requested that former comfort women should be given priority when admitting people to the facilities, and that areas where the victimization of comfort women had occurred should be given priority when selecting locations for those facilities. The Fund received the Indonesian Government's commitment that former comfort women who had come forward would be given priority when selecting residents of the facilities to be constructed under the projects. Also, the facilities would mainly be organized in those areas where many comfort women were thought to have been living.

On 25 March 1997, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Indonesian Department of Social Affairs and the Asian Women's Fund, and the projects began. The Department was designated as the organization implementing the projects, and it was agreed that the Asian Women's Fund would offer a total of 380 million yen as assistance over a 10-year period, taken from financial resources of the Japanese Government.

From 1997 to 2002, 21 facilities were built and as of January 2004, approximately 150 people had taken up residence in these facilities.

By March 2003, Fund representatives had visited all 20 of the completed facilities. All are quite simple, but it is obvious that the Indonesian staff members working at these facilities are keen to ensure a clean environment and pleasant atmosphere.

Former comfort women feel considerable reticence about coming forward, and this has affected the plan to give them priority when admitting residents. The Fund has strongly requested that the Indonesian Government improve this situation.

The Suharto administration stepped down in 1999, succeeded by new leaders. The government ministries and agencies have been reorganized. The present administration has announced its intention to continue promoting the projects in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, and they are moving ahead at this time.

10. Projects to Learn from History

Projects to learn from history were conceived as a fourth element of the Fund's projects of atonement.

First of all, the Asian Women's Fund prepared a bibliography on published materials from books and journals containing information on the comfort women. From this came publication of *"Ianfu" Mondai Kankei Bunken Mokuroku (A Bibliography of Publications on the "Comfort Women" Issue; September 1997, Gyosei)*. The work lists books and papers in journals published up to 1996, with all titles given in Japanese and English. An appendix contains a chronology of events relating to the comfort women issue. The work has since been input into a database.

As a second step, the Fund had organised comfort-women-related documents which were collected during Japanese Government investigations. The documents were published by Ryukei Shosha in five volumes between March 1997 and July 1998;: *Seifu Chousa "Juugun Ianfu" Kankei Shiryou Shuusei (Compilation of Government-collected Documentary Materials Relating to Wartime "Comfort Women")*. The original documents are in the possession of various institutions: the Diplomatic Record Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Defense Agency's Military Archival Library; the National Archives of Japan; the National Diet Library; the National Police Academy Library; and the National Archives and Records Administration of the United States.

As a third step, in October 1996 the Fund established the Committee on Historical Materials on Comfort Women. Shinkichi Eto serves as committee advisor, with committee members Takanori Aeba, Toyomi Asano, Masao Gabe, Aiko Kurasawa, Ken'ichi Goto, Soji Takasaki, Yoshikatsu Takahashi, Ikuhiko Hata, Sumio Hatano, Hiroko Hashimoto, and Haruki Wada.

During 1996, 1997 and 1998, committee members traveled for study purposes and commissioned studies, to conduct research, for example, into the Setsuzo Kinbara papers (Kinbara was the chief of the Medical Affairs Section, Medical Affairs Department, Ministry of War) held by the Defense Agency's Military Archival Library, and to study documents held by the Okinawa prefectural government and national archives in the United States, the Netherlands, Germany and Taiwan. Committee members also conducted hearings in Indonesia and Micronesia. The results of these research efforts were included in *"Ianfu" Mondai Chosa Hokoku 1999 (Report on the Inquiry into the "Comfort Women" Issue, 1999)*, published in February 1999. The report contains six monographs.

The above-mentioned publications have been donated to public and university libraries in Japan and the countries concerned, and have met with the appreciation of many researchers and citizens.

Round table discussions on the comfort women issue have been organized by the Fund since 2000, and have benefited from the participation of researchers from abroad. The 3rd Round Table Discussion, held in September 2001, was joined by specialists from the Netherlands, the Philippines, Taiwan and Indonesia.

11. Now that the Atonement Projects Have Been Concluded

The Japanese Government acknowledged its moral responsibility regarding those forced to become comfort women, and established the Asian Women's Fund. The Fund is a juridical foundation established to implement projects expressing the atonement of the Japanese Government and people with heartfelt apology and remorse, and to address problems faced by women today. From the beginning, the Fund's proponents, directors and Advisory Committee members have volunteered their efforts, working with the Presidents of the Fund (the first of whom was the late Bunbei Hara, with the current President being Tomiichi Murayama) while implementing projects in cooperation with the Fund Secretariat staff and officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary.

The projects of atonement began in August 1996 in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, and were concluded in September 2002. In the Netherlands, projects were implemented from 1998 to 2001.

The feelings of apology and atonement of the Japanese Government and people were offered through these projects to a total of 364 former comfort women — 285 in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, and 79 in the Netherlands. Quite a few of them, including Ms. Rosa Henson, have since passed away.

Fund members and the many Japanese people who donated money to the Fund shared an earnest desire: to offer the atonement of the Japanese Government and people to the victims while they were still alive, and to provide them with material and psychological support. Although there is no way to bring back their youth, we believe that the letter and projects of atonement offered some solace to the victims, who are now advanced in years, in recovering their honor.

And yet, there are other victims who did not accept benefits from the Fund's projects of atonement from the Japanese people. Some were unable to do so because they live in countries whose governments rejected the Fund's projects. Some others died before the Fund's projects began, or after project commencement but before they could accept them. The Fund will most certainly not forget these victims, either.

Reports submitted to the UN Human Rights Commission and Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities criticized the Fund's atonement projects as insufficient, but welcomed the initiative, nonetheless.

Many victim support groups criticized the Japanese Government and the Asian Women's Fund. They called on the Japanese Government to acknowledge legal

responsibility, pay compensation from the state treasury, and punish those responsible. Unfortunately, there was a completely negative criticism — that acknowledging moral responsibility was just a ruse to avoid acknowledging legal responsibility. There were also demands that the Asian Women's Fund be abolished. We are willing, in all humility, to receive criticism, but we cannot accept the argument that the Asian Women's Fund is a ruse. To those who believe it is, we ask that, instead of being swayed by stereotypes, they examine without prejudice what type of organization the Asian Women's Fund has always been.

One of the essential elements of the Fund's atonement projects is the provision of atonement money valued at 2 million yen per person, paid from donations of the Japanese people. It is natural that this element creates the strongest impression. But the Fund is not simply a private organization. It also presents the Prime Minister's letter of apology to victims, and implements medical and welfare support projects financed by the Japanese Government. In addition, the salaries of the Fund's secretariat staff are paid from the Government budget. This is why all of the donations from the Japanese people could be presented as atonement money to the victims. The Fund was established in order to promote atonement projects, bringing together the sincere feelings and efforts of the Japanese Government and people.

On 1 September 2000, Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, a former Prime Minister of Japan, was appointed President of the Fund, following the first President, Mr. Bunbei Hara, who passed away in September 1999. To mark Mr. Murayama's appointment and the 5th anniversary of the establishment of the Asian Women's Fund, then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Hidenao Nakagawa issued a press statement on the day of Mr. Murayama's appointment. In the statement, he clarified "the basic understanding of the Japanese Government, which established the Fund." Based on this understanding, he said, "The Japanese Government is painfully aware of its moral responsibility regarding the so-called wartime comfort women issue, and has been dealing with this issue in all sincerity through the Fund." He further stated that the Government intended to continue cooperating with the Fund.

The Chief Cabinet Secretary also emphasized that the Fund's projects expressing "the feeling of atonement of the Japanese people for the so-called wartime comfort women issue are generally making steady progress. The Government has made contributions from its budget to the Fund, and has been implementing medical and welfare support projects for former comfort women through the Fund."

This was a clear statement that medical and welfare support projects, which express the atonement of the Japanese people, are implemented and financed by the Japanese Government.

The question of whether the Japanese Government should bear legal responsibility is presently being disputed in court. The work of the Asian Women's Fund has been to offer national atonement based on acknowledgement of moral responsibility. This was the intention when the Fund implemented and completed projects of atonement in the Netherlands, and then in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Taiwan.

We are grateful for the understanding we received from the victims who accepted project benefits. We also express our heartfelt thanks to the many Japanese people who donated money and cooperated in other ways with the Fund, and to the international community, governments and groups that offered their support.

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1. Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the Result of the Study on the Issue of "Comfort Women"

4 August, 1993

The Government of Japan has been conducting a study on the issue of wartime "comfort women" since December 1991. I wish to announce the findings as a result of that study.

As a result of the study which indicates that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women. Comfort stations were operated in response to the request of the military authorities of the day. The then Japanese military was, directly or indirectly, involved in the establishment and management of the comfort stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of the comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who acted in response to the request of the military. The Government study has revealed that in many cases they were recruited against their own will, through coaxing coercion, etc., and that, at times, administrative/military personnel directly took part in the recruitments. They lived in misery at comfort stations under a coercive atmosphere.

As to the origin of those comfort women who were transferred to the war areas, excluding those from Japan, those from the Korean Peninsula accounted for a large part. The Korean Peninsula was under Japanese rule in those days, and their recruitment, transfer, control, etc., were conducted generally against their will, through coaxing, coercion, etc.

Undeniably, this was an act, with the involvement of the military authorities of the day, that severely injured the honor and dignity of many women. The Government of Japan would like to take this opportunity once again to extend its sincere apologies and remorse to all those, irrespective of place of origin, who suffered immeasurable pain and incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

It is incumbent upon us, the Government of Japan, to continue to consider seriously, while listening to the views of learned circles, how best we can express this sentiment.

We shall face squarely the historical facts as described above instead of evading them, and take them to heart as lessons of history. We hereby reiterated our firm determination never to repeat the same mistake by forever engraving such issues in our memories through the study and teaching of history.

As actions have been brought to court in Japan and interests have been shown in this issue outside Japan, the Government of Japan shall continue to pay full attention to this matter, including private researched related thereto.

2. On the Issue of Wartime "Comfort Women"

4 August, 1993

Cabinet Councilors' Office on External Affairs

1. Study Background

The issue of wartime "comfort women" has been attracting attention from both within and outside Japan, as actions have been brought to court in Japan by those concerned and the issue has been debated in the Diet.

During Prime Minister Miyazawa's visit to the Republic of Korea in January 1992, the issue was brought up in the meeting between the Prime Minister and then President, Mr. Roh Tae Woo, in which the Korean side requested strongly that relevant facts be brought to light. Other countries and areas concerned also have shown strong interest in this issue.

Under these circumstances, the Government of Japan, since December 1991, has been conducting a study by means of individual hearings of former military personnel and others concerned in parallel with a search for relevant documents. In addition, for five days from July 26 to 30, the Government of Japan conducted detailed regarding of former comfort women, with the cooperation of the Association of Pacific War Victims and Bereaved Families, in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, regarding the circumstances at the time. Furthermore, in the course of the study, government officials were sent to the United States to search for official U.S. documents and a field study was conducted in Okinawa as well. The following gives the details of the study, and a list of the documents discovered by the study is attached.

Institutions covered by the study: the National Police Agency; the Defense Agency; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health and Welfare; the Ministry of Labor; the National Archives; the National Diet Library; and the U.S. National Archives.

People covered by individual hearings: former comfort women; former military personnel; former officials of the Government-General of Korea; former operators of comfort stations; residents in the areas where comfort stations were located; and history researchers, etc.

Domestic and foreign documents and publications used for reference: the study report compiled by the Government of the Republic of Korea; collections of testimonies by former comfort women, compiled by those concerned including the Association of Pacific War Victims and Bereaved Families and the Korean Council for the women Drafted for Sexual Slavery by Japan; and also practically all of the numerous Japanese publications on the subject matter were perused.

On 6 July 1992, the Government of Japan announced the results of its study on this issue conducted up to that time. In view of the further progress of the study since then, the Government has decided to announce the findings reached as below.

2. Facts on the Issue of Wartime "Comfort Women"

The following has been brought to light as a result of the aforementioned search for documents and individual hearings as well as comprehensive analysis and review of the various documents used as reference.

(1) Background to the establishment of comfort stations

The comfort stations were established in various locations in response to the request of the military authorities at the time. Internal government documents from those days cite as reasons for establishing comfort stations the need to prevent anti-Japanese sentiments from fermenting as a result of rapes and other unlawful acts by Japanese military personnel against local residents in the areas occupied by the then Japanese military, the need to prevent loss of troop strength by venereal and other diseases, and the need to prevent espionage.

(2) Timing of the establishment of comfort stations

As some documents indicate that a comfort station was established in Shanghai at the time of the so-called Shanghai Incident in 1932 for the troops stationed there, it is assumed that comfort stations were in existence since around that time to the end of World War II. The facilities expanded in scale and in geographical scope later on as the war spread.

(3) Areas with comfort stations

The countries or areas where it has been possible as a result of the study to confirm that comfort stations existed are: Japan; China; the Philippines; Indonesia; the then Malaya; Thailand; the then Burma; the then New Guinea; Hong Kong; Macao; and the then French Indochina.

(4) Number of comfort women

It is virtually impossible to determine the total number of comfort women, as no document has been found which either indicates their total number or gives sufficient ground to establish an estimate. However, in view of the fact, as described above, that comfort stations were operated in extensive areas for long periods, it is apparent that there existed a great number of comfort women.

(5) Comfort women's place of origin

The countries or areas from which it has been possible as a result of the study to confirm that comfort women came are: Japan; the Korean Peninsula; China; Taiwan; the Philippines; Indonesia; and the Netherlands. Apart from Japanese, many of the comfort women transferred to the war areas were from the Korean Peninsula.

(6) Operation and management of comfort stations

Many comfort stations were run by private operators, although in some areas there were cases in which the then Japanese military directly operated comfort stations. Even in those cases where the facilities were run by private operators, the then Japanese military was involved directly in the establishment and management of the comfort stations by such means as granting permissions to open the facilities, equipping the facilities, drawing up the regulations for the comfort stations that set the hours of operation and tariff and stipulated such matters as precautions for the use of the facilities.

With regard to the supervision of the comfort women, the then Japanese military imposed such measures as mandatory use of contraceptives as a part of the comfort station regulations and regular check-ups of comfort women for venereal and other diseases by military doctors, for the purpose of hygienic control of the comfort women and the comfort stations. Some stations controlled the comfort women by restricting their leave time as well as the destinations they could go to during the leave time under the comfort station regulations. It is evident, at any rate, that, in the war areas, these women were forced to move with the military under constant military control and that they were deprived of their freedom and had to endure misery.

(7) Recruitment of comfort women

In many cases private recruiters, asked by the comfort station operators who represented the request of the military authorities, conducted the recruitment of comfort women. Pressed by the growing need for more comfort women stemming from the spread of the war, these recruiters resorted in any cases to coaxing and intimidating these women to be recruited against their own will, and there were even cases where administrative/ military personnel directly took part in the recruitments.

(8) Transportation of comfort women, etc

When the recruiters had to transport comfort and other women by ship or other means of transportation, the then Japanese military approved requests for their travel by such means as regarding such women as having a special status similar to its civilian personnel serving in the military, and the Japanese Government issued certificates of identification. In quite a few cases the women were transported to the war areas by military ships and vehicles, and in some cases they were left behind in the confusion of the rout that ensued Japanese defeat.

3. Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on the "Peace, Friendship, and Exchange Initiative"

31 August, 1994

Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the war. With the anniversary approaching, I visited the Republic of Korea in July this year, and I have just completed a tour of Southeast Asian countries. Taking this opportunity, I would like to say a few words of explanation on the basic thinking behind Japanese external policy to make the historic anniversary truly significant.

1. Japan's actions in a certain period of the past not only claimed numerous victims here in Japan but also left the peoples of neighboring Asia and elsewhere with scars that are painful even today. I am thus taking this opportunity to state my belief, based on my profound remorse for these acts of aggression, colonial rule, and the like caused such unbearable suffering and sorrow for so many people, that Japan's future path should be one of making every effort to build world peace in line with my no-war commitment.

It is imperative for us Japanese to look squarely to our history with the peoples of neighboring Asia and elsewhere. Only with solid basis of mutual understanding and confidence that can

be built through overcoming the pain on both sides, can we and the peoples of neighboring countries together clear up the future of Asia-Pacific.

With next year's historic 50th anniversary of the war's end, I believe it is necessary that such views are solidified and that we redouble our efforts for peace.

2. In keeping with this view, I would like to announce "Peace, Friendship, and Exchange Initiative" to start in the 50th anniversary, 1995. I see this as a two-part Initiative.

One part consists of support for historical research, including the collection and cataloging of historical documents and support for researchers, to enable everyone to face squarely to the facts of history.

The other part consists of exchange programs to promote dialogue and mutual understanding in all walks of life through intellectual exchange, youth exchange and so on.

I would also like to include such other programs as deemed appropriate in light of the Initiative's objectives.

In addition, I would like to consider the establishment of an Asian Historical Document Center, which has been advocated, within this Initiative.

While this Initiative will focus primarily upon the neighboring Asian countries and areas where Japan's past actions have left deep scars even today, I also want to include other regions as appropriate in light of the Initiative's objectives.

This Initiative calls for the disbursement of about ¥100 billion over the next ten years, with the details now being worked out within the government for inclusion in the next year's budget.

3. On the issue of wartime "comfort women", which seriously stained the honor and dignity of many women, I would like to take this opportunity once again to express my profound and sincere remorse and apologies.

With regard to this issue as well, I believe that one way of demonstrating such feelings of apologies and remorse is to work to further promote mutual understanding with the countries and areas concerned as well as to face squarely to the past and ensure that it is rightly conveyed to future generations. This initiative, in this sense, has been drawn up consistent with such belief.

Along with the Initiative by the government, I would like to find out, together with Japanese people, an appropriate way which enables a wide participation of people so that we can share such feelings.

4. The government is keenly aware of the importance of international cooperation in such fields as the advancement of women and the enhancement of women's welfare.

I have been strongly concerned with the issues of women's human rights and welfare. Knowing that the Fourth World Conference on Women is scheduled to be held in Beijing next year to formulate new guidelines for the advancement of women toward the 21st century, the government intends to place even greater emphasis on economic cooperation in such fields as the advancement of women and the enhancement of women's welfare, including, for example, vocational training centers for women, particularly in relation to the neighboring Asian countries and areas.

5. With this "Peace, Friendship, and Exchange Initiative" as the basic framework, the government also intends to make good-faith efforts in the following areas.

a. One is the issue on permanent repatriation of ethnic Koreans residing in Sakhalin. This issue cries out for our attention particularly from a humanitarian perspective, and the government intends to decide upon the support policies as soon as possible, in full consultation with the governments of Republic of Korea and Russian Federation, and to implement them as they are firmed up.

b. The other is the issue of "established financial obligations" to the people concerned in Taiwan, including the non-payment of wages and the status of military postal savings accounts, which have long defied solution. Considering the facts including that the creditors are increasingly aging year by year, the government intends to work to meet these established obligations as soon as possible.

6. While almost half a century has passed since the end of the war, a vast majority of people today have not experienced the war. In order to make sure that the horrors of war be never again repeated, we should not forget about the war. It is all the more essential in this time of peace and abundance that we reflect on the errors in our history, convey to future generations the horrors of war and the many lives that were lost, and work continuously for lasting peace. I believe that this is the responsibility which the political leadership and the Administration of Japan should bear together with each and every Japanese.

4. First Report on the So-called Wartime Comfort Women Issue

7 December, 1994

Issued by the Sub-committee to Address the Wartime Comfort Women Issue
(Ruling Parties' Project to Deal with Issues Fifty Years After the War)

1. Addressing the so-called wartime comfort women issue

As a result of a careful study of the so-called wartime comfort women issue, the Government of Japan now recognizes that there existed in the past a great number of comfort women.

The study shows that comfort stations were established at the demands of the Japanese military authorities of that time, with the then-military being directly or indirectly involved in the establishing and managing of those stations and the transfer of comfort women. The recruitment of comfort women was conducted mainly by private recruiters who had been

requested to do so by the military. In many of those cases, the women were recruited against their will, through coaxing, coercion and the like. In addition, it is clear that government officials and others in authority also directly took part in the recruitments. The comfort women lived under coercive conditions in those stations, and their lives were extremely miserable. These actions were undeniably a grave affront to the honor and dignity of many women.

It is therefore necessary that the Government of Japan and ruling political parties once again express, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, our heartfelt apology and remorse to those women who experienced so much anguish and were forced to suffer incurable physical and mental damage.

We shall face squarely this past history of actions committed by Japan and the Japanese people, and act responsibly as a country that respects moral values, thereby ensuring that such actions are not committed again in the future.

2. Why we are calling for the participation of a broad spectrum of the Japanese population

With regard to the question of restitution or the right to demand material compensation as a result of issues arising from the past war, including the so-called wartime comfort women issue, the Japanese Government has always acted in good faith and in view of international law and the practice of diplomacy in accordance with the stipulations of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, bilateral peace treaties and other relevant accords.

But in light of past events and the current situation, Japan must, from a moral standpoint, take the opportunity offered by the 50th anniversary of the end of the war to fulfill its responsibility for the wartime comfort women issue. We call on all Japanese to understand and share this commitment, and on Japanese people from a wide spectrum of the population to participate in activities that fulfill this responsibility.

3. Participation of the Japanese people

(a) Objectives and projects

Showing the atonement of the Japanese people, through expressions of apology and remorse to the former so-called wartime comfort women, is important not only to restore their honor, which was affronted, but also to indicate in Japan and abroad our country's strong respect for women.

It must also be noted that problems offending the honor and dignity of women still exist in many parts of the world. It is important that we Japanese remain concerned about these problems and promote efforts to eliminate them worldwide.

In light of the above, consideration should be given to adopting the following measures:

(i) A Fund encompassing the participation of the Japanese people should be established, as a way to achieve the above objectives.

(ii) The AWF should implement measures for women who were forced to suffer unbearable hardships as wartime comfort women.

(iii) The AWF should also implement a variety of projects supporting activities that aim to resolve problems offending the honor and dignity of women.

(b) Organization and administration of the AWF The organization and administration of the AWF should reflect the opinions of the relevant people.

(c) Project implementation

When implementing projects, the AWF should request the understanding and cooperation of the relevant countries and people, and should base its actions on the need to protect privacy.

(d) Other considerations

The AWF should establish its modus operandi as soon as possible by, for example, calling for cooperation from existing organizations that have a strong public nature.

4. Role of the Japanese Government

The Government should cooperate with the AWF to the greatest extent possible, including providing financial support, as a way to indicate its position with regard to the issue, a position made clear by the Prime Minister in his recent statement.

In addition, the Government should carefully study the question of how the country should express its deep feelings of apology and remorse.

5. Resolution Renewing Japan's Determination for Peace, Taking to Heart the Lessons of History

9 June, 1995

Plenary Session of the House of Representatives, National Diet of Japan

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, this House expresses its grief for the war dead and the victims of wars and conflicts throughout the world.

Solemnly reflecting upon the many instances of colonial rule and acts of aggression that occurred in modern world history, and recognizing that Japan carried out such acts in the past and inflicted suffering on the people of other countries, especially in Asia, the Members of this House hereby express deep remorse.

We must learn in all humility the lessons of history, and promote peace in the international community, overcoming the various differences in ideology that exist regarding the understanding of history related to the war in the past.

6. Statement by the Chief Cabinet Secretary

14 June, 1995

Kozo Igarashi, Chief Cabinet Secretary

To follow up the statement made in August, 1994, by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, and in accordance with discussions of the Ruling Parties' Project Team for 50th Anniversary Issues, and after consideration within the Government, based on our remorse for the past on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the War, the projects of the "Asian Peace and Friendship Foundation for Women" will be undertaken as follows.

1. The following activities will be conducted for the former wartime comfort women, through the cooperation of the Japanese People and the Government:

(a) The Foundation will raise funds in the private sector as a means to enact the Japanese people's atonement for former wartime comfort women.

(b) The Foundation will support those conducting medical and welfare projects and other similar projects which are of service to former wartime comfort women, through the use of government funding and other funds.

(c) When these projects are implemented, the Government will express the nation's feelings of sincere remorse and apology to the former wartime comfort women.

(d) In addition, the Government will collate historical documents on past wartime comfort women, to serve as a lesson of history.

2. As its project addressing issues related to the honor and dignity of women, including the projects mentioned in 1 (b) above, the Foundation will, through the use of government funding and other funds, support those who undertake projects that address contemporary problems, such as violence against women.

3. The names of those who have given their support to date, acting as "campaigners" calling on a broad range of Japanese people to cooperate with the projects of the "Asian Peace and Friendship Foundation for Women," are listed separately.

7. An Appeal for Donations for the Asian Women's Fund

18 July, 1995

Fifty years have elapsed since the war came to an end.

The war caused enormous horror and ravaged the people of Japan and many other nations, especially those in Asia. Particularly brutal was the act of forcing women, including teenagers, to serve the Japanese armed forces as "comfort women," a practice that violated the fundamental dignity of women. No manner of apology can ever completely heal the deep wound inflicted on these women both emotionally and physically. Yet we should, by whatever means, do our best to appreciate their pain and make the greatest possible effort to salve their suffering in any way we can. We believe the obligation to do so today hangs heavy over Japan, the country that inflicted the suffering.

The Government of Japan has expressed its deep remorse, albeit belatedly, apologizing to the victims through the Chief Cabinet Secretary's statement of August 4, 1993, and the Prime Minister's statement of August 31, 1994. Further, on June 14 of this year, the Cabinet announced a concrete action plan, which is to be based upon four pillars:

1. Support will be given to the establishment of a fund that invites the people of Japan to atone for the institution of "comfort women."
2. The Government will contribute funds to the welfare and medical care of these women.
3. The Government will express remorse and apology.
4. Historical documents and materials will be collated that will help make this a lesson to be drawn on.

Moneys from the AWF - donated by the Japanese as an offer of atonement to the "comfort women" - will be delivered to the women, as well as be used to provide support for measures to cope with current-day issues such as the eradication of violence against women. We have gathered together to propose this fund in the conviction that atonement in the form of compensation by the people of Japan to the victims of the institution of "comfort women" is urgently needed now, along with an apology by the Government.

Some of us proponents differ in our views. Some, for example, believe Government compensation is absolutely necessary, while others believe such compensation will be difficult to realize in a prompt manner because of legal and practical impediments. We are, however, united in one regard - our burning desire to take action immediately, because the time left to compensate these women of advanced age is running short.

We will continue to urge the Government to spare no effort in bringing to light all the facts of the case, and to express a heartfelt apology, in order that the honor and dignity of the victims of the institution of "comfort women" be restored. At the same time, we will be vigilant in our effort to make sure the Government apportions ample budgetary outlays and uses these

funds to fully provide, in good faith, for the welfare and medical care of the victims. We will continually demand that our Government pursue an active policy of working to prevent still remaining infringements upon the dignity of all women, both in Japan and throughout the world.

Of paramount importance, however, is the need for as many Japanese citizens as possible to appreciate the suffering of the victims and to express a genuine desire for atonement. The indignities and pain suffered by these women, both during the war and in the fifty years since, can never be fully compensated for. But we are convinced that, if each and every citizen of Japan would do his or her best to understand the plight of the victims, and then act in a concrete manner to make amends, and if such a commitment - coming, as it must, from the heart - could reach the women involved, then our actions would help mitigate, to some extent, the trauma they have lived through and continue to live with.

It is the Japanese nation of the past that created the "comfort women." But Japan is not the government alone. Like other, Japan is a nation in which each citizen must shoulder the legacy of the past, live in the present, and create the future. To make amends for the past, then, fifty years after the fact, is our responsibility - we, the present generation, owe it to the victims, to the international community, and to future generations.

We sincerely urge you to take part in and contribute to this national fund, in order that as many Japanese citizens as possible translate into action the desire to make amends.

Proponents of the "Asian Women's Fund"

Ryoko AKAMATSU
Jinnosuke ASHIDA
Shinkichi ETO
Toshiko OKITA
Yoshiko OTAKA
Yasuaki ONUMA
Yukio OKAMOTO
Taki KATO
Mitsuko SHIMOMURA
Kenji SUZUKI
Ryozo SUNOBE
Yoshikatsu TAKAHASHI
Shunsuke TSURUMI
Aiko NODA
Kuniko NONAKA
Nobutoshi HAGIWARA
Mutsuko MIKI
Isamu MIYAZAKI
Tadashi YAMAMOTO
Haruki WADA

8. Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama on the Occasion of the Establishment of the “Asian Women’s Fund”

July, 1995

I would like to share with you my sentiments on the occasion of the establishment of the “Asian Women’s Fund.”

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the end of the War, an event that caused many people, both in Japan and abroad, great suffering and sorrow. During these past 50 years we have worked hard to cultivate, step by step, friendly relations with our neighboring Asian countries and others. However, the scars of war still run deep in these countries to this day.

The problem of the so-called wartime comfort women is one such scar, which, with the involvement of the Japanese military forces of the time, seriously stained the honor and dignity of many women. This is entirely inexcusable. I offer my profound apology to all those who, as wartime comfort women, suffered emotional and physical wounds that can never be closed.

Established on this occasion and involving the cooperation of the Government and citizens of Japan, the “Asian Women’s Fund” is an expression of atonement on the part of the Japanese people toward these women and supports medical, welfare, and other projects. As articulated in the proponents’ Appeal, the Government will do its utmost to ensure that the goals of the AWF are achieved.

Furthermore, to ensure that this situation is never again repeated, the Government of Japan will collate historical documents concerning the former wartime comfort women, to serve as a lesson of history.

Turning from yesterday to today, we still see many women suffering violence and inhuman treatment in many parts of the world. The “Asian Women’s Fund,” as I understand it, will take steps to address these problems facing women today. The Government of Japan intends to play an active role in this regard. I am convinced that a sincere effort on the part of Japan to implement these measures will further strengthen the true relationships of trust we share with our neighbors in Asia and other nations around the world.

The Government of Japan intends to cooperate, to the greatest extent possible, with the “Asian Women’s Fund,” in order that its aims are achieved. I call on each and every Japanese citizen, asking for your understanding and cooperation.

Tomiichi Murayama
Prime Minister of Japan

9. Understanding of the Government of Japan, Agreed Upon during a Cabinet Meeting

11 August, 1995

The aims of Asian Women's Fund activities are to contribute to the promotion of the social values of peace and freedom and to promote friendship between the countries of neighboring Asia and elsewhere and Japan, through respect for and protection of the honor and dignity of women in Japan and abroad. In light of these aims, the Government of Japan is resolved to cooperate with the activities of the Asian Women's Fund.

10. Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama "On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End"

15 August, 1995

The world has seen fifty years elapse since the war came to an end. Now, when I remember the many people both at home and abroad who fell victim to war, my heart is overwhelmed by a flood of emotions.

The peace and prosperity of today were built as Japan overcame great difficulty to arise from a devastated land after defeat in the war. That achievement is something of which we are proud, and let me herein express my heartfelt admiration for the wisdom and untiring effort of each and every one of our citizens. Let me also express once again my profound gratitude for the indispensable support and assistance extended to Japan by the countries of the world, beginning with the United States of America. I am also delighted that we have been able to build the friendly relations which we enjoy today with the neighboring countries of the Asia-Pacific region, the United States and the countries of Europe.

Now that Japan has come to enjoy peace and abundance, we tend to overlook the pricelessness and blessings of peace. Our task is to convey to younger generations the horrors of war, so that we never repeat the errors in our history. I believe that, as we join hands, especially with the peoples of neighboring countries, to ensure true peace in the Asia-Pacific region -indeed, in the entire world- it is necessary, more than anything else, that we foster relations with all countries based on deep understanding and trust. Guided by this conviction, the Government has launched the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative, which consists of two parts promoting: support for historical research into relations in the modern era between Japan and the neighboring countries of Asia and elsewhere; and rapid expansion of exchanges with those countries. Furthermore, I will continue in all sincerity to do my utmost in efforts being made on the issues arisen from the war, in order to further strengthen the relations of trust between Japan and those countries.

Now, upon this historic occasion of the 50th anniversary of the war's end, we should bear in mind that we must look into the past to learn from the lessons of history, and ensure that we do not stray from the path to the peace and prosperity of human society in the future.

During a certain period in the not too distant past, Japan, following a mistaken national policy, advanced along the road to war, only to ensnare the Japanese people in a fateful crisis, and, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations. In the hope that no such mistake be made in the future, I regard, in a spirit of humility, these irrefutable facts of history, and express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and state my heartfelt apology. Allow me also to express my feelings of profound mourning for all victims, both at home and abroad, of that history.

Building from our deep remorse on this occasion of the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, Japan must eliminate self-righteous nationalism, promote international coordination as a responsible member of the international community and, thereby, advance the principles of peace and democracy. At the same time, as the only country to have experienced the devastation of atomic bombing, Japan, with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, must actively strive to further global disarmament in areas such as the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is my conviction that in this way alone can Japan atone for its past and lay to rest the spirits of those who perished.

It is said that one can rely on good faith. And so, at this time of remembrance, I declare to the people of Japan and abroad my intention to make good faith the foundation of our Government policy, and this is my vow.

Tomiichi Murayama
Prime Minister of Japan

11. Letter from the Prime Minister to the Former Comfort Women

The Year of 1996

Dear Madam,

On the occasion that the Asian Women's Fund, in cooperation with the Government and the people of Japan, offers atonement from the Japanese people to the former wartime comfort women, I wish to express my feelings as well.

The issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women.

As Prime Minister of Japan, I thus extend anew my most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

We must not evade the weight of the past, nor should we evade our responsibilities for the future.

I believe that our country, painfully aware of its moral responsibilities, with feelings of apology and remorse, should face up squarely to its past history and accurately convey it to future generations.

Furthermore, Japan also should take an active part in dealing with violence and other forms of injustice to the honor and dignity of women.

Finally, I pray from the bottom of my heart that each of you will find peace for the rest of your lives.

Respectfully yours,

Ryutaro Hashimoto

Prime Minister of Japan

(Subsequent Prime Ministers who signed the letter are: Keizo Obuchi, Yoshiro Mori and Junichiro Koizumi)

12. Letter from the AWF President

The Year of 1996

Dear Madam,

The Asian Women's Fund, established in cooperation with the Government and people of Japan, herein conveys to you the sense of atonement held by the Japanese people for the unbearable suffering you were forced to endure as a wartime "comfort woman."

At a certain time of war in the past, many comfort stations were established with an involvement of the former Japanese armed forces, and many women were recruited and forced to become "comfort women" for officers and soldiers. There were cases where young women, including 16-17 year-olds, were recruited without an indication of the fate before them, and, in occupied areas, there were cases where direct coercive means were also used. I understand that you were one of such victims.

This cruelty truly denigrated the fundamental dignity of women. As clearly acknowledged in the Prime Minister's letter, the Government and people of Japan today bear moral responsibility for the acts inflicted upon you. We also extend our heartfelt apologies to you.

I know that you not only experienced intolerable suffering during the war, but through more than 50 years since, have lived with physical damage and cruel memories.

In such recognition, the Asian Women's Fund, in cooperation with the Government of Japan, appealed to the Japanese people in a year-long campaign for contributions. Many thoughtful people responded with contributions to the AWF. Many letters accompanying contributions expressed sincere apologies and sense of atonement shared in the hearts of the Japanese people.

We know that the pain you have endured could never be atoned for with words of apology or with a monetary payment. However, we sincerely hope that you will accept our atonement as a token of our people's resolve to never repeat what happened in the past.

In cooperation with the Government of Japan, the Asian Women's Fund will launch medical and welfare assistance programs as one of the AWF's activities for atonement, the intention of which is to fulfill our moral responsibilities. The AWF will furthermore strive to make known the true facts relating to the "comfort women" issue, and proceed with study and research programs which examine relevant documents and materials to serve as lessons of history.

Since you stepped forward to pronounce your case, our eyes have been opened anew to the events of the past. The Japanese people will never forget your suffering and your courage. With all our hearts, we sincerely hope that you are able to find somewhat more peace in your life.

Sincerely,

Bunbei Hara

President, Asian Women's Fund

(Subsequent President who signed the letter is Tomiichi Murayama)

13. The Legal Position of the Japanese Government Regarding Implications of Acceptance of Support from Asian Women's Fund Projects

October, 1996

The Government of Japan has communicated to us its legal position with regard to the implications of acceptance of support from Asian Women's Fund projects. This position is explained below.

In light of this position, we sincerely request your understanding of and cooperation with the Asian Women's Fund.

1. The following is the Japanese Government's position with regard to the question whether, when a former comfort woman accepts to receive atonement money from the Asian Women's Fund in accordance with the AWF's procedures, she should accept it under the condition that she will drop a lawsuit or refrain from instituting a new lawsuit

Position of the Japanese Government

The Government of Japan does not request that a former wartime comfort woman agree to any conditions when the Asian Women's Fund provides her with atonement money.

2. The following is the Japanese Government's position with regard to lawsuits demanding individual compensation.

Position of the Japanese Government

(a) Atonement money provided by the Asian Women's Fund is an expression of the feeling of atonement of the vast majority of Japanese people. The money is obtained through the AWF's campaigns to raise donations, and through its various activities to encourage the awareness and understanding of the Japanese people regarding the wartime comfort women issue, in order to fulfill moral responsibility.

(b) Therefore, it is the opinion of the Japanese Government that atonement money from the Asian Women's Fund is a matter which is set apart from legal issues, and that the acceptance of atonement money does not prevent that individual from instigating a lawsuit or demanding a decision with regard to that issue in a Japanese court of law.

(c) The legal position of the Japanese Government with regard to this issue is the same as before, and it has not changed.

(d) It may also be added here that, at a ceremony in the Philippines on 14 August 1996, Ms. Maria Rosa L. Henson was presented with atonement money, the letter from the Prime Minister of Japan, and a letter from Mr. Hara, the AWF President, at which time Ms. Henson said that she was pleased to accept the Prime Minister's letter and was satisfied with its contents. She also referred to the ongoing lawsuit she had personally initiated before the

Tokyo District Court, and stated that she had already forgiven Japan, and that if she had not forgiven Japan, that God would not forgive her. She added that, although her lawsuit was continuing, any further action she would take would be through a lawyer.

The Japanese Government is of the understanding that Ms. Henson, after fully understanding the significance of the measures being taken by the Japanese Government and the Asian Women's Fund, accepted the Prime Minister's letter and atonement money from the people of Japan, and will nevertheless continue with the lawsuit.

14. The contents of the letter of the then Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto sent to the Netherlands Prime Minister Willem Kok

15 July, 1998

The Government of Japan, painfully aware of its moral responsibility concerning the issue of so called "wartime comfort women," has been sincerely addressing this issue in close cooperation with the Asian Women's Fund which implements the projects to express the national atonement on this issue.

Recognizing that the issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women, I would like to convey to Your Excellency my most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

After a series of talks among the parties concerned to crystallize such feelings of the Japanese people, an agreement has been reached that the Asian Women's Fund will provide financial assistance for the newly established Project Implementation Committee in the Netherlands which will implement the Project to provide goods and/or services in the medical and welfare fields for those who experienced the difficulties during the war concerning the comfort women issue.

I will be grateful if the Government of the Netherlands provides warm understanding and support to this Project of the Asian Women's Fund which embodies the sincere feelings of the Japanese people.

By the Statement of Prime Minister in 1995, the Government of Japan renewed the feelings of deep remorse and the heartfelt apology for tremendous damage and suffering caused by Japan to the people of many countries including the Netherlands during a certain period in the past. My cabinet has not modified this position at all, and I myself laid a wreath to the Indisch Monument with these feelings on the occasion of my visit to the Netherlands in June last year.

In view of further promoting mutual understanding between our two countries, the Government of Japan is extending, support for historical research, and expanding exchanges,

as two pillars, under the Peace, Friendship and Exchange Initiative which has a purpose to build a relationship toward the future between Japan and neighboring countries.

We must not evade the weight of the past, nor should we evade our responsibilities for the future. Japan, facing up squarely to its past history and accurately conveying it to future generations, is determined to do its utmost to further promote the friendly relationship with the Netherlands which will celebrate the 400th anniversary in the year 2000.

15. Report on the Activities of the Asian Women's Fund, Five Years after Its Establishment

(Distributed to members of the media, during a press conference on the occasion of Mr. Tomiichi Murayama's appointment to the position of President of the AWF)

1 September, 2000

The Asian Women's Fund was established through the united efforts of the Government and people of Japan. Its establishment was the result of a decision made by the Japanese Government, which was painfully aware of its moral responsibility for the so-called wartime comfort women issue. The objectives of the AWF are to promote two types of projects - projects expressing the atonement of the Japanese people for the former comfort women, and projects working for the resolution of problems faced by women today.

The Asian Women's Fund has been the object of numerous criticisms since its establishment five years ago, on 19 July 1995. The path taken by the AWF has been strewn with many controversies, not limited to the simple question as to whether the state should pay compensation. In spite of numerous difficulties, the AWF has promoted a number of projects and has achieved some fundamental results, thanks to the encouragement of many donors and Japanese people from various walks of life, and thanks also to cooperation from officials in relevant ministries and agencies of the Japanese Government.

Projects of Atonement

To date, Asian Women's Fund projects of atonement have provided support to 170 former comfort women in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. In addition, medical and welfare support projects, which are one aspect of the projects of atonement, have provided services to 77 former comfort women in the Netherlands. This makes a total of 247 recipients of support. The AWF is also supporting projects in Indonesia under a program called Promotion of Social Welfare Services for Elderly People.

Each recipient in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan was given a letter of apology from the Prime Minister of Japan when receiving support under the projects of atonement. In his letter, the Prime Minister recognizes that "the issue of comfort women, which involved the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women," and states that Japan is "painfully aware of its moral responsibility" with regard to all former comfort women "who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and mental wounds." The letter, signed

by the Prime Minister, expresses his "most sincere apologies and remorse" to all such women.

The AWF's projects of atonement consist of three constituent parts. First of all, 2 million yen is given as "atonement money" to each former comfort woman. This money comes from donations from Japanese people who share feelings of apology and remorse. Donations received to date total about 448 million yen. Of this amount, 340 million yen has been provided as "atonement money" to 170 people in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, leaving a remainder of about 108 million yen.

Secondly, as an expression of its feelings of apology and remorse, the Japanese Government is using its own financial resources to implement, through the Asian Women's Fund, medical and welfare support for each former comfort woman. The monetary amount of benefits takes into consideration the cost of living in each country or region, and is equivalent to 3 million yen per person in the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and the Netherlands, and 1.2 million yen per person in the Philippines. Project objectives include housing improvements, nursing services, and assistance for the provision of medical treatment and pharmaceuticals. The projects are designed to take into account the actual circumstances and wishes of each former comfort woman.

The above-mentioned letter of apology from the Prime Minister of Japan is given to each recipient as the third constituent part of the projects of atonement.

Project Implementation, by Country and Region

I would now like to report on the AWF's projects being implemented in the various countries and region.

In the Philippines, applications are submitted under the assistance of LILA-PILIPINA, a prominent women's group, and the Asian Center for Women's Human Rights (ASCENT), which promotes the human rights of women. The applications are examined by a task force of the Philippine Government called Task Force on Filipino Comfort Women (TFFCW) (composed of officials in departments and agencies of the Philippine Government). Those who have been recognized as former comfort women are provided with "atonement money" by the Asian Women's Fund. The AWF also implements, for their benefit, medical and welfare support projects through the Philippine Government's Department of Social Welfare and Development. Applications are being received steadily and verification procedures are continuing. At the present time, almost 160 applications are in the process of being examined, and we expect that more applications will be made before the deadline, August 2001, a date less than a year away.

In the Republic of Korea, the AWF has not been able to obtain the understanding of the media or activists' groups that are promoting a campaign with former comfort women. The AWF was criticized after projects were implemented for seven people who applied in January 1997, and as a result the projects were temporarily suspended. Projects began again in January 1998, after notices were placed in four of the country's newspapers. Later, the Korean Government began providing public assistance payments, after which the AWF requested, in a letter signed by its former President, Bunbei Hara, that it be recognized that

potential recipients could receive both the AWF's "atonement money" and the Korean Government's public

In Taiwan, too, the AWF has not been able to obtain the understanding of the authorities or prominent women's groups. Against this backdrop, the AWF is cooperating with a lawyer, Mr. Lai Hao Min, who has stated that the feelings of the former comfort women should be respected. The AWF has designated his Wanguo Law Office as the place where applications for support can be sent. In May 1997, the AWF placed notices in three Taiwanese newspapers. Once a year since then, it has placed the same notices in newspapers in Taiwan, so that as many victims as possible can learn about the AWF's projects, and so that other people, too, will correctly understand the nature and purpose of the projects.

Former comfort women who have accepted support under the AWF's projects of atonement have expressed to us some of their profound emotions.

One Korean victim decided to accept benefits from the AWF, but indicated at first that she was unwilling to meet a Fund representative. However, she later agreed to a meeting. Upon hearing the representative read aloud to her the letter from the Prime Minister, she burst into tears, hugged the AWF's representative, and began to speak through her tears about her experiences as a comfort woman and the suffering she had endured after returning to her own country. From this, we believe that she has completely accepted the sincere expressions of apology and remorse of the Government and people of Japan.

With regard to the Netherlands, on 15 July 1998, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the AWF and the Project Implementation Committee in the Netherlands. Medical and welfare support projects have been implemented under the MOU, on a scale of 255 million yen. Seventy-seven victims have accepted support, and the project is now close to completion.

In his letter to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Japan's Prime Minister expressed his Government's most sincere apologies and remorse to all former comfort women. The letter was later given to each victim recipient. Some victims sent the Project Implementation Committee their expressions of gratitude and personal messages, and here I would like to quote from one of those letters:

"I thank you for all you have done and are committed to doing for me. I thank you not only for this monetary compensation, but also for having recognized the misery I experienced as a girl of 15. You have softened the pain of a wound that is still open, a wound I have endured through life."

The Indonesian Government indicated that it would not identify any former comfort women, and stated to the Government of Japan that it would like to receive support not in the form of assistance for individual former comfort women, but in the form of social welfare services for elderly people. After this request was relayed from the Japanese Government to the Asian Women's Fund, on 25 March 1997, the AWF concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Social Affairs of the Government of Indonesia. Under the terms of the MOU, financial support for elderly people, amounting to a total of 380 million yen, is to be

provided over 10 years. During the first two years of the project, 11 facilities for the elderly were completed, and 124 people are now accommodated there.

Project to Learn from History

The project to learn from history is considered to be an essential element within the AWF's projects of atonement.

The project consists of three components:

1. The AWF collates data from books and journals relating to the comfort women. In September 1997, it published *"Ianfu" Kankei Bunken Mokuroku, (List of Documents Relating to "Comfort Women")*. This list was later placed in a database and made available through the AWF's website (<http://www.awf.or.jp>).
2. The AWF has published photoengraved printed versions of comfort-women-related materials obtained during investigations conducted by the Japanese Government. The 5-volume work, entitled *Seifu Chousa "Jugun Ianfu" Kankei Shiryō Shusei (Compilation of Government-collected Documentary Materials Relating to Wartime "Comfort Women")*, was published between March and July 1997.

The AWF also established the Committee for Historical Materials on "Comfort Women." During travel and research in 1996, 1997 and 1998, committee members studied the "Diary of Department of the Army" written by Setsuzo Kanehara held by the National Institute for Defense Studies, documents in the possession of the Okinawa Prefectural Government, and materials at government archives in the U.S., the Netherlands, Germany and Taiwan. During the same period, committee members also conducted interviews in Indonesia and Micronesia. The results of these investigations were included in the AWF's publication, *"Ianfu" Mondai Chousa Hokoku 1999 (Collection of Reports of Investigations into Documents Relating to "Comfort Women", 1999)*, published in February 1999).

Copies of these publications were donated to public libraries in Japan and the countries concerned, and have received the high regard of relevant parties.

Addressing Problems Faced by Women Today

Violence against women and the violation of their human rights are two problems that are as prevalent as before in many parts of the world. Building on Japan's remorse for the past, the Asian Women's Fund is actively involved in efforts to resolve these problems, working for their elimination in society through a variety of projects.

To promote efforts to eliminate domestic violence, the trafficking of human beings, the commercial exploitation of women, the violation of women's rights during armed conflict, and the judicial maltreatment of women, over the last five years the AWF has worked with experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Japan and abroad, and has organized

international conferences and promoted research, investigations and training sessions in cooperation with local governments, the United Nations, and other international organizations.

To ensure that these numerous activities produce positive results, the AWF issues reports, and produces videos to be used for educational and public awareness campaigns conducted by citizens' groups, local governments and groups of women. The AWF also organizes study sessions with a view to raising the potential of providing aid and relief for women who are victims and currently facing problems.

AWF projects for the dignity of women place importance on understanding and addressing problems by looking at the issues through the victims' own eyes. When we first launched such projects, some NGO representatives could not understand why the AWF was involved, but I believe that after five years of our activities, they are steadily coming to accept our role and the significance of our efforts.

Future Goals of the Asian Women's Fund

With the willingness of the Government and people of Japan to cooperate, the Asian Women's Fund has promoted two types of projects - projects expressing the feelings of atonement all Japanese have toward the former comfort women, and projects addressing problems faced by women today. The AWF hopes that these projects are contributing to the restoration of the honor of former comfort women, and that our efforts will be of some assistance to all women who have been victimized, helping them become self-reliant. The AWF also wants to do what it can so that all those who receive support under our projects of atonement will be accepted without discrimination in society.

AWF projects addressing problems faced by women today have enjoyed the support of many researchers, local governments, media organizations, governments, international organizations and NGOs, and we hope that we can work even closer with such organizations and groups in the future.

The AWF's projects of atonement have still not been completed. We request in all sincerity even greater understanding from the victims, relevant governments and political authorities, and people in general. And we hope that, in places where our projects have been suspended, we will be able to recommence them after obtaining the understanding of governments and relevant associations.

16. Chief Cabinet Secretary's Press Statement

1 September, 2000

Hidenao Nakagawa, Chief Cabinet Secretary

The Asian Women's Fund was established in July 1995, and has now passed its fifth anniversary. Today, former Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama has been chosen as the AWF's President, and the Government of Japan fully welcomes his appointment. At this time I would like to clarify once again the basic understanding of the Government of Japan, which established the AWF and has continued to support it.

1. The Japanese Government is painfully aware of its moral responsibility regarding the so-called wartime comfort women issue, and has been dealing with this issue in all sincerity through the AWF.
2. Today, former Prime Minister Murayama was appointed as the new President of the Asian Women's Fund. A short while ago, he visited Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori to greet him as the AWF's new President. The AWF was established in 1995 and therefore reached its fifth anniversary this year, and its projects expressing the feeling of atonement of the Japanese people for the so-called wartime comfort women issue are generally making steady progress. The Government has made contributions from its budget to the AWF, and has been implementing medical and welfare support projects for former comfort women through the AWF. In addition, money from a wide spectrum of the Japanese population has been donated to the AWF, to the amount of about 450 million yen. We understand that the AWF has used some of these financial resources to provide "atonement money" to 170 former comfort women so far.
3. Under its new President, Mr. Murayama, the AWF will do everything it can to promote its projects related to the so-called wartime comfort women issue, to collect and collate materials relating to comfort women, and to promote projects addressing problems faced by women today. The Government hopes that all these projects will make steady progress, and intends to continue cooperating as much as possible with the AWF's projects.

17. Statement of the AWF on Close of Project in Korea (Excerpt)

20 February, 2002

1. "Atonement Projects" of the Asian Women's Fund in the Philippines, Korea, and Taiwan have been carried out with a fixed term. Each project was planned to be completed after five years.
2. While the Atonement Project in Korea was launched in January 11, 1997, the AWF Board of Directors decided to suspend the project on July 30, 1999 after taking all the circumstances into consideration, particularly the opposition to the project in Korea. For this

reason, at the meeting on December 17, 2001, the Board of Directions decided that the project would continue to be suspended after January 10, 2002, the initial date of conclusion.

3. Then, after protracted negotiations and consultations with various quarters, the Board of Directors met on February 15. It recognized the difficulty of changing the current situation and decided to cancel the suspension as of February 20, 2002. This means that the project in Korea will be concluded on May 1, 2002, when entire "Atonement Project" is expected to finish.

4. Although the project will come to an end soon, our resolution is to express the deep repentance of both the Japanese government and the Japanese people toward the former "comfort women," who have taught us a lesson in history.

18 . An Expression of Gratitude to All Donors

October, 2002

Tomiiichi Murayama, President of the Asian Women's Fund

A message to all who kindly donated to the Asian Women's Fund atonement projects

Seven years have passed since the establishment of the Asian Women's Fund, and the AWF's atonement projects were recently completed in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. Here, I would like to express our deep gratitude to all who donated atonement money for those forced to become comfort women.

The term "comfort women" refers to those who were forced to provide sexual services to officers and men at comfort stations established with the involvement of the former Japanese military during the last World War. Many women at those comfort stations had their honor and dignity gravely trampled upon, and suffered incurable physical and psychological trauma.

On August 4, 1993, the Chief Cabinet Secretary expressed the Japanese Government's sincere feelings of apology and remorse. After his Statement, the government and people of Japan searched for ways to offer atonement.

Painfully aware of its moral responsibility, the government decided to establish the Asian Women's Fund, which would implement projects of atonement of the Japanese people, in cooperation with the government and citizens of Japan. The AWF was established on July 19, 1995.

After the government took this initiative, the Asian Women's Fund decided that the projects of atonement of the Japanese people would involve: (i) atonement money financed by donations from the Japanese people; (ii) medical and welfare support projects financed by disbursements from the Japanese government; and (iii) a letter of apology from the Prime Minister of Japan, sent to each former comfort woman with these benefits. The Asian Women's Fund then launched a campaign calling on the Japanese people to donate money.

The projects of atonement of the Japanese people began on August 13, 1996 in the Philippines, on January 1, 1997 in the Republic of Korea, and on May 2, 1997 in Taiwan. Because of a strong desire to implement the projects as soon as possible for the women, who were advanced in age, it was decided that the project duration would be five years. The deadline for receipt of applications was August 2001 in the Philippines, and May 2002 in the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. The projects of atonement were recently concluded in those countries and region.

Project of atonement benefits were provided to 285 recipients in those countries and region. Many recipients sent us favorable comments, such as, "I never thought I would receive apologies from the Prime Minister and money. I know they represent the feelings of good will of the Japanese people."

Since the establishment of the Asian Women's Fund, the total amount of money donated by Japanese citizens has reached more than 565 million yen. All of this money was provided to former comfort women of the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan.

We are deeply grateful to all Japanese donors. I am pleased to note that cooperation among the citizens and government of Japan made it possible for the projects of atonement of the Japanese people to be implemented in the above-mentioned countries and region, and for the Asian Women's Fund to undertake the projects.

Some former comfort women and support groups in those countries and region criticized the Asian Women's Fund atonement projects, saying that the Japanese government should acknowledge legal responsibility and pay compensation to individuals from the State treasury. The Asian Women's Fund tried, in all sincerity, to enter into a dialogue with them in order to obtain their understanding.

In the Netherlands, medical and welfare support programs financed by Japanese government disbursements were implemented from 1998 to 2001 through the Project Implementation Committee in the Netherlands, with program benefits being provided to 79 former comfort women of that country. They were each also given, together with the benefits, a copy of the letter of apology sent by Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan to Prime Minister Willem Kok of the Netherlands.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the government of Indonesia, it was decided that the Asian Women's Fund would support social welfare projects implemented by that government for elderly people in Indonesia. The projects are planned to last 10 years, starting in March 1997, and are now being implemented.

In addition to the projects of atonement, the Asian Women's Fund has also promoted projects aimed at resolving problems faced by women today. The projects spring from a strong sense of remorse for the Japan of the past that created that detestable system, the comfort women system.

The AWF has also promoted a greater awareness of the comfort women issue, so that it will serve as a lesson of history. The AWF's collection, survey and analysis of relevant historical documents, and the public awareness campaigns based on the knowledge gained through

those efforts, have crystallized in a determination that the Japanese people must never forget the issue or repeat the same mistakes.

We believe in the importance of the AWF's projects described above, and intend to continue our efforts in the future.

We sincerely hope that we can continue to count on the sympathetic understanding and support of all Japanese citizens.

History

1991

Dec The Government started the fact-finding study on the issue of the so-called "Wartime Comfort Women."

1993

4 Aug Japanese government releases its report on the results of its investigation. (Report entitled *On the Issue of Wartime "Comfort Women"*) Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono issues a statement on the results of this investigation.

1994

31 Aug Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama issues a statement expressing his "profound and sincere remorse and apologies "with regard to the wartime comfort women issue, and states his desire to find an appropriate way to enable the wide participation of Japanese people in the expression of such feelings of remorse and apology.

7 Dec The three political parties in the ruling coalition (Liberal Democratic Party, Socialist Party and New Party Sakigake) propose that Japan carry out, with broad national participation, atonement activities for the so-called wartime comfort women and support activities that aim to resolve problems concerning the honor and dignity of women.

1995

9 Jun Plenary session of the House of Representatives passes a resolution entitled, "Renewing Japan's Determination for Peace, Taking to Heart the Lessons of History"

14 Jun Chief Cabinet Secretary Kozo Igarashi gives information on projects of the proposed Asian Women's Fund (provisional name at this time) , outlines the government's role, and names Fund proponents.

18 Jul The AWF's Proponents issue "An Appeal for Donations for the Asian Women's Fund." Remarks by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama are released.

19 Jul The Asian Women's Fund is established, and Bunbei Hara, Former President of the House of Councilors, is installed as the president of the Asian Women's Fund.

11 Aug The Cabinet consents to the Government cooperating with Asian Women's Fund projects. An activity for donation begins.

15 Aug Statement by Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama "On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War's End" is issued.

8 Dec The Asian Women's Fund is given authorization to act as a non-profit foundation, under the joint jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1996

- Jul The AWF decides that the projects of atonement of the Japanese people will consist of: (i) atonement money in the amount of two million yen for each former comfort woman, financed through donations from the Japanese people; (ii) a letter of apology from the Prime Minister of Japan; and (iii) medical and welfare support projects financed by the Japanese government, totaling seven hundred million yen.
- Aug Projects of atonement of the Japanese people begin in the Philippines.

1997

- Jan Projects of atonement of the Japanese people begin in the Republic of Korea.
- Mar A Memorandum of Understanding for projects entitled Promotion of Social Welfare Services for Elderly People is signed by the Indonesian Department of Social Affairs and the AWF.
- May Advertisements regarding AWF projects are placed in newspapers in Taiwan, and projects of atonement of the Japanese people begin there.

1998

- Jan Advertisements regarding AWF projects are placed in newspapers in the Republic of Korea.
- Jul The AWF signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Project Implementation Committee in the Netherlands (PICN), and projects of atonement of the Japanese people begin there.

2000

- Sep Tomiichi Murayama, a former Prime Minister of Japan, becomes the second President of the Asian Women's Fund. On the occasion of Mr. Murayama's appointment as President, then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Hidenao Nakagawa states at a press conference that the Japanese Government will continue to cooperate with the AWF.

2001

- Jan The Asian Women's Fund is placed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as part of a restructuring of government ministries and agencies.
- Jul Projects implemented by the PICN are concluded.
- Aug The period for applying for project benefits ends in the Philippines

2002

- May The period for applying for project benefits ends in the Republic of Korea and Taiwan.
- Sep Projects are concluded in the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, with a total of 285 beneficiaries.
- Oct Advertisement regarding an expression of gratitude to all donors for the atonement project is placed in newspapers.
- Oct-Dec Briefing sessions reporting on Asian Women's Fund activities are held in locations throughout Japan.

List of Officers

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>
Directors		
<i>President</i>	Tomiiichi Murayama	Former Prime Minister
<i>Vice-President</i>	Nobuo Ishihara	President, Research Institute for Local Government Former Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary
	Yoshiko Otake	Former Member of the House of Councilors
<i>Executive Director</i>	Momoyo Ise	Former Director, Specialist Service Division, Office of Human Resources Management, U.N.
<i>Director</i>	Makiko Arima	Journalist, Former Japanese Representative to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women
	Shinkichi Eto	Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo
	Teruko Kanehira	Former Vice-Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government
	Tadayoshi Kusano	Chairperson, Japan Trade Union Confederation
	Isamu Miyazaki	Former Minister of State, Economic Planning Agency
	Kenji Okabe	Vice-President of the Central Executive Committee, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union
	Yasuaki Onuma	Professor, University of Tokyo
	Mitsuko Shimomura	Journalist
	Haruki Wada	Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo
	Tatsuo Yamaguchi	Former Ambassador to Singapore and then to Spain
Auditor		
<i>Auditor</i>	Yutaka Hashimoto	Permanent Director, Seibi Gakuen School
Councilor		
<i>Councilor</i>	Ryoko Akamatsu	Former Minister of Education
	Sumio Edamura	Former Ambassador to Russia
	Seiko Hayashi	Vice-Chairperson, Japan Trade Union Confederation
	Ichiko Ishihara	Member of Advisory Committee, Forbes Japan Edition
	Kaichiro Kino	Former Secretariat Councilor, Management & Coordination Agency
	Mitsuko Wakana	Attorney
Advisory Committee		
<i>Chairperson</i>	Yozo Yokota	Professor, Chuo University, Senior Advisor to the Rector of U.N. University
<i>Members</i>	Masahiko Daimon	Director of Political Department, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union
	Hiroko Hashimoto	Professor, Jumonji Gakuen Women's University
	Yoko Hayashi	Attorney
	Kuniko Nonaka	Attorney, Chairperson of the Committee on Women's Issues, National Federation of Consultative Assemblies of Civil Liberties Commissioners
	Soji Takasaki	Professor, Tsuda College
	Haruki Wada	Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo
	Tatsuo Yamaguchi	Former Ambassador to Singapore and then to Spain

List of Former Officers

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Title at the time of assumption of office</u> <u>(Duration of Service)</u>
Directors		
<i>President</i>	Bunbei Hara	Former President of the House of Councilors (Jul 1995 – Sep 1999)
<i>Director</i>	Ichiro Kaneda	President of Foundation of Social Development for Senior Citizens (Jul 1995 – Mar 1997)
	Tsutomu Hotta	Attorney, Former Deputy Vice-Minister of Justice (Jul 1995 – Mar 1997)
	Tsuneo Enomoto	Vice Chairperson of the Central Executive Committee, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Jul 1995 – Oct 1997)
	Etsuya Washio	Secretary-General, Japan Trade Union Confederation (Jul 1995 – Nov 1997)
	Koei Sato	Vice Chairperson of the Central Executive Committee, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Nov 1997 – Oct 1999)
	Kiyoshi Sasamori	Secretary-General, Japan Trade Union Confederation (Nov 1997 – Oct 2001)
	Shingo Fukuyama	Vice Chairperson of the Central Executive Committee, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Oct 1999 – Oct 2001)
Councilor		
<i>Councilor</i>	Kanji Takaoka	Former Deputy Vice-Minister of the Prime Minister's Office (Dec 1995 – Jul 1998)
	Kiyoko Kumasaki	Vice-Chairperson, Japan Trade Union Confederation (Dec 1995 – Mar 2000)
	Junko Takashima	Vice-Chairperson, Japan Trade Union Confederation (Mar 2000 – Oct 2001)
	Aiko Noda	Attorney (Dec 1995 – Mar 2003)
Advisory Committee		
<i>Members</i>	Yukio Okamoto	International Consultant (Jul 1995 – Mar 1997)
	Kenichi Goto	Professor, Waseda University (Jul 1995 – Mar 1997)
	Shigeru Nakajima	Director, International Affairs, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Jul 1995 – Oct 1999)
	Haruki Wada	Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo, [Present Director] (Jul 1995 – Oct 2000)
	Takeshi Kasami	Director of Political Department, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Dec 1995 – Oct 2001)
	Takanori Aeba	Member of the Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange Council (Jul 1995 – Mar 2003)
	Shigeki Yamaguchi	Director of Political Department, All Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers' Union (Oct 2001 – Dec 2003)