



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Forty-fourth session

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Agenda item 4

### Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

## **Joint written statement\* submitted by Japan Society for History Textbook, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[27 May 2020]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

## A Deceitful Korean Citizens' Group (NGO) and the Comfort Women Issue

The Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereinafter KCWDMS), currently called The Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereinafter KCJR), a Korean organization primarily centered on the comfort women issue and has criticized Japan in the United Nations Human Rights Council for “coercive recruitment into ‘sexual slavery’”, has allegedly defrauded its donors. The KCWDMS has had special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since 2014.

Ms. LEE Yong-soo, a self-proclaimed comfort woman has long been active with the group. She is known around the world as the activist who screamed before the members of the US House of Representatives in 2007 during the deliberation on the resolution calling for an apology from the Japanese government over the comfort women issue. Recently, she asked President Donald Trump for a hug as an ex-comfort woman at the state dinner given during President’s visit to the Republic of Korea (ROK) in November 2017.

On May 7, 2020, Ms. LEE Yong-soo without hesitation stated the following at a press conference in Daegu, the ROK.

- 1) The donations collected by the group were never used for former comfort women. The money was mostly used for private purposes and the responsibility lies with Ms. YOON Mi-hyang, who was the head of the group until this past March 2020.
- 2) Ms. LEE’s testimonies about her days as a comfort woman were given as instructed by the group.
- 3) She was not a “sex slave.” She requested Ms. YOON Mi-hyang not to use the phrase because she did not understand why she was called one but Ms. YOON made it a point of using the phrase “sex slave” at the UN because “the expression was effective in scaring America.”

Based on these three points, it is clear that former president YOON Mi-hyang allowed false testimonies to be made from those who call themselves "comfort women", including Ms. LEE, and misrepresented the comfort women as “sex slaves,” made use of the UN to spread the lie of the comfort women issue as a global women’s human rights issue and collected large amounts of donations from within and outside the ROK for her own personal use.

At present, former KCJR president YOON Mi-hyang has been denounced by several citizens’ groups, in addition to Ms. LEE Yong-soo, for suspected private use of donations and dubious accounting. The ROK’s prosecutors have started an investigation—prosecutors searched the KCJR premises on May 20 and 21, 2020.

### UN Human Rights Council Fooled by Crooks

As has been repeatedly demonstrated in the past, Japanese "comfort women" were prostitutes who worked in warzones. This has been clearly stated by US Army Psychological Warfare Report No. 49 (official data of the US Army) dated October 1, 1944 made by the US Office of War Information (OWI), a report of captured Korean comfort women and their employers in Burma. The American interrogator stated that “a comfort girl is nothing more than a prostitute or professional camp follower” in conclusion.

The KCWDMS claimed that “Japanese administrative personnel coercively recruited 200,000 Korean women to make them comfort women and abused them as ‘sex slaves.’” However, on its face, this is clearly nonsense. In fact, many "comfort women" were obligated to engage in this line of work solely for the money. From 1930s to the middle of WWII, Korean criminal syndicates trafficked Korean women to Manchuria and China to become prostitutes. Really, most comfort women then who claim to have been "coerced" were victims of criminals. It should be noted that Japanese administrative personnel did what they could to enforce the law. Accounts of kidnappings and Japanese responses have been noted in *the Dong-a Ilbo* of the time.

Nonetheless, the KCWDMS outright lies to the UN, and denigrates the honor of Japan, striving to show its earnestness in combatting human trafficking.

Committee on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR),

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Committee against Torture (CAT) and Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) have recommended the Japanese government to “publicly acknowledge legal responsibility for the crimes of sexual slavery and prosecute and punish perpetrators with appropriate penalties” based on an opinion paper from the group.

**In light of the circumstances, we request the following:**

- The matter of the KCJR (former KCWDMS), must be vigorously investigated and resolved by the Government of the ROK and the findings reported to the UN Human Rights Council. The UN Human Rights Council must immediately demand this action to the Government of the ROK.
- The six human rights treaty-based bodies mentioned above made accusations against Japan based on KCWDMS’s falsehoods and deceit, and continuously issued misdirected recommendations to the Japanese government concerning the comfort women issue. We demand that the various human rights treaty-based bodies thoroughly investigate facts without swallowing the victims’ testimonies and produce a report. A scientific investigation based on facts is more important than anything.

International Research Institute of Controversial Histories (iRICH) <sup>\_\_\_\_\_</sup> NGO without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.