



<YWCA Week Without Violence>

YWCA of JAPAN

Reaffirming Our Protest Actions against the statements of Japanese politicians infringing the human rights of “Comfort Women” (the Japan’s military sexual slavery during the Second World War)

“There was no Japanese military slavery system, so-called “comfort women” during the World War II”, “The wartime sex slaves were really needed in maintaining discipline in the army and providing relief for soldiers”, “I recommended the current U.S military commander in Okinawa to make full use of sex industry so as to decrease the numbers of sexual offences committed by the U.S soldiers”.

Those remarks were made by Mr. Hashimoto, the current mayor of Osaka city in Japan. A series of his statements provoked a flood of harsh criticisms from many advocacy groups for human rights.

Such shameful attitudes against the wartime sex slavery prevail among politicians in Japan and they keep denying the fact that the Japanese Army has forced women and girls into sexual servitude in the wartime. It is nothing but violating the rights of the victims and trampling their dignities. According to the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, state parties are obliged to take appropriate actions to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for war crimes relating to sexual violence against women and girls.

In June 2013, the UN Committee against Torture (CAT) expressed severe concerns in the concluding observation on the second report of Japan over continuing official denial of the facts of “the comfort women” and re-traumatization of the victims. The committee also called for the government to recognize the victim’s right to redress, and take immediate and effective legislative and administrative measures to reach victim-centered resolution. However, the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe decided not to comply with the recommendations of the CAT by saying that recommendations of the CAT are not legally binding and do not oblige a state party to comply.

Having considered these situations, YWCA of Japan sent a request letter to Mr. Hashimoto which demanded him to withdraw his remarks on “the comfort women” and take responsibilities to restore trust from the international community¹. We also sent a letter to the Japanese government to urge to take appropriate measures following recommendations of the CAT². In addition, YWCA of Korea and YWCA of Japan required the Japanese government to make apologies with the comment that “Japanese Government Must Apologize to the Japanese Army’s Comfort Women”.³

In the Week Without Violence of 2103, YWCA of Japan reaffirms our commitment to fight against impunity to violence against women including sexual assault in conflict situations and advocates the rights of the victims in collaboration with other women’s organizations.

Reference: <http://www.ywca.or.jp/english/topnews.html>

¹ Letter of Request for Retraction and Apology for the Remark that “Comfort Women were Necessary”, and for Responsible Actions to Regain International Trust.

² Request to accept and make appropriate responses and actions to the Recommendations of UN Committee against Torture regarding the Japanese wartime military sex slavery system’.

³ JAPANESE GOVERNMENT MUST APOLOGIZE TO THE JAPANESE ARMY’S ‘COMFORT WOMEN!’ <The YWCA of Korea and the YWCA of Japan Demand the Japanese Government’s Apology to the ‘Comfort Women’>