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H. Res. 121: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally...

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110th CONGRESS
1st Session
H. RES. 121

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as 'comfort women', during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
January 31, 2007

Mr. HONDA (for himself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. ROYCE, Ms. WATSON, Mr. HARE, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. WU) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as 'comfort women', during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II.

Whereas the Government of Japan, during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II, officially commissioned the acquisition of young women for the sole purpose of sexual servitude to its Imperial Armed Forces, who became known to the world as *ianfu* or 'comfort women';

Whereas the 'comfort women' system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan, considered unprecedented in its cruelty and magnitude, included gang rape, forced abortions, humiliation, and sexual violence resulting in mutilation, death, or eventual suicide in one of the largest cases of human trafficking in the 20th century;

Whereas some new textbooks used in Japanese schools seek to downplay the 'comfort women' tragedy and other Japanese war crimes during World War II;

Whereas Japanese public and private officials have recently expressed a desire to dilute or rescind the 1993 statement by Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono on the 'comfort women', which expressed the Government's sincere apologies and remorse for their ordeal;

Whereas the Government of Japan did sign the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children and supported the 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security which recognized the unique impact of armed conflict on women;

Whereas the House of Representatives commends Japan's efforts to promote human security, human rights, democratic values, and rule of law, as well as for being a supporter of Security Council Resolution 1325;

Whereas the House of Representatives commends those Japanese officials and private citizens whose hard work and compassion resulted in the establishment in 1995 of Japan's private Asian Women's Fund;

Whereas the Asian Women's Fund has raised \$5,700,000 to extend 'atonement' from the Japanese people to the comfort women; and

Whereas the mandate of the Asian Women's Fund, a government initiated and largely government-funded private foundation whose purpose was the carrying out of programs and projects with the aim of atonement for the maltreatment and suffering of the 'comfort women', comes to an end on March 31, 2007, and the Fund is to be disbanded as of that date: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Japan --

- (1) should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Force's coercion of young women into sexual slavery, known to the world as 'comfort women', during its colonial and wartime occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands from the 1930s through the duration of World War II;
- (2) should have this official apology given as a public statement presented by the Prime Minister of Japan in his official capacity;
- (3) should clearly and publicly refute any claims that the sexual enslavement and trafficking of the 'comfort women' for the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces never occurred; and
- (4) should educate current and future generations about this horrible crime while following the recommendations of the international community with respect to the 'comfort women'.