

Striving for “Normalization” - Korea-Japan Civic Cooperation and the Attempt to Resolve the “Comfort Women” problem [正常化] を求めて 韓日市民協力と「慰安婦」問題解決への模索

Gavan McCormack

Introduced and translated by Gavan McCormack

Introduction

Fifty years have passed since relations between Japan and South Korea were “normalized.” Yet they remain in fact far from “normal.” Seventy years since the Japanese colonial empire collapsed the issue of the wartime “comfort women” system continues to bedevil relations and defy solution. It remains probably the most hotly contested among outstanding issues between the two countries, issues that include forced labor and a multitude of atrocities committed during the colonial era extending to 1945.¹

During his visit to the United States in April 2015, Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo spoke of his “deep remorse” [*kaigo*] over the war and his intent to “uphold” statements (of regret and apology) by former Prime Ministers. However, the fact is that throughout his political career Abe has played a central role in casting doubt on those statements, especially those by Foreign Minister Kono in 1993 and Prime Minister Murayama in 1995. He avoided in his US speeches the key terms “aggression,” or “apology” or “Comfort Women” (much less “sex slave”) or any reference to the role of the Imperial Japanese Army in establishing and managing the Asia-wide system of military prostitution. It seemed unlikely that he was about to engage in a full and serious rethinking of his position in the seventieth anniversary

year of Japan’s surrender.

Yet Japan-Korea cooperation at the civil society level seeking to achieve a resolution of the “Comfort Women” problem continues and deepens. The 10th anniversary of Japan’s annexation of Korea was marked by a joint statement (included in the following documents) signed by around 1,000 intellectuals and public figures of the two countries in 2010. They agreed that the Japanese annexation of Korea was accomplished as a result of long-term Japanese aggression, repeated activities by the Japanese army, murder of the Korean Queen consort and intimidation of the king and major political figures and the crushing by force of resistance by the Korean people.

This is plainly not what Prime Minister Abe wishes to think of as the “proud” history that he believes the nation’s schools should teach.

Deeply dissatisfied with the continuing failure of the Abe government to move towards full resolution of the issues of colonialism, and especially of the exploitation and brutalizing of women, a group of Japanese historians, researchers, literary figures, editors, lawyers and social activists in June 2015 issued a new “Statement by Intellectuals in Japan on Japan-Korea Historical Problems.” That too follows below, in Japanese and Korean as well as English translation.

In the following, we present:

- 1) The 2015 Statement by Intellectuals in Japan

on Japan-Korea Historical Problems, in English, Japanese, and Korean

2) The Recommendations to the Government of Japan for Resolution of the Comfort Women issue adopted in June 2014 (and cited in the 2015 Document), in English, Japanese, Korean, and Chinese

3) The 2010 “Joint Statement by Japanese and Korean Intellectuals on the 100th Anniversary of the Annexation of Korea,” in English, Japanese, and Korean

Original Japanese documents:

[2015年日韓歴史問題に関して日本の知識人は声明する](#)

[第12回日本軍「慰安婦」問題アジア連帯会議](#)

[「韓国併合」100年日韓知識人共同声明](#)

Korean translations:

[2015년 일한 역사 문제에 대하여 일본 지식인의 입장을 밝힌다](#)

[일본정부에 대한 제언 일본군'위안부' 문제 해결을 위해](#)

[「한국병합」 100년에 즈음한 한일 지식인 공동 성명](#)

Chinese translation:

[给日本政府的建议书 为解决日军“慰安妇”问题](#)

For an account in *Japan Times* (June 9 2015) of the 2015 Statement, [see here](#).

The *Japan Times* article carried this photograph:



Haruki Wada, historian and professor emeritus of the University of Tokyo, speaks before the press with other Japanese historians in Tokyo on Monday. Japanese academics urged Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to renew apologies over the country's imperialist past and offer compensation to victims of its wartime brothel system, the latest in a line of interventions from scholars. | AFP-JIJI Seated to right of Wada: Utsumi Aiko, Odagawa Ko, and Yano Hideki.

Gavan McCormack

15 June 2015

2015 Statement by Intellectuals in Japan on Japan-Korea Historical Problems

We (the undersigned) who in 2010 issued the Centennial Joint Statement by Japanese and Korean intellectuals on the “Annexation of Korea”² now issue this new Statement on the historical problems that have plunged the Japan-Korea relationship into crisis. While the present Statement was under preparation, 187 Japan scholars in America (later, more than 460 Japan scholars around the world) issued an

“Open Letter in Support of Historians in Japan,”³ and we also wish to respond to that. By “intellectuals in Japan,” we mean intellectuals living and working in Japan, including but not confined to Japanese.

On the occasion of this statement, we emphasize resolution of the Comfort Women problem. We refer to the plan for resolution proposed by Japanese and Korean movements in June 2014, which is attached below.

Among the 270 historians, scholars and researchers, literary figures, editors, lawyers, social activists and religious figures who have signed thus far are the following:

Kano Masanao, Waseda University, emeritus professor

Mitani Taiichiro, University of Tokyo, emeritus professor

Yi Seong-si, Waseda University, professor

Cho Kyeong-dal, Chiba University, professor

Kibata Yoichi, Seijo University, professor

Toma Seidai, Japanese historian, aged 102

Nagai Kazu, Kyoto University, professor

Arasaki Moriteru, Okinawa University, emeritus professor

Kang Sang-jong, University of Tokyo, emeritus professor

Yamashita Yong-ae, Bunkyo University, professor

Ishida Takeshi, University of Tokyo, emeritus professor

Kim Sok-bon, novelist

Kobayashi Hisatomo, Deputy Secretary-General of Network for Research on Forced Labor

Hanabusa Toshio, former representative of Association in support of “Kan-Pu” (Shimonoseki-Pohang) trial

Watanabe Mina, Joint representative of the All-Japan Action for resolving the Japanese Army “Comfort Women” problem

Shoji Tsutomu, Director of Korai Museum

Issued by:

Ishizaka Koichi, Associate Professor, Rikkyo University (Sociology of Korea)

Ueno Chizuko, Emeritus Professor, University of Tokyo, (Women’s studies)

Utsumi Aiko, Adjunct Professor, Osaka University of Economics and Politics

Ota Osamu, Professor, Doshisha University (Korean history)

Odagawa Ko, Representative, In Korea Citizen’s Conference on Hibakusha Problems

Kasuya Kenichi, Emeritus Professor, Hitotsubashi University (Korean history)

Takasaki Soji, Emeritus professor, Tsudajuku University (Japanese history)

Tanaka Hiroshi, Emeritus professor, Hitotsubashi University (Postwar reparations problems)

Tonomura Masaru, Associate professor, University of Tokyo (Japanese history)

Nakatsuka Akira, Emeritus professor, Nara Women’s University (History of Japan-Korea relations)

Hayashi Hirofumi, Professor, Kanto Gakuin University (Japanese history)

Mizuno Naoki, Professor, Kyoto University (Korean history)

Miyata Setsuko, Former president of Korean History Research Society (Korean history)

Yano Hideki, Secretary General, “Campaign to Reconnect Japan-Korea 2015”

Yamada Shoji, Emeritus professor, Rikkyo University (Japanese history)

Yoshizawa Fumitoshi, Professor, Niigata International University, (Research on Japan-Korea relations)

Wada Haruki, Emeritus professor, University of Tokyo (Historian)

Nikkan rekishi mondai ni kansuru Nihon chishikijin seimei no kai

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On May 10, 2010, on the 100th anniversary of the Japanese annexation of Korea, we, together with Korean intellectuals, issued a joint statement on the annexation and the “Annexation treaty.” Initially 100 intellectuals in Japan signed in June but by July the number grew to more than 500. In that Statement, we said

“Historians of the two countries have made clear that the Japanese annexation of Korea was accomplished as a result of long-term Japanese aggression, repeated activities by the Japanese army, murder of the Queen consort and intimidation of the king and major political figures and the crushing by force of resistance by the Korean people.

The annexation of Korea by the Japanese state is explained as based on the Annexation Treaty of 22 August 1910.

The historical fact of annexation by forcefully trampling on the will of the people was concealed by the myth of a spontaneous agreement between equals in which the Korean emperor gave up national sovereignty and the Japanese emperor accepted it. The preamble is a lie. The text of the treaty is a lie.

Consequently, all the processes to do with the annexation of Korea were unjust and wrongful. The Treaty of Annexation is unjust and wrongful.”

In response to this Statement, on August 10 2010, the 100th anniversary of the “annexation of Korea,” Japan’s Prime Minister Kan Naoto issued a Statement,⁴ saying,

“In August precisely one hundred years ago, the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was concluded, making the beginning of the colonial rule of thirty six years. As

demonstrated by strong resistance such as the *Samil* independence movement, the Korean people of that time was deprived of their country and culture, and their ethnic pride was deeply scarred by the colonial rule which was imposed against their will under the political and military circumstances.

... To the tremendous damage and sufferings that this colonial rule caused, I express here once again my feelings of deep remorse and my heartfelt apology.”

Even though Prime Minister Kan’s statement was rather vague, at least he recognized the forced nature of the annexation, and he drew upon, and developed further, the understanding contained in Prime Minister Murayama’s [1995] Statement “On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the War’s End”.

In Korea the constitutional court in August 2011 delivered a ruling that, although there was a dispute between the governments of Japan and Korea as to interpretation of the 1965 “claims agreement” concerning the harm the Japanese army had caused to the Comfort Women, the Korean government had been in breach of the constitution by neglecting to take steps to resolve the issue in accordance with the terms set out in that agreement.

The Korean government, hewing to this ruling, strongly demanded of the government of Japan a solution for the Comfort Women problem. Furthermore, in May 2012 the Korean Supreme Court delivered a judgement saying that the victimization of “forced laborers” under Japanese colonial control had not been resolved by the “claims agreement,” thus raising the fresh problem of forced laborers.

However, from August 2012 the Japan-Korea relationship steadily worsened -- with the Tokdo/Takeshima visit by President Lee Myung-bak, the reaction to it by the government of Noda Yasuhiko, and the installation of the 2nd

government of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo who talked about revising the Kono and Murayama Statements. Because moves to revise those Statements met strong criticism from Korea, China, and even the United States, Prime Minister Abe announced that he would maintain the Statements. However, Prime Minister Abe has not responded to President Park Gyun-hye's call for resolution of the Comfort Women matter to be made a condition for resumption of leadership talks and the confrontation between Japan and Korea became acute. Amid this confrontation some conservatives spread irresponsible views on the Comfort Women problem and called for repudiation of the Kono Statement, having some influence on the way the Japanese people perceived the issue.

This year is the 50th since Japan-Korea normalization and the 70th since Japan's defeat in war and Korea's liberation from Japanese colonialism. Prime Minister Abe has announced that he will issue a new Statement. This "Abe Statement" must start from acceptance of the statements on historical matters issued by previous governments of Japan, i.e., the Kono, Murayama, and Kan Statements. It must reaffirm that invasion and colonial control caused harm and pain to neighbor countries including China and Korea, and it must express renewed sentiments of regret and apology.

There are still historical problems requiring settlement between Japan and Korea. Most pressing is the Comfort Women problem. The whole world already knows that in the last war women suffered greatly from being gathered in Comfort Stations and forced to provide sexual services to Japanese officers and soldiers. In response to women victims coming out from 1991 to testify about this, charging Japan with responsibility and demanding apology and compensation, the Government of Japan began to make efforts to clarify the facts and in 1993 it published the Kono Statement, by Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono, and apologized. On

that basis the government of Japan in 1995 set up the Asian Women's Fund and set about the task of apology and "atonement". The Fund dealt with Korean, Taiwanese, Filipino and Dutch victims, but it did not address the question of Chinese or Indonesian victims. In Korea, there was a strong reaction against the fact that the solatium payments were made from private donations and not government, and more than two-thirds of government-recognized victims there did not receive anything from the Fund. To that extent, the Government of Japan's apology task is incomplete and the problem is still unsolved. A renewed effort is called for from the government of Japan.

Since the Kono Statement, new materials on the Comfort Women system have been discovered and published by the government of Japan and by private Japanese and Korean researchers and citizens. It has become clear from them that indeed it was the Japanese army, not private contractors, that bore primary responsibility for the establishment and management of the Comfort Stations. The Japanese state must admit responsibility for the Japanese Army.

In June 2014, Korean and Japanese movement groups which had striven over many years to address the Comfort Women problem, with the cooperation of historians and legal scholars, proposed a draft solution in terms that should be acceptable to the victims and able to be implemented by the Government of Japan. An apology based on admission of the facts and "compensation" as sign of that apology, were its pillars. The governments of Japan and Korea should as soon as possible cooperate and take the necessary steps towards the fifty or so surviving victims to resolve this. If the two governments were to take such steps, the citizens of the two countries would cooperate in drawing up plans for such resolution.

Japan and Korea are the closest neighbors

within the Northeast Asian region. The people of the two countries have already spent years trying to overcome and settle the 36-year history of colonial rule. Joint Japan-Korean efforts, with Japanese people responding to the leadership of the Koreans, would have world-historical significance in overcoming the basic confrontation that splits the world today and opening a perspective towards cooperation and reconciliation.

Now that five years have passed since the hundredth anniversary of Japan's annexation of Korea, we confront a rising tide of worsening in Japan-Korean relations and pathological phenomena such as hate speech on the part of some sectors of Japanese society. But we will neither waver nor retreat. We can overcome the temporary crisis by circulating widely our shared historical understanding. We affirm once again our resolve to open the way to one hundred years of Japan-Korea people-to-people cooperation and we will move forward together with the people of Japan and Korea.

Recommendations to the Government of Japan (2014)

For Resolution of the Japanese Military "Comfort Woman" Issue⁵

The international community is now urging the Japanese government to resolve the Japanese military "comfort woman" issue, a grave violation of human rights against women. Resolution of this issue is the first step towards normalization of relations with neighboring countries, and a necessary foundation in order to contribute to world peace. Furthermore, the first step towards "resolution" can only be taken after presentation of a proposal which can be accepted by the survivors themselves.

What then, would be an acceptable proposal to the survivors? An apology is one of the important elements of the resolution sought by the survivors. The key issue here is for the perpetrating country to accurately recognize who conducted which kind of violating acts, to acknowledge responsibility, to clearly and unambiguously express this apology both domestically and internationally, and take continuing measures to make it credible and sincere. Only then will the survivors be able to accept it as a genuine apology.

Now that the survivors, who have been forced to continue to suffer both physically and mentally in the post-war period without recovery, are becoming older, the time remaining for Japan to resolve this issue is short. We, the victims and supporters who participated in the 12th Asian Solidarity Conference, demand that the Japanese government preserve and further develop the "Kono Statement" and, upon recognizing the following points, take the necessary measures.

In order to resolve the Japanese military "comfort woman" (sexual slavery) issue, the Japanese Government should:

- Recognize the following facts and responsibilities:
 - That the Japanese Government and Military proposed, established, managed and controlled military facilities known as "comfort stations".
 - That the women were forced to become "comfort women / sexual slaves" against their will, and were kept in coercive circumstances in the "comfort stations" etc.
 - That there were various forms of victimization of women from the colonies, occupied areas and Japan who suffered sexual violence by the Japanese military, that the scale of victimization was extensive, and that the suffering continues today.

That it was a serious violation of human rights which contravened a variety of both domestic Japanese as well as international laws of the time.

- Take the following measures for reparation:
 - Apologize to the individual victims in a manner that is clear, official, and can not be overturned.
 - Make compensation to victims as proof of apology
 - Accounting of the truth:
 - full disclosure of all documents possessed by the Japanese Government
 - further investigation of documents within Japan and internationally
 - hearings of survivors and other related persons within Japan and internationally
 - Measures to prevent further occurrence:
 - Implementation of school and social education including references in textbooks used in compulsory education
 - Implement commemorative activities
 - Prohibit statements by public figures based on incorrect historical recognition, and clearly and officially rebut similar kinds of statements etc.

Joint Statement by Japanese and Korean Intellectuals on the 100th Anniversary of the Annexation of Korea. (May, August

2010)

Signatories, Korea

- Kim, Young ho (Chair, Professor, Dankook University)
- Yi, Tae jin (Emeritus Professor, Seoul National University)
- Kim, Jin hyun (President, Korea City University)
- Jeong, Chang nyul (Emeritus Professor, Hanyang University)
- Kim, Young duk (Emeritus Professor, Seoul National University)
- Paik, Nak chung (Emeritus Professor, Seoul National University)
- Go, Un (poet)
- Lee, Jang hee (Professor, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies)
- Kim, Chang rok (Professor, Kungbook National University)
- Bae, In joon (Chief Editor, Dong-A Ilbo) (and 528 others)

Signatories, Japan

- Arai Shinichi (Professor emeritus, Ibaragi University)
- Kasuya Kenichi (Professor, Hitotsubashi University)
- Mitani Taiichiro (Professor emeritus, University of Tokyo)
- Mizuno Naoki (Professor, Institute of Human Sciences, Kyoto University)
- Nakatsuka Akira (Professor emeritus, Nara Women University)
- Okamoto Atsushi (Editor-in-chief, Magazine “Sekai”)
- Ooe Kenzaburo (Novelist)
- Shoji Tsutomu (Protestant priest)
- Tanaka Hiroshi (Professor emeritus, Hitotsubashi University)
- Utsumi Aiko (Visiting Professor, Waseda University)
- Wada Haruki (Professor emeritus, University of Tokyo),
- Yamada Shoji (Professor emeritus, Rikkyo University) (and 528 others)

On 29 August 1910 the empire of Japan swept the empire of Korea from the face of the earth and announced its annexation of the Korean peninsula. In 2010, just 100 years since that time, we believe it is necessary for the governments and peoples of Japan and Korea to affirm a common understanding of what the annexation of Korea was and how to think about the “Treaty of Annexation.” It is this matter which is the kernel of the historical problem between the two peoples and the basis for reconciliation and cooperation between us.

Historians of the two countries have made clear that the Japanese annexation of Korea was accomplished as a result of long-term Japanese aggression, repeated activities by the Japanese army, murder of the Queen consort and intimidation of the king and major political figures and the crushing by force of resistance by the Korean people.

The modern Japanese state conducted military operations by sending a battleship to Kanghwa Island in 1875, bombarding and capturing it. In the following year, the Japanese side sent a special representative and imposed an unequal treaty and opened the country. In 1894, a wide-scale peasant revolt took place in Korea and when the Chinese (Qing) army sent in forces Japan also sent a large army and took Seoul. After seizing the palace and taking the king and queen captive it attacked the Qing army, thus beginning the Sino-Japanese War. At the same time, it also suppressed by force the Korean peasant army. As a result of victory in the Sino-Japanese war Japan succeeded in driving Chinese forces out of Korea but, following the Triple Intervention it was forced to return the Liaotung peninsula that it had had acquired under the Shimonoseki treaty. As a result, worried that it might lose the position that it had gained in Korea, Japan murdered Queen Min and terrorized the king. When King Gojong sought refuge in the Russian embassy, Japan

was forced to back down under new agreements with Russia.

However, following the Boxer Uprising and the Russian capture of Manchuria, Japan in 1903 demanded that Russia recognize the whole of Korea as a Japanese protectorate. When Russia refused, Japan resolved on war, sending a large army into Korea although it had declared neutrality, and capturing Seoul. Under pressure from that occupying army, it compelled the signing on 23 February of the Japan-Korea protocol, its first step in turning Korea into a protectorate. The Russo-Japanese war that had begun ended in Japanese victory and under the Treaty of Portsmouth it compelled Russia to recognize its control over Korea. Ito Hirobumi hastened to Seoul and against the backdrop of Japanese military force, alternating threat and cajolery, reached the second Japan-Korea agreement on 18 November 1905, stripping Korea of diplomatic authority. With an uprising by peasant militia underway in various places, Emperor Gojong sent a protest to the great powers that the agreement was invalid. Because of the sending of a special representative to the 1907 Hague Peace Conference, Resident-General Ito challenged the authority of Gojong and eventually abolished the army and forced the abdication of the king. Under the 3rd Japan-Korea Agreement of 24 July, Japan seized control of Korea’s government. In response to this reinforcing of Japanese control the “Righteous People’s Army” (*gihei/uibyong*) movement escalated, which Japan suppressed using its army, military police and police, leading to the annexation of Korea in 1910.

In this way the annexation was accomplished, forcibly suppressing protests by the emperor and people. It was classic imperialism, conduct both immoral and unjust.

The annexation of Korea by the Japanese state is explained as based on the Annexation Treaty of 22 August 1910. Under the Preamble of this

Treaty, the emperors of Japan and Korea, desirous of close relationship between Japan and Korea and for the sake of achieving the happiness of both sides and permanent peace, enter upon this Treaty in the conviction that “the best way forward is for Korea to be assimilated within the empire of Japan.” Under Article 1, “His Majesty the Emperor of Korea makes the complete and permanent cession to His Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea,” and under Article 2 “His Majesty the Emperor of Japan accepts the cession mentioned in the preceding article and consents to the complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.”

The historical fact of annexation by forcefully trampling on the will of the people was concealed by the myth of a spontaneous agreement between equals in which the Korean emperor gave up national sovereignty and the Japanese emperor accepted it. The preamble is a lie. The text of the treaty is a lie. Serious defects and shortcomings are also evident in the procedures and form through which the agreement was reached.

Consequently, all the processes to do with the annexation of Korea were unjust and wrongful. The Treaty of Annexation is unjust and wrongful.

With Japan’s defeat in its war of aggression in 1945, Korea was liberated from colonial control. Relations were opened in 1965 between the ROK that emerged in the southern half of the liberated peninsula and Japan. Article 2 of the Japan-ROK basic Treaty declared that all treaties and agreements concluded between the Empire of Japan and the Empire of Korea on or before 22 August 1910 were “already null and void.” However, the Japanese and Korean governments have differed as to the interpretation of that article.

The Government of Japan takes the view that the Annexation Treaty was negotiated “between equals and freely,” that it had validity

from the time of its agreement and was valid but that it ceased to have validity from the time of establishment of the ROK in 1948. The ROK, on the other hand, takes the view that the unjust and improper treaty was the “product of past Japanese aggression and null and void (totally invalid) from the outset.”

Looking back today over facts brought to light on the history of the annexation, the Japanese interpretation can no longer stand. In the sense that the treaty of annexation was intrinsically unjust and improper, the Korean interpretation that it was null and void from the outset should be accepted by both sides.

Although it has been a slow process, there have been advances in Japan’s understanding of its colonial control. This new understanding was demonstrated from the 1990s, in the Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono Statement (1993), the Prime Minister Murayama statement (1995), the Japan-ROK Joint Statement (1998), the Japan-North Korea Pyongyang Declaration (2002). In particular, the 15 August 1995 Statement by Prime Minister Murayama expressed “sincere reflection and “heartfelt apology” (*owabi*) over the “huge harm and pain” Japan’s colonial control had caused. At the Budget Committee hearings in the Lower House of the Diet on 13 October 1995, Prime Minister Murayama responded to a question by saying “I do not think the position of the parties to the Treaty of Annexation of Korea was equal,” and Chief Cabinet Secretary Nosaka told a press conference that “the Japan-Korea Annexation treaty was negotiated under extreme duress.” In his 14 November letter to President Kim Young sam, Prime Minister Murayama stressed in relation to the Annexation treaty and the Japan-Korea agreements that preceded it that “there is no doubt that these were treaties of the age of imperialism that did not recognize the self-determination and dignity of the Korean people.”

On the foundation that was built up at this time, and through various subsequent trials and verifications, it has become possible today for the Government of Japan to revise its understanding of Article 2 of the Japan-ROK Basic Treaty in such a way as to show this judgement of the Annexation Treaty. The US Congress too in 1993 recognized as “illegal” its overthrow of the kingdom of Hawaii that preceded the annexation of Hawaii and adopted a resolution of apology. Various efforts have been made over recent years in the field of international law concerning “crimes against humanity” and the “crime of colonialism.” Now in Japan too, influenced by new currents of thinking about justice, the time has come for a fundamental reconsideration of the history of aggression, annexation, and colonial control.

On this 100th anniversary of the annexation of Korea, we share this common historical understanding. Taking our stand on this shared historical understanding, it should be possible to reconsider the many historically-rooted problems that lie between Japan and the ROK and to resolve them by joint effort. The reconciliation process must be carried forward ever more self-consciously.

To confirm this shared historical consciousness, materials on the historical relationship between Japan and the Korean peninsula over the past 100 years and more must be made public and nothing left covered up. In particular, the Japanese authorities that have monopolized the compilation of the archives of the colonial era bear the obligation to collect and publish the historical materials.

Forgiveness must be sought for crime and forgiveness must be granted. Pain must be assuaged and harm compensated. All the horrendous acts, including the large-scale massacre of Korean residents that was carried out at the time of the great Kanto Earthquake must be revisited. The problem of the Japanese Army’s “Comfort Women” system has still not

been resolved. It is desirable that the Japanese government and business and people respond by positive cooperation with the Government of Korea in the measures by which it has begun to address compensation and support, including medical support, for former forced labourers and civil employees of the Japanese military.

The problems we are confronting must be resolved without delay, re-examining the past and with steady eye on the future. On this 100th anniversary of annexation, normalization of state relations between Japan and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the other country on the northern part of the peninsula, must be carried forward.

Through doing this, we can open a new century based on true reconciliation and friendship between the ROK and Japan. We call for this agenda to be made widely known and to be solemnly undertaken by the governments and peoples of Korea and Japan.

(Introduced and translated by Gavan McCormack)

Gavan McCormack is emeritus professor of Australian National University and an editor of *The Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. His recent books are: *Resistant Islands: Okinawa Confronts Japan and the United States* (with Satoko Oka Norimatsu), Rowman and Littlefield, and *Tenkanki no Nihon e - ‘pakkusu amerikana’ ka ‘pakkusu ajia’ ka* (with Joh W. Dower), NHK Bukkusu (in Japanese).

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Notes

¹ For a very recent discussion, see Yan Minja, Chang Rok Kim and Wada Haruki, “‘Ianfu’ mondai no kaiketsu wa nani ka,” *Sekai*, July 2015, pp. 158-173.

² See document in Japanese linked above and English below.

³ See document in English [here](#).

⁴ [See here](#).

⁵ Adopted at 12th Asian Solidarity Conference to resolve the Japanese Army’s “Comfort Women” Problem, June 2, 2014.