

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

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*Session document*

11.12.2007

B6-0528/2007

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Eva-Britt Svensson

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on Comfort Women

**European Parliament resolution on Comfort Women**

*The European Parliament,*

- Having regard to the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children (1921) of which Japan is a signatory
- Having regard to the Forced Labour Convention No. 29 (1930), ratified by Japan
- Having regard to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women and Peace and Security (2000)
- Having regard to the report by Gay McDougall, UN Special Rapporteur on Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slave-like Practices during Armed Conflict (22 June 1998)
- Having regard to the judgement and recommendations of the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery, The Hague (2001),
- Having regard to the Report of A Study of Dutch Government Documents on the Forced Prostitution of Dutch Women in the Dutch East Indies During the Japanese Occupation, The Hague (2004)
- Having regard to the Conclusions and recommendations of the UN Committee against Torture in its 38th session (9-10 May 2007),
- Having regard to Resolution of the American Congress, adopted on 30 July 2007
- Having regard to the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of abolition of slave trade in 2007
- Having regard to Rule 115 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. 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',

B. Whereas historians conclude that as many as 200,000 women were enslaved,

C. Whereas the 'comfort women' system of forced military prostitution by the Government of Japan 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 20<sup>th</sup> century,

D. Whereas in the dozens of 'comfort women' cases brought before Japanese courts, all have entailed dismissals of plaintiffs' claims for compensation, despite court judgments acknowledging the Imperial Armed Forces' direct and indirect involvement, and the state's responsibility,

E. Whereas most of the victims of the ‘comfort women’ have passed away, and the remaining survivors are 80 or more years of age;

F. Whereas the full extent of the sexual slavery system has never been fully disclosed by the Government of Japan

1. Urges the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical and legal 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. Welcomes the government initiative to establish in 1995 the now dissolved private-sector financed Asian Women's Fund, which distributed some 'atonement money' to several hundred 'comfort women', but considers that this humanitarian initiative cannot satisfy the victims claims of legal recognition and reparation under public international law, as stated by UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Gay McDougall, in her 1998 report;

3. Calls on the Government of Japan to immediately implement effective administrative mechanisms to provide full reparations to all surviving victims of the ‘comfort women’ system and families of the deceased victims, including all forms of reparations listed in the recommendations of the Women’s International War Crimes Tribunal on Japan’s Military Sexual Slavery;

4. Calls on the Japanese National Assembly (Diet) to take legal measures to remove existing obstacles to obtaining full reparations before Japanese courts; In particular, the right of individuals to claim reparations against the government should be expressly recognized in national law and cases for reparation for survivors of sexual slavery, as a crime under international law, should be prioritized, taking into account the age of the survivors;

5. Calls on the Government of Japan to publicly refute any claims that the subjugation and enslavement of ‘comfort women’ never occurred;

6. Calls on the Government of Japan to educate current and future generations about these events;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Japanese Government, the UN Human Rights Council, the Governments of the ASEAN states, of the DPRK, South Korea, the People's Republic of China and of Taiwan, to Timor Leste, to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.