

CEACR:

Individual Observation concerning Convention No. 29, Forced Labour, 1930 Japan (ratification: 1932) Published: 1996

The Committee takes note of the observations of the Osaka Fu Special English Teachers' Union (OFSET), dated 12 June 1995, concerning the application of the Convention during the years prior to the Second World War, and during that war. The Committee notes that the Convention was in force for Japan during that period. The allegations refer to gross human rights abuses and sexual abuse of women detained in so-called military "comfort stations", a situation which falls within the prohibitions contained in the Convention. The Committee recognizes that such conduct should be characterized as sexual slavery in violation of the Convention. The Government has made no comment on OFSET's letter, a copy of which was sent to it on 31 August 1995.

OFSET has asked for wages, compensation and other benefits arising from the forced labour of the women concerned. On the basis of the allegations as they appear in the trade union's communication, it would appear that these women would have been entitled to wages and other benefits under the Convention.

Under the Convention and the Committee's terms of reference, the Committee does not have the power to order the relief sought for compensation and wages. This relief can be given only by the Government. The Committee hopes that, in view of the time that has elapsed since these events, the Government will give proper consideration to this matter expeditiously.