

(財)女性のためのアジア平和国民基金

# 理事懇談会

平成8年4月



# 「慰安婦問題も糾弾」 NGO、政府に反論

## 国連人権委員会決議

「従軍慰安婦」にまつられた被害女性への国家謝罪を勧告した報告書を含む国連人権委員会(ジュネーブ)の決議について、日本NGO代表者が二十四日会合し、「決議文は慰安婦を性奴隷と位置づけ、人権侵害を糾弾している」と指摘、「決議に勧告受け入れを求める主張はない」との政府見解に反論した。

会合したのは日本弁護士連合会海外調査員の戸塚悦朗弁護士をはじめ、前後浦

儀に取り組み市民グループの代表者七人。

この日、戸塚弁護士は「殺人、組織的強姦(ごらん)、性奴隷及び強制妊娠を含むこれらの人権侵害に対し特別に効果的な対応を求める」とされた人権委員の決議文を讀み上げ、「『性奴隷』が慰安婦を指していることは明らかだ」と語った。

さらに、人権委員が慰安婦報告の報告書を検査から除外するよう日本政府が他国に働きかけていた経緯を紹介し、「決議を『歓迎する』か『謝罪する』かの両方ではなく、報告書が認められるかどうかこそが最大の焦点だった。外務省もそれは分かっているはずだ」と批判。人権委に出された政府関係の文書を公開するよう政府に注文をつけた。

# 「慰安婦」をみつめる外の目

朝鮮半島をはじめ、東アジア各地の女性が、旧日本軍将兵の性の相手をさせられた従軍慰安婦問題で、政府は昨年、国家として、個人補償をしないことを決めた。代わりに、「女性のためのアジア平和国民基金」(アジア女性基金)を設立し、国民からの拠金を募って補償することにした。

基金には、高層になった被害者に、国民有志の情いの意思を込めたお金を贈るといふ意味がある。

4/24 '96 朝日 社説

人権委員会が採択した決議は、報告書で「慰安する(チンクノート)」といふものだった。政府は「報告受け入れを求める懸念は決議に入っていない」とし、民間基金による解決という方針には変わりがないことを表明した。

この問題はジュネーブで五年越しに討議されてきている。その経緯や、今回の書議内容をみると、日本政府のよめに、その決議だけを取り上げて事態を乗り切ろうとする姿勢には、疑問なしではない。

日本政府の主張は、そもそも従軍慰安婦は国連が設立される前の出来事であり、国連には討議する権限はない、ということになった。だが、こうした主張だけでは納得させることができず、報告書が議院になったという経過がある。

日本政府は今回、報告書の内容に事実の誤りがあることや、違反したという国際法の理解の仕方による誤りなど、全面的な反論を試みようとした。確かに、報告内容には、誤った記述もある。だが、こうした角度からの反論だけでは説得力がない。結局、公の場で断えたのは、もっぱら「民間基金による努力の決議」だった。

しかし、各国政府や、ジュネーブに集まった非政府組織(NGO)から、民間基金による解決を支持する声は少なく、あったの

は、報告を歓迎する発言ばかりだった。それどころか、韓国や中国の代表は、報告を自主的に実行するよう求めるなど、政府間では解決済みといふこれまでの姿勢から、一歩踏み出したと取れる発言もあった。

この報告書の不採択は失敗した日本政府が、かろうじて「慰安」というあいまいな表現にとどめたことで体面を保った、というのが実情ではなかったか。

ジュネーブでは、南北朝鮮、フィリピン、台湾の元従軍慰安婦や支援者の五団体も、民間基金からの一時金の受け取り拒否を表明した。台湾では、謝罪と国家賠償を日本政府に求める書簡に、立法院の八割を越える議員が署名している。

民間基金への理解は進まず、政府の責任逃れに使われている、との見方がむしろ広がっているのではないか。当初からの懸念が実現のものになり始めている。

「民間基金による解決」も、受け取りを拒む人が数多く出るようでは、基金に応じた人たちの被害が十分に生かされまい。肝心の基金も三億円は超えたものの、目標の二十億円には達しない。

ジュネーブでの討議はこれからも続く。政府は、従軍慰安婦問題に注がれる国際社会の厳しい目を正面から受け止め、事態を国民に説明すべきである。

## TARGETED RECIPIENTS THREATEN BOYCOTTS

# Sex-slave fund donors' profile low

By AKO WASHIO

The Asian Women's Fund plans to begin distributing in summer what it calls consolation money to former "comfort women" in Asia who were forced to provide sex to the Imperial Japanese Army before and during World War II.

The fund, which was established last August, has never presented a target figure for donations, but it has been rumored that it wants to collect at least ¥1 billion from the private sector.

As of April 12, about ¥320 million had been collected, with about half coming only in the past two months.

But it remains to be seen whether the donations will reach the amount needed for the payouts.

The fund plans to announce next month that it will start paying some ¥2 million or more to each former comfort woman in July or August, according to sources. As many as 200 victims living in the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea will be the first recipients.

In the first several months after the fund was created, donations were largely from individuals. However, the recent increase in contributions has come mostly from firms and labor unions, but does not necessarily mean increased public support for the fund, observers said.

The fund was transformed into a foundation in December so that taxes imposed on donations from private organizations would be exempted. The change was intended to invite large-scale contributions from private firms and labor unions.

Some 70 firms have contributed to the fund, but in most cases not as an individual company but as a group of companies in the same sector such as power and automobile, according to an official at the Prime Minister's Office.

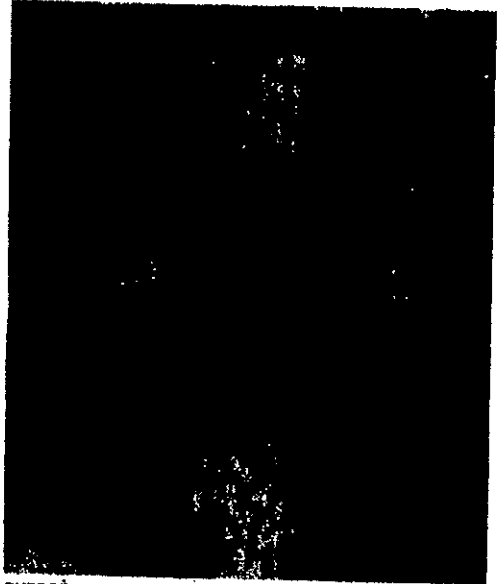
However, in an unusual move for private firms that normally publicize their contributions to private funds, the 70 companies have asked the fund not to publicize their names.

Tokyo Electric Power Co., which the official indicated is a donor, declined to confirm whether it is.

"Some of the firms said they wish to remain anonymous," the official said. "And others said they wouldn't mind if the names of other firms are disclosed at the same time. But no one wants to be the first to declare its name."

From the start, the fund has been controversial because the money is not coming directly from the government, as desired by its targeted recipients.

The government has acknowledged that Japan helped establish military brothels but refuses to pay individual compensation to women forced into sexual slavery, claiming the 1953 San Francisco Peace Treaty concluded Japan's legal responsibilities to countries that suf-



SUPPORTERS OF Japan's wartime sex slaves march in Tokyo's Shibuya district, protesting the government-initiated Asian Women's Fund in December. TOKYO SHANNON PHOTO

fered from Japan's aggression and colonial rule.

The government created the private fund after facing pressure to do something for the former sex slaves. Although the government will not directly curtail money for the compensation, it pays the fund's operational costs and works behind the scenes to secure donations from firms and organizations.

Meanwhile, many of the former comfort women and the citizen groups supporting them oppose the fund, arguing that it comes in lieu of the

state taking the blame for the war broths. They women thus demand compensation directly from the government.

Tokyo's responsibility was the focus of debate at recent sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, where U.N.-appointed human rights expert Radhika Coomaraswamy presented her report calling on the Japanese government to take legal blame over the matter and provide direct compensation. Last Friday, the U.N. commission adopted a resolution

that "takes note" of the report and "welcomes" the work by Coomaraswamy.

Some women due to receive payment from the Asian Women's Fund, especially South Koreans, are expected to turn it down to protest Tokyo's stance.

The victims and their supporters are actually applying heavy pressure on the fund and its backers.

More than a few citizen groups visited the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) to urge it not to cooperate with the fund, according to a Keidanren official.

"Under the current circumstances where the issue remains highly controversial, Keidanren is not in a position to judge whether the fund is good or bad," the official said. "Keidanren leaves the decision of whether to contribute to the fund to the individual member-company."

Last month, the nation's biggest business group distributed a paper conveying the fund's wish for donations from member companies. But the official is quick to point out that the paper was not a "recommendation."

Some citizen groups even threaten to promote a boycott of donor company's products, an official at the fund said.

"Whether these groups will actually boycott a company's products is not really important," the official said. "For a company, a protest itself is threatening and significantly damages the company's image."

Apparently, firms donate to the fund not because they support it but because they feel a

social obligation to maintain a good relationship with people behind the fund, such as Bungei Hara, a former Upper House president who heads the fund's board of directors, and Foreign Ministry officials who visit firms and request donations.

A source at Keidanren said private companies have extended and will extend "some small amounts of money" to the fund, but added he is doubtful whether it will be enough.

In the meantime, more labor unions across the country have pledged to extend donations, but they are having trouble collecting from their members.

The All Japan Prefectural Municipal Workers Union (Jichiro) pledged it would collect ¥100 million because the organization saw the need to swiftly extend financial help to the aging victims, regardless of the absence of unanimous public support for the fund, according to a Jichiro official.

But Jichiro, which had no problem quickly gathering ¥500 million for survivors of last year's Great Hanshin Earthquake, has been able to send only ¥20 million to the fund so far, the official said.

While admitting that the fund controversy is discouraging the organization's members from donating, the biggest reason is their indifference toward Japan's wartime responsibility, the official said.

"Most of the members question why they have to take responsibility for things (that happened) more than 50 years ago," the official said.

## Women's forum calls for gender-equal society

OMIYA, Sakasa Pref. (Kyoto) An international women's forum held over the weekend in Omiya adopted a declaration calling for a society where men and women are given equal opportunities to demonstrate their abilities.

Two days of discussions at the Global Forum on Women Creating the Future, sponsored by the Sakata Prefectural Government, focused on how to promote women's empowerment to participate more in decision-making processes, and on fostering equal

partnership with men.

"We are not advocating that women should take over and throw the men into the ocean," said Tanzanian Gertrude Mwangi, secretary general of the U.N.-sponsored World Conference on Women held in Beijing last September.

"We are just saying that the time has come to realize the historical disadvantage (of women) and we must all, men and women, work together to take out that disadvantage," she said.

The participants also discussed the so-called glass ceiling, an invisible barrier in business and other organizations that prevents women from making it to top positions.

Mariko Bando, vice governor of the host prefecture, said when she first heard American women using the expression, she thought that in Japan, where the situation of women was much worse, it should be called a "bamboo fence."

"American women were

complaining about the difficulties for them to reach the very top of the top posts, but in Japan, it was almost like off-limits for women," said Bando.

The situation has not changed much, with women holding 40 percent of those managerial posts in U.S. companies, compared with only 9 percent in Japan, Bando said.

Mwangi said she wonders why Japanese women, who are highly educated, occupy only 2 percent of seats in the House of Representatives.