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FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session

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SENATE
P.S. Res. No. 314

RECEIVED BY

[Signature]

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT URGES THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN TO FORMALLY ACKNOWLEDGE, APOLOGIZE AND ACCEPT HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL MANNER FOR THE SEXUAL ENSLAVEMENT OF YOUNG WOMEN KNOWN AS 'COMFORT WOMEN' BY THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL ARMY DURING WORLD WAR II AND PROVIDE COMPENSATION TO THE VICTIMS THEREOF

WHEREAS, the Report of UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women Radhika Coomaraswamy and the McDougall Report on Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery, and Slavery-Like Practices submitted to the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on 14 August 1998 reveal that the Government of Japan during the colonial occupation of Asia and the Pacific Islands during World War II organized the subjugation and kidnapping of young women for the sole purpose of sexual servitude, known to the world as 'comfort women';

WHEREAS, the same reports further reveal that the enslavement of comfort women was officially commissioned and orchestrated by the Government of Japan to include gang rape, forced abortions, sexual violence, human trafficking, and numerous other crimes against humanity;

WHEREAS, many comfort women were eventually killed or forced to commit suicide upon cessation of hostilities;

WHEREAS, historians conclude that as many as 200,000 women were enslaved, many of whom have passed away and only a few survive today;

WHEREAS, over the years Japan has made concrete progress in recognizing and atoning for its past actions, and for many decades has been a major contributor to international peace, security and development, including through the United Nations;

WHEREAS, the Government of Japan is a signatory to the 1921 International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children and is a supporter of the 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which recognized the unique impact on women of armed conflict;

WHEREAS, in the past years numerous high-ranking members and officials of the Japanese Government have issued apologies for the forced military prostitution by

its Imperial Armed Forces, while some Japanese officials have expressed a regrettable desire to retract those statements;

WHEREAS, some new textbooks used in Japanese schools seek to understate the tragedy of the 'comfort women' and other Japanese war crimes during World War II;

WHEREAS, a bill entitled "Promotion of Resolution for Issues Concerning of Wartime Sexual Coercion Act" was introduced to the House of Councilors by the Democratic Party of Japan, the Japanese Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party and independent senators last June 9, 2004, March 21 and November 14, 2001 and January 21, 2003;

WHEREAS, the bill seeks to provide the necessary fundamental grounds for the resolution of the issues concerning the victims of wartime sexual coercion that will improve the relationship of peoples of the concerned nations and will enable Japan to occupy an honoured place in the international community;

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives passed unanimously on July 31, 2007, House Resolution 121, a resolution calling on the government of Japan to formally acknowledge, apologize and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its sexual slavery of 'comfort women' during World war II;

WHEREAS, following the action of the U.S. House of Representatives, the European Parliament, the Canada House of Commons and the Dutch Parliament have likewise approved their respective resolutions, encouraging the Japanese government to take full responsibility for the involvement of its Imperial Army in the system of forced prostitution;

WHEREAS, the Filipino comfort women are continuously struggling for formal apology and legal compensation from the Japanese Government;

WHEREAS, there is a need for government to urgently ask the government of Japan to make a gesture of offering the comfort women still alive today some form of direct moral and financial compensation for the suffering caused;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government has a moral duty to work for the restoration of the dignity and honor of former Filipino comfort women especially while they are still living, as a concrete manifestation of our recognition of and commitment to the principles of human rights, gender equality and peace;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, That the Senate expresses its sense that the Philippine Government urges the Government of Japan to formally acknowledge, apologize and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for the sexual slavery of young women known as 'comfort women' by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II and provide compensation to the victims thereof.

Adopted,



LOREN LEGARDA

Senator