

08.11.2007 – Motion by Van Baalen and co on the subject of the comfort women

The House, having heard the debate,

considering that Japan is a strategic partner in Asia, with whom the Netherlands has been maintaining relations for 400 years, 150 years of which diplomatic relations by 2008, and with whom our country wants to shape a common future;

taking the view that Japan should publicly take full responsibility, without any reserve, for the system of forced prostitution as operated in the years before and during the Second World War, and for the suffering thus caused to the so-called comfort women and about which no doubts can and should be raised;

observing that the Japanese government, by means of the so-called Kono statement from 1993, has acknowledged the fate of the comfort women, has expressed their regret towards the victims and has accepted responsibility with this statement, but at the same time observing that the Japanese government and Japanese members of parliament have, on various occasions, distanced themselves from this, as is shown by the statements by the then prime minister Shinzo Abe last March which were later retracted, and by the advertisement of members of the Japanese House of Representatives in the Washington Post earlier this year on the same subject;

having read the letter which the chairman of the Japanese House of Representatives wrote on 7 November last in reply to the letter of the chairman of the House of 26 June last about the advertisement in the Washington Post and in which he distances himself from said advertisement;

considering that certain teaching materials in Japanese schools do insufficient justice to the acknowledgement of the Japanese war crimes, among them the treatment of the comfort women;

considering that Japan, via the Asian Women's Fund, has offered forms of compensation to the former comfort women, partly financed by public funds, but that this compensation was granted by a private organisation;

entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to abandon any statement which devalues the expression of regret from 1993 and to take full responsibility for the involvement of the Japanese army in the system of forced prostitution;

entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to make an additional gesture by offering the comfort women still alive today some form of direct moral and financial compensation respectively for the suffering caused;

entreats the government to urgently ask the government of Japan to encourage that all teaching materials in Japanese schools provide a factual picture of the Japanese role in the Second World War, including the fate of the comfort women;

and proceeds to the order of the day.

Van Baalen	Wilders	Van der Staaij
Van Gennip	Peters	Thieme
Van Dam	Voordewind	Verdonk
Van Bommel	Pechtold	