

Facts vs. False Claims regarding the 'Comfort Women' Issue

Denier's False Claims	Facts	References
Myth #1: "Comfort Women issue is a diplomatic dispute between S. Korea and Japan"	It was the largest case of systematic, government-run, wartime military sexual slavery and the longest-running institutionalized sex trafficking in modern history. It ran from 1932 to 1945. Some scholars and experts estimate the number of victims is as high as 400,000 from more than 20 countries, including South and North Korea, China, Taiwan, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Burma, East Timor, India, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, USA and more. It is hardly a bilateral issue. It is a universal human rights issue that is still relevant today.	Testimonials by Survivors are available at Yoshiaki Yoshiaki, <i>Comfort Women</i> (2002) Qiu, Su and Chen, <i>Chinese Comfort Women</i> (2013) Griselda Moleman, Blind spots in 'comfort women' Research (http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/opinion/2017/04/197_228182.html)
Myth #2: "The 'Comfort Women' issue has already been resolved. Japan made several apologies and an agreement has been reached in 2015 between the government of Japan and S. Korea"	<p>Although a few high officials of Japanese government (e.g. Chief Cabinet Secretary Kono in 1993, and several Prime Ministers in personal letters) have expressed remorse and apologies for the victims of 'Comfort Women' atrocity in the past, none of them ever acknowledged Japanese government's formal and legal responsibility for the system of military sexual slavery. And, none of these statements has been ratified by the Japanese Diet (Parliament) either. Further, Japan's high officials, including the current Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has falsely claimed that the victims were not forced, undermining the Kono Statement.</p> <p>2015 Agreement (December 28, 2015) declared the 'Comfort Women' issue to be "finally and irreversibly" resolved with Japan's payment of 1 billion Yen, but there were a number of serious problems in this Agreement. First of all, it does not cover the victims outside of South Korea. Secondly, even the South Korean victims were excluded from the negotiation that the victims denounced this Agreement. Thirdly, the payment was not a "government reparation." "Japan made every effort to ensure the funds are not deemed as reparations" for the victims, but as "healing money" to provide assistance to the victims and their families.</p> <p>After the 2015 Agreement was announced, various UN Human Rights bodies renewed their calls for the Japanese government to properly resolve the "Comfort Women" issue, by taking a "victim-centered" approach based on the international standards to resolve such war crimes.</p>	<p>Kono Statement (Unofficial translation provided by the Japanese Foreign Ministry) (https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/fund/state9308.html)</p> <p>Japanese PM denies Wartime 'comfort women' were forced (https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1544471/Japanese-PM-denies-war-time-comfort-women-were-forced.html)</p> <p>EU Resolution in 2007 United States House Resolution 121 in 2007</p> <p>Asian American Life report video clip showing the anger of the survivors after the 2015 Agreement was struck [8:40]</p> <p>Abe Cabinet Oks 1 billion transfer to South Korea 'Comfort Women' fund (https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2016/08/24/national/politics-diplomacy/abe-cabinet-set-ok-%C2%A51-billion-transfer-south-korea-comfort-womenfund/#.W47rREVKgxg)</p> <p>UN CEDAW recommendation in 2016 UN CERD concluding observation in 2018</p>
Myth #3: "It is Japan-bashing and the Memorial will cause hate against Japanese people"	There has been a number of fake news on Japanese media about "bullying" and "hate crimes" against Japanese children in Southern California, connecting those stories to the installation of the Glendale Memorial. None of these reports could be backed by any evidence or witness. The Japanese American supporters of the 'Comfort Women' issue conducted a thorough investigation, interviewing the Police departments and School Districts, but there were no report or evidence of such bullying or hate crime against the Japanese descendants.	<p>David Monkawa in Los Angeles investigated and found out there was no case of bullying.</p> <p>Japanese Americans in the United States have supported the building of 'Comfort Women' Memorial in the cities like Glendale, San Francisco and Atlanta, and continue to work with the other communities to promote human rights.</p>
Myth #4: "Japan isn't the only culpable country. Why single out Japan?"	<p>The crime against humanity of the institutionalized sexual slavery committed by Japan is the largest and longest running case. No other incidents come close to the magnitude of this case. Deniers are pointing fingers to others to dilute their responsibility, rather than owning up to their own past.</p> <p>We must remember and educate this history because those who do not remember the history are doomed to repeat it.</p>	<p>Japan's Prime Minister could solve the 'comfort women' issue once and for all. So why won't he? (https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2018/01/22/japans-prime-minister-could-solve-the-comfort-women-issue-once-and-for-all-so-why-wont-he/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b00e1de9e3bf)</p>
Myth #5: "Let's move on. We need a bright future for our children."	Of course the history revisionists want to put the issue behind them. But most importantly, the survivors are still fighting for justice. In clear contrast to how Germany dealt with the Holocaust, Japan is increasing its effort to deny and whitewash the history, recently wiping out any mention of the 'Comfort Women' or Japan's war crimes during WWII from its textbooks. Quote from the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's speech in commemoration of the 70 th anniversary of the end of WWII in 2015 " We must not let our children, grandchildren, and even further generations to come, who have nothing to do with the war, be predestined to apologise. " With internationally and nationally accepted apologies, we can all say the children of Germany are not haunted by the tragic past of Holocaust. PM Abe is guilty of denying Japan's children of bright future by not teaching them the history and misleading them with falsified and whitewashed history, leaving the possibility open of grave crime against humanity repeat itself.	<p>What Japanese history lesson leave out (https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-21226068)</p> <p>Japan urges US publisher to remove comfort women from textbooks (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/15/japan-urges-us-publisher-delete-references-comfort-women)</p>