



Democratic People's Republic of Korea

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

820 Second Avenue, 13th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10017

Tel: (212) 972-3105/3106 Fax: (212) 972-3154

**Statement by Mr. Pak Tok Hun, Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission
of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations
At the 3rd Committee of the 65th Session of the General Assembly
Agenda item 28 Advancement of Women**

Mr. Chairman,

Advancement of woman is a critical socio-political issue determinant of the destiny and future of the countries and nations. The social status and role of women who account for half of the world population affect to a great extent the development of the countries of all nations and the humankind. There can be no world without women. As such, social development is unthinkable apart from the role of women.

Today, the advancement of women, especially the issue of complete elimination of discrimination and violence against women, is deliberated as one of the major agenda items of the UN and other international fora, amidst deep concern of the international community. It is a positive result of the international effort for promotion and protection of genuine human rights and sound development of societies.

However, the global effort for elimination of discrimination against women in all its kinds and for advancement of women including assurance of gender equality is still faced with many difficulties and challenges. We recognize that all pending issues of the past should be clearly liquidated if we are to achieve real advancement of women by overcoming these difficulties and challenges. Without clean settlement of the past, it is impossible to achieve advancement of women for the present and the future.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to mention once again on the attitude of Japan towards the issue of "comfort women" which has been the focus of international debate as commonly recognized as the most typical violation of women's rights in modern history.

On August 12, this year, a testimony meeting of the victims of the crime against humanity of the Japanese imperialists in the past was held in Pyongyang, on the occasion of the 65th year of Japanese defeat and a centenary of the fabrication of the "Treaty of Korea-Japan Annexation". At the meeting the surviving victims of the "comfort women" for the Japanese imperial army demanded that the government of Japan make unconditional apology and compensation for the past crimes.

The "comfort women" system was established as a state policy of Japan in the early half period of the past century. It is a crime against humanity which had inflicted unimaginable and immeasurable sufferings and damages on hundreds of thousands of women from Korea and other several Asian countries.

In this regard, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women in 1996 had defined the "comfort women" as the "military sexual slavery" crime and recommended that the government of Japan accept the legal responsibility, make an official apology and compensation to the victims without delay, reflect the truth of the history in the educational curricula and punish the criminals.

However, this recommendation has not been implemented in the least for more than 10 years until now, due to intentional and stubborn objection on the part of the Japanese government. Japan should settle its crimes committed against the mankind above anything else before clamouring about "peace" and "human rights".

My delegation strongly urges Japan once again to acknowledge its legal responsibility for all the past crimes including the "sexual slavery" system for the Japanese imperial army involving 200,000 women, forcible drafting of 8.4 million and 1 million massacre of the Koreans, and make sincere apology and compensation.

The government of the DPRK whose guiding principle is the Juche idea centered on popular masses consistently adheres to its position to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and realize substantial equality between men and women. In our country, the law on equality between men and women was promulgated in 1946 immediately after its liberation, which provided legal basis for women to enjoy the same rights with men in all fields of social life including politics, economy and culture, free from all sorts of social inequality and discrimination. The Government of the DPRK has continuously taken legal and practical measures for gender equality and advancement of women in conformity with the evolving social development. As a result, the women in our country today are exercising their rights to the full in all spheres of state and social life.

The Government of the DPRK will faithfully fulfill its obligations under the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and make active contributions to the international efforts for promotion and protection of women's rights and advancement of women.