

**Response to the Statement Posted on the Embassy of Japan Website  
Regarding the June 14 Ad in the *Washington Post* (“The Facts”) Regarding  
the Comfort Women**

**An Asia Policy Point Brief**

June 25, 2007

*Statement taken from the Embassy of Japan in Washington website*

<http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html/cw0607.htm>

Embassy Statement in *Italics*. Our reply in **Bold**



*Question: What is the position of the Government of Japan concerning the full-page advertisement regarding the comfort women issue which ran in the Washington Post on June 14, 2007?*

*Answer:*

- *The Government of Japan has on many occasions extended official apologies regarding [the Comfort Women issue. [sic]*

**Not True. The Government of Japan has never extended a single official apology to the Comfort Women.**

**>Visit our explanation of the legal steps necessary for an apology to be considered “official” under the Constitution of Japan at:**

<http://www.jiaponline.org/documents/WhatConstitutesApology.doc>.

- *Prime Minister Abe, during his recent visit to the US, clearly stated,*

*- “In my meeting with congressional representatives, I explained my thoughts - namely that, both personally and as Prime Minister of Japan, my heart goes out in sympathy to all those who suffered extreme hardships as comfort women; and I expressed my apologies for the fact that they were forced to endure such extreme and harsh conditions.*

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*- Human rights were violated in many parts of the world during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century; therefore we must work to make the 21<sup>st</sup> century a wonderful century in which no human rights are violated. And the Government of Japan and I wish to make significant contributions to that end.” (April 27, 2007)*

**Not True.** The above translation deviates greatly from the statement made by the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as reported in the Japanese media. In addition, both the Prime Minister himself, and the Japan’s Foreign Ministry went on the record to disavow the belief that an apology had been expressed to the President or anyone in the United States.

On April 27, Foreign Ministry, Deputy Press Secretary Tomohiko Taniguchi, in Tokyo, told members of the foreign press in English: *“I do not think he apologized. He tried hard to explain what he has long been saying about the very issue of comfort women, and that is what actually happened. So, describing it as that Prime Minister Abe tried to apologize to the members of Congress I think is not an accurate description.”*

>See our account of the Prime Minister’s statement, checked by Japanese language and translation specialists at: <http://www.jiaponline.org/didabeapologizel.doc>

> See our list of Abe and Japanese Foreign Ministry disavowals of having given any apologize in Washington at: <http://www.jiaponline.org/documents/PMAbeDisavowals.doc>.

● *This advertisement was sponsored by members of a private group, and was neither sponsored by, nor associated with, the Government of Japan.*

**True but misleading.** The individuals who sponsored the advertisement are the political allies, supporters, and personal friends of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

>See our introduction to the signers and our descriptions of the organizations they belong to at: <http://www.jiaponline.org/documents/Jun14ADBiosFINAL5.doc> and **NOT DONE YET**



We strongly urge the Government of Japan to cease in these efforts to obfuscate or misstate about the Comfort Women issue and House Resolution 121. Such disregard for the truth displays an undignified and **callous** attitude toward the citizens of both the

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**United States and Japan. It is demeaning for the diplomatic corps of Japan to have to defend these statements. It is finally a grave insult to the Comfort Women, who have waited six decades for the restoration of their dignity.**

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### **Questions?**

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