

**DPRK-Japan Diplomatic Normali-
zation Talks: Last Chance for Tokyo
to Come to Terms with Its Past
And Erase Shame**

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Preface

The fundamental premise of the DPRK-Japan talks on opening full diplomatic relations between the two countries is for Tokyo to come to terms with its past militarist colonial rule, war crimes and other outrages committed against the people of Korea. The talks between the two countries, currently stalled over the delaying tactics by the Japanese, present a striking contrast to those that south Korea and other countries conducted before they established normalized relations with Japan in that the former puts top priority to the candid acknowledgement and rectification of the distorted history by Tokyo from the viewpoint of the victims versus the assailants.

Pyongyang insists that there will be no normalized relations between the two Far Eastern neighbors unless Tokyo is ready and willing to atone for its past repugnant aggressor behavior. During the 41 years of colonial rule of Korea from 1905 to 1945 the Japanese militarists enslaved the people of Korea by ruling it with heavy hands. The Japanese deprived Korea of its sovereignty, diplomatic rights and the Korean language and prohibited the Korean people from retaining their own cultural heritage and personal names. All the material and human resources of Korea were seized and harnessed for the conduct of the aggressive war against Asia, as over six million Koreans were mobilized for military service, forced labor and army prostitution, better known as “comfort” women, and army civilian employees, all at gunpoint, with some two millions brought to Japan, the origin of the Korean community in the island country.

Fifty years after the end of the last world war, the Tokyo Government managed to reopen diplomatic relations with Seoul and other Asian countries by offering a yen aid package to silence the demand for atonement of the past aggressor acts. This is where the Japanese behavior differs from the German. Needless to say, no official apology has been expressed to the DPRK and its people, nor have any reparations been paid. The most scandalous is the Japanese refusal to educate the Japanese young generations on the past heinous Japanese aggressor conduct against the Asian peoples. The war crimes against peace and humanity committed by Japan in Korea and other parts of Asia are hardly discussed in Japanese school textbooks. No thoroughgoing fact-finding has yet to be conducted by the Tokyo Government, which remains adamantly deaf to the mounting public demands in Japan and abroad.

As the DPRK is the only Asian country with which Japan has yet to establish diplomatic relations, the Pyongyang-Tokyo talks provide the last chance for the Japanese to come to terms with the war of aggression they conducted and their crimes committed against humanity in Korea and other parts of Asia before Japan is accepted as a leading power in the region and given a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

This booklet is designed to provide insight into the character, features, basic problems, major points at issue and prospects of the on-going DPRK-Japan diplomatic normalization talks.

Editor, Korean Report
May 1993

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General Remarks

Reconsideration of Pyongyang - Tokyo Talks

The question of normalizing relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan and establishing diplomatic relations between the two Far Eastern countries is far from bilateral but is of pan-Asian and global importance. This accounts for apparent reluctance on the part of Tokyo to successfully conclude the talks.

The Japanese raised a host of irrelevant issues in an obvious bid to offend the north Koreans, derail the talks and pass the buck for their breakdown to them. Eight rounds of talks were held from January, 1991 to November, 1992, but they made little headway, and for the moment there is no prospect that the talks will be resumed in near future.

As the DPRK is the only Asian country with which Japan has yet to establish diplomatic relations, the Pyongyang-Tokyo talks provide the last chance for the Japanese to come to terms with the war of aggression they conducted and their crimes committed against humanity in Korea and other parts of Asia before Japan is accepted as a leading power in the region and given a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

The most outrageous is the so-called comfort women question of military prostitution involving some 200,000 Korean women and numerous women from other Asian countries.

At issue are the questions that the Tokyo Military Tribunal for the Far East discussed but failed to properly address which had been briefly mentioned but disregarded in the process of negotiations Japan held with south Korea and the other Asian countries before the establishment of diplomatic relations.

That is where the north Koreans stand for the long-smoldering desire of the Asian peoples to bring the Japanese to confront the past squarely as it is and to put right their history of aggression against the Asian peoples.

South Korean reporters stationed in Tokyo proved very supportive of the north Korean stand, when they were interviewed by the Asahi Shimbun, a prestigious Japanese daily.

South Korea's foremost daily Dong-A Ilbo Tokyo correspondent Li Rak Yon said: "The 1965 ROK-Japan Basic Treaty is not any success for the ROK at least in setting history to rights as regards the colonial age. My desire is to see north Korea do better."

South Korea's official Yonhap News Agency Tokyo correspondent O Jun Dong had this to say: "To speak from the standpoint of the ROK people, not of the ROK Government, I want the issue to be settled on the north Korean terms. I expect that the north Korean stand that Japan should 'make reparations' will prevail."

The prelude to the government-level bilateral talks came in March 1989 when the then Japanese Premier Takeshita "expressed deep remorse and regret over the unfortunate past" at the Diet. This theme was repeated by Premier Kaifu in his personal letter to President Kim Il Sung in September, 1990.

In response the north Korean leader on September 27 proposed to establish full diplomatic relations with Japan as he received the Japanese ruling Liberal Democratic Party strongman Kanemaru Shin who delivered the message. The visiting LDP delegation and the No. 1 opposition Social Democratic Party of Japan delegation signed a joint declaration with the Workers' Party of Korea, urging diplomatic relations between the two neighbors.

Regarding the question of opening diplomatic relations with Tokyo, the DPRK Government has pursued a firm principled stand different from that of other Asian governments, including Seoul, which put on the back burner the issue of the aggressive war and massive atrocities committed by Japan in favor of monetary settlement in the form of property claims.

The north Korean standpoint can be summarized in the words of President Kim Il Sung, hero of the anti-Japanese national resistance war and whose parents, young brother and other folks perished while fighting the Japanese colonialists:

"The matter of improving the relations between Korea and Japan boils down, in essence, to the question of redressing the wrongs done in their past relations, and of developing new neighboring relations..."

"In order to redress the past wrongs, it is more important than anything else to repent of the past properly. Japan committed aggression against our country in the past, and our country suffered Japan's aggression. Japan's sincere repentance of her past wrongdoing is needed for the good of herself rather than for others."

The agenda agreed on between the DPRK and Japan are: (1) Basic problems regarding the normalization of DPRK-Japan diplomatic relations; (2) Economic issues related to the normalization of DPRK-Japan diplomatic relations; (3) International issues related to the normalization of DPRK-Japan diplomatic relations; (4) Other matters of mutual concern (legal status of Korean residents, Japanese spouses of Koreans, etc.)

The first item focuses on the Japanese aggression against Korea from 1905 to 1945 and the Japanese role in the division of Korea till today, while the second concerns war reparations and compensation for the outrages committed, as Korea was ruled with heavy hand and ruthlessly plundered by the Japanese militarists.

The fourth item is of immediate importance for the Korean community in Japan, where 700,000 Koreans are subject to constant racial discrimination as second-class citizens, with their human rights very often curtailed. The number of Koreans taken to Japan for forced labor or military conscription reached about two million at peak years.

In discussing the four agenda items, the DPRK worked hard to keep the talks on track and listed their demands:

(1) An official apology from the Japanese Government for the past wrongs done against the Korean people and an official government statement that the 1905 Ulsa Five-Point Treaty – which established the protectorate status of Korea – and the Chongmi Seven-Point Treaty, allegedly signed in 1907 – which legalized the Japanese annexation of Korea – were null and void.

(2) Appropriate reparations for the immeasurable physical and mental damage inflicted on the Korean people during the military rule of the Korean Peninsula.

Resources, human and material, commandeered in Korea, were used to feed the Japanese people, supply the Japanese economy, and finance the Japanese machine, as Okinawan sugar funded the Satsuma forces to topple the Tokugawa Shogunate forces and achieve the Meiji Restoration.

Technically speaking, the Japanese government coffers paid no yen to finance the war efforts, including construction of battleships Yamato and Musashi and the production of Zero fighters.

(3) Compensation for the postwar 45 years of sufferings by the Korean people and those of 700,000 resident Koreans in Japan, including the protection of their legal status and human rights.

The north Korean stand is in line with international law. As the Vienna Convention confirmed the principle in international customary law, in which any treaty imposed on an individual representative of the state through threats or acts of coercion does not take any effect and is absolutely null and void, the 1905 protectorate and 1910 annexation treaties were signed at gunpoint. The aggressive war is a crime under international law. The Cairo Declaration of December 1, 1943, noting that the three great powers were fighting to “punish the aggression of Japan,” stated that they, “mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course of time Korea shall become free and independent.”

To support their argument regarding the 1905 and 1907 treaties, the north Koreans revealed that the first treaty bore no endorsement, or signature or royal

signature of the Emperor Ko Jong as he opposed it and that the royal signature affixed on the second treaty was false.

The north Koreans claimed that the two treaties were illegal and dead letters in view of three legal codes, the then Korean law, the old Japanese Constitution and international law:

(1) Article 9 of the 1899 Korean Code stipulates that the Emperor had the authority to conclude and ratify a treaty (Article 9 of the 1899 Korean Code) and Article 18 of the November 21, 1894 imperial decree on the format of official documents states that "The royal seal shall be stamped on a document ratifying a treaty after the Emperor affixes his signature to it.

(2) Article 4 of the old Imperial Constitution of Japan states that the Emperor "shall conclude all treaties," but the 1905 treaty bore no signature of the Japanese Emperor.

(3) Public international law stipulates that a treaty can be implemented when it has been approved by the kings of its signatories and that a treaty not endorsed by the state will become a mere piece of scrap paper soon.

What emerged from the eight rounds of talks is the blatant Japanese behavior which puts Japan in striking contrast with Germany, which expressed official apologies for the Nazi crimes and took serious steps to atone for the wrongs done.

Throughout the bilateral talks, unlike the Germans, the Japanese rationalized their past crimes against peace and humanity, scoffing at international law, the Cairo Declaration and the verdict of the Tokyo military tribunal, in other words, the Japanese view that the Japanese colonialists are not guilty of any wrongdoing in their war of aggression against Korea and other parts of Asia.

The Japanese response to the north Korean demands is two-pronged: One is the idiosyncratic attempt to justify the 41 years of ruthless colonial rule and the all-familiar offer to settle the problem of property claims. The other is a series of foot-dragging tactics designed to divert attention from the fundamental questions at issue and sidetrack the talks.

In short, the Japanese stand is "We have done nothing wrong in Korea and left something constructive." The Japanese position can be summed up:

- The 1905 and 1910 treaties were valid;
- No illegal seizure of assets or recruiting of manpower took place in Korea;
- There is no evidence that the Japanese Government was involved in the drafting of some 200,000 Korean women for forced prostitution for Japanese troops;
- There is no need for the Japanese Government to compensate the Korean comfort women;
- Only the question of property claim remains yet to be settled.

Most scandalous about the Japanese behavior is the persistent attempt to stall the talks. In the first place, the Japanese first asked the north Koreans to define its territorial jurisdiction, the issue which they would never raise in reestablishing diplomatic relations with the now defunct Soviet Union or China.

Secondly, the Japanese repeatedly raised the issue of the Japanese high school dropout-turned woman who was allegedly abducted to north Korea to teach Japanese to the woman agent who allegedly planted an explosive in a KAL jetliner to explode it in midair over Burma.

No wreckage of the KAL plane has been recovered from the Burmese waters. Japanese police has failed to produce any physical proof of her abduction to north Korea. Few Japanese aircraft experts accept the version of the explosion given by the south Korean and Japanese authorities. Serious doubt is cast on the motive to recruit a poorly-educated low-class woman as a Japanese-language teacher.

Thirdly, the Japanese have insisted that diplomatic relations with Pyongyang is conditional on matters which have nothing to do with the agreed-on agenda: UN membership, the question relating the DPRK's sovereignty, progress in north-south relations - purely domestic affairs of the Korean people - and acceptance of international inspections of nuclear facilities, the issue to be discussed between north Korea and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The DPRK joined the United Nations as a separate state in September 1991 simultaneously with south Korea as Seoul applied for separate membership. North and south Korea signed two landmark agreements, one designed to commit them to non-aggression against each other and bring the two parts of Korea together, and the other to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula.

Strange indeed, Tokyo never raised the issue of IAEA inspections when it reestablished state relations with China. Nor have they demanded international access to nuclear facilities in India, Pakistan, Israel and South Africa. As regards Beijing, Tokyo never urged better ties between Mainland China and Taiwan as a precondition for diplomatic relations. Japan kept silence when Washington threatened to leave the IAEA when the world body insisted on inspecting suspicious nuclear facilities in Israel.

Regarding the nuclear issue, the north Koreans signed a safeguards accord with the IAEA, and allowed in IAEA inspectors on six occasions. The north Korean charge is that the Japanese are trying to create red herring to divert attention from their refusal to come to terms with the past and their deliberate negligence of the comfort woman issue, scuttle the Pyongyang-Tokyo negotiations, and prepare the world public for their own nuclear weapons program.

Japan is building the world's largest nuclear waste-processing plant at Rokkasho Village in the northern Aomori Prefecture under the long-range program to develop

Japanese nuclear weapons. It is a matter of common knowledge that Japan is implementing plants to store some 100 tons of weapons-grade plutonium, sufficient to make several thousand Hiroshima-type A-bombs.

Japan has already succeeded in launching multi-stage rockets which can easily be converted to nuclear-tipped inter-continental ballistic missiles. Japan is a virtual nuclear power ready to take on a greater role, eager to achieve what it failed to during the last world war.

At UN meeting north Korea expressed its objection to Japan becoming another permanent member of the Security Council and has taken issue with the Russian proposal to remove the enemy state clause from the UN Charter. Pyongyang has done a great deal to make the world community wary of Japan's dangerous nuclear weapons program.

With the eight rounds of talks held, the DPRK and Japan are still far away from the avowed goal of leaving the unfortunate past behind them. However, the north Korea-Japan talks have created a worldwide interest in the issue of military prostitution by causing a chain reaction of vociferous outcries for full accounts of the issue and compensation in Asian capitals and at world bodies.

The comfort woman issue has become a hot item at international forum meetings in Vienna and at UN meetings in Geneva as the UN Human Rights Commission has launched an official investigation of the issue. At long last Tokyo finds itself standing at the dock of a world court, accused of crimes against humanity.

Should the Japanese continue to resist coming to terms with the past aggression against Asia and repugnant atrocities perpetrated, Japan would become a pariah state. "As its power grows, coming to terms with the past is becoming more necessary in order to come to terms with the future," BBC Tokyo correspondent Gordon Brewar wrote in the April 26, 1992 issue of *The Financial Times*, the influential daily in London. The resentment and distrust growing among most of the occupied Asian countries is too strong for Tokyo to erase the shame by doling out the Japanese yen.

Major Points in Both Sides' Assertion at the DPRK - Japan Negotiations for Normalizing Diplomatic Relations

AGENDA 1. Basic Problems Relating to Normalization of DPRK-Japan Diplomatic Relations

- Evaluation of Old Treaties

* Korean side - Old treaties between Korea and Japan were illegal and invalid because Korea was forced by Japan's military power to sign them after Japan colonized the Korean Peninsula.

* Japanese side - Although old treaties between Japan and Korea became already invalid, they were legally concluded and were effective in those days.

- Question of Jurisdiction

* Korean side - In establishing diplomatic ties between states, specification of jurisdiction is not a subject to be usually discussed. In case the clarification of jurisdiction is regarded as necessary in negotiations for establishing DPRK-Japan diplomatic relations, each side is able to specify the jurisdiction on the premise that Korea is one and should be reunified peacefully.

* Japanese side - There is a need to make clear the DPRK's jurisdiction from the viewpoint that Japan-south Korea relations should not be damaged. The Military Demarcation Line should be regarded as a demarcation line of jurisdiction. Our side cannot accept the premise that Korea is one and should be reunified peacefully.

- Question of Adjustment

* Korean side - The 1965 south Korea-Japan Normalization Treaty was signed without correctly settling the unfortunate past between the two countries. Therefore, a treaty for normalizing DPRK-Japan relations should not be concluded within the purview of the south Korea-Japan treaty.

* Japanese side - The conclusion of a normalization treaty of Pyongyang-Tokyo relations should be adjusted in consideration of the south Korea-Japan treaty.

- Question of Liberation and Independence of Korea

* Korean side - The Korean people achieved the country's liberation and their own independence after ousting the Japanese Imperial Army from the Korean

Peninsula through their long-continued anti-Japanese struggle.

* Japanese side - Korea was separated and liberated from Japan by the San Francisco Treaty.

AGENDA 2. Economic Problems Concerning DPRK-Japan Diplomatic Relations

- Question of Compensation

* Korean side - DPRK-Japan relations are those between aggressors and their victims. Japan colonized Korea by its military power and inflicted an inestimable amount of human and material losses upon the Korean people. Japan cannot evade its responsibility for compensation to over 200,000 "comfort women", about 1,000,000 victims and some 6,000,000 forced laborers. So, Japan should compensate these Korean victims from political and humanitarian viewpoints as well as from the viewpoint of international law.

Japan also should bear responsibility for its hostile policy to the DPRK after World War II, in particular, for the fact that it sent its troops to the Korean War and inflicted damage on the DPRK.

* Japanese side - The compensation question should be dealt with according to a claim to possession on the basis of the fact that Korea was lawfully annexed to Japan and liberated from it. In case of exercising the right of claim, Korea should prove its damage by presenting positive legal evidence.

Japan will never bear responsibility for abnormal relations with north Korea in the postwar period of 45 years.

AGENDA 3. International Problems Related to the Normalization of Relations

* Korean side - Inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) proved that our nuclear activities were aimed at peaceful use. Refusal of inspection by the United States and the south Korean authorities has placed an obstacle in the way of the solution of "mutual inspection of north and south Korea".

Japan clamors about "suspicion of nuclear development by the DPRK" to make an excuse for its militarization.

* Japanese side - There will be no progress or improvement in Japan-DPRK relations unless Pyongyang dispels its nuclear suspicion. Mutual inspection of north and south Korea should be conducted.

AGENDA 4. Other Urgent Problems to be Solved by Both Sides

- Question of the Legal Position of Koreans in Japan

* Korean side - The Japanese government should cancel its unjust oppressive policy against Chongryun (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan). It should respect Koreans' national education and guarantee their democratic national rights including approval of due qualification of Korean schools and educational subsidies to them.

* Japanese side - We do not oppress Chongryun, but make efforts to improve the legal status of Korean residents in Japan. We respect Koreans' national education, but it is difficult to qualify Korean schools as equal to Japanese schools and give educational subsidies to them.

- Question of Japanese spouses in the DPRK

* Korean side - This question will be solved through normalizing diplomatic relations between the two countries. It is unreasonable for Japan to urge us to realize the return of Japanese spouses to their homeland, while shirking its responsibility for humanitarian problems including that of "comfort women". A favorable atmosphere so far has not been created in Japan for solving that question.

* Japanese side - We hope Pyongyang to settle the problem of returning Japanese spouses in north Korea to their homeland at an early date without linking the issue to the problem of normalizing diplomatic relations.

Follow the date and places of the DPRK-Japan negotiation talks from the 1st round to the 8th round:

- The 1st Round- Jan. 30 - Jan. 31, 1991 Pyongyang
- The 2nd Round- Mar. 11 - Mar. 12, 1991 Tokyo
- The 3rd Round- May 20 - May 22, 1991 Beijing
- The 4th Round- Aug. 31 - Sep. 2, 1991 Beijing
- The 5th Round- Nov. 18 - Nov. 19, 1991 Beijing
- The 6th Round- Jan. 31 - Feb. 1, 1992 Beijing
- The 7th Round- May 14 - May 15, 1992 Beijing
- The 8th Round- Nov. 5 - Nov. 6, 1992 Beijing

Itemized Discussion

The Issue of Compensation

The stand of the Japanese government on the compensation issue is clear: Japan can not respond to this issue as compensation. However, it admits that there is enough ground for discussion within the framework of the “right of claim to property.” What is the basis of this argument? We introduce here the outline of speeches by the Japanese delegation during the eight rounds of the normalization talks.

1) The old treaties between Korea and Japan such as the Ulsa Protectorate Treaty or the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty which gave Japan the authority to rule Korea, were legally concluded.

2) Therefore, the forcible drafting of Koreans and plunder of materials were legally conducted under the legitimate Japanese colonial rule and Imperial Japanese Law.

3) Accordingly, the concept of “compensation” does not exist. What does exist is only the “right of claim to property” in terms of “monetary debt relations.”

The Japanese delegation also said that the government is ready to deal with the issue of Korean “comfort women” within the framework of “the right of claim to property.” However, it added that such women should produce evidence which prove their sufferings due to that.

Needless to say, the settlement of the historical aftermaths between the two countries is not a matter of financial debt. Japan occupied Korea using arms and did immeasurable damage to Korean people. This is an undeniable fact. The real intention of the Japanese government to substitute the “right of claim to property” for “compensation” is to hush up the issue of settlement of the issues of its war criminals and colonial control of Korea. And this is the reason why due compensation as well as an apology have been demanded of Japan not only by Koreans but also by victims in the Asia and Pacific region even now after nearly half a century of Japan’s aggression.

The government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea insists that the atrocities committed by Japan are crimes even under international law in those days.

Japan accepted the Potsdam Declaration because it recognized its war crimes, leading to the trial of war criminals by the Far Eastern Military Tribunal.

The trial pursued “general war crimes,” “crime against peace” and “crime against humanity.” The trial upheld the position that “murders, annihilation, slavery and compulsory displacement and other conducts against humanity against civilians during and before the war, and the suppression based on political and racial reasons” shall be tried “irrespective of domestic law.” That is because ordinary domestic laws cannot be applied to try unprecedented war crimes such as those perpetrated by Japan and Nazi Germany.

Looking back on the past, all the “legal procedures” (claimed as such by the Japanese side) during the colonial period were “forced” upon the Korean people who had no rights at all. If these procedures were to be pleaded “legal,” Nazi’s annihilation of Jews and the recruitment of “comfort women” would be “legal” conducts. More than that, it follows from this argument by Japan that the Far East International Military Tribunal “illegally” tried murders based on “legal” colonial rule.

Moreover, concerning the obligation to produce “facts of sufferings” and “evidence,” this assertion is based on a wrong premise. Every criminal act perpetrated under Japan’s colonial rule of Korea took a systematic form with the involvement of the Japanese authorities and the materials concerned were in the hands of the Japanese authorities. An ex-Imperial Army soldier testifies that just before and after the defeat of Japan, the Japanese authorities destroyed all materials concerned out of fear that they might be investigated as to their war crimes. The Japanese government still refuses to make public some kinds of materials which might exist and possibly prove Japan’s war crimes. (Most important police materials have never been made public.)

To make the matters worse, despite the fact that about 450 women in north and south Korea testified that they had been made “comfort women,” the Japanese government, casting doubts upon the credibility of their testimony, has never made a hearing investigation from them afraid of their own war crimes being revealed.

The Japanese government, meanwhile, presents an argument, emphatically stressing the need of “balance” between the so-called war-time compensation and the south Korea-Japan Treaty which was concluded in 1965. Speaking about the south Korea-Japan treaty, Japan insists that the basic treaty doesn’t have any clause which refers to Japan’s colonial criminal acts. The Japanese government tries to justify their colonial rule over Korea, claiming that the old treaty was valid. Concerning the question of compensation for war-time crimes, they said they had “compensated” the Koreans for their half-century long history of aggression and plunder by promising “economic cooperation” in the name of “congratulatory

funds for independence.” (This does not deserve even the right of claim to property.) This argument on “balance” and the south Korea-Japan Treaty are out of the question.

Compensation means both apologizing and compensation for the past criminal acts. Moreover, compensation is necessary not for Korea but for Japan itself. For Japan to compensate Koreans means Japan’s acknowledgement of the responsibility of the Japanese imperialists for waging a war of aggression and for their colonial rule over Korea. Japan’s compensation also means its firm will not to repeat the same crime.

Since the end of the Cold War, Japan has sought to be a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, and for the sake of an “international contribution,” it is busy dispatching overseas Self-Defense Force units. Then, is there a Cold War structure built-in in Japan? The Asian peoples including the people of the Korean Peninsula cast doubts about Japan which is drumming up “international contribution,” boasting of economic and military power without compensating for its past history of aggression.

Itemized Discussion

Legal Position of Korean Residents in Japan

The legal position of Korean residents in Japan is the same in nature as Japan's failure to make a post-war compensation. About 700,000 Korean residents in Japan did not come to Japan for sightseeing, travel, commerce or as refugees. Koreans who had been deprived of their land and jobs due to Japan's colonial rule were compelled to come to Japan in pursuit of their livelihoods, or were brought to Japan as draftees or laborers or the offspring of such Koreans. Nevertheless, the Japanese government has consistently taken a discriminatory policy and treated the Koreans in Japan unjustly and illegally.

While imposing the legal obligation of paying taxes on Koreans in Japan as on the Japanese, the Japanese government deprived the Korean residents for some decades of their rights to social benefits (survivorship, children's allowance, admittance to public housing) and it was only a year ago that Koreans of more than third generations in Japan were granted permanent residence. However, still now there are a number of rights denied Koreans, including fundamental human rights.

The right of national education is a prominent example. At present there are 150-odd Korean schools. (Primary, middle and high schools and a university - which differ little from Japanese counterparts except for the fact that language used there is Korean.) But these Korean schools are labelled as miscellaneous schools. Article 1 of the school education law stipulates that the miscellaneous schools are not regular schools, but schools in which education similar to school education is conducted. Under the colonial rule of Korea by the Japanese, Japan which long denied Koreans their right to national education for the sake of its colonial policy of annihilating Koreans as a nation, similarly continues to deny Koreans their right to national education after the war. Japan has justified all sorts of discriminative treatment against Koreans in Japan on the undue assertion that Koreans are miscellaneous.

Today, the Japan Railways (JR) sets a lower discount rate for its commuter train tickets for Korean school students than for Japanese school students - and

graduates from Korean high schools have no right to take an entrance examination for Japanese universities (although there are some public and private universities which qualify graduates from Korean high schools to take entrance examinations, stating that Korean high schools are schools stipulated by Article 1 of the education law), - so that there is an additional financial burden on the parents whose children go to Korean schools. Korean schools are not entitled to public educational subsidies - All this is due to the the fact that Korean schools are defined as miscellaneous schools. The problem of membership of Korean schools in the Kotairen, which was brought to the fore last year is based on the same reason.

However, in the first place, this problem lies not in its legal aspect but in that the Japanese government who are responsible for the existence of Koreans in Japan does not regard the problem of guaranteeing the national education of Korean residents in Japan as an act of compensating them for the past crimes. Generally speaking, the Japanese government neglects the protection of national minorities which is stipulated under the International Covenant on Human Rights and the Charter on Children's Rights.

Next comes the problem of pension. The Japanese government paved the way in 1982 for Koreans in Japan to be the recipients of national pensions, by abolishing the nationality clause in the pension law. But, those Koreans who were already over 60 years old in 1986 when the pension law was revised, were excluded from its application. They are supposed to be taken care of warmly as pension recipients because they are the very persons that suffered most under the colonial rule. Such old Koreans number about 30,000. Moreover, in 1982 when the law for pensions for physically handicapped people was revised, disabled Korean residents in Japan who were already over 20 years old then, are not covered by the law. (There are about 3,000 such Koreans in Japan). The above-mentioned problems are raised as the Japanese government, ignoring the historical background of Korean residents in Japan, apply the standard of social security for refugees to Korean residents.

Although the Alien Registration Law which controls foreigners in Japan was revised to abolish the obligation of fingerprinting for permanent residents this year, there still remains the problem that heavier punishments are meted out to Koreans in Japan for the same offense than to Japanese offenders and the Koreans' obligation to always carry their Alien Registration Certificates remains intact so as to enable police to investigate them on the spot. The maximum punishment of one year's servitude for failure to carry an Alien Registration Certificate is heavier than the prison terms for the offense of gambling and the offense of accidental manslaughter. The Japanese people have a system similar to the Alien Registration Law. However, the offenders have only to pay a fine, and it is not an offense

registered as a criminal record. There is no justifiable reason for this striking difference in treatment between Japanese and foreigners concerning this procedural mistake.

Apart from these cases of discriminatory treatment of foreigners, their human rights are violated, such as the refusal to confirm the nationality of children born of international marriages, discrimination against Korean residents in their business activities, and discrimination against them in occupation and rejection of Koreans from public housing. These are the problems which the Japanese government should address by actively taking legal and administrative measures so that human rights violations may be curbed.

The problem of the legal position of Korean residents in Japan is for the Japanese government to recover the original state of Koreans before Japan's occupation of Korea with a historical responsibility. This is to guarantee the rights of Korean residents in Japan in the same way as if there had not been the colonial rule of Korea by Japan. If this is not done, it is impossible to genuinely recover the negated and violated rights and human rights of Koreans.

Itemized Discussion

Some Problems Concerning Validity of 1905 Treaty

Introduction

An argument has been advanced on the Korean Peninsula that the old treaties signed between Korea and Japan including the Ulsa 5-Point Treaty of 1905 (hereinafter referred to as the 1905 Treaty) concluded prior to the “Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty” were invalid. In particular, it has been widely recognized that the 1905 Treaty which deprived Korea of its diplomatic rights, and virtually legalized Japan’s colonial domination of Korea, was forcibly concluded by blackmailing the then Korean King and ministers through direct threats.

The invalidity of the treaty has been pointed out by scholars both in north and south of Korea. The issue was also a point of discussion at the Japan-south Korea diplomatic normalization talks in the early 1960s, even though the controversy over the validity of the treaty was left unsolved.

The argument was brought to the fore in a dramatic way last May with the discovery of the original document of the treaty as new evidence which casts doubts on the existence of the treaty itself, transcending the level of continued controversy over the treaty’s validity. The new material found in the Changgyu House of Seoul National University triggered publication of a series of theses by north Korean scholars who called the treaty invalid.

The controversy developed into a hot debate in the eighth round of the DPRK-Japan diplomatic normalization talks last November. This problem was also raised at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights as part of some NGOs’ fact-finding activities on the truth about forced Korean laborers including Korean “comfort” women.

Based on the new evidence and historical facts, the nullity of the 1905 Treaty is discussed below in the light of international law.

- 1) The treaty was concluded as an act of coercion.

It is a generally accepted fact that the 1905 Treaty was forcibly concluded by blackmailing Korean ministers with the mobilization of its troops by Japan. This is also mentioned in many history books.

Any treaty concluded through acts of coercion or threats is null and void under international law. Although the Vienna Convention on the Law of the Treaties written and published in 1969 by the United Nations International Law Commission regards it as one of the main factors for nullifying a treaty, this point has long been established as a customary standard under traditional international law. Article 51 of the Law of Treaties only restated this established standard based on customary law.

This point had been publicly discussed and confirmed as one of the fundamental principles under traditional international law when the ILC prepared a draft of the Law of Treaties. Noticeable in the draft is the fact that the 1905 Treaty was cited as an example of this kind of invalid acts of state in history.

It has long been a principle based on customary law under traditional international law as well as it is now that a treaty of this kind is invalid. The 1905 Treaty was invalid because it violated the fundamental principle of customary law. This fact is recognized by the international community.

2) The treaty was concluded by those who had no authority.

The general proceeding of concluding treaties established through state practice under traditional international law, has followed the procedures of negotiation of contents of a treaty, signing, ratification, exchange of ratification instruments.

In order to conclude a treaty, first of all, the representatives concerned should have the authority to sign a treaty.

Historically, in an era of absolute monarchy and undeveloped communications, a letter of proxy should be given to an agent when he signed a treaty, on behalf of a king because it was a king, the supreme ruler, who had the state sovereign ruler conclude a treaty.

In case a treaty was signed by a person other than a king himself, the agent of the king should have a letter of proxy under traditional international law. No one who had no such credentials, had the right to sign a treaty. In case a treaty was signed by an agent who was not given the authority, such a treaty should have been ratified or confirmed by a king later. The 1905 Treaty was concluded without a letter of proxy from the Korean King. This means the treaty was signed by a foreign minister who had no authority. The Korean King had consistently opposed the treaty even before and after its conclusion, and never confirmed it.

3) The treaty was not ratified.

The ratification of a treaty means the final expression of a state's consent to be bound by a treaty.

Under traditional international law, the system of ratification was aimed at examining whether the persons who signed a treaty took proper measures within an extent of their competence or not, and confirming the final consent of a constitutionally authorized person to a treaty after he examined it in its entirety. It was a principle of customary law that a formal conclusion of a treaty was made not by its ratification but by exchange of the instruments of ratification.

The 1905 Treaty was not one of administrative and technical content of such a nature that could be made a treaty by signing alone in an informal way. This treaty concerned the political activity, namely, the transference of diplomatic rights which was directly related to the interests of the state and the nation. The ratification procedures were essential for the 1905 Treaty because of its nature. The signing of a treaty does not mean that it is legally valid. That only means that the wording of a treaty has been agreed upon.

The 1905 Treaty does not have a provision that it "requires ratification." However, the treaty certainly needed ratification in view of the practices of international customary law in those days and because of its political nature.

The original document of the 1905 Treaty discovered in the Changgyu House of Seoul National University carried neither signature of the then Korean King nor that of the then Japanese Emperor. There was no ratification instrument attached to it. It follows from this fact and the principles of traditional international law that this treaty was not effective.

A closer look at these three points reveals that the 1905 Treaty was concluded against the principles of international customary law, and was without any legal effect. Thus, all the treaties concluded after and based on the 1905 Treaty were null and void, and the Japanese colonial domination system of Korea based on these invalid treaties had no legal basis under Japanese domestic law nor did it have any legitimacy under international law.

Itemized Discussion

International Focus on Forced Laborers: Hot Issue before NGOs

Apparently, Tokyo is among the most backward states in terms of human rights as Japan has no intention at all to thoroughly investigate and atone for the atrocities it committed against peoples of Asian countries during the last world war, comparable to the Nazi holocaust of Jews.

The Japanese government has been deaf to the mounting public demands that all the documents and historic materials on its war-time crimes should be released.

Tokyo's long overdue putting of the past to rights leaving behind itself the history of repeated overseas aggression has been a target of sharp criticisms at the DPRK-Japan diplomatic normalization talks, until it has emerged as one of top agenda items at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in recent years.

The key blunder in Japanese behavior vis-a-vis the issue of forced labor and military prostitution is the obvious failure to predict that the DPRK would be able to lead world public behind its demand for setting right the Japanese history of aggression.

The efforts of U.N. non-governmental organizations have been made to get to the truth about the drafting by Imperial Japan of Koreans for forced labor and army prostitution as "comfort" women, as serious concern has been expressed by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights last August at its forty-fourth session and last February at its forty-ninth session.

During the two sessions, two governments (north and south Korea) and 7 U.N. NGOs made more than 20 critical speeches against the Japanese government, concerning the issue of forced laborers and "comfort" women.

They accuse Japan of trying to evade any liabilities. Their demands are (1) thorough fact-finding (2) compensation for victims (3) establishment of an international court for Asian victims.

A closer look at NGOs' activism reveals a remarkable trend which is bound to influence the future political scene. Noticeable was the speech made by Ms. Karen Parker, a U.S. lawyer and chief representative of the International Educational Development at the forty-fourth session.

Dismissing the Japanese allegation that the issue of the “comfort” women was solved in the 1965 Agreement between Japan and south Korea, (in which Japan promised to give south Korea \$300 million in grants and \$200 million in loans), she said, “Human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot be deprived of by any governments, as they are inalienable... No government is allowed to abandon any right of individuals or to claim its right of diplomatic protection for individuals against the rules of JUS COGENS. Any, treaty which violates the rules of JUS COGENS is null and void.”

This constitutes an implicit criticism of the south Korean government which had dropped its claim to the compensation of domestic individual victims in favor of its immediate profits.

This vindicates the diplomatic policy conduct of the DPRK which has been arguing since last world war that getting a full account of the status of Korean victims will be the first step toward establishing future-oriented relations between the two countries. Pyongyang has turned down monetary solutions suggested by Japan.

The world public which champions international law has now stood behind the Korean victims in open defiance of the Japanese government, which has become a pariah state in the global community.

Another blow was delivered to Japan when a report was submitted to the U.N. commission at the forty-ninth session by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. The IFOR holds that the Korea-Japan Ulsa 5-Point Treaty of 1905 which gave Japan the mandate to rule the Korean Peninsula, was illegal under international law and had no binding power at all to mobilize Koreans as “comfort” women, forced laborers or soldiers.

The IFOR claims that the 1905 treaty was null and void because it was brought about by the blackmailing of the Korean representative, citing Article 51 of the Law of Treaties which provides that the expression of a state’s consent under a treaty which has been procured by the coercion of its representative through acts or threats directed against him shall be without legal effect.

The IFOR report indicates that U.N. bodies have taken up the issue of Japan’s past crimes against mankind on their own, going beyond limits of state-to-state disputes.

“The issues of forced Korean laborers and ‘comfort women’ are not the problem only between the assailants and the victims. If these issues are not properly solved, that would set a deleterious precedent in solving the disputes taking place in the world,” said Ms. Karen Parker.

Japan has successfully covered up its crimes against humanity for the past nearly 50 years by doling out some money to south Korea and other Asian countries, while promising a blind submission to the U.S. However, the pursuit of the truth

will never die out as exemplified by the behavior of the DPRK whose steps are now followed by the world public vis-a-vis Japan.

No more excuse will be accepted. There shall be the thorough revelation of the truth on the atrocities committed by the Japanese imperialist government against the victims in Asian countries. Tokyo shall be sincere in compliance with international law. Otherwise Japan will face severer protests at home and abroad and find herself a permanent odd man out.

The truth will prevail.

Major U.N. Meetings on Forced Laborers and "Comfort" Women

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights (Feb. - Mar. 1992, Geneva)

Feb. 17

Totsuka Etsuro from the International Educational Development raised a problem concerning Japan's wartime recruitment of "comfort women" and forced laborers at the U.N. Human Rights Commission for the first time. He stressed the need of the international body's active interference in the issue of grave human rights violation.

Feb. 19

A Japanese government representative said in exercising the right of reply that he is not in a position to discuss the compensation issue.

The U.N. Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery (May 1992, Geneva)

May 13

The U.N. Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery adopted a proposal to request U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to provide information which would shed light on the "comfort" women issue.

The U.N. Sub-Commission of the Human Rights Commission (Aug. 1992, Geneva)

Aug. 7

A DPRK government representative criticized the Japanese government for its

report published in July 1992 which suggested that the so-called Korean victims volunteered to be sexual slaves for money. He also urged the government to make an apology for the victims and make public all the related materials.

Aug. 10

A Japanese representative said, "Apart from such legal issues, the Government of Japan will consider, in deepest sincerity, how best we can embody our feelings towards those who underwent such pains and sufferings."

Aug. 14

The U.N. sub-commission adopted a resolution, calling for the concerned governments to submit information on "comfort" women to the U.N. Secretary General.

Aug. 18

Koreans in Japan and south Korea convened a joint NGO meeting to accuse Japan of its atrocities committed during the last war under the title "Slavery by Japan," drawing about 100 representatives of governments and NGO members.

Hwang Kum Ju, a former "comfort" woman now living in south Korea, testified her 4-year suffering as a sexual slave for the Japanese army in the north west of China (then called Manchukuo). Hong Sang Jin, secretary-general of the Fact-Finding Mission on Forced Korean Laborers in Japan disclosed hard evidence which he said proves that the Imperial Japan forcibly drafted Chinese women as "comfort women."

Aug. 21

Theo van Boven, Special Rapporteur to the sub-commission said he would investigate the issue of "comfort" women.

The (south) Korean Council for Women Drafted by Japan for Sexual Services and the World Council of Churches jointly accused the Japanese government of shirking its responsibility for the "comfort women" issue.

Aug. 25

The Fact-Finding Mission on Forced Korean Laborers and Liberation jointly demanded that Japan admit enslaving Koreans for sex and labour during World War II and give the survivors the utmost compensation possible.

Karen Parker, chief representative of the International Educational Development, denounced Japan for its claim that all the compensation issues were settled through bilateral and multilateral treaties with the countries concerned. She stressed that no government is allowed to abandon any right of individuals or its

right of diplomatic protection of individuals against the rule of JUS COGENS as international law.

The International Public Hearing Concerning Post War Compensation by Japan (Dec. 1992, Tokyo)

December 9,10

Six former “comfort” women from north and south Korea, China, the Netherlands, the Philippines and Taiwan participated in the International Public Hearing Concerning Japan’s Post War Compensation held in Tokyo to testify how they were beaten, tortured and raped by Japanese soldiers. Among the panel guests were Theo van Boven, special rapporteur of the U.N. sub-commission, and John Humphrey, the former first director of the U.N. Human Rights Division.

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights (Feb. - Mar. 1993, Geneva)

Feb.15

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation submitted a report to all the human rights bodies of the U.N. arguing that the treaty signed in 1905, namely the Ulsa 5-Point Treaty that gave Japan the power to rule the Korean Peninsula, was illegal under international law and had no legal authority to mobilize Koreans as “comfort” women, forced laborers or soldiers. The report was accepted by the commission as “NGO Document No.36.”

Feb.18

The Fact-Finding Mission on Forced Korean Laborers and Liberation jointly declared that the issue of “comfort” women is just a tip of an iceberg, putting at about 6 million the number of Koreans including women and children that had been drafted by Japan for forced labor and sexual abuse. They claimed that the treaties in the 1910s between Korea and Japan which gave the latter the authority to control the former, had been forged by Japan, and not a really concluded treaty in the true meaning of the word.

The World Council of Churches pointed out that a vast number of girls and women as young as 12 years old, had been made victims of sexual abuse by Japanese soldiers, and demanded reparations to be paid to the victims and their families and punishment of war criminals concerned.

A Japanese government representative replied to the questions raised by them that Japan is now seriously considering “how it might best convey its feeling of compassion to those who have long suffered,” repeating that Tokyo has “sincerely dealt with the issue of claims” through multilateral and bilateral peace treaties.

A south Korean representative immediately rebuffed Japan's reply saying that the most important matter to ease sufferings of victims is for Japan to reveal full facts which Japan has so far concealed.

Mar. 4

A DPRK representative urged the U.N. human rights commission to take immediate measures for the settlement of the issue of the "comfort" women and forced laborers, criticizing Japan's "insincere" attitude toward the issue.

Mar. 5

A Japanese representative argued that the U.N. is not an organ to solve problems which occurred before its formation, claiming that the special rapporteur of the sub-commission is not in a position to make recommendations on individual cases of claims to compensation.

Mar. 8

A DPRK representative refuted the claim, calling it a "very dangerous one." He said that Japan can not expect a bright future without settling its past crimes and atrocities.

Asia-Pacific NGO Conference on Human Rights (Mar. 1993, Bangkok)

Mar. 29

One hundred and ten nongovernmental organizations attending the Asia-Pacific NGO Conference on Human Rights issued a statement urging the United Nations to establish a permanent international criminal court to prosecute those responsible for allegedly forcing women into Japanese military brothels during the Pacific War.

Interview with Head of DPRK Delegation

The Choson Sinbo, a daily Korean-language news paper based in Tokyo, made an interview with Ri Sam Ro, head of the DPRK delegation to the DPRK-Japan negotiation talks for normalizing diplomatic relations right after its 7th round of talks which were held in Beijing on May 14 - 15, 1992.

Ri was named head of the DPRK negotiations to the talks in March, 1992 following the passing away of Chon In Chol, former head of the talks.

Question: Please tell us on the fruit of the negotiation talks this time.

Answer: During the talks both sides stated their opinions straightforwardly and confirmed the points of consent and confrontation between us, which both sides thought, were progress in the negotiation.

But the Japanese side did not change its stance on the key point of the talks, that is, Japan's settlement of the past and establishment of friendly relations between the two countries on the basis of a correct understanding of the past.

Q: The two sides differed on the interpretation of the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty. How about that?

A: Regarding the problem of the interpretation of the Korea-Japan Annexation Treaty, the core part of the settlement of Japan's past, the Japanese side did not change its view justifying its colonial rule over Korea.

They stressed that the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty was signed "legally" in 1910 between Japan and Korea at that time and put into effect validly.

Contrary to the Japanese side's opinion, our side asserted that the Japanese colonial rule over Korea began virtually when the "Ulsa (5-point) Treaty" was signed in 1905 between the two countries.

Through the conclusion of the Ulsa Treaty, Japan deprived Korea of all its sovereignty including the right of diplomacy, right of public security, and the right of financial affairs.

This treaty was not legal at all from the viewpoint of the legal system at that time. Because the King of Korea, who held the supreme power to sign a treaty at that time, was opposed to signing the treaty. The treaty also required the royal seal of the King. Therefore, it cannot be said to be a treaty because it lacked the signature and royal seal of the King. Japan forced Korean ministers to sign the treaty at the point of a bayonet, surrounding the royal palace of Korea with its

army.

Moreover, Japan forcibly ordered the then Korean army disbanded in 1907 and occupied Korea completely.

As the treaty was concluded in 1910 under these circumstances, we can never recognize it as legal.

Q: What do you think of the right of claim to possessions?

A: The Japanese government has claimed that the legality of the claim to possessions is based on the 1951 San Francisco Treaty and that by the treaty Korea was separated from Japan and became independent.

However, this treaty was beneficial and advantageous not to Korea but only to Japan. Our Republic does not recognize the San Francisco Treaty. Because the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was founded in September 9, 1948 and was recognized as a sovereign state internationally.

It is extremely unjust that Japan should hold that it recognized the independence of Korea according to the San Francisco Treaty signed three years after the founding of the DPRK and that it should demand the right of claim to property on the basis of the treaty.

Q: The Japanese government has tried to adjust DPRK-Japan relations according to the south Korea-Japan relations. What do you think of it?

A: The south Korea-Japan Treaty was concluded before Japan compensated Korea satisfactorily for a miserable past history between the two countries. The issue of Korean "comfort girls" is a typical one.

Trying to settle DPRK-Japan relations after the pattern of the south Korea-Japan Treaty, which unjustly settled past south Korea-Japan relations, is tantamount to repeating Japan's past wrongdoings.

Q: Tell us about the compensation issue.

A: For Japan to settle its past crimes, it should bear in mind the fact that Japan was a wrongdoer and Korea was a victim.

Japan has tried to settle the problem of compensation to Korean victims not as one of wrongdoer-victim relations but as one of creditor-debtor relations. This means that Japan, too, has the right to receive something from Korea in the settlement of property as well as Korea has the same right. No one can accept this theory.

At the talks this time, the Japanese side said that the compensation to Korean "comfort" girls can be discussed within the limits of property claims.

As compared with the past evasive remarks that the issue was under investigation, it can be said that there was progress in what the Japanese side stated on Korean "comfort" girls this time.

But the issue of "comfort" women must be solved as a question of compensation, not within the framework of property claims. Recruiting Koreans as

forced laborers or “comfort” girls is precisely a crime against humanity and must be dealt with as a matter of compensation from the viewpoint of international law.

Q: Could you tell us about the nuclear problem as well as about the future progress of the talks?

A: After the visit to our Republic, Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said in a press conference held in Beijing on May 16 that during his visit he realised that north Korea has used nuclear facilities for peaceful purposes. The nuclear inspection issue has been completely solved.

The Japanese side, however, set the matter of north-south mutual inspection as a “precondition” for normalizing diplomatic relations with the DPRK, claiming that nuclear doubts about the DPRK can be dispelled only by international inspections plus a north-south mutual inspection.

That claim by the Japanese side was exploded by what it had said in the past and it was an irresponsible remark aimed at laying a new obstacle to the talks.

The Japanese side repeated its “suspicion” and “concern” about the DPRK’s nuclear facilities so often that we made a motion that the 8th round of DPRK-Japan negotiation talks be held on Mt. Myohyang near the Nyongbyon Nuclear Research Center and that Nakahira Noboru, head of the Japanese negotiators, visit there himself to verify our nuclear activities.

To accelerate the talks so that we may proceed to the last stage of negotiation, the Japanese side should withdraw its “precondition” and should not insist on the framework of relations set by the south Korea-Japan Treaty.

2,689 Local Japanese Assemblies Call for Normalized Japan - DPRK Ties

In response to Japanese people's demand for early normalization of diplomatic relations with the DPRK, as many as 2,689 local assemblies of Japan adopted resolutions as of Apr. 30, 1993, urging the government to settle the wrongdoings committed in the past and establish diplomatic relations with it at an early date.

The resolutions were adopted by 42 prefectural assemblies, 601 cities, 1,611 towns and 435 villages which accounted for about 82.1 percent of the total local assemblies of Japan (3,275).

All local assemblies adopted resolutions in Gunma, Okayama, Fukushima, Aomori, Aichi, Gifu, Toyama, Kyoto, Yamaguchi, Tottori, Tokushima, Fukuoka, Oita, Miyazaki, Kanagawa, Ishikawa and Nara prefectures.

Japanese people's activities for an early normalization of Japan-DPRK diplomatic relations have developed gradually since the publication of the joint declaration of the three parties - the Workers' Party of Korea, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Social Democratic Party of Japan - on Sep. 28, 1990.

They have developed activities urging local assemblies to adopt resolutions or petitions for an early normalization of two countries' diplomatic relations and present them to the government. They have also organized broad-based prefectural councils for the purpose and submitted petitions to the Japanese government.

Japanese Figures Demand Early Establishment of Dip. Relations with DPRK

The governments of the DPRK and Japan have had negotiations to try to establish normal diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Up until now there has not been much progress in the negotiations toward bilateral relations, but many Japanese people in several fields wish an early establishment of bilateral relations with the DPRK.

Following are some of the remarks by the Japanese people supporting the establishment of normal relations with the DPRK.

Tanabe Makoto, former chairman of the largest opposition Social Democratic Party of Japan said:

It is very natural to have friendly relations with our neighbour which is geographically the closest and has influenced our culture since the ancient time.

The joint declaration of the three parties is based on the idea that Japan should make clear its past wrongdoings to Koreans and make a compensation for them.

I expect that Japan will normalize its diplomatic relationships early.

The Social Democratic Party of Japan will do its best to develop Japan's friendly relation with your country.

Ishii Hajime, chairman of Japan-DPRK Dietmen's League and a member of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, said:

I expect an early realization of the independent reunification of Korea and will do my best for the achievement of the national cause of Koreans.

I sincerely want to see the issue of Japan-Korea relationships solved in at least three years. We have caused great troubles to Koreans in Japan who have devoted themselves for a long time to the cause of their fatherland in a patriotic spirit.

When a bright future is seen in the relationship of the two countries after a long period of darkness, I will make up my mind once again to contribute to the national cause of the Korean people.

Ishida Koshiro, chairman of the Komeito, the No. 3 political party of Japan said:

The Komeito will fully support the joint declaration adopted by the Workers' Party of Korea, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party of Japan, and expect early normalization of the diplomatic ties between the two countries.

We also demand that Japan and Korea promote their friendly exchanges not only in the fields of sports, culture and art, but also in the fields of economy, industry and etc.

Ushikoshi Hironari, director of the Youth and Children's Department of the Central Headquarters of the Social Democratic Party of Japan said:

The publication of a joint declaration of the Social Democratic Party of Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party and the Workers' Party of Korea in 1990 made a breakthrough in the improvement of Japan-DPRK relations. This is, indeed, an epochal event in developing the relations between the two countries from "close yet away" to close and intimate ones.

Aoki Mikio, president of the Council of Young Men's Associations of Japan, said:

It will be a great contribution to peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and, furthermore, in Asia and the rest of the world. I hope that the two countries would overcome obstacles together and establish friendly relations at an early date.

Ogasawara Mitsuko, chairperson of the Japan-Korea Society for Music and Art Interchange said:

Japan and Korea are countries easily understandable to each other since Japanese culture was under the influence of Korean culture from old time. To deepen mutual understanding under the present situation in which the relations between Japan and Korea are improving will create favorable opportunities for establishing genuine friendly relations.