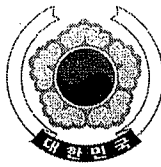


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Ambassador

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA
GENEVA

The 14th Session of the UPR Working Group
Review of Japan

<Check against delivery>

Geneva, 31 October, 2012

Statement of the Republic of Korea

Thank you, Madam President.

The Republic of Korea welcomes the recent efforts made by the Japanese Government to promote and protect the human rights of its people. Most importantly, we would like to commend the Japanese Government's commitment to strengthen its institutional framework for the advancement of women, including the adoption of the *Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality*. Encouraging its continued endeavors, we would like to offer the following comments and recommendations:

To begin with, my delegation note the concerns raised by the treaty bodies and relevant stakeholders that Japan has not taken sincere measures to address the issue of the so-called 'comfort women,' victims who were forced into sexual slavery for the Japanese Imperial Army during the Second World War. Although a number of the UN treaty bodies as well as the High Commissioner for Human Rights have recommended that the Japanese Government accept legal responsibility, provide redress to victims, and prosecute those responsible for such crimes, this case still remains unresolved. In this regard, we recommend that the Japanese Government recognize its legal responsibility and take appropriate measures acceptable to the victims, as recommended by the relevant international community.

Next, we take special note of the fact that Japan is giving serious consideration to the individual complaints procedures. Given its beneficial impact on the development of human rights standards, we would like to recommend that Japan recognize the competence of the treaty bodies to receive and examine complaints from individuals, by ratifying the relevant treaties, including the First Optional Protocol to the ICCPR and the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. We believe that this would help the Japanese Government to achieve its goal of the full realization of human rights for all.

Thank you. /END/