CHRONOLOGY

April 17, 1895	Taiwan became a colony of Japan when the Qing dynasty of China ceded Taiwan Province in the Treaty of Shimonoseki after the Japanese victory in the First Sino-Japanese War.	
November 17, 1905	Japan made Korea a protectorate, depriving it of diplomatic sovereignty, after the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.	
August 27, 1910	Japan formally annexed Korea, beginning its thirty-five-year colonial rule.	
March 1, 1919	The Korean independence movement against Japan's colonial rule began in Seoul, with demonstrations spreading to the entire country.	
September 18, 1931	Japan invaded Manchuria and established the puppet regime of Manchukuo.	
January 28, 1932	In what is called the Shanghai Incident or the First Shanghai Incident, the Japanese Army suddenly attacked Chinese civilians in the Shanghai Interna- tional Settlement. The Japanese Navy established the first "comfort stations" in Shanghai around this time.	
March 1932	The Shanghai Expeditionary Army established the first "comfort stations" for the army.	
July 1937	Japan began its all-out war against China. The number of "comfort women" in China rapidly increased, starting in late 1937.	
December 1937– January 1938	The Japanese Army committed the Nanjing Massacre (also known as the Rape of Nanjing), which included the mass killings of 100,000–300,000 Chinese soldiers and civilians, rapes of approximately 20,000 Chinese women, and looting and destruction of one-third of what was then the Chinese capital.	

	07
December 7, 1941	Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on the day and started the war against the United States. It also engaged in the war against Great Britain, the Netherlands, and their allies, which included the Japanese occupation of many Southeast Asian and Pacific countries. Japanese soldiers began to rape many women in occupied territories. In 1942, the Japanese Army established large numbers of "comfort stations" in these countries.
August 6 and 9, 1945	U.S. planes dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively. The Japanese emperor, Hirohito, surrendered on August 15, and Japan was occupied by U.S. forces. Korea and Taiwan became independent of Japan. However, immediately after Korea became independent, U.S. forces informally occupied South Korea, while Soviet forces occupied North Korea.
1946–1948	The Tokyo War Crimes Trial was held. However, the representatives of the United States and other Western powers did not include establishing the "comfort women system" (CWS) as one of the major crimes committed by the Japanese military, although much evidence about the system was submitted.
August 15, 1948	The Republic of Korea was established in South Korea, with Syngman Rhee as its first president.
September 1948	The Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in North Korea, under the protection of the Soviet Union.
June 25, 1950	The Korean War broke out when North Korean forces invaded South Korea. Large numbers of U.S. and United Nations forces were sent to South Korea, while many Chinese soldiers were sent to North Korea in this first war in the Cold War period.
September 8, 1951	The Treaty of San Francisco, a peace treaty between Japan and the Allied Powers, was signed to end hostilities and maintain peaceful relations. With this treaty, the U.S. occupation of Japan formally ended, and Koreans and Taiwanese living in Japan lost their Japanese citizenship.
July 27, 1953	The Korean War ended when the two sides signed

an armistice on July 27, 1953 in the demilitarized

zone, which left the Korean peninsula more or less permanently divided.

May 16, 1961

Chung-hee Park took power in South Korea through a military coup d'état. He ruled South Korea as the president (military dictator) between 1963 and 1979.

June 22, 1965

Japan and South Korea signed the Treaty on Basic Relations between the two countries. The treaty allowed the two countries to formally establish diplomatic and trade relations. But it also included the Japanese government's \$300 million grant and \$200 million loan to the Korean government for the property and manpower damages Japan inflicted to Korea during the colonization period.

July 1977

Pong-gi Pae, a resident of Okinawa, was identified as the first Korean "comfort woman" survivor when Fumiko Kawata published her biography. Pae became widely known in Korea when a Korean translation of Kawata's book was published in 1992.

December 1979

After President Chung-hee Park's assassination, Doo-hwan Chun, a general, took power in South Korea through a semi-coup d'état. He ruled South Korea with military dictatorship between 1980 and 1887.

December 1987

Chung-ok Yun came to have contact with Korean Church Women United (KCWU), which had already been engaged in the movement to stop *kisaeng kwankwang* for nearly two decades. Her contact with KCWU provided her with the institutional bases for active research on the *chongshindae* issue.

February 12-21, 1988

Chung-ok Yun and two other members of KCWU visited Hukuoka, Hokkaido, and Okinawa in Japan, following the footsteps of Korean "comfort women" (KCW).

April 1988

KCWU held an international conference on women and tourism in Seoul and Jeju Island. Significantly, Chung-ok Yun, the woman who took the leading role in the redress movement for "comfort women" victims (CWVs), presented a paper titled "Korean Comfort Women during World War II" at the conference.

January 1–24, 1990	The Hankyoreh Shinmun, a very progressive Korean daily, ran a series of four articles by Chung-ok Yun focusing on KCW. These articles publicized the "comfort women" issue (CWI) widely in Korea.		
June 6, 1990	During deliberations in Japan's House of Representatives Budget Committee, Motooka Shōji of the Japanese Socialist Party noted that the Japanese military had forcibly sent many Korean women to Japanese military brothels (JMBs) and asked the government to undertake a study of KCW. Shimizt Tsutao, director-general of the Employment Security Bureau in the Labor Ministry, responded that since private entrepreneurs had managed the military brothels, the Japanese government could not investigate them.		
September 10, 1990	The Korean Research Institute within KCWU was established.		
October 17, 1990	Thirty-seven Korean women's organizations sent an open letter to Japan's National Diet, protesting Shimizu's June 6 statement.		
November 6, 1990	Thirty-seven Korean women's organizations established Chongshindae Munje Daechaek Hyeopuihoe (the Association for the Solution of the <i>Chongshindae</i> Issue) to formally begin the redress movement. The organization used the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (Korean Council) for the English-speaking world.		
August 14, 1991	Hak-sun Kim, the first "comfort woman" who had emerged to tell her story, held a press conference in Seoul.		
January 8, 1992	The Korean Council held its first Wednesday demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul during a visit by Japan's prime minister, Miyazawa Kiichi.		
January 11, 1992	The Asahi Shimbun reported that Yoshiaki Yoshimi had discovered historical documents in the National Institute of Defense Studies that proved the Japanese military government had planned, established, and managed "comfort stations."		

August 4, 1993

Yohei Kōno, Japan's chief cabinet secretary, issued what became known as the Kōno Statement, admitting the Japanese military government's involvement in mobilizing "comfort women" against their will and establishing and managing "comfort stations," and expressing an apology.

August 23, 1993

In a speech to Japan's National Diet, Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro apologized to Asian countries for Japan's past aggression and colonial rule.

November 2, 1994

The International Commission of Jurists released a long report on the CWI titled *Comfort Women: An Unfinished Ordeal.* The report concluded that surviving victims of Japanese military sexual slavery (JMSS) have the right under international law to file personal compensation claims. It also urged the Japanese government to set up a forum where victims could make their claims and to submit the issue to an international tribunal or arbitration panel.

July 19, 1995

The Asian Women's Fund was established as a semi-public foundation to resolve the CWI. The foundation collected donations from Japanese citizens to pay each surviving "comfort woman" two million yen as what was called atonement money. The Japanese government financially supported the management of the fund and paid for Asian "comfort women's" health care. However, the Korean Council and other Asian advocacy organizations rejected the fund as an acceptable solution to the CWI.

August 15, 1995

On the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Asia-Pacific War, Prime Minister Murayama Tomiichi issued what became known as the Murayama Statement. In this statement he admitted that Japan's colonial rule and aggression had caused great damage and pains to people in many Asian countries and expressed remorse.

January 4, 1996

Radhika Coomaraswamy, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, presented her report on the CWS to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). She labeled the CWS "sexual slavery" and urged the Japanese government to take several measures to fulfill its legal responsibility to the victims.

May 6, 1998

Gay J. McDougall was appointed as Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery by the UNCHR to report on sexual violence against women, particularly in war zones. She submitted her final report, which focused on JMSS, in 1998. She used not only "sexual slavery" but also "rape camps" to refer to "comfort stations." In her recommendations she emphasized the prosecution of those Japanese who had been responsible for having established such camps, as well as the Japanese government's obligation to take other necessary measures.

December 8–12, 2000

Violence against Women in War Network—Japan (VAW W-NET Japan) and other Asian advocacy organizations held the Women's International War Crimes Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery (WIWCT) in Tokyo. The internationally known judges convicted Emperor Hirohito and nine other Japanese officials and officers of crimes against humanity. They also found the Japanese military government responsible for violating its treaty obligations and principles of customary international laws relating to slavery, human trafficking, rape, and forced labor.

January 30, 2001

NHK, the Japanese national broadcasting corporation, aired a documentary film of the proceedings of the WIWCT. But it shortened the proceedings by cutting the crucial segment of the verdict that found the emperor guilty and deleting interview footage, including testimony by two Japanese soldiers and two CWVs.

July 24, 2001

VAWW-NET Japan filed a lawsuit against NHK and its two affiliates for altering the content of its documentary presentation on the WIWCT. The Tokyo Lower Court awarded the plaintiff a partial victory in 2004. In 2005, Nagai Satoru, the program's director, revealed that a high-ranking NHK executive had been pressured to modify the script by senior governmental officials, including Shinzo Abe.

August 2005	The Women's Active Museum on War and Peace was established in Tokyo by VAWW-NET Japan as the first museum in Japan to memorialize Asian "comfort women" and educate people about JMSS.		
June 14, 2007	The Committee for Historical Facts, Japanese revisionist lawmakers, and other leaders published a full-page ad, titled "The Facts," in the <i>Washington Post</i> . The ad claimed that "comfort women" were not the forcibly mobilized victims of sexual slavery but prostitutes who had made a lot of money.		
July 30, 2007	The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution urging the Japanese government to "formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces' coercion of young women into sexual slavery."		
June 12, 2008	The Tokyo Supreme Court reversed the Higher Court's decision regarding the NHK's alteration of the documentary by emphasizing its right to revise the documentary.		
February 7, 2010	The 2010 Japan Nationwide Action for the Solution to the Comfort Women Issue was established.		
October 23, 2010	The first "comfort women" memorial in the United States was installed in Palisades Park, New Jersey.		
August 30, 2011	Responding to a petition filed by KCW in 2006, the Constitutional Court ruled that the Korean government's lack of effort to seek a resolution with the Japanese government on compensating survivors constituted an infringement on the basic human rights of the victims and a violation of the Constitution.		
September 25, 2011	The Violence against Women in War Research Action Center (VAWRAC) was inaugurated, carrying on the work of VAWW-NET Japan. VAWRAC seems to put more emphasis on taking social action than VAWW-NET Japan, although both organizations put emphasis on conducting research on CWI.		
December 14, 2011	The Korean Council held its thousandth Wednesday demonstration in front of the Japanese embassy		

in Seoul, in which approximately a thousand people participated. The council also unveiled the "comfort girl" peace statue (the first "comfort girl" statue [CGS] in Korea) in front of the embassy.

May 5, 2012

The Korean Council established the War and Women's Human Rights Museum in Seoul.

November 4, 2012

Members of the Committee for Historical Facts placed a full-page ad, denying that the CWS constituted sexual slavery, in the *Star-Ledger*, a local newspaper in Newark, New Jersey. The ad was titled "Yes, We Remember the Facts." It was a response to "Do You Remember?," an ad created by two Koreans that described the brutal experiences of 200,000 KCW, which had been printed in the *New York Times* and placed on a billboard in Times Square in New York City.

June 2, 2013

The U.N. Committee against Torture criticized Japan for its continuing official denial of facts and retraumatization of the victims by high-level national and local officials and politicians and for the government's rejection of past recommendations.

July 30, 2013

A CGS was installed in Glendale Central Park in Glendale, California, near Los Angeles, despite strong opposition by Japanese consulate officials and other Japanese neonationalists in Southern California.

February 22, 2014

Koichi Mera, the leader of Japanese neonationalist historical revisionists in Southern California, and other Japanese nationalists filed a lawsuit against the City of Glendale, asking the judge to order that the CGS in that city be removed. The lawsuit was dismissed in courts all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court because the activists had no ground for suing a city for installing a CGS for educational purposes. The neonationalists' court battles ended up only publicizing their untenable position on the CWI.

August 6-8, 2014

The Asahi Shimbun ran a series of articles that reexamined its past coverage of the CWI. Under strong pressure from Japanese neonationalists, it

retracted the articles it had published in the early 1990s on Seiji Yoshida's claim to have rounded up young Korean women on Jeju Island to send them to JMBs during the Asia-Pacific War. November 2014 Japanese diplomats demanded that McGraw Hill Higher Education revise or delete the section of a U.S. high school textbook it had published that mentioned "comfort women" because the text conflicted with the Japanese government's position. Of course, the publisher refused to revise the text, indicating that it supported the author's historical interpretation. January 29, 2015 Prime Minister Shinzo Abe severely criticized the United States for erroneously describing "comfort women" as being forced to work in IMBs. March 5, 2015 Twenty U.S. historians published a letter to the editor of Perspectives on History, criticizing the Japanese government's effort to suppress U.S. history textbooks. May 6, 2015 Nearly 190 Japanese studies scholars, primarily from U.S. universities, published an open letter expressing "our unity with the many courageous historians in Japan seeking an accurate and just history of World War II in Asia." May 25, 2015 In response to the May 6 open letter, sixteen associations of historians and educators in Japan (with about 6,900 members collectively) issued a statement demanding the end of the disinformation campaigns waged by the Abe administration and CWS deniers. December 28, 2015 The Japanese and Korean governments reached an agreement to resolve the CWI. The terms included the payment of two billion yen by the Japanese government to the Korean government for compensation to forty-six surviving KCW and their medical treatments, the Korean government's acceptance of the agreement as the final resolution to the CWI, and the promise of the Korean government not to use the term "sexual slavery" in international

> meetings and to relocate the CGS erected in front of the Japanese embassy to another location. It does not

include the Japanese government's acknowledgment of the CWS as sexual slavery. Thus, it included the government's apology to the victims, but it was not sincere because the government did not acknowledge its predecessor's crime of sexual slavery. Finally, neither government asked the Korean victims whether the agreement was acceptable to them or not.

June 2016

The administration of President Geun-hye Park established the Hwahae-Chiyu Jaedan (Reconciliation-Healing Foundation) with funds provided by the Japanese government, which were to be distributed to KCW as compensation and to provide medical services for them. But the Korean Council adamantly opposed the agreement, refusing to accept any services from the foundation. With much difficulty, the Korean government individually approached the forty-six surviving KCW and persuaded thirty-two of them to accept the compensation money (each received about \$850,000).

December 28, 2016

A year after the signing of the 2015 agreement between the Japanese and Korean governments to resolve the CWI, a young Korean nationalist group erected a CGS in front of the Japanese consulate in Busan. The consul general complained, and local government officials and police officers forcibly removed it. However, the pressure of many citizens' telephone and online complaints forced officials to put the CGS back the next day.

May 9, 2017

After the impeachment of President Geun-hye Park, Jae-in Moon, a former human rights lawyer, was elected president of Korea. His administration began in June.

June 9, 2017

The Korean Council and Korean civic organizations established the Foundation for Justice and Remembrance. It had two major goals: to put pressure on the Korean government to return the \$1 billion of consolation money to Japan and to express appreciation to KCW redress activists who had fought for women's human rights and dignity for many years.

November 25, 2017

The Foundation for Justice and Remembrance completed a three-month donation campaign and gave an equal share of the money to the eleven surviving KCW who had refused the consolation money provided by the Japanese government.

January 4, 2018

President Jae-in Moon visited the House of Sharing and invited eight KCW there to the Blue House (the Korean equivalent of the U.S. White House) so that he could apologize to them for the 2015 agreement that "conflicts with the principles of truth and justice in both the procedure and contents." Thus, he clearly indicated that he did not accept the agreement.

January 9, 2018

Angry about President Moon's rejection of the agreement and the establishment of the second CGS in front of another Japanese diplomatic building, Prime Minister Abe recalled the Japanese ambassador and consul general to Japan temporarily. He did not send the consul general back to Busan for more than three months.

June 17, 2019

The Korean Council and the Foundation for Justice and Remembrance were combined into a single organization, the Korean Council for Justice and Remembrance for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan.

July 2019

The Japanese government imposed a partial economic sanction against South Korea by restricting exports of chemicals essential to the country's semiconductor industry. Although the Japanese government emphasized that it was imposing the economic sanction for reasons of security, the Korean government, as well as many Englishlanguage media, believed that the Japanese government was using the economic sanction as a way to retaliate against the Korean government for supporting the effort of Korean victims of forced labor and sexual servitude during the colonization period to seek redress. Remember that the Japanese government had tried to conceal the crime of sexual slavery and other war crimes, mainly using diplomacy and economic power.

November 17, 2019

President Moon promised to close the Reconciliation-Healing Foundation, and it was closed on November 21. The Korean government tried to return the two billion yen in compensation funds to Japan, but Prime Minister Abe would not accept it, claiming that the 2015 agreement was a done deal.

Korean "Comfort Women"