



Wake Up! UNESCO **Wake Up! World** **Wake Up! Mankind**

We oppose Japan's bid for World Heritage status for its forced labor sites.

In its World Heritage bid,

- Specifying the period of its industrial legacy from 1850 to 1910
- Not the entire legacy
- "Shoka-son-juku", which has no relation to Japan's industrial legacy, is included

In his bid for UNESCO World Heritage listing, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to enshrine the incubator of Japanese militarism as a holy site, accelerating its shift toward right-wing nationalism.

Its bid for heritage status of the early industrial sites that are of no outstanding universal value and of no humanitarian sincerity is ineffective in principle because the sites do not comply with World Heritage principles. Their inclusion on the World Heritage List should be reversed.

Resolution "Condemnation of the Japanese Government's Actions for Listing Meiji Industrial Sites for World Heritage Status"

Text of the Resolution

The National Assembly of Korea,

Strongly condemning the Japanese government's submission of the list of 23 sites of Meiji Industrial Revolution in Kyushu-Yamaguchi and related areas to UNESCO World Heritage Center in January 2014, which includes seven facilities where conscripted Koreans were forced into labor, since this act can be the Japanese government's ignorance of the fact that these Koreans were forced into work in inhumane conditions at the facilities and its attempt of glossing over the history involving the sites as the heritage of industrial revolution,

Condemning, in recognition of these acts violating the original principle of World Heritage Convention of collective protection of the world heritage of outstanding universal value, Japan's bid that exacerbates the pain of Koreans by nominating the facilities bearing the traces of colonial rule and military aggression as the cultural heritage sites to publicize its history of industrial development,

Sternly warning that now is time for Japan to fully compensate the damage and fulfill its responsibility for its past military aggression instead of promoting and commemorating the heritage of industrial revolution, and the Japanese government under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe should make every effort as a member of the international community to take a step forward for the world peace,

1. **Notes** that the Japanese government's submission of the nomination of 23 sites including seven facilities, where Koreans were forced into labor, for listing as a World Heritage Site and its efforts made for World Heritage Committee is defined as diplomatic provocation that can have a significantly negative impact on the peace and stability on Northeast Asia and thus **strongly condemns** these acts;
2. **Strongly warns**, in recognition of the fact that a total of 57,900 Koreans were conscripted for forced labor at these seven facilities nominated for the listing on the UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Japanese government since its bid is regarded as an act of ridiculing those who were victimized in their agony by way of glossing over the history of its aggression into the neighboring country with the history of industrial revolution, and **urges** the Japanese government to sincerely reflect on and be responsible for its past first and foremost;

3. **Requests** that, with all due respect, the World Heritage Committee use caution in deciding the inscription of the facilities nominated by the Japanese government on the World Heritage list in accordance with the original principles of the World Heritage Convention of protection of the world heritage of outstanding universal value;
4. **Urges** the Korean government:
 - to take a strong and firm action against the Japanese government's anachronistic act of whitewashing its colonial rule by way of seeking its world heritage status
 - to condemn the Japanese government in honor of the resolution of the National Assembly that reflects public indignation of Korea
 - to take corrective measures to prevent recurrence of Japanese government's attempts to negate its history of aggression in a diplomatic way.

Reasons behind the Proposal

The Abe government's January 2014 bid to put 23 Meiji industrial sites that include 7 facilities where Koreans were forced into labor on the UNESCO world heritage list has drawn the ire of the Korean people and has created severe diplomatic ramifications in neighboring countries in East Asia.

In particular, Japan's pursuit of world heritage status for the sites is intended to glamorize its past aggressions as the foundation for its industrial development, in violation of the values of the World Heritage Convention. Furthermore, such a move is clearly an attempt to negate its past diplomatic efforts with East Asian neighbors and an action threatening the peace and stability of the international community.

This resolution is proposed in light of what has been described above to strongly condemn the Japanese government's attempt to add its industrial sites of forced labor to the UNESCO world heritage list; above all, call on the Japanese government to sincerely reflect on its past and take responsible actions; and to call on our government to exert all its diplomatic efforts to neutralize such provocative behavior of the Japanese government and communicate its commitment to the protection of world peace that is of universal value.

<Statement>

The Japanese government's submission of the list of sites of its Meiji Industrial Revolution to the UNESCO World Heritage Center is ineffective in principle.

On July 3, 2015, a final decision will be made at the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting as to whether to approve the Japanese government's bid for World Heritage status. As already known, the 23 industrial sites include seven facilities where conscripted people from occupied territories such as Korea, China, and the Philippines as well as Allied POWs were forced into labor during Japan's colonial rule and war of aggression. In particular, coal mines in Hashima earned the notorious nickname of "Hell Pits" because children were sent to work underground digging shafts for coal, one of which even reaches 1,000 meters below sea level. At a shipyard and an airport in Nagasaki alone, over 10,000 wartime Korean forced laborers were killed or injured, including those by the atomic bombing, and many survivors still suffer from health problems directly related to their labor.

According to a recent study conducted by South Korea's Prime Ministerial Commission on Inspection into Damages from Forced Mobilization during the Anti-Japanese Independence Movement Period and Assistance for Victims of Forced Mobilization Overseas, the Koreans conscripted into forced labor reached 7,827,355. The number is almost beyond imagination. Especially during the Pacific War, Japan conscripted men and women of all ages, resulting in uncountable casualties. However, the Japanese government and its munitions companies have turned a complete blind eye to their sufferings.

Despite the clarity of these particular historical facts, the Abe administration has been seeking to register these sites of forced labor as World Heritage under the pretext of promoting the legacy of its 19th century Industrial Revolution, glossing over its history of colonial rule and military aggression. In addition, it deliberately attempted to conceal its forced annexation of Korea and forced conscription during the Pacific War by way of specifying the period of its industrial legacy from 1850 to 1910 in its World Heritage bid. This attempt, however, backfired, as UNESCO has recommended it to include the whole period of its industrial legacy on the records. Furthermore, the early industrial facilities for which the Japanese government is seeking UNESCO listing include the Nagasaki shipyard facilities and other sites, which are still in operation. These facilities represent only the Japanese side of its legacy, failing to represent the legacy as a whole. Of more concern, Shoka Sonjuku, which has no relation to Japan's industrial

legacy, is included in its bid for heritage status. Shoka Sonjuku, a private school run by Yoshida Shoin, served as the cradle of Japanese militarists who advocated the aggressive doctrine of conquering Korea. Those who led the ruthless rule of the Chosun Governor Office during the Japanese colonial period, including the then Japanese Ambassador Miura Goro, Ito Hirobumi, Terauchi Masatake, and Hasegawa Yoshimichi, were all educated at the school. In his bid for UNESCO World Heritage listing, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe aims to enshrine the incubator of Japanese militarism as a holy site, accelerating its shift toward right-wing nationalism.

Given the Abe administration's moves to register only a certain part of its early industrial movement as a cultural heritage site, not the entire legacy, and to include the industrially unrelated Yoshida Shoin in its World Heritage bid, such actions are clearly just another step toward threatening peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Its bid for heritage status of the early industrial sites that are of no outstanding universal value and of no humanitarian sincerity is ineffective in principle because the sites do not comply with World Heritage principles. If such sites draw the ire of Korea, China, and other Asian countries and the concern of the international community, rather than its genuine appreciation and respect, their inclusion on the World Heritage List should be reversed.

In this line, we call on the Korean government to go beyond merely requesting the Japanese government to include its history of forced labor in its recent bid for the UNESCO World Heritage listing and to stay true to our fundamental stance of blocking the bid itself, as it is ineffective in principle.

To this end, we will appeal to the conscience of the international community and the civilizations of humanity and deter any further Japanese movement toward right-wing nationalism.

June 23, 2015

Cultural Assets International Return Agency (CAIRA)
the Civic Group Supporting Chosun Womens who had forced Labor
Cooperative for Victims of Japanese Imperialism
Lee Won-wook, Member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea