



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO)  
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS  
IN GENEVA

No: 145/POL-II/IX/2025

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honour to convey the response of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia (GoI) to the Joint Communication (Ref.: AL IDN 5/2025, dated 17 July 2025) concerning the alleged failure to ensure access to truth, justice, remedy, and reparations for survivors of the “comfort women” system under the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II.

The GoI reaffirms its strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, including the rights of women who are victims of violence, such as survivors of the ‘comfort women’ system, in line with Indonesia’s obligations under international human rights law.

The GoI recalls that compensation and reparations relating to this matter has been addressed within the bilateral framework with the Government of Japan, as codified in Indonesia’s Law No. 13 of 1958 on Peace and Compensation for War. It served as the legal basis for resolving residual post-war issues, including measures concerning survivors of the comfort women system.

During the period of 1997-2007, the two Governments cooperated to establish and manage 69 elderly-care institutions across 26 provinces in Indonesia, accessible to war victims, including survivors of ‘comfort women’ system. Reports indicated that the facilities were well-constructed, properly maintained, and fully utilized, while providing improved living conditions and better access to welfare and healthcare services for the residents.

#### **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Geneva

Cc:

Laura Nyirinkind, **Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls;**

Mary Lawlor, **Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders;**

Mama Fatima Singhateh, **Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children;**

Tomoya Obokata, **Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences;**

Alice Jill Edwards, **Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;**

Siobhán Mullally, **Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children;**

Bernard Duhaime, **Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence;**

Reem Alsalem, **Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences.**

Moreover, the Gol had also shown its openness to receiving complaints as well as willingness to provide assistance and facilitate reporting, including where concerns arise regarding possible budget misappropriation in the implementation of such cooperation. Further details on the foregoing measures taken by the Gol on this matter is provided in the enclosure to this note.

In light of the above, the Permanent Mission requests the Office's kind assistance to convey the response of the Gol, as attached, to the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-reccurence and Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 15 September 2025



## **Reply of the Government of Indonesia to the Joint Communication of the Special Procedures Mandate Holders Ref. AL IDN 5/2025 of 17 July 2025**

In response to the letter No. AL IDN 5/2025 dated July 17, 2025, please find below the information, explanations, and clarifications addressing the concerns raised regarding the allegations of the failure to ensure access to truth, justice, remedies, and reparations for survivors of the so-called 'comfort women' system, which was methodically established and controlled by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II in Indonesia:

### **A. Overview**

The Governments of Indonesia and Japan have reached an agreement to resolve issues stemming from the Imperial Japanese occupation of Indonesia through a peace agreement, which was later codified in Law No. 13/1958 concerning Peace and Compensation for War. This law serves as the foundation for Indonesia's continuous engagement with Japan in addressing residual and pertinent post-war matters, including reparations for victims of the 'comfort women' system.

The Government of Indonesia acknowledges several official apologies issued by the Japanese Government, particularly the 1994 statement from Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, which expressed profound remorse for the suffering experienced by nations under Japanese occupation, and the 1997 letter of apology from former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto addressed to the President of Indonesia.

These formal acknowledgments have laid the groundwork for deepening mutual understanding and enhancing bilateral cooperation between the two countries in addressing the humanitarian repercussions of the occupation, including reparations for victims of the 'comfort women' system.

In the context of these humanitarian consequences, particularly on reparations for 'comfort women', the Japanese government established the Asian Women's Fund (AWF) in 1995. This fund was supported by contributions from both the Japanese government and private citizens, aiming to provide assistance to affected countries, including Indonesia.

### **B. Efforts Taken by the Government of Indonesia**

In addressing the matter of reparations for victims of 'comfort women' system, the Government of Indonesia references Law No. 13 of 1958. The objective is to achieve best solutions for the victims while upholding the dignity of Japan and Indonesia .

Following the formal establishment, the AWF was committed to allocating 380 million Yen over ten years (1997 – 2007) to assist victims of 'comfort women' in Indonesia. Several discussions took place between the Government of Indonesia, represented by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Government of Japan, through the AWF, to determine the appropriate methods, mechanisms, and procedures for reparations and compensation distribution.

To ensure effective delivery of assistance, the Minister of Social Affairs highlighted several key principles: (i) the aid must be channelled exclusively through the Government of Indonesia, specifically the Ministry of Social Affairs, rather than through other entities or individuals; (ii) the management and use of the aid must be transparent; and (iii) the Government of Indonesia would greatly appreciate assistance being directed toward broader humanitarian objectives, particularly social welfare programs and women's health initiatives, including support for former 'comfort women'.

In 1997, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Social Affairs (representing the Government of Indonesia) and the AWF (representing the Government of Japan), focusing on social welfare services for the elderly. The MoU specified that these funds would be dedicated to social welfare initiatives, particularly for the construction and rehabilitation of 69 elderly care institutions (Panti Sosial Tresna Werdha or PSTW) across 26 provinces.

The management of these facilities was a collaborative effort between the government, including local authorities, and private organizations, aimed at enhancing nationwide access to social services. In addition to developing infrastructure, the AWF also contributed essential equipment, such as beds, wheelchairs, and other utilities to improve the quality of care for the elderly. These facilities were also open to victims of war, including women who were victims of the 'comfort women' system under the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II.

This approach was chosen to uphold national dignity, provide broader social benefits, and ensure that the aid would have a sustainable impact on public welfare.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the Ministry of Social Affairs established several coordinating teams that included various agencies, such as the Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and other relevant institutions to oversee the implementation of the MoU.

From 1998 until the conclusion of the program in 2007, representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, and the AWF conducted a series of visits to numerous locations, including West Java, Central Java, East Java, Sumatera, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Bali, and Papua. Reports from these inspections consistently indicated that the facilities were well-constructed, properly maintained, and fully utilized.

The program successfully enhanced the capacity of elderly care institutions, allowing them to accommodate more residents while providing improved living conditions and better access to welfare and healthcare services.

### **C. Complaint Mechanisms**

The Government of Indonesia guarantees all citizens the right to access to justice, which includes various mechanisms for filing human rights complaints and reports. It is important to highlight that Indonesia has an effective individual complaint mechanism through its National Human Rights Institutions, such as the National

Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), which operates as an independent national body, and the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), which specifically addresses complaints related to violence against women and girls.

The Ministry of Human Rights facilitates access to justice by offering a complaint channel through SimasHAM, a dedicated human rights communication service. Since 2020, there have been approximately 2,822 submissions of complaints made via the online platform SimasHAM and directly at complaint posts. Regarding the issue of 'comfort women', the Ministry of Human Rights has recorded no complaints in the past decade.

Additionally, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection operates SAPA 129, a reporting and complaint mechanism dedicated to addressing cases of violence against women and children, accessible through the 129 hotline and a mobile application. Since its implementation in 2021, SAPA 129 has not recorded any complaints related to the issue of 'comfort women'.

## **Reporting Cases**

In 2016, the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture received a complaint from the Board Leaders of Gerakan Rakyat Sadar Hukum Indonesia (GRASHI) concerning compensation and reparations for victims of the 'comfort women' system in Indonesia. In response to this complaint, the Ministry held several coordination meetings with relevant ministries and concluded that the issue had been resolved through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Social Affairs and the AWF. Additionally, the Coordinating Ministry encouraged the Ministry of Social Affairs to expand social services for older individuals, including former victims, and urged the Ministry of Health to ensure healthcare access for older persons, including Indonesian war survivors.

In the same year, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection also received a complaint from the Forum Persatuan Ex-Heiho Yugun Ianfu Indonesia (FORSATSI) regarding similar issues. This complaint was addressed in a meeting between FORSATSI representatives and the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, where it was reiterated that matters related to compensation and reparations had been resolved under the agreement between the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Japan, as outlined in the MoU. The Ministry also expressed its willingness to provide assistance and facilitate reporting if there were any indications of budget misappropriation related to the MoU. However, to date, there has been no further follow-up or reporting from FORSATSI regarding this issue.

## **Awareness Raising**

To enhance public awareness, the Government of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education, has incorporated the history of colonialism and the Japanese occupation into the national school curriculum for both elementary and secondary education. This curriculum emphasizes a factual and conceptual understanding of historical events, including the background of the Japanese occupation, significant events, early resistance movements, the path to independence, slavery, and the demographic, economic, social, and cultural impacts of the occupation.

The goal of the curriculum is to ensure that younger generations grasp the historical context of Indonesia's fight for independence, the effects of foreign occupation on society, and the significance of upholding human rights. By integrating these lessons into subjects like History and Social Studies, the government aims to cultivate national identity and preserve the collective memory of past injustices, including the experiences of victims during the war for independence.

#### **D. Concluding Note**

The issue of compensation and reparations for victims of the 'comfort women' system has been addressed through bilateral cooperation between the Governments of Indonesia and Japan. At the national level, Indonesia has ensured that reparations are provided in line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), emphasizing broader social benefits and ensuring that the assistance has a sustainable impact on public welfare.

As a State Party to eight international human rights instruments, particularly the ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, and CAT, Indonesia reaffirms its commitment to upholding human rights principles, including the recognition and protection of women who are victims of violence, such as survivors of the 'comfort women' system, through national laws, policies, and mechanisms. These commitments highlight Indonesia's ongoing efforts to promote justice, dignity, and access to adequate forms of support for survivors, in accordance with its international obligations.

In conclusion, the Government of Indonesia reiterates its commitment to constructive collaboration with all relevant stakeholders to protect and promote human rights, including to safeguard women from all forms of violence. This commitment is also demonstrated through its support of existing channels to individual complaints and comprehensive rehabilitation programs. The Government of Indonesia also values the continued dialogue and cooperation with relevant stakeholders on this issue.

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