

## The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

### Regarding the Decision by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea, Confirming the Existing Judgments on the Japanese Company (Statement by Foreign Minister KONO Taro) (October 30, 2018)



[https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e\\_002204.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press4e_002204.html)  
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1. Japan and the Republic of Korea have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea and other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (the “Agreement”), which is the core of these agreements, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the Republic of Korea 300 million USD in grants and extend loans up to 200 million USD (Article I), and that problems concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) as well as concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals are “settled completely and finally,” and no contention shall be made thereof (Article II). As such, the Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.
2. In spite of the above, today on October 30, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea decided to confirm the previously existing Korean judgments as final, which ordered Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corporation, inter alia, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs. This decision is extremely regrettable and totally unacceptable. This decision clearly violates Article II of the Agreement and inflicts unjustifiable damages and costs on the said Japanese company. Above all, the decision completely overthrows the legal foundation of the friendly and cooperative relationship that Japan and the Republic of Korea have developed since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965.
3. Japan once again conveys to the Republic of Korea its position as elaborated above, and strongly demands that the Republic of Korea take appropriate measures, including immediate actions to remedy such breach of international law.
4. Furthermore, if appropriate measures are not taken immediately, Japan will examine all possible options, including international adjudication, and take resolute actions accordingly from the standpoint of, inter alia, protecting the legitimate business activities by Japanese companies. As part of such effort, in order for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fully address this matter, today, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has established the Division for Issues Related to Claims between Japan and the Republic of Korea in the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau.

## Foreign Minister HAYASHI Yoshimasa's comment on the Government of the Republic of Korea's announcement regarding the issue of former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs) (March 6, 2023)



[https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page1e\\_000579.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page1e_000579.html)

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Today, the Government of the Republic of Korea made an announcement regarding the issue of former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs).

The Government of Japan is of the view that it is necessary to advance Japan-ROK relations further, based on the platform on which our friendly and cooperative bilateral relations have been built since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965, and that the issue of former civilian workers needs to be resolved to that end. Based on this recognition, the Government of Japan has been communicating closely with the ROK government since the inauguration of the YOON Suk Yeol administration. The Government of Japan values the measures announced today by the ROK government, as a move towards restoring Japan-ROK relations, which had been severely strained due to the ROK Supreme Court ruling in 2018, to a sound footing.

Japan and the ROK are important neighbors for one another and we should work together in dealing with various issues of the international community. Ever since the inauguration of the YOON administration,

the two governments have been in close contact with each other, including at the leaders' level. In light of the current strategic environment, the Government of Japan will enhance Japan-ROK and Japan-ROK-U.S. coordination, including in the area of security. Japan will also work in cooperation with the ROK in pursuit of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Taking this opportunity, the Government of Japan confirms that it upholds in its entirety the positions of the previous Cabinets on history, including the "Japan-ROK Joint Statement" issued in October 1998. The Government of Japan will continue to work closely with the ROK to further advance sound Japan-ROK relations, based on the platform on which the friendly and cooperative bilateral relations have been built since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965.

After today's announcement, the Government of Japan hopes to see a robust expansion of political, economic and cultural exchanges between our two countries, together with the implementation of the announced measures.

See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for other related materials.

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