



קאנאדער יידישער קאנגרעס ♦ הקונגרס היהודי הקנדי

## CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS CONGRÈS JUIF CANADIEN

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Rt. Hon Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Langevin Block  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

Sixty years after the end of the Second World War, there remain around the world individuals and groups whose suffering from the depredation of Nazism, fascism and imperialism continues. Indeed, their need for recognition, redress and apology still burns brightly even as the years have taken their toll. One such group is the women who were forced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army. Euphemistically referred to as "comfort women", their recollections of torture, humiliation and degradation are a painful reminder of the depths to which humans can sink in their treatment of others.

On March 15, 2007, MP Olivia Chow (NDP, Trinity-Spadina) tabled Motion 291 in the House of Commons which reads as follows:

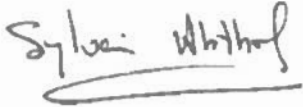
That, in the opinion of the House, the government should urge the Prime Minister and the Parliament of Japan to: (a) pass a resolution in the Diet to formally apologize to the women who were coerced into military sexual slavery during the Second World War and were euphemized as "comfort women" by the Japanese Imperial Army; and (b) provide just and honourable compensation to these victims.

Canadian Jewish Congress endorses this motion. Our community, more than most, understands the need for recognition of wrong-doing, for apology, for justice however overdue and for just compensation. It is only through such tangible measures that the victims of atrocity can achieve some measure of closure and peace. While the tragedy of the "Comfort Women" has been documented beyond dispute, the refusal of the Japanese Diet to formally acknowledge, and provide proper compensation for, the disreputable acts that were performed by the government of the day is an affront to the dignity of those who remain; an insult that grows no duller with the passing of the years.

We ask that when the House of Commons returns for a new session next month you support Motion 291 and the call for Japan to apologize and provide restitution so that the surviving “comfort women” may find greater dignity in their final years. Ultimately, of course, Tokyo is the address for such an appeal and we respectfully urge you to apply the principled and courageous approach that has marked Canada’s foreign policy under your leadership to a démarche with the Japanese on this important matter.

We thank you for your consideration of the above and hope that Canada will take appropriate steps to urge the government of Japan to accept its moral responsibilities and provide real and tangible “comfort” to these women.

Sincerely,



Sylvain Abitbol  
Co-President  
Canadian Jewish Congress



Rabbi Dr. Reuven Bulka  
Co-President  
Canadian Jewish Congress