

Testimony

Jaherang Mariwangan
Born in Indonesia, 1930–2020



Jaherang at the 15th Asian Solidarity Conference in Seoul, Korea 2018

“[The Japanese government] needs to take responsibility for treating me like an animal, and I demand an immediate apology and reparations for all the victims of their atrocious cruelty.”

Violent conflict shaped Jaherang’s life from almost the beginning. She was not yet a teenager, just twelve years old, when she was taken from her home in Indonesia to one of the Japanese soldiers’ “comfort stations.” These “comfort stations” were established and operated by the Japanese Imperial Army in their occupied territories from the 1930s through the end of WWII. Hundreds of thousands of women and girls from across Asia were forced into Japanese military sexual slavery during these years.

“I was forced to work during the day and then was gang-raped by Japanese soldiers at night.”

She had not yet begun menstruating. After the war ended, Jaherang returned home only to be met with rejection by her father, who blamed her for bringing disgrace on the family

for having served as a “comfort woman.”

“My mother told my angry father that it wasn’t my fault. The Japanese soldiers forced me into it.”

Although WWII ended, conflict continued in Indonesia, and Jaherang was caught up in it. From 1950 to 1965, Abdul Kahar Muzakkar led an Islamic movement against the Indonesian government. Jaherang married one of the guerilla soldiers fighting with Muzakkar. After giving birth to two children, Jaherang found herself alone, once again, when her husband left her for another woman. Jaherang later remarried and had four more children.

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Source: Korean Council, *The 15th Asian Solidarity Conference for the Issues of Military Sexual Slavery by Japan*, South Korea, 2018, p. 10.

