



To: Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan

### **Protest Against Prime Minister's Yasukuni War-Shrine Visit**

YWCA of Japan strongly protests against your visit to Yasukuni War-Shrine on December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013, the first anniversary of the formation of Abe Cabinet.

On the strength of ruling party members' number, strengthening national military system has aggressively been forced since you took seat of Prime Minister last year. To mention a few, legislations such as "National Security Council related laws" and "National Secrecy Law", abolition of the three principles that restrict arms export, accepting Japanese Self Defense Forces' supply of bullets to Korean military in PKO in South Sudan, and pressing Okinawa prefectural governor for an permission in order for Japan and the U.S. to install a new U.S. military base on the beach and in coral sea in Okinawa. These decisions were made without enough discussion at Diet or even while Diet was in recess, and without fulfilling accountability towards Japanese citizens. This move clearly violates the Japanese Constitution of the Article 9, the supreme law, and leads Japan a nation to be able to conduct Collective Self-Defense. Your visit to Yasukuni War-Shrine today is obvious to our eyes that it is one big step forward Japan's militarization.

Yasukuni Shrine reigned as the spiritual center for the aggression over Asia under military regime before 1945. The attitude ---such as beautifying the militarism and sacrifice of ones' life to State--- is still alive in the shrine today. Abe regime makes use of the shrine, like once the military regime had done in the past, and aims to incite negative nationalism among people and to control freedom of thoughts.

Prime Minister's visit to Yasukuni War-shrine is an act which affirms war and aggression including beautification of militarism. This is clearly violation of Japanese Constitution that states renunciation of war (art.9), people's freedom of faith and separation of government and religion (art.20, 89), and public servants' obligation to obey the Constitution (art. 99).

The YWCA of Japan in collaboration with YWCAs in Asia and in the world has been realizing young people's face-to-face exchange for decades in order for Asia to be a peace region. This effort is based upon our regret as war aggressors and as a faith organization that could not stop the State's military aggression during the War. YWCA of Japan, upholding the Japanese "Peace" Constitution, thinks that the government of Japan has responsibility to create peace in Asia and in the world without armament but based on trust. For this, the State's invariable regret for the military aggression has to be pledged. Creation of peace without armament is what the Constitution of Japan clearly states and this unique international cooperation is what Japan should initiate in the world.

Again, YWCA of Japan strongly protests against your Yasukuni War-shrine visit, and demands the Japanese government to face to the negative historical fact, admit them, and manage the State's administration and international relations based on trust.

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