



13th March 2020

Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister,
Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Government of Japan,

Satoko Fujitani, President
Yumiko Ozaki, General Secretary
YWCA of Japan

**Letter of Protest Against Discriminatory Measures Against the People' s Republic of China
and the Republic of Korea**

The Japanese Government, in its national headquarters meeting on 5th March, has decided on “new measures for the fundamental strengthening of border control” , including strengthened quarantine, limitation of passenger planes, and restrictions of visa of those entering Japan from the People' s Republic of China (hereafter “China”) and the Republic of Korea (hereafter “Korea”), and put it in effect on 9th March. (*)

Given that there are already many cases of confirmed infections inside Japan, there is no practical meaning in “border control” . Also, with the virus having spread in a large part of the world, “measures” targeting only China and Korea are irrational and discriminatory.

The YWCA of Japan, since the end of the Asia Pacific war, stands upon its deep regret for the totalitarianism that caused Japan to press on with the war and the aggressions committed by Japan, and has worked with people from different generations to promote learning from the bitter experience. Through this work, we are aware and deeply concerned that the “sense of discrimination” against the people of China and Korea, and the idea that Japanese people are “superior” has continuously been passed on within education and culture without being corrected. We realize that the measure in question is an organizational act by the country, based on such negative notions.

The measure calls for “2 week quarantine” , but the individual travelers are required to decide for themselves where to stay during this period, and the request to “refrain from using public transport” does not include any suggestions on how to move from the airport to the place of stay; in other words, no actual will to effectively prevent infection can be seen from this measure. Furthermore, the policy includes no financial support for the costs required to secure a place of stay.

This measure which is not only ineffective but also discriminatory, resulted in undermining the relationship with China and Korea, our neighbors. Japan needs to sincerely face the root

of the problem, both in the past and in the present, work with other countries around the world and tackle the current difficulty. Instead of discriminating against humans, it should work on appropriate testing and development of prevention and cure of COVID-19. Therefore, we urge the Government to apologize for and suspend the measures toward China and Korea.

* Border control has been expanded since, and as of 13th May 2020, Japan refuses entry from 87 countries, and 184 countries refuse entry from Japan.