**A message from the National YWCA of Korea**

**Dear friends**

South Korea currently is in the top 6 ranking country list with the most nuclear reactors in the world along with the highest density of nuclear power plants of any country with more than ten or more reactors. The country is under critically dangerous condition where there are 24 operable reactors running with a plan to construct 11 more reactors by 2029.

**A rising antinuclear tide among the public in the wake of the Fukushima accident in 2011**

In South Korea, before the Fukushima accident, a small number of environmental groups raised voices for abandoning nuclear power, but on June 2011, the Joint Action for Nuclear-free Society, a coalition of about 40 civic organizations was formed. A growing number of civic activists, lawyers, professors and religious leaders have participated in the movement to seek alternatives to the government’s plan to expand the nuclear capacity to meet an ever-increasing demand for electricity.

TheNational YWCA of Korea as one of the largest women's organization with the longest history in women's movement in Korea alsoadopted the ‘Anti-Nuclear Movement’ as the core movement of the organization in 2014. 52 regional member YWCA branches have been carrying out the national Anti-Nuke Campaign every Tuesday calling for the closure of the existing old nuclear power plants and the nullification of a plan to construct new reactors. Most importantly, the YWCA of Korea has collected 100,000 signatures for their petition for the shutdown of Kori unit 1 Nuclear Power Plant and it has already handed over to the Governor of the Busan city back in 2015.

The YWCA of Korea is a politically neutral organization and collecting the 100,000 signatures for the civil movement is known to be the first time in the history of Korean society and have brought the rapid expansion of the anti-nuclear movement in the country. Also YWCA Korea joined its effort to carry out the 'Goodbye Nuclear Power Plants campaign' which was first launched September 2016. This anti-nuclear campaign started by religious and civic groups of Korea. It asked society to support the use of renewable energy and to oppose the use of nuclear energy by signing the petition. About three million Korean people signed the petition. The collected signatures were sent to the new South Korean President Moon Jae-in term in May 2017.

As a result, the permanent shutdown of unit 1 of the Kori nuclear power plant- the country’s oldest operating reactor unit -has been finally approved by the South Korea’s nuclear safety regulator and to be taken offline on 19 June, 2017.

National YWCA of Korea not only network on a national level, but it has been working very closely partnering with the YWCA of Japan. Since 2013, along with the senior members, youth members of Korea and Japan have gathered multiple times to participate at the Korea-Japan YWCA Youth Conferences to discuss about the nuclear-free Japan, Korea and the world. The youth participants together held co-campaigning in front of the nuclear power plants of Korea and Japan. As a follow up agenda, Korea YWCA and Japan YWCA have proposed a co-resolution of ‘Equal Denial of Nuclear Energy/Weapons’ at the 2015 YWCA World Council and has written a joint statement at the 2016 the 9th Korea-Japan YWCA Conference for the solidarity of the two organization in the anti-nuclear movement

**YWCA of Korea postition**

Fully supporting the new president’s vow in leading South Korea towards a “nuclear-free era,” National YWCA of Korea will continue to work to 1) abolish nuclear-centered energy policy in Korea, 2) phase out the country’s dependence on nuclear power and 3) completely scrap construction plans for new nuclear reactors that are currently under way. Along with its 100,000 YWCA members nationwide, the committee for Anti-Nuclear Movement of National YWCA of Korea will continuously meet with the related government officials to advice on policy making. And just as the organization has worked closely with YWCA of Japan on this anti-nuclear campaign, YWCA of Korea will network closely with like-minded national and international organizations to support and advocate for the denuclearization policies of Korean Peninsula.