

Message from YWCA of Japan

74 years have passed since the end of the World War II/Asia Pacific War, which left devastating humanitarian damages around the world. In Japan, the war brought along terrible tragedies in Japan, including two atomic bombs, and a land war in Okinawa which killed a quarter of its residents.

During the same war, the Japanese army invaded other Asian countries, and committed cruel oppressions, especially on women and girls.

Since then, the YWCA of Japan has pledged to become a movement working for peace. This determination comes from the regret for the period leading up to and during the Asia Pacific War. Embroiled in the Japanese militarist policies and social pressure, the YWCA of Japan stopped interaction with the World YWCA movement, lost its characteristics as an international movement and distorted its core Christian based values. We strongly believe that we should never let such thing happen again.

The YWCA of Japan calls for a total elimination of nuclear weapons, and also advocates to protect the Japanese Constitution established in 1947, which includes the Article 9 which renounces war.

The YWCA of Japan holds the program “Pilgrimage to Hiroshima” every August, where participants from all different generations visit memorial sites and listen to the testimonies of survivors who experienced the bombing.

August is an important time to remember what happened in 1945, and to renew our commitment for peace. The YWCA of Japan believes that the role of young people as leaders, and our sisterhood transcending countries and borders are vital for the efforts for a world without nuclear weapons, without violence and oppressions, where every one person is respected and treasured.