

# On the Release of Tritiumcontaminated Water into the Ocean

10 June 2021

*Dear Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga,*

*Dear Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hiroshi Kajiyama*

We, Anglican Japan-Korea Cooperation Committee, with the Justice and Peace Committee of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai, protest the decision of the Japanese cabinet on the release of tritium-contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi (No.1) Nuclear Power Plant.

We support the 'Korea-Japan Church (NCCK-NCCJ) Joint Statement – Protest against the Decision of the Government Cabinet on the Release of Tritium-contaminated Water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the Ocean'.

To protect the "dignity of life" of all and the environment, we strongly urge you to withdraw the decision to release tritium-contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the ocean while listening to the voices of opposition in Japan and abroad, particularly with those involved in the fishing industry.

*The Rt. Rev. Haruhisa Iso,*

*Chairperson of the Japan-Korea Anglican Cooperation Committee (Japan)*

*The Rt. Rev. Dong-Shin Park,*

*Chairperson of the Korea-Japan Anglican Cooperation Committee (Korea)*

*The Rt Rev. Shouei Uehara,*

*Chairperson of the Justice and Peace Committee of the Nippon Sei Ko Kai*

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Joint statement of Korean-Japanese Church (NCCK-NCCJ)

April 29, 2021

## Withdraw the plan to discharge Fukushima radioactive contaminated water to the ocean.

*"Life and death, blessing and curse are laid before you, choose life for you and your descendants to live" (Deuteronomy 30:19).*

The Korean-Japanese Church, which has been striving to plant and nurture the seeds of justice, peace and life in the whole earth, has made it clear that the plan for discharging radioactive water announced by the Japanese government is an apparent criminal act that slowly kills the entire human race. We firmly ask them to withdraw.

On April 13, 2021, the 10th year after the Fukushima nuclear accident that alarmed all humankind, the Japanese government officially announced a plan to discharge radioactive water from the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant. Despite deep concern and opposition within their own country and neighboring countries, and the world, they unilaterally decided to release the sea.

The Japanese government says it will release the radioactively contaminated water by diluting it to a harmless level to the human body. However, the total amount of radioactive substances thrown into the sea remains unchanged. In addition, the case of the multinuclear species removal facility proposed by the Tokyo Electric Power Company as a purification facility has the problem of initial facility defects. Moreover, nuclides such as tritium and carbon-14 (C-14) cannot be purified. It has no choice but to be released as it is. Tritium and radioactive substances such as iodine 129, which have a half-life of 15.7 million years, remain in the tank storage water after purification of contaminated water at the Fukushima No.1 nuclear power plant. Tokyo Electric Power's assertion that radionuclides other than tritium are below the standard level is dishonest. The Japanese government also excuses that other countries' nuclear power plants are also releasing tritium, but this is a hazardous and irresponsible treatment. It is inappropriate to compare the discharge of contaminated water from a nuclear power plant that caused a particularly fatal accident. The toxic substances released in this way will spread worldwide via ocean currents, accumulate in marine ecosystems, and eventually pass to humans as they are, resulting in an unimaginable disaster for all humans, including women and children. In the end, the Japanese government's decision is nothing but to say that by pouring toxic substances into the sea without any countermeasures, humanity and the planet's ecosystem will be exposed to the dangers of contaminated, polluted water unprotected.

The disposal of nuclear waste is not just a matter of Fukushima. In Japan, scientists and citizens point out that Japan's largest spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in Rokkasho-mura (village), Aomori Prefecture, is trying

to release more than four times the amount of radioactive material into the ocean and atmosphere every year since 2022. It happens because there is no way to dispose of the enormous amount of nuclear waste that accumulates over time. According to the Rokkasho reprocessing plant discharge plan, 100% of radionuclides, including tritium, are released into the ocean and the atmosphere—an unacceptable behavior. Compared to 200 tons of tritium from the melted core of Units 1, 2, and 3 of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant, the amount of tritium released annually from the Rokkasho reprocessing plant is expected to reach 800 tons. In addition, surveys around the world's reprocessing plants have revealed that spills of plutonium and the like are inevitable. In the end, we cannot but doubt whether the decision to release Fukushima contaminated water is the procedure for the release of radionuclides at the Rokkasho reprocessing plant, which weighs 800 tons. The Nuclear Citizens' Committee, where scientists and engineers participate, has suggested that the government could treat by adding a storage tank to the site planned for expanding Units 7 and 8 or disposing of mortar solidification. We can never admit that they have decided to dispose of the sea, ignoring this.

The situation in Korea is no different. The Wolseong Nuclear Power Plant is trying to expand the spent nuclear fuel dry storage facility (from now on referred to as Maxtor) despite the residents' opposition when the spent nuclear fuel storage tank is saturated. In addition, the Korean government detected a large amount of tritium in the groundwater of the nuclear power plant site. Instead of informing the cause or effect on the surrounding environment, the KNP has in a hurry hide the truth. Since the construction of the Yeonggwang nuclear power plant has been constant problems due to insolvency, the concrete of the actual containment building has voids. In the Gyeongju radioactive waste treatment plant built amid numerous conflicts, it discharges contaminated groundwater to the sea without filtering. South Korean nuclear power plants are also not free from responsibility for the release of radioactive materials.

The remaining time until actual discharge after completing treatment facilities, such as dilution of contaminated water, is less than two years. The following two years should not be a time of preparation for release, but a time of determination to seek safety from nuclear and a just coexistence with the ecosystem. Now we must choose life for our descendants and us beyond greed and ignorance.

Therefore, we demand:

- The Japanese government should immediately withdraw the Fukushima contaminated water marine discharge plan and cooperate with neighboring countries and the international community to take an active step in preparing fundamental and safe deadly water treatment measures.
- The Korean Government and the Japanese government, and the international community should thoroughly investigate the current status and actual condition of Fukushima radioactive contamination. As well as the risk of food contamination and the impact on the human body when the contaminated water spills, and do its best to come up with fundamental safety measures.

Finally, it appeals to citizens of the world.

- No country can be free from the responsibility of disposing of nuclear waste as long as it operates a nuclear power plant. Do not try to adopt the easy method at a low cost, but let us cooperate and solidarity with all our strength in making a world safe from nuclear for the sustainable coexistence of humankind and the earth's ecosystem.

Both Korean and Japanese churches will do their best to create a safe planet from nuclear and radioactive water in solidarity with the world's churches and civil society worldwide.

*Pastor Seongje Kim,*

*Secretary-General of the National Christian Council in Japan.*

*Pastor Shingo Naito,*

*Chairperson of the Peace Nuclear Issues*

*Pastor Hong-Jeong Lee,*

*Secretary-General of the National Council of Churches in Korea.*

*Pastor Hong-Taek Ahn,*

*Chairperson of the Life Culture Committee*