

## **PRESS RELEASE: Call for Japan to stop investing in coal, keep the world to 1.5 degrees warming**

Civil society organisations (csos) from around the world will stage a protest action at the Bonn COP23 this Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> November to draw attention to Japan's investments in climate-destroying coal projects around the world. Coal is highly polluting and is incompatible with a 1.5 degree world, the aspirational climate target agreed to by country signatories to the Paris Accord in December 2015. The csos will be appealing to Japan be a responsible climate player and to divert funding to renewable energy for people and climate.

**When: Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> November, starting at 9:30am**

**Where: Outside of Bula COP Zone near the train station and inside the Bula zone near the entrance (parallel actions in Philippines and Indonesia)**

Japan is the only G7 country in which its utility companies want to build new coal plants both in country and abroad with the support of the government. In 2015 G7 countries agreed that the decarbonisation of the global economy should be completed by the end of this century; this requires deep cuts in CO2 emissions; and that it must include a transformation of their own energy sectors by 2050.

In spite of this, most Japanese companies featured on the *Global Coal Exit List*- a comprehensive database of companies investing in coal projects globally which German environmental organisation Urgewald is launching at the COP23 - are still on a coal expansion course. Out of 22 companies, 16 have coal power expansion plans. **Ayumi Fukakusa, Climate Change and Energy campaigner of Friends of the Earth Japan** believe that, "People around the world are already experiencing the terrible impacts of climate change. With historical responsibility for causing climate change, Japanese government rather continues to funding dirty energy projects. Our government can turn around its destructive course and shift investing in renewables which will deliver clean energy and help to stave off further impacts of climate change."

Japanese company, Marubeni stands out as one of the top companies developing coal projects around the world, with new coal plants in 9 Asian and African countries. Marubeni is the world's 26<sup>th</sup> largest coal plant developer. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation's (JBIC) decided financing of Marubeni for a 1000MW coal plant in West Java, Indonesia known as "Cirebon 2" is creating much controversy. The local community is concerned about the loss of livelihood and the health impact, and filed an administrative lawsuit against the local government in December 2016 to demand the cancelation of the environmental permit. And the verdict of the district administrative court declared the cancellation of the permit for Cirebon 2 on April 19, 2017, due to non-compliance with the local spatial planning. However, JBIC still seems poised to disburse the loan in the coming 1-2 weeks. Nur Hidayati from Indonesian social movement based organisation, WALHI says, "JBIC must not disburse any loans for Cirebon 2 before the final court decision of the coming new lawsuit by respecting the local people's rights, the judicial decision in the host country, and the JBIC's own environmental guidelines."

Fukakusa supports this assertion that JBIC must not disburse any loan for the Cirebon expansion coal power plant in Indonesia due to its illegality as well as the local community's concerns about the loss of livelihood and health impact. "The community is now ready to continuously fight for their future in a new lawsuit questioning about the validity of the new environment permit, which was issued after the old permit had been revoked by the earlier court decision in favor of the community. We

urge Japanese government to stop financing any coal power projects which destroy communities and environment and support people-centered sustainable energy projects. “

JBIC is not only funding companies that pushes for coal plant projects in Asia and Africa, it is also poised to fund coal mining projects. One project that Indonesian communities are also resisting a North Kalimantan coal mining project. Merah Johansyah, National Coordinator of JATAM (anti-mining alliance) of Indonesia raises that “Japan will not only burn coal and our climate, but will also ruin forests and watersheds which will put communities in Indonesia more vulnerable to climate change impacts.” Forests protection is being promoted not just carbon sinks, but more of adaptive measures from impacts of climate change like droughts and flash floods, among many others.

“Reclaim Power, a broad global collective of movements, is demanding governments to stop new dirty energy projects and end public financing of fossil fuels. This includes Japanese funding of coal projects in Asia such as Cirebon 2” said Lidy Nacpil, who is co-facilitator of the Reclaim Power initiative and coordinator of the Asian Peoples’ Movement on Debt and Development. “Funds need to be redirected away from dirty coal projects and instead used to support swift and just transition to democratic, pro-poor, renewable and clean energy systems for people and communities,” she added.

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