

## **Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC) Calls for the Decommissioning of Fukushima NPP**

During the international conference held by the Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC) in Chennai, India, to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Women's Resistance, the following urgent call was adopted by the Conference on March 30, 2011. The full text is reproduced below.



### **Decommission the Fukushima nuclear plants and nuclear plans all over the world**

The tragic events caused by the earthquakes and tsunami that hit the eastern part of Japan have raised international solidarity. The nuclear crisis at the Fukushima plants is apparently not under control and continues to be a radiation threat. We are concerned about the people who have been exposed to the radiation in engaging in the operations to suppress the reactors, as well as the people who may have to shoulder the consequences of radiation exposure.

Nuclear power has been promoted under the false assumption that it is a safe and clean alternative energy source to fossil fuel in the climate change talks. In Asia, various countries have expressed their interest in building nuclear plants, including Thailand, Indonesia, Burma, the Philippines and India. In India, the nuclear power plants were planned to be built in Jaitapur, which has been raising strong concerns and protest among the local people. The Philippines has built a nuclear power plant in Bataan.

This is an issue of central-peripheral, rural-urban disparity in development policy. Hazardous establishments such as nuclear power plants are built in rural areas or the outskirts of capital cities, putting the risks and expenses on the lives of people in those areas. The power generated by the nuclear plants is used to promote industrial and economic growth, the materialistic lifestyle of some people and the hegemonic power in the world, which has been maintained at the expense of people in rural areas.

Policy-making and employment in those industries are male-dominated, which widen the gaps in economic capacity and autonomy between women and men and strengthen the patriarchal system in society. Budget cuts in and privatization of social services, which have been pursued under the global economic framework, make women in rural areas vulnerable particularly in the crisis situations such as natural disasters, disease outbreaks and exposure to pollution. Women's reproductive health, particularly regarding pregnant women, fetuses and children, is the most affected, as experienced in Chernobyl. Communities who protest the nuclear plants at the local area are also vulnerable to attacks, displacement and dislocation.

We, the Asian Rural Women's Coalition (ARWC), gathering in Chennai to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day, express our support for the people in Japan and Jaitapur in protesting the nuclear plants. We urge the government of Japan to decommission all nuclear plants in Fukushima and across Japan. We urge the government of India to give up the plan to build the nuclear plants in Jaitapur. We urge the government of the Philippines to junk the efforts to revive the Bataan nuclear power plant. We urge all countries that have existing nuclear plants or have plans to operate to decommission and stop supporting these plans, as these would expose us to unnecessary risks and potentially horrendous consequences. The ARWC calls on governments to expand its radiation monitoring, immediately mobilize resources, and implement precautionary measures to prevent or at least mitigate the potential effects of radioactive contamination.

The ARWC, at the same time, rejects the equally destructive agro-fuel production and monocropping for energy, which have serious impacts on the local communities, health and the

environment. The ARWC reiterates the need to build sustainable, safe and appropriate sources of energy.

We call on the international community to promote less consumption of energy, particularly by the industrial countries.