

# Reminding the Bandung Conference

*On the 70th anniversary of the Bandung Conference, Japan AALA Solidarity Committee issued the following statement on March,14,2025*

Seventy years ago, in 1955, when our predecessors launched the Japan-Asia Solidarity Committee, they wrote out their founding declaration as follows, emphasizing the significance of the Bandung Conference held in the spring of that year.

The voices of the 1.4 billion peoples of Asia and Africa, who have been forced into servitude, hunger and cultural stagnation under colonial rule for so long, rang out loudly. They decided to break the yoke of colonialism and become masters of their own destiny. They decided that they would not become objects of trade or instruments of war between the colonial powers, but would build a strong peace on both continents and contribute to the peace of the whole world by developing resilient cultural activities on the basis of the inheritance of the great cultures of the past.

It was indeed a historic conference where the leaders of the AA countries, who had been under Western colonial rule for 500 years and outside the framework of international politics, pledged for the first time in history to become 'protagonists of history' and to create an international order of peace.

Today, in the face of a situation where the world peace order has been shaken to its foundations by the actions of great powers that prioritize power over law and justice, we would like to recall once again the call in the Final Communiqué of the Asia-Africa Conference that defined the Bandung Ten Principles.

One is the call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. It emphasized the urgent need for efforts to ban and abolish nuclear weapons in the context of the Cold War and the intensifying nuclear arms race between the US and the Soviet Union. The second was the establishment of the principle that people living

in any country and place, wherever they are on the planet, have the right to determine the nature and course of their own society, i.e. the right to national self-determination, as a fundamental premise for world peace. It raised high the flag of this right to national self-determination, which was not enshrined in the UN Charter, and called for support and solidarity with those who were still struggling against colonial rule, imperialism and racism.

Seventy years later, most countries, with a few exceptions, have now won their independence, but many are still suffering from the negative legacy of colonial rule, poverty, hunger and ethnic conflict. In addition, they are threatened by climate crises and pandemics that threaten the very survival of the planet. And now, in Asia, Africa and Latin America, there is a steadily growing acknowledgement that under this grave situation is another form of foreign domination and exploitation, abuse of power and violent intervention by the major powers, which undermine peace and social progress.

In this recognition, many countries and civil society, led by the Non-Aligned Movement, have united to bring the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons into force against the monopoly and threat to use nuclear weapons by some major powers. Regional communities such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which promotes voluntary regional cooperation without external intervention under the slogan 'We will not be agents of the major powers', have also developed.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is an aggression, in violation of the UN Charter, But the US and European aggression is also to be blamed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria in the name of 'defence of human rights and the US interference in Latin American and Caribbean countries under the Monroe Doctrine. It has become increasingly clear that racism and colonial imperialism of white supremacy lie behind these actions of 'Western' countries.

This perception has been confirmed by the support and bystander support of the US and Western countries for the Israeli genocide against Gaza. There is now a growing acknowledgement among leaders in Asia, Africa and Latin America who see the Gaza genocide as an extension of their countries' colonial past, re-evaluating their own history and demanding responsibility

for former colonial rule. The BRICS 10 countries, in which many non-aligned countries participate, continue to expand as a counterbalance to Western domination, and this is also a sign of this trend.

In its founding declaration, then Japan AA stated that the Japan before the war 'failed to listen to the voice of the great historical trend' in awakening Asia and thus hurt other countries and itself', and on serious reflection it expressed its determination to 'join hands firmly with our brothers in Asia and Africa' and 'contribute to the establishment of world peace'. Seventy years later, Japan is still suffering from colonialist discrimination with many US military bases in Okinawa in spite of its return to Japan , and is under pressure from new war preparations and military spending under an autocratic government that is solely following the US.

At this juncture, we would like to renew our determination to struggle for a new Japan of non-nuclear, non-aligned and neutral, in solidarity with the movements for peace and progress in Asia, Africa and Latin America, which now overlap with the Global South increasingly getting powerful economically and politically as well.

We are calling for ;

**Immediate ceasefire in the war in Ukraine**, withdrawal of Russian troops and peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Raise the banner of independence and respect for sovereignty and **support the struggles in Palestine, Cuba** and other countries.

**Aim for the abolition of nuclear weapons**, promote ratification of the Nuclear Weapons Convention and call on the Japanese Government to participate as an observer in the Conference of the Parties.

Learn from the regional cooperation of ASEAN, which aims for independence and neutrality, and **create a community of peace in East Asia**.

**Promote solidarity with the Non-Aligned Movement** as Japan's only observer organization at the Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. (END)