

## **Civil society calls on Japan, Korea, Taiwan's transnational corporations and governments to urgently take action and adopt BHR legislation to end corporate abuses and achieve sustainability for future generations**

Human rights and sustainability are under pressing threat. Devastating human rights, environmental and biodiversity consequences arising from the triple planetary crisis—climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution—are upon us. This is compounded by the shrinking civic space in authoritarian states and intensified armed conflicts around the world such as the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the Israeli military operation against Gaza.

Corporations, with their ever-expanding economic and political influences, have long been one of the key actors causing and contributing to these crises, and they must now play an equally instrumental role to address and solve these burning issues.

Corporations from Japan, South Korea and Taiwan play important roles in global supply chains and bear the responsibility to respect human rights and the environment throughout their operations. However, corporations from Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have failed to implement their responsibility by outsourcing human rights and environmental risks in their supply chains. Transnational corporations cause, contribute to and are directly linked to human rights violations and environmental destruction by their operation in host countries but the rights holders are left without any remedy.

**We, the undersigned organisations and trade unions, urge corporations from Japan, South and Taiwan to prevent and address human rights and environmental risks in their supply chains, especially occurring transnationally. We also urge the governments and lawmakers of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan to adopt necessary laws and policies and to hold corporations accountable for their transnational human rights violations and environmental destruction in their home countries. Meanwhile, it is imperative to ensure access to remedies for rights holders in host countries, and decision makers in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan need to take such measures.**

The only way for corporations and governments to survive in times of crises is to put people and the planet first rather than profit. We urge corporations and the governments from Japan, South Korea and Taiwan to fulfil their responsibility as leaders in Asia by respecting human rights and the environment throughout supply chains.

**We call on our governments and lawmakers to seize this opportunity by urgently adopting a mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence (mHREDD) law that is feasible and effective. Governments and lawmakers must also consider other BHR-related measures that are complementary and ensure the implementation of human rights and environmental due diligence, such as by incorporating human rights and sustainability provisions in trade and investment agreements, utilising the strength of public procurements, etc.**

The time to act is now. We have already witnessed countless environmental and human rights abuses relating to business activities, and this suffering continues to this day. To stop the suffering and to realise human rights for all and achieve sustainability for generations to come, we must act NOW!

### **[Recommendations]**

To transnational companies,

We call on transnational companies to respect human rights, to implement HREDD based on UNGPs and to advocate for the mainstreaming of mHREDD, utilising their influence to protect victims of human rights abuses and to contribute to the establishment of a level playing field.

To the governments of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan,

Once again, we call on the governments and lawmakers of Japan, South Korea and Taiwan to urgently enact effective mHREDD legislation as well as other measures that ensure the implementation of human rights and environmental due diligence.

### **[List of signatory organisations]**

Taiwan Transnational Corporations Watch (TTNC Watch)

Environmental Rights Foundation

Taiwan Association for Human Rights

Environmental Jurists Association

Covenants Watch

Korea Transnational Corporations Watch (KTNC Watch)

Chang Fo-chuan Center for the Study of Human Rights

Human Rights Program, Soochow University

Taiwan Labor Front

Human Rights Now

Youth Labor Union 95

Taiwan Laborers Association

Clean Clothes Campaign East Asia Coalition