



청년기후긴급행동(Youth Climate Emergency Action)

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Minister Tran Tuan Anh (Ministry of Industry and Trade)

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A Request to Halt and Reconsider the Construction of Vung Ang 2 Coal Power Plants

Dear Minister Tran Tuan Anh,

Hello, we are the youth from South Korea representing Youth Climate Emergency Action(YCEA). YCEA is a non-violent direct action group fighting against the threat of climate change that could jeopardize the survival of humankind. We advocate for climate justice by demanding stricter regulations on GHG emission from governments and companies in order to safeguard the land of all people.

In 2021, Vung Ang 2 coal power plants will be constructed in Hà Tĩnh, Vietnam. Korea's many public companies and private corporations—KEPCO, Samsung C&T, Doosan Heavy Industries, and The Export-Import Bank of Korea—are involved in the project. YCEA has been protesting against their decision since last year, but they are unwilling to change their decision claiming that “unilaterally pulling out from the Vung Ang 2 project will hurt the trust between the two countries.” KEPCO and Samsung C&T are receiving immense criticism for declaring to go fossil-free but still maintaining their coal power business in foreign countries. We are asking Minister Tran Tuan Anh of the Ministry of Industry and Trade to halt and reconsider the construction of Vung Ang 2.

First of all, fossil fuel accelerates and worsens climate change. With the construction of Vung Ang 2, it is expected that at least 180 million tons of GHG during its 25 years of operation. This is about 15 times more than the GHG that Korean government promised to reduce (12.3 million ton) through their Green New Deal initiative. Doosan Heavy Industries claims that using Ultra-Supercritical(USC) technology will help reduce the amount of GHG emitted, but this is still more than twice compared to that of LNG plants. Even with the most advanced technological innovations, there is no such thing as an “eco-friendly coal plant.”

Secondly, the construction of coal plants will destroy the homes and livelihoods of the people around them. The pollutants emitted from the plants contaminate the water and air in the region, making people fall ill. The severity of the destruction could be understood as grave as an ecocide, and therefore Vietnam's criminal law article no.278—the destruction of the natural environment is a crime against human rights in both wartime and otherwise—could be applied here. Furthermore, according to Vietnam's law of environmental protection, before constructing large scale infrastructure such as a coal

plant, the project needs to be consulted with the local residents. However, Vietnam's NGO "GreenID" has argued that the companies in charge of the Vung Ang 2 project omitted this step and invited the residents only as a formality, without properly interrogating the environmental and public health impact of the power plants.

Lastly, fossil fuel infrastructure will soon become stranded assets. As the effort to mitigate the climate crisis spreads across the globe, the fossil fuel industry's market competitiveness continues to diminish. An international think tank "Carbon Tracker" predicted that Vietnam's cost of production for renewable energy would be lower than that of coal power. Vung Ang 2, expected to complete after 5 years, will not only emit massive amounts of GHG, but also bring a significant risk for both Vietnam and Korean economy.

2021 is also a year where the Paris Agreement takes effect. In order to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5°C, humanity needs to reduce its GHG emissions by more than half by 2030. We are aware that as part of Paris Agreement's participating agent, Vietnam is making various efforts to rely less on coal and broaden its renewable infrastructure. In February 2020, Vietnam's CPV announced a "Resolution 55," saying that the country will increase its renewable and LNG production while reducing coal power plants. Bin Thuan province said they will no longer approve additional coal plants, and Ha Tinh's regional government released a detailed plan for Resolution 55 and said they will consider a plan to transition the currently planned coal plants into LNG plants.

Asia is home to 4.6 billion people, consisting more than 58% of the world population. Asia is simultaneously the most vulnerable continent for climate change, and a place with the most investment on coal power plants. This is a home to all of us. In May 2021, Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals (P4G) will be held in South Korea, in which Vietnam is also participating. Do we really need to continue building harmful and destructive coal plants just on the basis of "the unbreakable trust between the two countries?" With the halt of the Vung Ang 2 coal power plant, we hope the two countries can make the transition to a more peaceful and prosperous Asia in fight against the threat of climate change.

Hoping for the peace and the green transition of Asia,

Youth Emergency Climate Action

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