

Kyoto People's Forum ended successfully

Wednesday 9 May 2007, by [AKIMOTO Yoko](#) (Date first published: 7 May 2007).

There were some 300 participants at the plenary session, 400 at workshops and seminars, 140 at demonstration, which blessedly wiped out our initial uncertainty about low attendance. Persons at different age, from different groups such as NGOs, civic groups, social movements, trade unions, students' groups, residents' groups, or with different interest converged on the People's Forum held locally in a small and ancient town Kyoto. I can speak with assurance that this is "diversity", and I can also say that all of participants in the Forum found and recognized that ADB had a 40 years' history of destruction, abuse, hypocrisy and indebtedness, as our statement said.

There might have been some or maybe more than half of Japanese participants surprised at the fact - 40 years of hypocrisy- on ADB presented by foreign delegates. However, I heard in the lobby at the university youngsters talking about the previous day's demonstration "Hey! Can you imagine? I joined the demonstration for the first time. We demonstrators marched along a Shijo street, saying Down Down ADB or Get off ADB".

Certainly, the Kyoto People's Forum has created something significant in the dormant society which may have a spillover effect on other social movements. Organizers never enforced participants to understand how haphazard ADB projects were. They just presented what was presented by participants as it was. However, participants seem to have grasped a sense of justice through exchange of opinions or discussion.

At the workshop of Debt cancellation, a student insisted that all debts were not illegitimate and some were justified, and asked JubileeSouth for comment about his opinion. Lidy of JS politely objected to it, adding that JS therefore asked for audit of all debts.

In addition, alternative fund was discussed in the workshop. ATTAC Japan presented a platform on World Public Finance designed to restore democracy, redistribute wealth, democratize financial market, create a fair flow of money and change neoliberal global financial system for social justice and global solidarity.

The Forum was sort of a place for learning, particularly to Japanese participants. They understood the reality on ADB projects promoted by the Japanese government using money of tax payers. What is required of them now is to create an action immediately to stop ADB projects for solidarity with people in other Asian countries.

For more info, please see the websites:

<http://www.focusweb.org/adb-40-years-of-debt-poverty-and-ecological-plunder.html?Itemid=1>

On ESSF website: [ADB: 40 years of debt, poverty and ecological plunder](#)

<http://www.focusweb.org/kyoto-peoples-forum-challenges-adb.html?Itemid=1>

On ESSF website: [Kyoto People's Forum Challenges ADB](#)

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