

30th Human Rights Council



Human Rights Now

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Clustered ID with: SR on hazardous wastes and SR on water and sanitation

Speaker: Ms. Vi Hong Tran

The human rights situation of persons affected by the Fukushima nuclear disaster

Thank you Mr./Ms. President

Human Rights Now, a Tokyo-based international NGO, expresses concern over the health of people affected by the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident. The Japanese government continues to ignore recommendations made by Mr. Anand Grover and the Human Rights Committee to follow international human rights standards, including a 1 mSv/year exposure-limit for evacuations.

The government instead based its evacuation zones on a 20 mSv/year standard, so that many persons have lived in highly contaminated areas since 2011, and evacuees are now forced to return to contaminated former-evacuation areas re-opened by that standard, most recently Naraha on September 5th, the first fully-evacuated city to be undesignated. Because TEPCO will soon end compensation payments, most former residents have no choice but to return. Further, the government made a Cabinet decision this June to un-designate all evacuation areas by March 2017 except for those over a 50 mSv/year limit without any sufficient consultation with the affected communities.

The government has similarly discounted health consequences. A recent medical study confirmed that the sharp rise in pediatric typhoid cancer, which is several tens of times larger than pre-accident levels, was not a “screening effect” or “over-diagnosis”, which the government has used to deny a link to radiation exposure, giving it cover to shortchange health monitoring.

Meanwhile, highly contaminated water at the reactor site continues to risk contaminating ground and sea water, and 40% of residential houses with planned decontamination projects remain un-decontaminated.

Throughout, the government continues to have deficiencies with public communication of risk, information releases, and a lack of public consultation and participation in decision-making.

We request the Human Rights Council to act immediately on this issue and ask all relevant special rapporteurs to revisit Japan to investigate current violations of human rights. We also urge the Japanese government to reform its relevant policies in accordance with recommendations made by UN human rights bodies.

Thank you.