

# Human Rights Now



**Oral statement on General Debate under agenda item 4  
UN Human Rights Council 22<sup>nd</sup> Session,  
Geneva, 25 February-22 March 2013  
Speaker: Ms Kazuko Ito**

## **An urgent call to investigate past and on-going human rights crisis of people affected by the war on Iraq**

Thank you President,

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Iraq War. Grave human rights violations against international law have been reported during and after Iraq war.

However, most of the alleged violations have not been properly investigated in domestic and international levels, nor brought to justice. Victims are still suffering physical harms without any reparations.

For instance, the US attacks on Fallujah in 2004 were reported to have included direct attacks against civilians which caused significant deaths. It has been reported that white phosphorous weapons and depleted uranium were used in civilian areas without any preventive measures.

Human Rights Now<sup>1</sup> is particularly concerned about the ongoing health risk of Iraqis children caused by toxic wastes from the armed conflict. The data of Fallujah General Hospital shows that around 15% of babies of all births in Fallujah since 2003 have congenital birth defect.

This year, Human Rights Now conducted investigation in Fallujah and documented serious birth defects. Without sufficient disclosure of information related to toxic weapons used during the conflict, the cause of problem has not yet been identified.

We urge the US and UK governments to investigate all grave human rights violations during the war and occupation. We also call on UN to conduct independent investigations of all grave human rights violations since the war to ensure justice, accountability and reparation for all victims.

In order to prevent further victimization of children in Iraq, we request relevant UN special rapporteurs to urgently investigate the situation of the rights to health and life of children, in particular, epidemic of congenital birth defects in Iraq.

Thank you

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<sup>1</sup> International human rights NGO based in Tokyo with ECOSOC special consultative status. <http://www.hrn.or.jp/eng>