

Human Rights Now



Oral statement on agenda item 6 UPR session on Japan

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Speaker: Ms Kazuko Ito

Thank you Mr. President

Human Rights Now together with the affected people around Fukushima and evacuees, welcomes the report of the UN special rapporteur on the rights to health of people affected by the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Due to the accident in Fukushima, huge amount of radioactive materials were released, which cause significant health risk to the affected people, especially pregnant women, children and young people.

Many people in Fukushima still live in highly contaminated areas without financial support for relocation since the government limits the evacuation zones based on a 20 millisieverts per year exposure standard, which is indeed 20 times greater than the international standard. Moreover, the government disseminates the idea that “low level radiation under 100mSv causes no harm” and all policies are formulated under such belief without participation of citizens. As the special rapporteur precisely analyzed, the health monitoring system is very limited and poor. Children are exposed radiation without any protective measures.

In this regard, we highly appreciate that the special rapporteur clearly recommends the government to “formulate a national plan on evacuation zones and dose limits of radiation based on human rights and reduce the radiation dose to less than 1mSv/year”. Based on this clear and decisive recommendation, we urge the government to seriously review safety standard of radiation, and ensure people’s rights to live in safe environment, less than 1mSv per year.

We support the special rapporteur’s recommendation on health monitoring. As he stated, the government should provide comprehensive health check for all affected people and plant workers, and expand “check-ups for all possible health effects, including urine and blood tests”.

Mr. President,

The Special Rapporteur urges the government to “provide funding for relocation, housing, employment, education and other essential support needed by those who chose to evacuate, stay or return to any area where radiation exceeds 1mSv/year.” That is very important and reasonable policy in order to protect people’s rights to health. We urge the government to immediately implement this recommendation.

Two years has passed since the disaster, but so far, entire measure taken by the government is extremely insufficient and far behind policy after the Chernobyl. We believe that it is the time for the Japanese government to change entire policy to the right direction, and implement the recommendations made by the rapporteur immediately. It is the only way to prevent serious health consequences for children, young people and future generation, Thank you Mr. President.

