



Human Rights Now

Human Rights Now

4F Suzuki Bldg., 335 Yamabukicho,
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162-0801 JAPAN

Tel : +81-3-6228-1528

Email: info@hrn.or.jp

41th Human Rights Council Session
Item 3: Cluster ID with freedom of expression

25 June 2019

Speaker: Karo Okandeji

Thank you, Mr President.

Human Rights Now welcomes the follow-up report of UN Special Rapporteur David Kaye on the freedom of expression in Japan.

The report highlights the failure of the Japanese government to implement the recommendations from his 2017 report, even as recent developments signal further deterioration of Japan's media freedom.

We reiterate this concern. The government has not taken any step to revise Article 4 of the Broadcast Act or created an independent broadcast regulator as recommended, inviting continued harassment of broadcasters deemed not "politically fair" by a non-independent ministry.

The Specially Designated Secrets Act has also not been revised as recommended, allowing "secrets" to continue to be defined too broadly, which seriously deters rights of access to information

The Special Rapporteur's recommendations regarding the press club system have also not been addressed. Instead, the government uses the press club to harass and silence journalists who challenge the government's narrative. Tokyo Shimbun reporter Isoko Mochizuki has been the target of such harassment. The government official serving as the chair of the press club of the Chief Cabinet Secretary frequently intervenes in her questioning to prevent her activities as a watchdog. The government has also sent a series of intimidating warnings to media companies pressuring journalists, including Ms. Mochizuki.

Further, the government has confiscated the passport of investigative journalists, restricting their ability to travel and conduct investigations.

Mr. President, Mr. Kaye, the situation of media freedom in Japan is seriously threatened by acts of the government.

We strongly urge the Japanese government to take serious consideration of the recommendations made by UN special rapporteurs and end the pressure, intimidation and harassment of journalists and threats to media freedom.

Thank you.