

Scientific and Citizen Forum on Radioprotection From Chernobyl to Fukushima

May 11-12-13, 2012 – Geneva
Organised by IndependentWHO

Why organize such a forum?

For more than half a century, **the health consequences** of nuclear disasters, such as Chernobyl and Fukushima, and of nuclear activities in general, have been hidden from the public. A high-level international cover-up, involving governments, the nuclear industry, and international public institutions, has been coordinated by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), one of whose mandates is to promote peaceful use of the atom in the world.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) is an accomplice to this cover-up. In fact, according to the agreement signed on May 5, 1959 between WHO and IAEA, WHO is not allowed to disseminate information, undertake research, or provide assistance to populations affected by nuclear accidents, without the approval of the IAEA which itself reports to the UN Security Council. For the past two years, WHO no longer even has a “Radiation and Health” department. This unacceptable situation was confirmed during a meeting between Independent WHO and Dr Chan, WHO Director-General, on May 4, 2011. It is clear that WHO has abdicated all responsibility in the critically important field of radiation and health.

International radiological protection standards were introduced in 1950 by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), and its recommendations are followed by States and international organisations. But the ICRP model that is used to determine doses and risks of ionising radiation to human health fails to distinguish between the effects of **internal contamination** and those of **external irradiation** : with, as a direct consequence, denial of the morbidity and mortality rates observed among the people who live in contaminated areas.

This explains that the official Chernobyl death toll, of 5 September 2005, co-signed by UN agencies, is around 50 directly linked to the catastrophe, and 4000 *potential* deaths in the long term..... At the end of 2009, however, the book “Chernobyl: consequences of the catastrophe for people and the environment” by A.V. Yablokov and V. and A. Nesterenko, so far the most complete review on the subject, was published under the aegis of the New York Academy of Sciences. Based upon thousands of studies from all over the world, the authors estimate that there have been hundreds of thousands of deaths as a result of the Chernobyl catastrophe. They also document a significant increase in morbidity, particularly in children, 80% of whom are ill today compared to 20% prior to the accident.

These huge discrepancies in estimates of the number of victims must be investigated. With the Fukushima catastrophe - which is certainly as serious as the Chernobyl disaster - it is all the more urgent and essential today, to critically examine the information that is provided to populations on radioactive contamination and to consider possible radioprotection measures.

In the face of the inadequate response of international institutions, Japanese researchers and citizens have approached independent experts of other countries to request information and advice. The aim of the Scientific and Citizen Forum on Radioprotection is to share knowledge

and experience concerning the Chernobyl and Fukushima catastrophes. The question of “standards” will be addressed through a **comparison of official data with experience** and with other theoretical models supported by independent scientists. Radioprotection itself will also be addressed and its field of application and limitations, defined. A radioprotection handbook produced by the Belrad Institute, Minsk (Belarus) has recently been translated into Japanese. The French version of the handbook is in preparation and will be launched at the Forum. We know, since Fukushima, that no country or citizen is free from the risk of such an accident.

The Forum is organised by **IndependentWHO (IW)**, a group of individuals and associations (*founding associations: Brut de Béton Production, Contratom Genève, CRIIRAD (Commission d’Informations et de Recherches Indépendantes sur la Radiation), IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War), Enfants de Tchernobyl Belarus, Réseau Sortir du Nucléaire, SDN Loire et Vilaine, People’s Health Movement*), supported by a broad coalition of NGOs. IW’s major concern is that the World Health Organisation, through its alliance with the IAEA, is unable to fulfil its constitutional mandate “to act as the directing and co-ordinating authority on international health work” and “to assist in developing an informed public opinion among all peoples on matters of health”. IW addresses all citizens of the world and urges international organizations to apply the principles on which they are founded.

Since April 26, 2007, every working day, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., IndependentWHO Hippocratic Vigils stand in front of the WHO Headquarters in Geneva to demand the independence of WHO so that it may fulfil its duty to ensure “the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health”, including in the area of radiation and health. This Forum will also allow exchanges of experiences between IW Vigils, independent scientists, others partners and concerned citizens.

The schedule of events is as follows:

- 1) A PRESS CONFERENCE on FRIDAY, 11 May 2012 from 10 to 12 a.m. at the Swiss Press Club, Geneva
- 2) The FORUM on SATURDAY, 12 May 2012 at the Ecumenical Centre of Geneva (please see the attached programme)
- 3) SUNDAY MORNING, 13 May 2012, scientists and citizens discuss *Joint action, now and in the future*. Meeting between speakers, Hippocratic Vigils, elected representatives, journalists and the public

Website of IndependentWHO: www.independentwho.org