



## SCIENTIFIC AND CITIZEN FORUM ON RADIOPROTECTION

Organised by IndependentWHO – Geneva 12-13 May 2012

### PRESS RELEASE

#### Press Release

14/05/2012

**The “Scientific and Citizen Forum on Radioprotection: from Chernobyl to Fukushima”, organised by the collective ‘IndependentWHO – for the independence of the World Health Organisation(WHO)’, took place in Geneva on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May.**

IndependentWHO has maintained its Hippocratic Vigil every working day for the past five years outside WHO headquarters, denouncing the fact that they are failing to fulfil their duty to protect populations affected by radiation and the consequent contamination, most particularly as a result of the Chernobyl and Fukushima disasters.

Saturday 12th May was devoted to presentations by Dr Eisuke MATSUI, Kolin KOBAYASHI, Aya MARUMORI, Wataru IWATA and Miwa CHIWAKI (Japan); Dr Galina BANDAJEVSKAIA, Alexei NESTERENKO and Vladimir BABENKO (Belarus); Alexei YABLOKOV (Russia), Dr Youri BANDAJEVSKY (Belarus - now in Ukraine), Chris BUSBY (United Kingdom), Paul LANNOYE (Belgium), Dr Michel FERNEX (Switzerland) and Dr Sophie FAUCONNIER, Paul JOBIN, Roland DESBORDES and Michèle RIVASI (France).

More than 200 people, who attended the Forum, listened to an extremely full programme of speeches and presentations. The main subject was the health consequences of external radiation and internal radioactive contamination created by the explosions in the reactors in Japan and Ukraine, but the effects of depleted uranium weapons used in Kosovo and Iraq and by the programme of nuclear tests (more than 500 atomic bombs detonated in the atmosphere), were also mentioned. All the speakers emphasised that the current radioprotection guidelines, drawn up in the aftermath of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are no longer appropriate for the health consequences of the disasters at Chernobyl and Fukushima. These safety standards are manipulated by governments in the case of radiological accidents, in a way that is always detrimental to the health of the general public, and need to be revised.

The Japanese participants, faced with government disinformation and inaction in protecting the public – especially children – came to find answers to their urgent questions from their counterparts from Chernobyl, who, for the last 26 years have, sadly, had to deal with a health situation which continues to deteriorate in the contaminated territories, particularly for the under-18s.

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Abandoned by the authorities – including the producers of nuclear power, governments and international

organisations (including WHO) – the affected populations need to take control of their situation and organise appropriate radioprotection measures for themselves. V Babenko presented his Radioprotection Handbook, '*After the Nuclear Accident*', which has been published in Russian, Japanese and more recently in French.

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On Sunday 13th May, the speakers from Saturday's event, joined with politicians, representatives of associations, members of the public and members of IndependentWHO, to discuss the question "What can we do together to ensure that the truth about the health consequences of external radiation and internal radioactive contamination, that result from both the civil and military nuclear industries, are established and recognised?"

Regarding the two principal objectives – that WHO fulfil its constitutional mandate in the area of radiation and health, and that the independent scientific community should have authority in the area of radioprotection for populations – those taking part proposed the following actions:

- The revision of the WHO-IAEA Agreement so that WHO can act with complete independence in the area of radiation and health
- To denounce the current model for the ICRP norms on radioprotection and how they are used by States. To put forward a different approach, taking account of the facts.
- To investigate legal means to force the authorities to provide help to the victims.
- To present the problem as a Human Rights issue.
- To set up an international network for the dissemination of reliable information.
- To organise a series of Scientific and Citizen Forums on the Health Consequences of the activities of the civil and military nuclear industries.

In closing the Forum, Professor Matsui called on the international community to put pressure on the Japanese authorities to take action to protect the children of Fukushima and begin evacuating them from the contaminated areas.

The officers of the IndependentWHO collective would particularly like to thank the authorities of the Town of Geneva and the numerous other donors who, through their financial, logistical and political support made this Forum possible.

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