



IndependentWHO  
c/o Eric Peytremann  
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Dr Margaret Chan  
Director-General  
World Health Organization  
Avenue Appia  
1211 Geneva 27

11 March 2013

***Subjects: Urgent request for a meeting with representatives of citizen associations to discuss violations of the Right to Health in relation to the nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan***

Dear Dr Chan,

During our meeting on 4 May 2011, you requested that IndependentWHO<sup>1</sup> provide you with relevant and appropriate “alternative” information from our networks on the subject of radiation and health, in recognition of the fact that the World Health Organization seeks information *from as many reliable sources as possible*. You pointed out that we had better access than you to alternative networks, including citizen associations.

With this letter, we provide internet links to a small selection of reports of violations of the Right to Health emanating from citizen associations (Annex 1) and to issues and criticism (Annex 2) mentioned in the Press Statement<sup>2</sup> of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Mr Anand Grover, on the occasion of his visit to Japan in November 2012. This

The material we provide here indicates a significant discrepancy between reports emanating from the Japanese government and TEPCO<sup>3</sup>, and reports emanating from citizens’ associations. Mr Grover’s statement reinforces reports and complaints from civil society and provides strong indications of failure, negligence and deliberate misinformation on the part of the Japanese government in relation to radioprotection of the population.

In order to fulfill its obligations in relation to the Fukushima disaster, the WHO will want to take into account information from all sources in order to assess the health consequences now and in the future, plan its response and assist populations in need.

<sup>1</sup> Collectif Santé et Nucléaire – pour l’Indépendance de l’OMS

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=12831&LangID=E>

<sup>3</sup> Tokyo Electric Power Company

With regard to the health consequences we note with dismay that WHO's Health Risk Assessment<sup>4</sup> (just published) is based on WHO's Preliminary Dose Estimation<sup>5</sup>, which was written by experts all of whom have connections with the nuclear establishment, mostly the IAEA. The latter document has been extensively criticized<sup>6</sup> not least for conflict of interest and lack of independence.

Citizens in Japan and elsewhere have lost confidence in national and international nuclear authorities. It is our deepest conviction that, on the issue of radiation and health today, the WHO must assert its independence, assume its responsibilities as the international health authority and work with citizen associations and independent medical and scientific institutes and researchers.

We request that a meeting be organized with you as soon as possible and prior to the World Health Assembly in May 2013, with representatives of citizen associations<sup>7</sup>, concerned politicians and Mr Anand Grover or his assistant.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Peytremann  
*For IndependentWHO - health and nuclear power*

**Attachments:** two annexes as mentioned

**Copies:**

Anand Grover, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health  
Rémy Pagani, Mayor of Geneva  
Katsutaka Idogawa, the former mayor of Futaba Town in Fukushima  
Commission de Recherche et d'Information Indépendante sur la Radioactivité (CRIIRAD) France  
International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)  
Greenpeace (International)  
IndependentWHO Collective on Health and Nuclear Power  
The Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation  
Citizens against Fukushima Ageing Nuclear Power Plants (Fukuro-no-Kai)  
Green Action  
Human Rights Now  
Human Rights Watch  
Osaka Citizens against the Mihama, Oi and Takahama Nuclear Power Plants (Mihama-no-Kai)  
Greenpeace Japan  
Citizen's Radioactivity Measuring Station (CRMS),  
University of Tokyo Nuclear Disaster Support Forum,  
Fukushima University Forum on Nuclear Disaster,  
Association for Citizens and Scientists Concerned about Internal Radiation Exposures (ACSIR),  
The Committee for Citizen Scientist Network for Radiation Protection(CSRP)  
Pediatricians' Network for Saving Children from Radiation,  
3.11 life-note Project for Saving Children-future from Low-dose exposure  
Fukushima Health Consultation Meeting,  
Parents' Network Protecting Lives of High School Children,  
Workers' Executive Committee For Anti-nuclear Power Movements, Inter-Faith

<sup>4</sup> HealthRisk Assessment from the Nuclear Accident following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami

<sup>5</sup> Preliminary Dose Estimation from the Nuclear Accident following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. May 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Rosen, Alex. *Analysis of WHO Report on Fukushima catastrophe*. 3 August 2012. <http://www.fukushima-disaster.de/information-in-english/maximum-credible-accident.html>

<sup>7</sup> Delegation to be determined but including if possible representatives from: CRMS, Japan (Citizen Radiation Monitoring Station); CRIIRAD, France (Commission de Recherche et d'Information Indépendante sur la Radiation ; IPPNW, Greenpeace; IndependentWHO - Collectif Santé et Nucléaire.

Forum for Review of National Nuclear Policy, Peace and Environmental Advocacy for the Child  
Zensekiyu Showa Shell Labor Union  
Midori Fukushima

The Fukushima Collective Evacuation Trial Team  
World Network for Saving Children from Radiation  
Niji to midori no kai  
Fukushima Women's Association for the Protection of Children

## Annex 1

### Selection of Reports from citizen associations on human rights violations

**Human Rights Now** (HRN) submitted the following statement to the Human Rights Council, 22nd Regular Session, 25 February to 22 March 2013:

*NGOs Call for Immediate Action to Protect the Right to Health and Life of Women and Children Affected by the Nuclear Accident in Fukushima, Japan*

[http://hrn.or.jp/eng/activity/IWHO%20Human%20Rights%20Now%20HRC%20submission%20Fukushima\\_en.pdf](http://hrn.or.jp/eng/activity/IWHO%20Human%20Rights%20Now%20HRC%20submission%20Fukushima_en.pdf)

**Human Rights Watch** published the following article on 9 March 2012.

*Japan: a year after Fukushima, response falls short  
Disclose detailed information about health, food safety*

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/03/09/japan-year-after-fukushima-response-falls-short>

**The Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation** submitted an appeal to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 17 August 2011

*Violation of the Human Rights of the Children of Fukushima*

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/08/17/japanese-ngos-urge-un-to-investigate-violation-of-children%E2%80%99s-human-rights-in-fukushima/>

## Annex 2

### Issues and criticisms<sup>8</sup> mentioned in Mr Anand Grover's statement Tokyo, 26 November 2012

- Local residents were not aware of nuclear disaster management plans. Mr Grover makes this specific mention “*local residents of Futaba city in Fukushima were led to believe by the Safety Agreement signed in 1991 that the TEPCO plant was safe and there would be no occasion for a nuclear accident.*”

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.simplyinfo.org/?p=8403>

- The NRA, Japan's new nuclear regulatory agency should adopt a policy to disclose any conflicts of interest of members or potential members.
- The government neither gave instructions nor distributed stable iodine to the affected population. Nonetheless, some municipalities distributed stable iodine tablets in an ad-hoc manner.
- The government did not make public the data from SPEEDI and that it is crucial that the government provide this information so people may safely evacuate.
- The government used a radiation dose of 20 mSv/year to determine evacuation areas, the level is too high.
- The government's released a number of publications, including school booklets, informing the public that there was no clear evidence of direct risk of cancer if a person was exposed to radiation dose up to 100 mSv/year. This is not supported by medical research.
- The 20 mSv/year threshold actually violates Japan's 1972 law on exposures to nuclear workers and the public. The law dictates 2 mSv/year maximum for pregnant women.
- The mandatory evacuation level at Chernobyl was 5 mSv/year, Japan is not following this historical safety level.
- That cancer and other diseases could occur in low dose radiation below 100 mSv/year. According to studies, there is no low threshold limit for the occurrence of diseases.
- That government radiation monitoring stations are inaccurate and show artificially low. Validated independent radiation readings including those taken by the public should be included and made public.
- The government should monitor the impact of radiation on people's health in radiation-affected zones through holistic and comprehensive screening and provide appropriate treatment. The special investigator does not specifically state that the Fukushima Health Survey should be the one to do it.
- Health checks should be expanded to all areas that were affected by radiation.
- The current health survey is too narrow and relies on a narrow set of Chernobyl data and ignores a large body of evidence that shows cancer as well as other diseases happen in low-dosage radiation situations, even in areas of exposure below 100 mSv/year.
- The government should conduct a study that would entail examining and monitoring of internal radiation exposure for a considerable length of time.
- Children who have thyroid abnormalities are being denied access to second opinions and access to their medical records.
- The government needs to provide health monitoring to all nuclear workers, the current system and subcontractor system is failing to do this
- Evacuation centers failed to provide for the needs of the disabled and women with small children
- The government needs to better enforce food safety standards in relation to radiation contamination of food.
- The investigator applauded efforts to decontaminate soil but condemned the various government efforts to make residents do decontamination work and also in not providing them with proper safety equipment or information about the harmful effects of radiation exposure.
- The investigator encourage the Government to continue and/or restore financial support and subsidies to all evacuees so that they can make a voluntary decision to evacuate or return to their homes, if they wish to do so.
- The human rights framework calls for accountability for those who created the situation. The investigator specifically stated that TEPCO should be held accountable and that the public should not end up shouldering the liability.
- The people impacted by the disaster currently do not have a say in what is being decided and what happens to them. The investigator stated this must change.