

Violation of the Human Rights of the Children of Fukushima

This submission concerns the violation of the human rights of the children of Fukushima Prefecture, Japan. These children have been continually exposed to radioactive contamination since 11 March 2011, the start of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, and urgent measures are needed to reduce this exposure.

Both the Japanese government and Fukushima Prefecture continue to expose people, including children and pregnant women, to unhealthy radiation levels that can be prevented by these authorities, thus making this exposed population bear unnecessary health risks. Both the national and prefectural governments are unwilling to undertake feasible remedial measures to mitigate this radiation exposure.

Fukushima prefecture has a population of 2,030,463, of which 385,940 persons are under 20 years of age.¹ This paper addresses the human rights and the right to evacuation (right to relocate) of all non-adults and pregnant women.

Japan's standard for radiation exposure for the general public is 1 millisievert (mSv) per year. The provisional standard for Fukushima citizens is 20 millisieverts per year. This standard is only for Fukushima Prefecture. The standard remains at the pre-accident level of 1 millisievert per year (mSv/yr) for all the other 46 prefectures of Japan. The provisional standard for Fukushima applies to pregnant women and children, in spite of the vulnerability of fetuses and children to radiation.

The 20-millisieverts-per-year figure is also the standard to decide the evacuation zone. Any areas that are contaminated to the extent that living there will expose citizens to 20 mSv/yr or over are to be evacuated.

This paper will track the events chronologically from March 2011 to the present.

Children's Exposure to Radioactive Contamination

On 29 and 30 March, because of the total lack of monitoring of radiation levels by government authorities, parents of Fukushima children measured radiation levels at their children's schools. High levels were found at school grounds. To address this issue, the citizens formed a group, The Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster, and on 31 March, along with their report of the monitoring results² and press release³ they issued a letter⁴ to the Fukushima governor

¹ Fukushima Prefecture census data, 1 September 2010.

² 31 March 2011

Report by: Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster

and Fukushima Board of Education petitioning that the opening ceremonies for the new school year be postponed due to the high level of contamination. Fukushima Prefecture refused, and the opening ceremonies took place as scheduled. Because of this, many children who had been self-evacuated by their families were brought back to the contaminated areas.

Fukushima Prefecture did answer the parents' demand that school grounds be measured for radioactive contamination, undertaking a survey on 5th~7th April which covered the 1,638 schools in the prefecture.⁵ The result showed that 76% of Fukushima prefecture schools had levels of contamination exceeding what triggers designation of a workplace as "radiation-controlled" (0.6 microsievert per hour) where individuals under 18 are not legally permitted to enter. At over 20% of the schools even higher radiation levels were recorded, levels warranting "individual exposure control" if occurring in a workplace.

Elementary and junior high schools in Fukushima prefecture commenced the new semester on 5 April, even though radiation contamination was at very high levels and in spite of the greater health risks and vulnerability of children to radiation.

On 17 April, compiling the information from the prefectural study of school grounds, the Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster issued an advisory to Fukushima Prefecture and the national government. The advisory stated that measures should be taken to close schools for the time being, and that evacuation of the children should be undertaken quickly. In the meantime, the advisory sought prompt decontamination of school grounds.

In their advisory letter, the citizens group stated that all school grounds where radiation levels corresponded to those of "radiation controlled areas" designated by law (i.e., 0.6 microsievert per hour or more) should be closed.

"Measurement of Radiation at Elementary Schools"

http://fukurou.txt-nifty.com/fukurou/files/110331_FCRNED_Report.pdf

"Fukushima Radiation Monitoring Results (Table)"

http://fukurou.txt-nifty.com/fukurou/files/110331_FCRNED_Rad_Monitor_110329_30.pdf

³ 31 March 2011

Press release issued by the Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster

http://fukurou.txt-nifty.com/fukurou/files/110331_FCRNED_Press_Release.pdf

⁴ 31 March 2011

Letter to the Governor of Fukushima Prefecture and Fukushima Prefecture Board of Education

Issued by: Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster

http://fukurou.txt-nifty.com/fukurou/files/110331_FCRNED_Governor.pdf

⁵ For Fukushima prefecture's data on radioactive contamination at schools see:

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/04/20/radiation-at-fukushima-schools/>

The 20-millisievert-per-year provisional standard:

On 19 April the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) issued a notification to Fukushima Prefecture. The notification stated the maximum allowable permitted value for use of school grounds shall be 3.8 microsieverts per hour of radiation. This calculates to 20 millisieverts per year. That is how the provisional standard of 20 mSv/yr came into effect.

This 20 mSv/yr provisional standard has been heavily criticized both within Japan and abroad.

On 20 April, the next day after setting of the 20 mSv/yr provisional standard, MEXT issued an official booklet for schoolteachers titled, "To Correctly Understand Radiation" which was distributed to all schools in Fukushima prefecture.⁶

Excerpts from pages 10 and 11 of the booklet translated from the Japanese read:

"For 'definitive impact' there is a 'threshold' below which there is absolutely no damage found. For example, temporary decline in white blood cells will be seen [only] above the threshold level of 250 mSv."

".....there will be no impact with such weak radiation levels such as [cumulative] 250 mSv (=250,000 microsieverts) over several years. Therefore, it is unimaginable that physical damage from 'definitive impact' could occur at the level of radiation seen outside of the evacuation zone."

"It is unthinkable under current conditions that residents, even those staying near the nuclear power plants, would be exposed to a cumulative total of 100 mSv (=100,000 microsieverts) of radiation. The amount of radiation, however, should be monitored. At below the cumulative level of 100 mSv (=100,000 microsieverts), the probability of cancer due to other causes could become higher, and no clear correlation has been seen between radiation and increase in the probability of cancer."⁷

Before MEXT's notification on 19 April, many schools had made various efforts to reduce radiation exposure to children but they stopped as a result of the government notification. The setting of the 3.8-microsieverts-per-hour standard and the MEXT official booklet distributed to schoolteachers had a huge impact in reducing concern about the radiation exposure to children.

⁶ Informal English translation by Green Action and volunteer translators.

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/04/28/mext-issues-official-booklet-for-schoolteachers/>
For Japanese original see:

http://www.mext.go.jp/component/b_menu/shingi/giji/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2011/06/15/1305459_2_1.pdf

⁷ It is unclear what MEXT means by "...the probability of cancer due to other causes could become higher, and no clear correlation has been seen between radiation and increase in the probability of cancer."

The notifications and statements issued by the national government and Fukushima prefecture created a social situation where parents concerned about their children's radiation exposure could not voice their concern and were criticized by schoolteachers, neighbors, and relatives for "over-reacting" if they did. It also made it nearly impossible for teachers who had concerns about the radiation exposure of the children they taught to voice these concerns.

20-millisieverts-per-year provisional standard criticized by experts:

On 22 April, Kenji Utsunomiya, chair of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, representing the associations, issued a statement⁸ raising concerns about the provisional 20 mSv/yr standard. The statement says, "...children are also more susceptible to the long-term effects of radiation, demonstrating higher probabilities of developing radiation-induced illnesses. In view of these considerations, children should be afforded the maximum possible protection from all radiation exposure."

The statement continues, "MEXT bases its demarcation of controlled areas on Article 3, Clause 1(1) of the Ordinance on the Prevention of Ionizing Radiation Hazards (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2001). The Ordinance defines a controlled area as 'The area in which the total of the effective dose due to external radiation and the active dose due to radioactive substances in the air may exceed 1.3 mSv quarterly.' Clause 3 prohibits persons other than those with business there from entering the controlled area. A quarterly (three-month) dose of 1.3 mSv adds up to 5.2 mSv per year. The maximum dose permitted by the new guideline, however, far exceeds that limit. Moreover, the Ordinance was enacted to regulate activities involving radiation work and therefore assumes that some degree of control over the degree of radiation exposure is possible. The current situation, however, involves an ongoing crisis, and exposure due to changing weather conditions is entirely possible. The guideline must take full account of such unforeseen factors."

Utsunomiya's statement continues, "Considering the policy intent of the 1 mSv/year limit, we are forced to conclude that easing the radiation standard in the midst of an accident compromises the safety and welfare of the citizenry."⁹

The Associations urges that remedial measures be undertaken by "[P]romptly retract the new guideline and related directives", and "[E]stablishing a considerably lower radiation limit for children."¹⁰

⁸ 22 April 2011

Statement Issued by Chairman of Japan Federation of Bar Associations
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/04/27/statement-issued-by-chairman-of-japan-federation-of-bar-associations/>

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.*

On 29 April, the US-based Physicians for Social Responsibility held a press conference and issued a statement criticizing the Japanese government's provisional 20-millisieverts-per-year standard. The statement reads:

"It is the consensus of the medical and scientific community, summarized in the US National Academies' National Research Council report *Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiation VII* (BEIR VII report, <http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?isbn=030909156X>), that there is no safe level of radiation. Any exposure, including exposure to naturally occurring background radiation, creates an increased risk of cancer. Moreover, not all people exposed to radiation are affected equally. Children are much more vulnerable than adults to the effects of radiation, and fetuses are even more vulnerable. It is unconscionable to increase the allowable dose for children to 20 millisieverts (mSv). Twenty mSv exposes an adult to a one in 500 risk of getting cancer; this dose for children exposes them to a 1 in 200 risk of getting cancer. And if they are exposed to this dose for two years, the risk is 1 in 100. There is no way that this level of exposure can be considered 'safe' for children."¹¹

(The Physicians for Social Responsibility is the US affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). IPPNW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.)

Citizens confront national government:

On 1 May, a meeting entitled "Protecting Children from Radiation Meeting" was held in Fukushima City under the sponsorship of two groups, the Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster (Fukushima Conference) and the Tokyo-based Citizens Against Fukushima Aging Nuclear Power Plants (Fukuro-no-kai). The attendance was larger than expected at over 250 people. Parents felt they could not rely on being protected by the national government or by Fukushima prefecture and thus decided to meet to see how their children's radiation exposure could be reduced.

Excerpt from the report about the meeting:

"The participants were mostly parents of infants and children from Fukushima City but also from all over the prefecture.The formation of the "Fukushima Network for Protecting Children from Radiation" (The English translation of the group's name was later changed to the "Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation") was confirmed at the meeting. The meeting served to transform the

¹¹ 29 April 2011

PSR Statement on the Increase of Allowable Dose of Ionizing Radiation to Children in Fukushima Prefecture:

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/04/30/physicians-for-social-responsibility-no-safe-level-of-radiation/>

fervent wishes of the parents into concrete steps toward protecting the children from radiation.”¹²

On the next day, 2 May, a meeting was held at the House of Councillors Diet Office Building in Tokyo between the Fukushima parents, citizens, and NGOs on the one hand, and, MEXT, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), and the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) on the other.¹³

MEXT stated at the meeting, “We do not believe that there is danger at 20 millisieverts. However, we do not believe that it is fine at 20 millisieverts.”

The Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) official stated, “We do not feel it’s permissible for children to be exposed to 20 millisieverts a year. The four Safety Commissioners feel that way too.”¹⁴

The NSC official turning to the MEXT official and continued, “...why use the expression ‘there is no problem?’” ...MEXT is also deciding against the 20-millisievert limit, right?”¹⁵

At the meeting the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) admitted that “children should not/cannot be allowed to play within a radiation-controlled area (0.6 microSv/h or more).” However, the Ministry did not respond to whether or not playing in an area of *equivalent* contamination as a radiation-controlled area should be/could be allowed. (As stated earlier, 76% of schools in Fukushima Prefecture have contamination levels that require them to be radiation-controlled areas if they were workplaces.)

¹² 1 May 2011

“Fukushima Parents Create Network for Protecting Children from Radiation”

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/05/05/fukushima-parents-create-network-for-protecting-children-from-radiation/>

¹³ 2 May 2011

Meeting with Japanese government to demand rescinding of 20 mSv/yr radiation exposure standard for children. The meeting was organized by the following six NGOs: Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation, Citizens Against Fukushima Aging Nuclear Power Plants (Fukuro-no-Kai), FoE Japan, Green Action, Osaka Citizens Against the Mihama, Oi and Takahama Nuclear Power Plants (Mihama-no-Kai), and Greenpeace Japan.

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/05/05/press-release-fukushima-nuclear-disaster-meeting-with-japanese-government-to-demand-rescinding-of-20msvy-radiation-exposure-standard-for-children/>

¹⁴ For a visual and oral account see:

10 May 2011

Fuji TV Program “Tokudane: What is Happening at Fukushima Schools? — The Wavering ‘Radiation Safety Standard.’”

<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/05/13/tv-program-what-is-happening-at-fukushima-schools-the-wavering-radiation-safety-standard/>

Informal English translation:

http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/110510_FUJI_TV_Tokudane.pdf

¹⁵ *ibid.*

At the 2 May meeting the Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) stated, “NSC does not endorse 20 mSv as a standard. None of the experts have deemed 20 mSv/yr was safe.” It was clarified by the NSC on 2 May that the meeting on 19 April in which 20 mSv/yr was discussed was not a formal meeting of the NSC, and that there are no minutes of this meeting although four Nuclear Safety Commissioners including the Chair were physically present. MEXT, after receiving advice from the NSC, issued the 3.8-microsieverts/hour standard later that day (19 April.)

On 2 May, no government authority took responsibility for setting the 20 mSv/year provisional standard.

The following are excerpts from the document, “Facts and Questions Arising from Meeting the Japanese Government about the 20 mSv/yr Standard of Radiation Exposure to Fukushima Children”¹⁶, issued by NGOs on 2 May:

“The Ministry stated that it was necessary to reduce the level of contamination. However, it did not indicate any concrete methods for undertaking this... Although admitting the necessity of reducing levels [of contamination], the only measure being undertaken is monitoring.”

“The Ministry stated, although it will not stop local authorities from undertaking decontamination activities [of school grounds], that undertaking decontamination activities was not necessary.”

The NGO document notes, “monitoring” is not a measure for reducing children’s radiation exposure, just tracking how much exposure children were getting, and without other measures, MEXT was not implementing all necessary protective measures.

Since three-quarters of Fukushima Prefecture schools have radiation levels exceeding the trigger level for radiation-controlled areas as described above, where those under 18 years of age are legally not permitted to enter, Fukushima residents have repeatedly addressed this issue with MEXT. However, MEXT has refused to answer when pressed to respond concerning the inconsistency and de facto illegality of allowing children to continue to be in areas with such high radiation levels. The Minister of MEXT Yoshiaki Takagi has even criticized the asking of this question, stating, “I wonder if it is proper to ask such a question.”¹⁷

¹⁶ 2 May 2011

“Facts and Questions Arising from Meeting the Japanese Government about the 20mSv/y Standard of Radiation Exposure to Fukushima Children.”
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/05/03/facts-and-questions-arising-from-meeting-the-japanese-government-about-the-20msvy-standard-of-radiation-exposure-to-fukushima-children/>

¹⁷ 10 May 2011.

“Tokudane” interview, Fuji TV.
op.cit. (Informal English translation of Minister Takagi’s comment.)

It is important to note that no government authority in Japan has ever officially established the 20-millisieverts-per-year provisional standard nor taken responsibility for it. No Japanese government authority has stated that this level is safe for children. Yet, this standard is being utilized by the Japanese government as a provisional standard for Fukushima citizens including children and pregnant women. This situation remains the same today.

Facing increasing criticism both domestically and abroad, on 11 May, MEXT informed Fukushima prefectural offices about replacing topsoil with a layer of subsoil. However, the contaminated topsoil was not to be removed and deposited at another site away from the children, but only placed under the thin layer of subsoil, thus effectively keeping radiation in the ground under the children.

The next day, the Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation¹⁸ and the Fukushima Conference for Recovery from the Nuclear-Earthquake Disaster (Fukushima Conference), joined by four other citizen organizations, issued an emergency appeal and statement. The document petitions, “[MEXT] should stop burying topsoil and start the process of proper soil decontamination TEPCO and the government should take full responsibility in dealing with contaminated soil. Remove the 20 mSv/yr standard for children immediately and implement school closure until their safety can be confirmed.”

The statement continued, “There is no more room for excuses. With every moment, children are being exposed to that much more radiation. In order to keep these children from any more exposure, MEXT should retract the ‘20 msv’ standard immediately. We demand that all nursing schools, kindergartens and schools be thoroughly decontaminated. Until this decontamination process is complete and verified, we demand that schools be closed. Even if children’s educational opportunities are temporarily limited and they are put in an unsatisfactory position in the short term, they will still have the opportunity to catch up later if they have their lives and their health. Threatening children’s lives and health for the sake of securing educational opportunities is, in effect, putting the cart before the horse.”

On the same day, 12 May, the Japan Medical Association issues the following statement:

“The scientific basis for choosing the maximum amount of 20 mSv in the band of 1 to 20 mSv is not clear. The government’s action should be more carefully deliberated considering the fact that growing children are more sensitive to radiation exposure compared to adults. We as a nation should make the utmost effort to reduce the exposure to radiation of children, as well as adults. We are responsible for the

¹⁸ The English translation of the group name was originally, “The Fukushima Network for Protecting Children from Radiation.”

children's health and life." The statement continues, "We urgently request that the Japanese National government strive to reduce children's exposure to radiation in the fastest and most effective way possible."¹⁹

On 23 May, 70 parents from Fukushima, together with 650 citizens showing their support, gathered in front of the offices of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Tokyo.

The Fukushima parents, citizens, NGOs, and four national Diet members from three political parties supporting them demanded scrapping of the 20 mSv/yr provisional standard for children's exposure to radiation and made concrete demands. The MEXT building was encircled by a human chain. At the meeting MEXT restated, "MEXT does not consider 20 millisieverts a safety standard." However, it refused to rescind it.

The press release²⁰ issued on 23 May by the six citizen organizations stated, "The parents asked for only one thing: to protect the children of Fukushima. For that, the 20-millisieverts-a-year standard (3.8 microsieveerts an hour out in the school grounds) must be rescinded and the national government should take responsibility for implementing specific measures to minimize the radiation that children are exposed to."

In another press release issued the same day, L'Institut de Radioprotection et de Sûreté Nucléaire (IRSN), the French radiological protection institute, stated that 70,000 additional residents should be evacuated from the Fukushima area surrounding the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.²¹

Dr. Shunichi Yamashita Appointed Chair of the Review Committee for the Fukushima Prefecture "Prefectural People's Health Management Survey"

Back in 19 March, Professor Shunichi Yamashita, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Nagasaki University Department of Molecular Medicine and Department of International Health and Radiation Research, Atomic Bomb Disease Institute, was appointed by Fukushima Prefecture to be the prefecture's Radiation Health Risk Management Advisor. After his appointment, Dr. Yamashita lectured widely to citizens in Fukushima. According to him, "We have continued to educate the local people in the accurate knowledge of radiation. I have spoken over 27 times to more

¹⁹ 12 May 2011

Japan Medical Association statement.

Informal English translation by Peace Philosophy Centre

<http://peacephilosophy.blogspot.com/2011/05/20-msv-for-children-scientific-basis.html>

²⁰ 23 May press release.

http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/110523_PressRelease.pdf

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http://www.irsn.fr/FR/Actualites_presse/Actualites/Pages/20110523_Gestion_radiologique_territoires_contamines_Fukushima-Rapport_IRSN.aspx

than 10,000 people.”²²

On 27 May, Dr. Yamashita was appointed to chair the Review Committee for the Fukushima Health Management Survey.

The following are excerpts from Professor Yamashita’s lectures in Fukushima Prefecture and Tokyo:

Seminar in Fukushima City: 21 March 2011

“Radiation and its Connection to Personal Health”

“The name Fukushima will become known throughout the world. Fukushima, Fukushima, Fukushima — everywhere Fukushima. This is a tremendous thing. We have even surpassed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Now, the name Fukushima will ring out with more pre-eminence throughout the world. A challenge is an opportunity. Now is our biggest opportunity ever. Fukushima has claimed fame without so much as moving a finger. There’s no way we can let this opportunity pass by.”

“The effects of radiation do not come to people who are happy and laughing, they come to people who are being weak-spirited. This has been clearly proven through animal experiments. For good or for bad, those who drink alcohol are less susceptible to the impacts of radiation. I am not saying you should drink. But, laughing will remove your phobic fear of radiation.”

“Scientifically speaking, concerning concentration of environmental pollution in terms of microsieverts, there is no risk of health impact unless figures rise beyond 100 microsieverts per hour. So it is clear whether it is safe to go outside when the level is at 5, 10, or 20. I said this only yesterday at Iwaki. ‘Is it safe to play outside in Iwaki?’ My reply is, ‘Go right ahead and play as much as you want.’ The same applies for Fukushima City. There is nothing to worry about.”

Seminar at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan (FCCJ): 22 March 2011

“Impact of Radioactive Materials” Source: Science Media Centre of Japan

“The cancer rate will increase a little if exposure occurs at 100 millisieverts or more in one dose, however, when the exposure is limited to 50 millisieverts, it is not considered to cause any problem. “

“Among the people evacuated from the 10 to 20 km zone of the nuclear plant, some may have been exposed to a radiation dose of roughly 1 mSv. However, the health effects are no different between a few microsieverts and 100 millisieverts, so the increase in the cancer rate will be no different.”

²² Seminar at Aoyama Diamond Hall, Tokyo: 23 May 2011
Seminar title: “For Correct Understanding of Radiation”

At the 2 May meeting, the NSC stated that if it is indeed true that Fukushima Prefecture advisors Shunichi Yamashita and Kenichi Kamiya gave public lectures in Fukushima stating, “100 mSv is safe,” then the NSC would “give them guidance.”²³

A petition addressed to the governor of Fukushima Prefecture organized by The Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation launched 21 June demands that Professor Shunichi Yamashita be dismissed from all Fukushima prefecture appointments including that of Radiation Health Risk Management Advisor.²⁴

The petition states:

“The first thing that Professor Yamashita should have done when the hydrogen explosions began to occur at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant on March 12 was to call for the evacuation of the people of Fukushima Prefecture. This would have been possible due to his superior knowledge and standing. If he had taken this action, the people of the prefecture would have respected him and thanked him wholeheartedly.

“However, he did the exact opposite. Coming to the prefecture on 19 March, after the ‘most dangerous 7 days’ (his words) had passed, he told the people of the prefecture, “There is no need to consider health impacts,” “It’s OK,” and, “I absolutely want you to stay in this town.” Following that, he failed to call for radiation protection [measures] and continued to encourage the citizens to remain in Fukushima and carry on life as normal.”

The petition continues,

“Governor, please consider how the people of the prefecture who believed Professor Yamashita’s statements feel now. Please sense the feelings of the parents who are suffering remorse and guilt from having exposed their children to radiation because of their foolishness in believing in him. Please also understand the feelings of the people of the prefecture who are imagining the future and who are having to endure unspeakable fear.

²³ 2 May, op.cit.

Facts and Questions Arising from Meeting the Japanese Government about the 20 mSv/yr Standard of Radiation Exposure to Fukushima Children

²⁴ **21 June, Press Conference: Fukushima Parents Seek Dismissal of Radiation Advisor Shunichi Yamashita**, House of Councillors, Diet Office Building, Tokyo, Japan
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/07/02/video-fukushima-parents-seek-dismissal-of-radiation-advisor/#more-1305>

21 June press conference: Video of Seiichi Nakate, director, Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation. Subtitles in English.
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/07/02/video-fukushima-parents-seek-dismissal-of-radiation-advisor>

“It is totally unacceptable that Professor Yamashita has now been newly appointed as a member of the committee to consider a Prefectural People’s Health Management Study. He is the least suitable choice for a person to study the health impacts of exposure to radiation that we citizens have been forced to endure.”

The above Fukushima citizens’ petition signature campaign is ongoing.

Because the Japanese government continued to ignore the problem of internal radiation exposure, Fukushima parents and NGOs decided to initiate their own testing of children’s urine samples. The samples were taken and sent to ACRO, the independent radiation measuring and sampling laboratory accredited by the French nuclear safety authority, Autorité de Sûreté Nucléaire (ASN).

A joint press conference was held on 30 June 2011 by the Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation and the five other NGOs.^{25 26} The chair of ACRO, David Boilley, spoke at the press conference.

The ACRO press release that day stated,

“ACRO has analyzed urine of children living in Fukushima-city located at about 60 km of the Fukushima NPP. There is no ambiguity on the results: all samples are tainted by cesium 134 and cesium 137 at concentrations ranging from 0.4 to 1.3 becquerels per litre.”²⁷

“This means that these children between 6 and 16 years old are all contaminated by cesium 134 and cesium 137. There were also probably contaminated by iodine 131 that disappears quickly and cannot be detected now.” “This reinforces our opinion that the evacuation threshold fixed by the Japanese authorities is too high. Many NGO’s, including ACRO, have criticized this limit that is fixed at 20 millisieverts for the first year. It is 2 times larger that limit fixed by the French authorities in case of an accident and 20 times larger than the usual maximum permissible dose for the public.”

²⁵ 30 June 2011

Joint press conference by Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation, Citizens Against Fukushima Aging Nuclear Power Plants (Fukuro-no-Kai), International Environmental NGO FoE Japan, Green Action, Osaka Citizens Against the Mihama, Oi and Takahama Nuclear Power Plants (Mihama-no-Kai), and Greenpeace Japan. The press conference was held at the House of Councillors Diet Office Building, Tokyo.

²⁶ 1 July 2011

“More Fukushima Worries: Internal Contamination”, Wall Street Journal.
<http://blogs.wsj.com/japanrealtime/2011/07/01/more-fukushima-worries-internal-contamination/>

²⁷ 30 June 2011

“The children of Fukushima are contaminated”, ACRO press release.
http://www.acro.eu.org/CP_ACRO_300611_en.pdf

To date there have been 80,410 signatures collected cumulative in two petitions (from Japan and 61 other countries) and 1383 organizations (cumulative) have endorsed these petitions. The petitions were submitted to the Japanese government on 2 May and 16 June respectively. The petitions asked for speedy expanded evacuation and minimizing children's radiation exposure by withdrawing the provisional 20-millisievert-per-year radiation exposure limit for children (which was issued by the Japanese government on April 19, 2011), and restoring the 1-mSv-per-year dose limit.²⁸

The following is the third, ongoing petition, begun 30 June.²⁹ The demands are:

1. In areas with particularly high levels of radiation, promote short-term or long-term evacuation and close schools early for summer recess. Give top priority to the relocation of infants, children, and expectant mothers.
2. Monitor regularly the degree of internal exposure for all Fukushima residents, including children, using whole-body counters.
3. Dismiss Shunichi Yamashita, professor at the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Nagasaki University, from his dual positions as advisor to Fukushima prefecture on health-risk management for nuclear radiation and member of the prefecture's Health-Management Investigation Committee.
4. Strictly adhere to the legal annual radiation limit of 1 millisievert. Compute the radiation dose based on total cumulative radiation, internal and external, absorbed since March 11. Revoke the current provisional annual limit of 20 millisieverts (3.8 microsieverts per hour). Lower the provisional radiation standards for food and drink so as not to exceed the annual limit of 1 millisievert.

On 3 July, a statement titled "Statement on the program to monitor and manage the health of Fukushima prefectural residents" was issued by the Fukushima University Forum on Nuclear Disaster.³⁰ It was endorsed by nineteen members of the Fukushima University faculty. The statement critiques the Fukushima health survey stating, "The chairperson of the program committee is Mr. Shun'ichi Yamashita, who also serves as the health risk management adviser to Fukushima Prefecture. However, there is a conflict of interest if the person who is in charge of administering the prefecture's policy on radiation issues (risk management adviser) is also responsible for evaluating the health of Fukushima residents, which has been affected by the same risk management policy that person has established. To maintain the neutrality of the

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<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.com/2011/05/13/petition>

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<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.com/2011/07/01/petition-02-protect-the-children-of-fukushima/#more-76>

³⁰ For formal English translation see: <http://trans-aid.jp/viewer/?id=18701&lang=en>
For original Japanese see: <http://fukugenken.e-contents.biz/proposal03>

program, the person who serves as the health risk management adviser should not be allowed to become a member of the program committee.”

On 19 July, the first public meeting was held in Fukushima between citizens and the national government’s Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters.³¹ Tokyo officials of the headquarters refused to come to Fukushima and the meeting was held with the officials of the Fukushima division of the headquarters. Some 130 local residents participated. At the meeting, Seiichi Nakate, head of the Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation asked the government’s Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters, “It is correct, is it not, that Fukushima citizens have the same and equal right as other Japanese citizens to spend their life without receiving unnecessary radiation doses. That is correct, is it not?” Akira Sato, Director of the government’s Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters in Fukushima replied, “I don’t know whether or not they have that right.” The callous attitude of the government officials, which was later broadcast via YouTube, shocked many people.³² The meeting was a sequel to the first round of talks held on 30 June in Tokyo with the national government’s Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters. Kazumasa Aoki of Fukuro-no-Kai reported on the meeting.³³

One of the main issues raised by citizens at the meeting was the right to evacuate. Heart-rending testimonies were given by mothers and fathers whose families were torn apart because of the inaction of the Japanese government.

Back in 22 April 2011, Kenji Utsunomiya, chair of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations Japan Federation of Bar Associations had proposed in his statement:

“Where children must be relocated to other schools because radiation levels have

³¹ The meeting which was held in Fukushima City was organized at the citizen end by: Fukushima Network for Saving Children from Radiation, Citizens Against Fukushima’s Aging Nuclear Power Plants (Fukuro-no-Kai), Green Action, Greenpeace Japan, FoE Japan, and Osaka Citizens Against the Mihama, Oi and Takahama Nuclear Power Plants
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/08/03/wanted-the-right-to-relocate---growing-radiation-exposure-and-the-july-19-citizen-government-talks-in-fukushima/> - more-1372

³² YouTube:
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/08/03/wanted-the-right-to-relocate---growing-radiation-exposure-and-the-july-19-citizen-government-talks-in-fukushima/#more-1372>

As seen on the YouTube video, Akira Sato refused to accept the urine samples that citizens wanted tested. Citizens gave the samples to an official of NIRS assigned to the headquarters in Fukushima and asked to have them tested. The samples however were returned the following week in a box marked “clothing,” with no letter.

³³ 23 July 2011
“Wanted: The Right to Relocate----Growing Radiation Exposure and the July 19 Citizen-Government Talks in Fukushima”, by Kazumasa Aoki of Fukuro-no-Kai.
<http://fukushima.greenaction-japan.org/2011/08/03/wanted-the-right-to-relocate---growing-radiation-exposure-and-the-july-19-citizen-government-talks-in-fukushima/> - more-1372

exceeded the standard limit, implement the following measures, taking care not to separate children from their parents and communities unless absolutely necessary: arrange for children to be admitted to neighboring schools in safe areas, secure additional school buses and other means of transportation allowing them to commute, and where necessary, build temporary school buildings and related facilities outside the contaminated zone.”

“Where children must live apart from their parents and communities for their own safety, arrange for their room and board. Also, establish a system staffed by professionals who can help the children deal with the psychological and emotional trauma resulting from the earthquake, tidal waves, nuclear accident, and separation from their families.”

“Establish an oversight system to ensure that children who relocate are not subjected to bullying and other forms of discrimination and are able to receive a proper education in neighboring schools.”³⁴

The Japanese government has not implemented any of the above actions.

Fukushima citizens and NGOs continue to urge the Japanese government to implement measures to protect children from radiation. To date the Japanese government has refused to even consider these pleas and proposals. Today, 17 August, Fukushima children who want to meet with the Japanese government will be coming to Tokyo.

The children of Fukushima have the same right as all other children in Japan to live a life free from unnecessary, preventable radiation exposure. We urgently request that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/OHCHR come to Japan to investigate this matter.

This document is being submitted to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/OHCHR by:

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³⁴ op. cit. Utsunomiya.

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