

## ABOLITION 2000 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 16 SEPTEMBER 2011

### Annex V: Fukushima Update

[Note: these are raw notes, which have not been checked fully for accuracy. If you have questions, want more information or want to get involved, please contact the presenters.]

#### Akira Kawasaki & Reiko Asato

- Many people still missing, as a result of the tsunami
- People are now getting into rebuilding and reconstruction as a result of the tsunami and earthquake
  - o But the people in and around Fukushima, there is no thinking yet about rebuilding – they still don't know what's going to happen to them, and are unable to return home.
- Three nuclear reactors melted down
- The government has set a target of January next year for shut down (?)
- About 100,000 tons of highly-contaminated water has pooled in the area of the power plant
- More than 1000 workers are still at the plant working to achieve a shut-down (?)
- Almost 80,000 people have already evacuated from Fukushima
- About 10% of school children have already moved outside of Fukushima
- Local authority want to achieve a return of the people, but it's highly questionable as to whether it's possible or desirable
- Contamination of food and water now becoming a serious concern – beef, mushrooms, etc, have been found to have contamination higher than the levels allowed by government
  - o The harvest season is coming, especially for rice, so there could be a crisis shortly
- There has been a dramatic change in government policy in Japan, as the government has already committed to decreasing the reliance on nuclear power
  - o The pace of this change is a matter of great public debate
- Questions rising now – how will this affect Japanese policy on nuclear facilities export
- Civil society groups are generating pressure to completely phase out nuclear power
- Historic moment that the peace movement, which has historically focused on nuclear weapons, is shifting to work with the environmental movement, which has focused on nuclear energy
- There is a major event planned for September 19 all across Japan
- Japan is at a critical moment for policy change
- Thanks expressed from the people of Japan to the international community for their help, donations and support during this time
  - o Particularly encouraged by the messages of support from the people in nuclear testing zones
- After the disaster, civil society took part in the relief effort in their areas of expertise – youth groups, women's' groups, etc.
  - o The peace movement joined in efforts to help after the disaster
- Every year there has been a peace march organized in Japan in May – people were not sure where they could hold the march this year, but encouraged by local activists, decided to march through the affected areas
  - o Great encouragement to the communities who wanted to see something familiar
  - o March had two slogans: achieve a nuclear weapons convention and shift away from nuclear power to sustainable energy
- The peace movement is working on:
  - o Giving support to the victims and support the people who cannot rebuild

- Pressure the government to give real help to the victims, and to reveal the real truth about the disaster (they only revealed there was a real melt-down later)
- Ensure that Japan moves away from nuclear power and towards sustainable energy
- Questions?
  - Mentioned that the local authorities in Fukushima still have a goal of bringing people back - do they know that the area will be a “dead zone” just like Chernobyl?
    - Complicated question – there was a Minister fired the other day for calling it a death city. The people do not want to acknowledge that they won’t be able to live there. The real problem is the Japanese government and the level of radiation they have declared safe – 20 m is the level that has been declared safe, but it’s very, very high. Need to pressure them to bring the level down.
  - Have there been legal cases against the power company and the government for changing the rules about safe level of radiation?
    - Have heard of local cases seeking compensation. Some people who evacuated from areas that were not officially declared “evacuation zones” have sued the government – cases on-going.
  - Will or have the Japanese people taken up the discussion earlier about the WHO and radiation, as well as the influence of the IAEA.
    - People mistrust the explanation given by the government, especially in terms of the safety of radiation. Very helpful if civil society could present independent information about levels of radiation.
  - Has the government been giving money to local areas where there are nuclear power plans to keep them quiet about the dangers present?
    - Yes – they are now calling them a “nuclear village”, a closed community to decide everything to do with nuclear power in Japan. Need to get more media attention on this.