

Rally and March to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

March 5, 2025

Speech by Ms. Setsuko Shimomoto

日本から来ました「ビキニ被ばく船員訴訟」原告団長の下本節子です。

71年前の1954年3月米国の水爆実験で被ばくした第五福竜丸が命がけで日本に帰ってきました。その年12月までに、汚染マグロを廃棄した日本の漁船は延べ1000隻になります。私の父親が働いていた船もその中にいました。

船員たちは、何の説明もされないまま放置され、12月末には日米政治決着によって、調査も打ち切られてしまいました。私たちは、被災した船員たちを放置した日本政府に補償を求めて、2016年から裁判を闘っています。

1954年福竜丸の被ばくを知った日本では、核実験反対の署名が3000万筆以上集まり、反核運動が大きくひろがりました。これをきっかけに広島・長崎のヒバクシャたちも自分の辛い被爆体験を語るようになり、翌年の1955年には、原水爆禁止世界大会が開催され、2年後の1956年には、「日本原水爆被害者団体協議会(被団協)」が発足しました。

高知県では1980年代に、高校生たちが地元の人たちの聞き取り調査を始めたことで、血液の病気や癌で、若くして亡くなった漁船員がたくさんいたことが判明しました。しかし、日本政府は今でも、体の中に入った放射性物質が細胞の近くで放射線を出し続ける「内部被ばく」を認めません。

被団協の岩佐さんは「国家補償というのは、国が市民に対し、もう戦争はしない、ふたたび被爆者をつくらないと約束することなんだよ!」と話しています。

日本政府は2023年から東京電力福島第一原発事故の処理汚染水の海洋放流を始め、次は、除染した土を公共事業に再利用することなどを企てています。こんなことを許したらヒバクシャは増える一方です。

日本政府には「黒い雨」や「ビキニ被ばく」を認め、核禁条約を批准して、放射能の危険を世界に知らせる責任があります。

本日10時から国連の会議室でのサイドイベントで詳しく発言しますので奮ってご参加ください。



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My name is Setsuko Shimomoto, I am a chief plaintiff of a lawsuit in Japan that was filed by Japanese fishers impacted by nuclear testing in the Pacific.

71 years ago, in March 1954, the Daigo Fukuryu Maru, or Lucky Dragon No. 5, returned to Japan after being exposed to lethal radioactive fallout from the Castle Bravo hydrogen bomb test. By the end of the year, about 1000 Japanese fishing boats were in the area and impacted by nuclear tests. My father was in one of them.

Most of the fishers were abandoned without any explanation. By the end of the year, Japan and the U.S. entered into an agreement and halted investigations. We are fighting in court since 2016, demanding compensations from the Japanese government that abandoned affected fishers.

Meanwhile in 1954, after learning about what had happened to the Daigo Fukuryu Maru, more than 30 million signatures against nuclear testing were collected in Japan, and an anti-nuclear movement spread across the country. This became the catalyst, and hibakusha from Hiroshima and Nagasaki started to share their testimonies of atomic bombings. In 1955, the first World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held, and in the following year, Nihon Hidankyo was founded.

In Kochi Prefecture, where we live, it was not until the 1980s when high school students initiated collecting testimonies in our communities and found out that many people passed away at a young age due to blood-related illnesses and cancers. However, the Japanese government continues to deny the impact of internal radiation exposure where radioactive material that was inhaled or ingested into the body continues to release radioactivity near cells.

The late Mr. Iwasa of Nihon Hidankyo once said, “National reparations are a promise from the government to its people that it will not engage in war or create any more hibakusha.”

In 2023, the Japanese government started releasing treated but still contaminated water into the Pacific Ocean from the damaged TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant. They are also planning to “recycle” radioactively contaminated soil from decontamination efforts for public projects. If we allow these actions, they will create more hibakusha or nuclear victims.

The Japanese government has a responsibility to ratify the TPNW, recognize victims of black rain in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as fishers affected by nuclear testing, and inform the world of the dangers of radioactivity.

I will be speaking in detail at a side event later today at 10AM in Conference Room A at the United Nations. Please join us. Thank you very much.

