

Address by Katsutaka Idogawa, Mayor of Futaba (currently a mandatory evacuation zone), Fukushima

My name is Katsutaka Idogawa, Mayor of Futaba, Fukushima Prefecture.

The nuclear catastrophe that began on 11th March 2011 has devastated our community in Futaba, which then became uninhabitable. About 300 people in Futaba were exposed to particularly high doses of radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, which included the radioactive fallout from the explosion of the Unit 1. I am the only Mayor in contemporary Japan with personal experience of being covered with nuclear ash. As a representative for all Fukushima people, I ask you to share our very sad experiences and request your support to save our children.

From the onset of the nuclear disaster, our human rights, enshrined in the Japanese Constitution, have been violated. On the morning of 12th March 2011, the government ordered us to evacuate. However, they provided no assistance or advice regarding transport or destination. Having finally reached shelters, we received no advice regarding how we could rebuild our shattered lives. We have therefore had to make decisions and manage the evacuation and all its aftermath by ourselves.

A vast area in Fukushima Prefecture is highly contaminated with radiation. The government's response to this was to first raise the statutory radiation safety limit for the general public, and then tell us that radiation exposure below this limit is safe. Due to these policies, most Fukushima people, including children, are still living in highly contaminated regions, and worrying about the health effects of radiation. These people are continuously exposed to high doses of radiation. The weakest victims are the children. Some specialists have raised the alarm concerning the health risks of internal radiation exposure. Our government say that Fukushima Daiichi has released 186 times radioactive materials than the Hiroshima A-bomb. Despite this, there has been a total media blackout about the dangers of radioactivity. The Fukushima prefectural government has colluded with the state and TEPCO who are jointly responsible for the nuclear devastation, and withheld risk information in an attempt to prevent large scale de-population.

Part of our town, Futaba, received the radiation dose as highest as 1,590 micro SV per hour. The plume arrived here even before the explosion at Unit 1. The residents and I were still in Futaba and therefore exposed to this high level of radiation. This horrifying but crucial information was concealed by Fukushima Prefecture until recently. The prefectural government has never explained or apologised for this incident of radiation exposure.

Many people from our town, Futaba, are still left in Fukushima Prefecture. I want to evacuate them to a place far away as soon as possible. Why are they still there? It is because Fukushima Prefecture wants to keep people within the prefectural border and prevented us from moving out despite our wish to do so. Disaster relief law is implemented by the prefectural governments concerned, and it cannot be applied without their agreement. Even though many prefectures offered to accept evacuees and provide financial assistance for them to settle, without Fukushima Prefecture's consent, the law prevents evacuees from receiving such offers. Having lost everything, most people would not be able to survive without the financial and other assistance stipulated in this law. This is why many people who wish to evacuate Fukushima have not been able to leave.

The Japanese government wants to make this nuclear catastrophe look as if it were contained in Fukushima Prefecture. They do not want people to know the truth. As indicated in the map of "annual dose of radiation exposure in Fukushima prefecture", the areas with radiation concentrations above the level for the statutory radiation control zone. This contradicts the new radiation safety limit for evacuation introduced by the Japanese government and illustrates the double standards inherent in their post-Fukushima evacuation policy. As you can see, most major places in Fukushima are too contaminated for people to live in. The map of "food items from prefecture whose consumption and/or shipping have been restricted" shows the reality of contamination in food taken from the natural world. Sadly, much of food including freshwater fish, mushrooms, nuts, game meat and wild herbs in Fukushima are so toxic that they should not be consumed. However, a large number of people

are eating the contaminated vegetables from their own fields. The table of "the evacuation criteria based on the classification of Chernobyl disaster" describes the Chernobyl Law, which was introduced following the observation of the enormous suffering experienced by people in the contaminated regions following the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. The Chernobyl Law sets evacuation standards, for example, 5mSv per year or above for mandatory evacuation and below 5mSv down to 1mSv per year for voluntary evacuation with state support. The recommended maximum dose for the general public by the globally recognised International Commission on Radiological Protection is 1mSv per year. The Japanese government has completely ignored these standards in the Chernobyl Law and sets the evacuation standard at 20mSV per year. They have been influencing people to live in areas with radiation up to 20mSV per year. We say to the officials, "Why don't you come and live here before telling us to stay here", but they never respond. Such a dangerous standard was set in order to accommodate highly contaminated regions that were never evacuated. This is outrageous. This is a terrible act of negligence by the government, TEPCO and Fukushima Prefecture who have responsibilities for our protection.

To make matters even worse, the medical sector helped establish the myth that nuclear energy was absolutely safe while making no preparation for nuclear accidents. They had no radiation monitoring systems or devices in place when the Fukushima disaster occurred. This is yet another fact the government wants to keep from the Japanese people. Instead, they started a campaign onslaught throughout Fukushima Prefecture to create the myth that radiation exposure below the safety limit is safe by sending many academics to communities to reassure the population. Incredibly, the government have twisted the reality instead of fulfilling their responsibilities. However, one by one, their lies have been exposed, and the feeling of anxiety and distrust towards the authorities amongst Fukushima people is growing.

Recently, a secret meeting was held at Fukushima prefectural government office to control information released to the public. During this meeting, it was agreed not to disclose the fact that the prefectural government withheld the emergency radiation dose prediction data immediately following the nuclear disaster. Also, agreed was to announce that no anomaly had been found in the figures released in prefectural radiation health monitoring despite the high incidence of thyroid abnormalities in the children examined. The prefectural officials whose duty is to protect our lives repeatedly lied to us and withheld information. Most Japanese people are ignorant of these facts. What the authorities have been doing to the good people of Japan is an act of betrayal. This will also cause Japan to lose trust of the international community. It is totally unacceptable to destroy children's health, their hopes and future. Now, who can we turn to, for rebuilding our vision for the future?

I ask you all and people in the world to put yourselves in our place and look at the situation from the point of view of ourselves and our children. Please (do not take official announcements at face value but) continue to research alternative information. Today, I am here to speak for my people who have been victimised. We have been displaced and abandoned. I call for your support for those who have been grieving, suffering and enduring great hardship. I beg you to save us and our children. Please allow us to live together in a new place somewhere on the earth. I trust you will do whatever you can do to evacuate Fukushima children. Thank you very much for listening.