



Japanese Women Today

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New Japan Women's
Association

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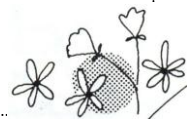
***Abolish Nuclear Weapons! Stop Nuclear Power Plants!
Money for Reconstruction and for a Safer and
Sustainable Energy Source!***

***Women in Action for Change,
for a Nuclear-Free, Peaceful, Just and Sustainable World
Just and Sustainable World***

Dear friends,

We thank all you for all the messages of support, solidarity and compassion you extended to us immediately after the massive earthquake and subsequent tsunami of unprecedented scale hit Tohoku Region, north-eastern part of Japan on March 11. Thank you also for continuing to show your concern and support for the people in Fukushima, who have been through life-altering experience due to the catastrophic accident of Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Your words and hearts have reached to the survivors in the north as well as all our members in their relief effort, giving them comfort and encouragement.

**National Office
New Japan Women's Association
(Shinfujin)**



Natural Disaster and Manmade Disaster caused the Worst Damage in Japan's Postwar History

On March 11, a magnitude 9-level earthquake hit Tohoku Region, with many big aftershocks following.

At Shifujin national office in Tokyo, we were also struck by the shaking, and from the moment we turned on the TV, we witnessed the unimaginable, frightening scenes –

the subsequent tsunami, as high as 10 meters, rushing towards the coast, wiping away ships and boats in harbors, bridges, buildings, houses, cars, fields and human beings. They went into the inland, more than 3 km away from the coast.

All those images took our breath away. The damage was horrible; in the most severely hit areas, some communities just disappeared. It was unimaginable how big human losses would be. As of July 31, the officially announced death toll is 15,650 (9,367 in Miyagui Prefecture, 4617 in Iwate Prefecture, and 1,600 in Fukushima Prefecture), and 4,977 are still missing.

Shinfujin Shimbun, March 24



Still a long way to go...



April, Ishinomaki, Miyagi

May, Aoba-ward, Sendai, Miyagi

May, Shiohama, Miyagi

Cleaning up, Miyagi

Further to that, the accident at the earthquake-crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, operated by the Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), is still in a critical situation with not much success in stabilizing it. The accident level was assessed as Level 7 according to the international nuclear and radiological event scale, same as Chernobyl. As radioactive substances have been found on soils, food, and mothers' milk in communities more than 200 km away from the plant site, fears for radiation contamination are growing nationwide especially among young mothers with small children. The Japanese public is becoming more and more aware of the need to rethink the country's energy policy which relies much on nuclear power generation, profit-first economic policy and their own lifestyle.

Shinfujin Members Out on the Streets for Relief Activities

Speechless at what they had seen from the media reports on the East Japan Great Earthquake and Fukushima disaster, Shinfujin members all over Japan took to the street the very next day of the earthquake, starting on their own collecting donations for the victims. The amount of donations contributed and collected by Shinfujin members nationwide reached about 86 million yen (about 1.1 US dollars) as of June 30. Shinfujin national office brought the money with message cards from our members of different places to the municipalities and Shinfujin Chapter offices in Miyagi, Iwate and Fukushima Prefectures.



Bringing donations to municipalities and Shinfujin members



Donation Collecting

We also received donation of 10 million yen from the All China Women's Federation and we gave the money to our chapters in those three prefectures. These chapters contributed the money from our Chinese sisters to daycare centers and other facilities for children, women's sections of fisheries cooperatives and other local women's organizations severely affected by the earthquake and tsunami.

Apart from donation collecting, many Shinfujin members went to the disaster-stricken areas to help the survivors to clean up the houses, to cook meals for those living in the evacuation centers, or to engage in other volunteer works. Similar activities have been organized by our members in the communities where Tohoku survivors moved in. Shinfujin continues to do its utmost to support the earthquake and tsunami survivors until they are finally able to make their own living.

Integrate Gender Perspectives into Relief and Reconstruction

Shinfujin national office has sent out many requests to the government to provide adequate support for the survivors based on their demands. On June 10, Shinfujin made public its proposals for reconstruction in line with the Japanese Constitution and the principles of gender equality, and it made representations to the ministries for taking these proposals into account as they work on the reconstruction. Shinfujin has been emphasizing to incorporate gender perspectives in planning and implementing the support program, so that the program can meet the needs of the socially

vulnerable, including women and girls, the elderly and those with disabilities. Our local chapters and branches have done the same to their local governments.

One of Japan's weaknesses is that the country lags far behind the other industrialized countries in terms of women's rights and gender equality. It ranks 94th out of 134 countries in the 2010 Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) by the World Economic Forum and 57th out of 109 in the 2009 Gender Empowerment Measures (GEM). Most notable is the low level of women's participation in decision-making levels in politics and all other areas. Women accounts only for 11.5% in the House of Representatives. No women among the There's no female member in the current Cabinet. More seriously, The Reconstruction Design Council established by the government has only one woman (6.7%) among its 15 members, the Council's study group has 2 women (10.5%) among its 19 members, and the Committee on the Investigation of Accidents at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company has 2 women (20%) among its 10 members.

Regarding women's employment situation, in 2010, the number of women in employment reached record high of 23.29 million. More and more women are being employed as non-regular workers; they make up 53.8% of all women workers, and 69.4% of the total number of non-regular employees ("Labor Force Survey," Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications). The wage gap between women and men is not narrowing but widening: in 2010 women regular employees only earned 51.0% of what their male counterparts received ("Monthly Labor Survey," Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare). In recent years, non-regular employment has been on a sharp rise in the workplace of public services. Among municipal workers, those in precarious status account for 30% of the total. Low-paid precarious women



Garage sale for fund-raising

workers are concentrated in daycare staff, school teachers and cooking staff, nurses and other professions that require particular qualifications, and they are called "official working poor."

All these have reflected in the difficulties facing women in the disaster areas; no locker rooms in most of the evacuation centers, for example. In those three prefectures women temporary staff members at daycare facilities or school kitchens have been dismissed. Women have to have their say in the evacuation center management and in the whole process of community reconstruction in its decision making level.

Young Mothers Speak Out, Act Together to Protect Children

Mothers in Fukushima Prefecture, including Koriyama City located about 60km from the Fukushima Plant, where the radiation level remains high, between 2 and 3 microsieverts per hour on the ground even now 3 and a half months after the explosion at the plant, have been worried about the effect on their children. Their worry and concerns are shared by mothers throughout the country, particularly those living in the places in Kanto Region, now known as "hot spots" with high radiation level. In one of the "hot spots", Kashiwa City, about 200km away from the Plant, the radiation level is even higher than some of the municipalities in Fukushima, mothers built their own network through the Internet and mobile phones to take action. They collected 10,000 signatures in just three weeks urging the city mayor to measure and publish the contamination level and take immediate measures to clean up the contaminated soil, especially the school or kindergarten playgrounds as well as parks. Similar actions are spreading in Eastern Region, and these

mothers are also joining the nationwide campaign to call for alternative energy resources. In many other areas in the western and southern parts of Japan, particularly those



Moms from Fukushima and Eastern Region saying "No More Nuclear Power Plant!" to

TEPCO

communities with nuclear power facilities, Shinfujin members together with local women have always been the first to voice against the construction of the plants, and they are now taking lead in the campaign to close the nuclear power plant.

On June 1, the International Children’s Day, Shinfujin organized a women’s action: “Protect Children from Radiation! Stop Nuclear Power Plant.” 111 members from different regions, including those from Fukushima, who brought messages from their 70 colleagues, held a rally in front of the House of Representatives’ Office Building, and marched to the TEPCO head office, and made representations to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. In front of TEPCO, members from Fukushima said that mothers in their communities wanted to know the truth and the ways to cope with their situation and to protect their children from the radiation. They also told of their everyday life; children were in a very stressful conditions not being able to play outside, or high school girl students were giving up



their reproductive health because of radiation. The participants shouted chants as they marched the streets in Tokyo, appealing to the public. At the Ministry of Education, they urged the Ministry to take all possible measures to protect children, including the cleanup of the contaminated soil, safe food for school lunch and the withdrawal of the plan to reduce school teachers and staff. They also demanded that the Ministry should stop distributing the side reading to convince children nuclear power plants are safe.

the nuclear abolition petition. We will carry on our effort until we finally make sure that nuclear weapons are outlawed and there will be no more victims of nuclear catastrophe.

We Know What Radiation Can Do to Humans Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Stop Nuclear Power Plant!

Shinfujin continues to work for cutting the military spending to redirecting our money to social services, education, and environmental protection as well as to reconstruction of the disaster-hit areas. We do believe this will be part of the global effort to achieve a nuclear-free, peaceful, just and sustainable world.



June 1, in front of the Ministry of Education

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Shinfujin members gathering at July 2 Action for Zero Nuclear Power Plant



Okinawa Shinfujin members fighting against US military bases organizing solidarity event with Tohoku survivors



Shinfujin members gathering at July 2 Action for Zero Nuclear Power Plant

