

International Campaign “Tokyo 2020 - The Radioactive Olympics”

In 2020, Japan is inviting athletes from around the world to take part in the Tokyo Olympic Games. We are hoping for the games to be fair and peaceful. At the same time, we are worried about plans to host baseball and softball competitions in Fukushima City, just 50 km away from the ruins of the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. It was here, in 2011, that multiple nuclear meltdowns took place, spreading radioactivity across Japan and the Pacific Ocean - a catastrophe comparable only to the nuclear meltdown of Chernobyl.

The ecological and social consequences of this catastrophe can be seen everywhere in the country: whole families uprooted from their ancestral homes, deserted evacuation zones, hundreds of thousands of bags of irradiated soil dumped all over the country, contaminated forests, rivers and lakes. Normality has not returned to Japan.

The reactors continue to be a radiation hazard as further catastrophes could occur at any time. Every day adds more radioactive contamination to the ocean, air and soil. Enormous amounts of radioactive waste are stored on the premises of the power plant in the open air. Should there be another earthquake, these would pose a grave danger to the population and the environment. The nuclear catastrophe continues today.

On the occasion of the Olympic Games 2020, we are planning an international campaign. Our concern is that athletes and visitors to the games could be harmed by the radioactive contamination in the region, especially those people more vulnerable to radiation, children and pregnant women.

According to official Japanese government estimates, the Olympic Games will cost more than the equivalent of 12 billion Euros. At the same time, the Japanese government is threatening to cut support to all evacuees who are unwilling to return to the region.

International regulations limit the permitted dose for the general public of additional radiation following a nuclear accident to 1 mSv per year. In areas where evacuation orders were recently lifted, the returning population will be exposed to levels up to 20 mSv per year. Even places that have undergone extensive decontamination efforts could be recontaminated at any time by unfavourable weather conditions, as mountains and forests serve as a continuous depot for radioactive particles.

Our campaign will focus on educating the public about the dangers of the nuclear industry. We will explain what health threats the Japanese population was and is exposed to today. Even during normal operations, nuclear power plants pose a threat to public health – especially to infants and unborn children.

There is still no safe permanent depository site for the toxic inheritance of the nuclear industry anywhere on earth, that is a fact.

We plan to use the media attention generated by the Olympic Games to support Japanese initiatives calling for a nuclear phase-out and to promote a worldwide energy revolution: away from fossil and nuclear fuels and towards renewable energy generation.

We need to raise awareness of the involvement of political representatives around the world in the military-industrial complex.

We denounce the attempt of the Japanese government to pretend that normality has returned to the contaminated regions of Japan.

We call on all organisations to join our network and help us put together a steering group to coordinate this campaign. The Olympic Games are still two years away – now is still time to get organised.

We look forward to hearing from you,

with best regards,

For the campaign „Nuclear Free Olympic Games 2020“:
Annette Bänsch-Richter-Hansen
Jörg Schmid
Henrik Paulitz
Alex Rosen