

### **Forum III: 60 years of damage from Agent Orange and solidarity with the AO victims**

We call for dissemination of information on war crimes and damage from chemical weapons and support to and solidarity with Agent Orange victims

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In a few days, it will be 60 years since the first use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. Similar to the atomic bombing damage, the victims of Agent Orange continue to suffer from physical and mental pains even after 60 years, and the genetic effects are inflicting great scars on innocent people of the second generation and of the generations after that.

As with the atomic bombings, what torments the victims even more is the fact that the U.S. government, despite its obvious war crimes, has yet to acknowledge its guilt or responsibility, and therefore has not apologized or compensated for its crimes.

Crimes for which the government does not admit its guilt will surely be repeated. Agent Orange, which contains dioxin, has also been used in the United States and has caused many victims there. Two years ago, it was reported in Japan that a large amount of Agent Orange was buried in a national forest in Yubari, Hokkaido. It seems that the defoliant was buried in the early 1970s when the U.S. military could no longer continue to use it, but no explanation has been given by the government about it.

The struggle of the victims and people of Vietnam suffering from this disaster, just like the struggle of the A-bomb survivors in Japan, is a humanitarian struggle to prosecute the criminality of the use of weapons of mass destruction and to eradicate the damage caused by them. Originally, we wanted to send a delegation to Vietnam for the August 10 commemoration to renew our resolve together. But due to the pandemic, we are holding this meeting online instead.

Once again, I would like to thank the Vietnamese people who are present today, especially the victims who gave their testimonies. I would also like to express my heartfelt respect to Mr. NAKAMURA Goro, Ms. SAKATA Masako, the Japan-Vietnam Friendship Association and all the other people present today who have been pioneers in taking action to support the victims. At the same time, we would like to renew our determination to strengthen our solidarity with the victims of Agent Orange.

Here I would like to propose our "Solidarity Fund" campaign towards next year's August 10th. The text is very short and I will read it out. I hope you will support our proposal.

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**Appeal for Solidarity with the Agent Orange Victims, Dissemination of Information  
about the Damage, and Fundraising for Support of the Victims**

This year, 76 years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and 60 years after the first use of Agent Orange/Dioxin by the U.S. military in Vietnam, we met at the Forum for Solidarity with the Victims of Agent Orange at the 2021 World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, where we had the opportunity to hear in-depth reports from the victims, experts working on their treatment and relief, and people in Japan and Vietnam involved in the movement to support the victims.

From the 1960s to the early 1970s, during the struggle for national liberation in Vietnam, the U.S. military sprayed more than 7,000 liters of Agent Orange containing the poisonous substance dioxin, contaminating more than 3 million hectares of land and affecting more than 3 million people with genetic effects lasting for generations.

The use of Agent Orange/dioxin is a serious war crime in light of the international laws of the time. We stand in solidarity with all those who have suffered and call on the U.S. government to offer an official apology to the victims, provide comprehensive compensation for their medical treatment, health care and livelihoods, decontaminate the vast areas affected, detoxify the poisonous substances, and immediately begin efforts to eradicate all weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons.

Relief from the damage caused by weapons of mass destruction can only be truly achieved by informing the world of the unfortunate reality of the victims and by completely banning and eliminating weapons of mass destruction, as declared by the first World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in 1955.

To this end, we are determined to take the following actions, and call on everyone in Japan and internationally to join us.

1. To inform the public of the reality of the damage caused by Agent Orange, as well as the damage caused by atomic and hydrogen bombs, at the grassroots throughout Japan and around the world, by making use of the testimonies of victims, photographs, videos, and many other materials that have been created so far.

2. To raise funds for the relief of the victims of Agent Orange in order to support the efforts to save the victims and their families in Vietnam, as well as those who are suffering from the genetic effects, including the generations to come.

3. To stand in solidarity with movements around the world that accuse the government and corporations involved in these acts, and to demand an apology and compensation from the perpetrating government.

After the conference, the secretariat of the World Conference Organizing Committee will continue to disseminate the materials and other resources produced by the Vietnamese participants and Japanese journalists and artists, and the proceeds will be added to the funds to support the victims.

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2021 World Conference against A and H Bombs