Health Experts, Parents Demand the International Olympic Committee Take Torch Relay, Olympic Games Out of Fukushima.

The Fukushima Fallout Awareness Network (FFAN) and Beyond Nuclear today responded to statements from Thomas Bach, Chairman of the International Olympic Committee that “No Olympic city has ever been as prepared as Tokyo for the 2020 summer Games.” Says Kimberly Roberson, FFAN Executive Director, “Considering that the 2011 triple nuclear meltdowns are a mere 150 miles away in Fukushima, that statement is hard to believe.” She continues, “Why won’t Mr. Bach comment on the possibility of 2020 Games being planned for Fukushima?” Ms. Roberson points to information from the Fairewinds Energy Education website which states as follows: “When the torch route and Olympic stadium samples were tested, we found samples of dirt in Fukushima’s Olympic Baseball Stadium that were highly radioactive, registering 6,000 Bq/kg Cesium, 3,000 times more radioactive than dirt in the US.” Fairewinds is dedicated to furthering public understanding of nuclear power and nuclear safety.

The IOC also announced that the torch relay will begin at J Village, the former disaster response headquarters used during the initial nuclear meltdowns in 2011. J Village is situated approximately 12.4 miles from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear meltdowns and not far from acres of radioactive topsoil and more stored in bags. The bags and the cranes moving them are visible on satellite maps dated 2019. “FFAN has petitioned Mr. Bach and other officials for over two years on the dangers of hosting Olympic Games at J Village in Fukushima. Now the torch relay will begin there. What will people be breathing, eating, drinking, while they are there? Scientific data regarding the dangers to human health requires immediate action,” says Ms. Roberson.

The IOC in December, 2018 established an ad hoc human rights committee chaired by the former UN High Commissioner on Human Rights Prince Zeid Ra-ad Al Hussein of Jordan. "Since radioactive dirt has been found in some venues and an ad hoc human rights committee has already been established, this committee should examine dangers from exposures to radioactivity, particularly for females and children who are more sensitive," said Cindy Folkers, Radiation and Health Specialist at Beyond Nuclear. "Radiocesium is man-made and not supposed to be in our environment and radioactive microparticles may be present as well, but would be harder to detect.” Ms. Folkers also states, “Instead of spending money on the Olympics and trying to force people to live on Fukushima-contaminated land, the government of Japan should spend money rebuilding lives for the thousands of people who are still radiation refugees.”

Nancy Foust, Editor at SimplyInfo.org explains, “Concrete and other highly radioactive materials from the Unit 3 reactor explosion were found in Naraha, the town where J Village resides, back in 2013. There has been no comprehensive effort to assure this type of debris has been removed from the region.” She further states, "Microparticles of reactor fuel (sometimes called hot particles) are the major ongoing public health risk from the initial disaster. These highly radioactive particles are small enough to inhale and can remain permanently lodged in the lungs giving a uniquely dangerous exposure."

After the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant exploded in 1986, children and adults in Belarus were found to have significant and often devastating heart, thyroid and hormonal abnormalities. Now, 33 years later, Chernobyl’s Exclusion Zone remains off limits to public access and inhabitation. The Zone covers an area approximately 2,600 km (1,000 square miles) surrounding Chernobyl. In Japan, J Village is located 20 km (12.4 miles) from Fukushima Daiichi. The National Academy of Sciences has stated that there is no safe dose of radiation.

Experts have questioned why Fukushima was chosen to host part of the 2020 Olympics. In a recent development, Japan’s Olympic Committee President Tsunekazu Takeda announced that he will step down in June of 2019. French authorities continue a two year investigation into Takeda’s involvement in payments made prior to Tokyo being awarded the 2020 Summer Games, as reported by National Public Radio and the New York Times. -33-