



UN Human Rights Council 8th session
Item 6: Consideration of UPR reports - Japan
Thursday, 12 June 2008

Statement on behalf of the International Movement Against Discrimination and All
Forms of Racism (IMADR).

Thank you Mr. President,

We welcome the broad range of human rights issues raised with Japan by members of the Council's UPR working group during its review last month, as reflected in the twenty six constructive recommendations contained in paragraph 60 of its report.

We regret however that as paragraphs 9, 29, 45 and 46 of the report demonstrate, the Japanese government did not take the opportunity presented by the UPR to give true consideration to the views and questions posed, instead using the opportunity only to repeat its established position, for example in respect of the issues of comfort women, the death penalty, the lack of a National Human Rights Institution or any domestic legislation prohibiting discrimination and the human rights of the indigenous Ainu peoples.

We also regret the fact that Japan has chosen not to accept a number of recommendations from the outcome of its UPR, in spite of its obligations, as a member of the Human Rights Council, to participate fully in the UPR process and take a lead in the protection and promotion of human rights.

IMADR welcomes the recommendations by Guatemala and Algeria at point 19, paragraph 60 of the report, in respect of implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for the indigenous population in Japan including the Ainu peoples. We applaud the recent resolution by Japan's national parliament, followed by the official statement of the Japanese Government, regarding the recognition of the Ainu as indigenous peoples and the examination of their indigenous rights in light of this Declaration. We urge Japan to make full use of this important opportunity, including by

ensuring the Ainu peoples' involvement in decision-making by the Expert Meeting (*Yūshikisha kondankai*) regarding their rights, in accordance with Article 18 of that Declaration, and Algeria and Guatemala's UPR recommendations.

Finally, Mr President, we support the recommendation made by the UK in the UPR outcome report, and call upon Japan to fully involve civil society in the follow up to the UPR process at the national level. Regrettably, Japan did not undertake broad or meaningful consultations with civil society prior to drawing up its national report, making it difficult for this report to reflect the true situation in respect of the implementation or otherwise of Japan's human rights obligations on the ground. The UPR follow up process presents an important opportunity for Japan to correct this shortcoming when implementing its UPR recommendations, and we urge it to do so by constructively engaging with civil society in respect of follow up and implementation.

We thank you, Mr. President.