**Submission to the UHCHR on General Comment on**

**children’s rights in relation to the digital environment**

I have come to know that the United Nations is discussing protecting children's rights in the digital environment.

The Internet is becoming an important part of building a human society. I sincerely hope that children will be able to use the Internet with peace of mind as they use the Internet.

I would like to express my opinion here, including what I would like to ask the committee and what I am worried about.

**B. Best interests of the child (Article 3, Paragraph 1)**

Originally, the digital environment is centered on us adults, in which children also interact and share information through various platforms.

Some are trying to do bad things in the digital environment. Therefore, we understand that the best interests of the child should be ensured as a top priority consideration.

However, although the 13th item in this item contains the word that there is a possibility, the possibility is just a possibility and cannot be judged as an act.

In addition, it is judged that the judgment of the possibility differs from person to person and that it does not directly affect the interests of the child or even the environment for the purpose of securing the interests of the child may affect the rights of the child. It means that the children lose the digital environment they used to live in.

It makes no sense for children to lose access to the digital environment.

Therefore, paragraph 13 should be changed from "potentially affecting children's rights" to "behavior that infringes children's rights".

In addition, there are an increasing number of cases in which excessive Internet regulations aimed at protecting children's rights do not actually contribute to the protection of children, leading to the blockade of minority opinions and the spread of prejudice.

These mean they are being abused by regulators.

I believe that it is necessary to acquire information literacy and educational things such as sex education in order to secure the interests of children, and it is necessary to acquire means to deal with potential harm. We believe that the approach we can take is far more important than censorship.

**Freedom of expression (Article 13)**

Freedom of expression is an important "right to express an opinion" to protect children's rights, and this right should be protected to the utmost.

And freedom of expression is not limited to expressing opinions, but there is also a way to convey ideas in the form of works of art and literary works.

In this way, expressions can convey opinions and ideas in various ways.

And the expression should not be limited to what is acceptable.

In essence, the fictional art created does not cause any direct harm to anyone.

In addition, expressions can be considered in various ways from various perspectives.

And the purpose of children's expression in art and literature is also different.

I strongly urge the committee members not to unilaterally deny the creation of children or censor them by criminalizing art.

Yours truly,

Tetsuya Shimada

Japan

Civilian