

THE JAPANESE WORKERS' COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

2-33-10 Minami-Otsuka, Toshima-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN

tel:+81-3-3943-2420 fax:+81-3-5395-3240 e-mail: [hmrights@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:hmrights@yahoo.co.jp)

Human Rights Council Advisory Committee

15 session,

10-14 August 2015

Local government and Human rights

Statement by Ms. Yumie MAEDA

on behalf of the

*Japanese Workers' Committee for Human Rights (JWCHR)*

Geneva, 11 August 2015

We, Japanese Workers' Committee for Human Rights(JWCHR) thanks to the Advisory Committee's progress report A/HRC/27/59 whose paragraph 22 says special mention should be made of the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City (2010).\* The charter's general provision VII is written on - Freedom of conscience and religion, opinion and information. \* Today we would like to speak up concerning this.

\*Please see the following site: <http://www.uclg-cisd.org/en/right-to-the-city/world-charter-agenda/7>

Recently, some local Japanese self-governments rejected the use of public facilities to citizens holding gathering or events during which they plan to appeal the importance of war-renouncing Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

We will show you three examples. First, in Kokubunji city, a group, named "the article 9 Kokubunji" was refused participation in the City's Festival. Second, Yamato city government canceled sponsorship of a gathering of the Article 9 Yamato Group which was to discuss collective self-defense because a young professional singing group sang a song opposing the ruling party's policy. Thirdly, a Haiku poem was refused by the publisher of Mitsuhashi public hall's monthly report in Saitama prefecture. It just says: There was Women's demonstration in rainy season saying "Uphold the article nine of our constitution."

These judgements are independent decisions by local governments and reflect the central government's policy to deploy the Japanese self-defense force overseas more under Prime Minister Abe's rule. Needless to say, public services are for citizens and public workers have an obligation to respect a nation's constitution and create the society where citizens can freely talk about peace and their constitution which are gifts of democracy. If civil servants don't do so, it means the society will neglect human rights.

As the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City says:

The city ensures that everyone is able to hold opinions without interference, as well as to seek and receive information and ideas through any media, in private and in public.

The city encourages debates and exchange of ideas and information. It ensures that all inhabitants have free access to public meeting places and facilitates the creation of such places.

We, JWCHR, request the Human Rights Council and Advisory Committee to advise all Japanese local governments to fulfill their roles to ensure freedom of conscience, religion, opinion and information.

\*Please see the following site: <http://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/right-to-the-city/world-charter-agenda/7>