

Information Circular

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Communication from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the Agency

1. On 24 August 2023, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the Agency.
2. As requested, the Note Verbale and its attachment are herewith circulated for the information of all Member States.



THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

PERMANENT MISSION IN VIENNA

HOHE WARTE 3, 1190 VIENNA TEL: +43 1 4801222

CPMV/2023/96

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliment to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and requests the Secretariat to circulate this Note Verbale and its attachment, in relation to the Remarks of the Spokesperson of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the IAEA on Japan's Releasing Fukushima Nuclear-Contaminated Water into the Ocean, as well as Press Release of the China Atomic Energy Authority and China's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's statement and remarks in this regard, as an INFCIRC document to all member states of the IAEA.

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the IAEA the assurances of its highest consideration.



Remarks of the Spokesperson of the Permanent Mission of
the People's Republic of China to the IAEA on
Japan's Releasing Fukushima Nuclear-Contaminated Water
into the Ocean

(08-24-2023)

On August 24, in disregard of the strong criticism and opposition from the international community, the Japanese government unilaterally started the release of the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. Such action seriously undermined the authority and credibility of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), severely harmed people's health and rights and interests of marine environment in neighbouring countries, and gravely jeopardized security and development interests of global nuclear energy industry. China firmly opposes and strongly condemns it.

The disposal of the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is a major issue about nuclear safety. Its impact goes beyond Japan's borders, and the issue is by no means a private matter for Japan. Since humanity began using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, there has been neither any precedent nor universally recognized standards for discharging nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. The Fukushima nuclear accident which took place 12 years ago was a major catastrophe that already caused the leakage of large amounts of radioactive substances into the ocean. There could be a man-made secondary disaster to the local people and the whole world if Japan chooses to dump the water into the ocean just to serve Japan's selfish interests.

Japan has been using the IAEA's Comprehensive Report released last month, hyping up the safety and harmlessness of the nuclear-contaminated water. In fact, the IAEA has conducted a review of Japan's ocean discharge plan at the request of Japan, which is of the nature of technical assistance and advisory service. Neither has it the force of the international law, nor can it give legitimacy and legality to Japan's ocean discharge plan. The scope of the IAEA review was strictly limited by Japan, which has no mandate to evaluate other disposal options for the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water, or the effectiveness and long-term reliability of the treatment facility. The IAEA has only reviewed and made its judgement based on the data and information provided by Japan, and conducted inter-laboratory comparison (ILC) with a small amount of samples of nuclear-contaminated water collected by Japan. Under such circumstances that the authenticity of data and the accuracy of information remains to be verified and independence and representation of sampling

is severely insufficient, the conclusion of the IAEA's review lacks adequate scientific or factual basis and inevitably has its limitations.

Japan failed to prove the legitimacy and legality of the ocean discharge decision, the long-term reliability of the purification facility, and the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data. It failed to prove that the long-term ocean discharge is safe and harmless to the marine environment and people's health, and that the monitoring plan is sound and effective. Japan also failed to have thorough consultations with other stakeholders. It has to be pointed out that if the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is truly safe, it is not necessary to dump it into the ocean, on the other hand, if such nuclear-contaminated water is not safe, Japan should not choose to dump it into the ocean. Therefore, it is unjustified, unreasonable and unnecessary for Japan to push through the ocean discharge plan.

The ocean belongs to all humanity. To forcibly start the ocean discharge is an extremely selfish and irresponsible act in disregard of the global public interest. Once the nuclear-contaminated water is dumped into the ocean, there is no way to recollect, while the hazards to marine environment and human health will last for decades. By dumping the water into the ocean, Japan is spreading the risks to the rest of the world and passing an open wound onto the future generations of humanity. By doing so, Japan has turned itself into a saboteur of the ecological system and polluter of the global marine environment. It is infringing upon people's rights to health, development and a healthy environment, which violates Japan's moral responsibilities and obligations under international law. From the moment Japan started the discharge, it has put itself in the dock in front of the international community and is bound to face international condemnation for many years to come. China urges Japan to immediately stop its wrongdoing.

The Chinese government always puts people's wellbeing first, and will take all measures necessary to safeguard food safety and the health of Chinese people.

**Press Release of the China Atomic Energy Authority
on Japan's Start of Releasing Fukushima Nuclear-Contaminated Water
into the Ocean on August 24, 2023**

On August 24, in disregard of the strong criticism and opposition from the international community, the Japanese government unilaterally started the release of the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. A relevant official of the China Atomic Energy Authority (CAEA) told the media that such action has done seriously undermined the authority and credibility of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), severely harmed people's health and rights and interests of marine environment in neighbouring countries, and gravely jeopardized security and development interests of global nuclear energy industry. China firmly opposes and strongly condemns it. The Japanese side should immediately stop this erroneous act.

The Japanese government has been wantonly using the IAEA's Comprehensive Report released last month, hyping up the safety and harmlessness of the nuclear-contaminated water, and started the ocean discharge. This is extremely selfish, irresponsible and in disregard of global public interest. In fact, the IAEA has conducted a review of Japan's ocean discharge plan at the request of Japan, which is of the nature of technical assistance and advisory service. Neither has it the force of the international law, nor can it give legitimacy and legality to Japan's ocean discharge plan.

The scope of the IAEA review was strictly limited by Japan, which has no mandate to evaluate other treatment options for the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water, or the effectiveness and long-term reliability of the treatment facility. The IAEA has only reviewed and made a judgement based on the data and information provided by Japan, and conducted inter-laboratory comparison (ILC) with a small amount of samples of nuclear-contaminated water collected by Japan. Under such circumstances that the authenticity of data and the accuracy of information remains to be verified and independence and representation of sampling is severely insufficient, the conclusion of the IAEA's review lacks adequate scientific or factual basis and inevitably has its limitations.

To date, Japan failed to prove the legitimacy and legality of the ocean discharge decision, the long-term reliability of the purification facility, and the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data. It failed to prove that the long-term

ocean discharge is safe and harmless to the marine environment and people's health. Japan also failed to have thorough and meaningful consultations or reach any understanding with other stakeholders including China. Nor has it delivered on its commitment to the IAEA to establishing international long-term monitoring and on-site oversight arrangements led by the IAEA and participated by stakeholders. The Fukushima nuclear accident which took place 12 years ago has already caused the leakage of large amounts of radioactive substances into the ocean. There could be a man-made secondary disaster to the local people and the whole world if Japan chooses to dump the water into the ocean just to serve Japan's selfish interests.

China urges Japan to immediately stop its wrongdoing. Japan should not discharge the nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean, without providing credible evidence on the legitimacy of the ocean discharge, reliability of the purification facility, authenticity of the source term data and uncertainty of environmental impacts, etc., seeking understanding with stakeholders including its neighbouring countries, or establishing long-term monitoring and on-site oversight arrangements led by the IAEA and recognized by stakeholders.

**Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Statement
on the Japanese Government's Start of Releasing Fukushima
Nuclear-Contaminated Water into the Ocean on August 24, 2023**

On August 24, in disregard of the strong criticism and opposition from the international community, the Japanese government unilaterally started the release of the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. China firmly opposes and strongly condemns it. We have made serious démarches to Japan and asked it to stop this wrongdoing.

The disposal of the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is a major issue about nuclear safety. Its impact goes beyond Japan's borders, and the issue is by no means a private matter for Japan. Since humanity began using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, there has been neither any precedent nor universally recognized standards for discharging nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. The Fukushima nuclear accident which took place 12 years ago was a major catastrophe that already caused the leakage of large amounts of radioactive substances into the ocean. There could be a man-made secondary disaster to the local people and the whole world if Japan chooses to dump the water into the ocean just to serve Japan's selfish interests.

The Japanese government failed to prove the legitimacy and legality of the ocean discharge decision, the long-term reliability of the purification facility, and the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data. It failed to prove that the ocean discharge is safe and harmless to the marine environment and people's health, and that the monitoring plan is sound and effective. Japan also failed to have thorough consultations with other stakeholders. The ocean belongs to all humanity. To forcibly start the ocean discharge is an extremely selfish and irresponsible act in disregard of the global public interest. By dumping the water into the ocean, Japan is spreading the risks to the rest of the world and passing an open wound onto the future generations of humanity. By doing so, Japan has turned itself into a saboteur of the ecological system and polluter of the global marine environment. It is infringing upon people's rights to health, development and a healthy environment, which violates Japan's moral responsibilities and obligations under international law. From the moment Japan started the discharge, it has put itself in the dock in front of the international community and is bound to face international condemnation for many years to come.

The Chinese government always puts our people's wellbeing first, and will take all measures necessary to safeguard food safety and the health of our people.

**Foreign Ministry Spokesperson's Remarks
on Japan's Releasing Fukushima Nuclear-Contaminated Water
into the Ocean at the Regular Press Conferences**

August 23, 2023

Yesterday Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong summoned Japan's Ambassador to China Hideo Tarumi to make serious démarches to the Japanese side on this. He noted that in disregard of the strong criticism and opposition from the international community, the Japanese government announced the decision to start releasing the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean soon. This is extremely selfish and irresponsible, as the discharge will spread the risks of nuclear contamination to its neighbouring countries, including China, and the rest of the world, and by doing so, Japan is putting its selfish interests above the long-term wellbeing of people in the region and beyond. China is gravely concerned and strongly opposed to this.

The ocean sustains humanity. It is not a sewer for Japan's nuclear-contaminated water. Japan's pushing for the ocean discharge plan is no doubt a huge gamble that ventures the global marine environment and people's health. If Japan sincerely wants to address the concerns of neighboring countries, it should stop insisting on dumping nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean, communicate with other parties without taking the decision in advance and fully discuss all potential options for disposing of the water safely.

China strongly urges Japan to cancel its wrong decision, stop pushing for the ocean discharge plan, carry out communication with neighboring countries with sincerity and good will, dispose of the water in a responsible manner, and avoid creating unpredictable damage and harm to the global marine environment. If Japan is bent on proceeding with its discharge plan, the Chinese government will take necessary measures to firmly protect the marine environment, food safety and people's health.

The negative impact of the ocean discharge cannot be undone. We don't want August 24, 2023 to be a disaster day for marine environment. If Japan does not change course, it must bear the historic responsibility for this decision.

Like we have said many times, there is a fundamental difference between the nuclear-contaminated water that came into direct contact with the melted reactor cores in the Fukushima nuclear disaster and the water released by nuclear power plants in normal operation. They are different in nature, come from different sources and require different levels of sophistication to handle. Japan deliberately compares the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water with water released by nuclear power plants in normal operation, which only proves that Japan is not handling the issue scientifically and is deliberately misleading the international community.

I need to stress that for the past two years and more, the legitimacy, legality and safety of Japan's ocean discharge plan has been questioned over and over again by the international community. Japan has yet to address major international concerns such as the long-term reliability of the purification facility, the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data, and the effectiveness of the monitoring arrangement. China and other stakeholders have pointed out on multiple occasions that if the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is truly safe, Japan wouldn't have to dump it into the sea—and certainly shouldn't if it's not. It is unjustified, unreasonable and unnecessary for Japan to push through the ocean discharge plan. We urge Japan not to shift the risk of nuclear pollution onto the rest of humanity in pursuit of its selfish interests.

August 22, 2023

In disregard of the strong concerns and firm opposition from the international community, the Japanese government announced the decision to start releasing the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean from August 24. This is extremely selfish and irresponsible, as the discharge will spread the risks of nuclear contamination to the rest of the world, and by doing so, Japan is putting its selfish interests above the long-term wellbeing of the entire humanity. China is gravely concerned and strongly opposed to this. We have made serious démarches to Japan.

For the past two years and more, the legitimacy, legality and safety of Japan's ocean discharge plan has been questioned over and over again by the international community. Japan has yet to address major international concerns such as the long-term reliability of the purification facility, the authenticity and accuracy of the nuclear-contaminated water data, and the effectiveness of the monitoring arrangement. China and other stakeholders have pointed out on multiple occasions that if the Fukushima nuclear-contaminated water is truly safe, Japan wouldn't have to dump it into the sea—and certainly shouldn't if it's not. It is unjustified, unreasonable and unnecessary for Japan to push through the ocean discharge plan.

Regrettably, Japan has given scarce response to international concerns. It has been trying to create an impression that the ocean discharge is safe and harmless. It has even made unfounded accusations against neighboring countries who have expressed legitimate concerns. All of this has caused outrage among people in neighboring countries and in Japan.

The ocean sustains humanity. It is not a sewer for Japan's nuclear-contaminated water. China strongly urges Japan to stop its wrong decision, cancel the ocean discharge plan, communicate with neighboring countries with sincerity and good will, dispose of the nuclear-contaminated water in a responsible manner and accept rigorous international oversight. China will take all steps necessary to protect the marine environment, ensure food safety and safeguard people's life and health.

August 21, 2023

China has stated its serious position on multiple occasions on the Japanese government pushing through its plan of discharging the nuclear-contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station into the ocean. The Japanese government has been ignoring domestic and international opposition, questions about the legitimacy, legality and safety about the discharge plan, and the potential risks to the global marine environment and human health, and has been headstrong on dumping the nuclear-contaminated water into the ocean. This is extremely selfish and irresponsible. China expresses its grave concern and will closely follow the developments.

Japan's discharge plan has led to serious questions about the Japanese government's credibility. In 2015, in a written document to the Fukushima Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Association, the Japanese government pledged not to take any disposal action before having gained the understanding of the stakeholders. As of today, a large number of Japanese people, including the Fukushima Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Association, are still strongly against the discharge plan. The latest survey by Kyodo News Agency on August 20 shows that 88.1 percent of the people being surveyed are concerned over the image damage and potential economic damage stemming from the discharge plan, and 81.9 percent think the government's explanation is insufficient. The Japanese government, however, only said that it is necessary to respond to the fisheries' concerns on an ongoing basis, as the release of the water will be a long-term effort. By going back on its own words, the Japanese government is jeopardizing its credibility with both its own people and the international community.

Once the nuclear-contaminated water is released into the ocean, there is no way to recollect it. We urge Japan to take seriously the legitimate concerns of the Japanese people and the international community, stop making wrong decisions, and abort the ocean discharge plan.