

Introduction of the 2nd session

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We will now move on to the second session of the webinar entitled "Looking Ahead: The future of victim assistance and environmental remediation – making use of the TPNW and existing international, esp. human rights law".

My name is Toshinori Yamada at Meiji University, and the moderator in this session. In addition to teaching international law at university, I am a board member of IALANA and JALANA.

This second session will consist of three parts; Introduction, Presentation, and Q&A.

Now, let's get to the introduction.

In the first session, we heard from legal experts from Japan and Korea, focusing on lawsuits to bring relief and justice to Hibakusha in their respective countries. We were also able to share the current situation of the damage caused by the U.S. hydrogen bomb tests in the Marshall Islands through video testimonies.

In this second session, we would like to consider what kind of legal efforts are possible for the relief of victims affected by the use and testing of nuclear weapons and for the remediation of environmental damages.

As you know, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) entered into force in 2021. The first meeting of the States Parties is scheduled to be held in the summer of 2022, although the exact date has not yet been determined. The treaty includes articles on victim assistance and environmental remediation, Articles VI and VII. The implementation of these articles is also expected to be a topic of discussion at this meeting of the parties. In fact, Kiribati and Kazakhstan have issued a joint statement indicating that they will prepare a working paper on this topic. Experts and civil society are also working on proposals on this topic.

This session aims not only to provide an overview of the provisions on victim assistance and environmental remediation in the treaty, but also to gain relevant insights on this topic from the perspective of international human rights law and environmental law. Based on this, we hope to discuss with everyone what legal initiatives are possible and what are the challenges regarding victim assistance and environmental remediation.