



## PETITION

### For an independent World Health Organization

The **World Health Organization** (WHO) is responsible for the health of populations throughout the world and is, in the eyes of the different states, regarded as a leading authority. In accordance with its Constitution, WHO must be independent of any commercial interest.

As is shown by the series of cases concerning asbestos and tobacco, to which, today, can be added the issues of pesticides, polychlorobiphenyls or PCBs... the freedom of WHO to carry out its mission can be compromised by the infiltration of lobbies. Such incidents may occur in any institution.

As a result of the WHO/IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) agreement, signed on May 28th, 1959, (Res.WHA 12-40), the World Health Organization has contractual ties to an agency whose recognized purpose is the commercial promotion of the atom for domestic purposes. This agreement stipulates: « *whenever either organization proposes to initiate a programme or activity on a subject in which the other organization has or may have a substantial interest, the first party shall consult the other with a view to **adjusting the matter by mutual agreement*** ». (article I §3). Article III anticipates that it may be « *necessary to apply certain limitations **for the safeguarding of confidential information*** ». Finally : « *In view of the desirability of maximum co-operation ... **the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization** undertake to avoid undesirable duplication between them with respect to the collection, compilation and publication of **statistics*** » (Art. 7).

The IAEA reports to the Security Council of UNO and thus is hierarchically dominant to WHO which reports only to the Economic and Social Council<sup>1</sup>. What happens **in the case of a conflict of interests, when** WHO's mandate to inform and provide health care to the population is confronted with the commercial promotion of nuclear technology by IAEA? **The answer can be found in the way the Chernobyl disaster has been managed.**

It took WHO 5 years to make a first appearance on the scene at Chernobyl, thereby leaving a free hand to the IAEA. In November, 1995, WHO called an international conference on the consequences of Chernobyl. Many of the contributions to the conference turned out to be alarming : the acts of this conference remain, as yet, unpublished. <sup>2</sup>Six months later, the IAEA convened another conference in Vienna (April, 1996), and proclaimed the official toll for the catastrophe - figures which WHO has not challenged : 32 deaths, 200 cases of irradiation, 2000 thyroid cancers in children! These figures, reviewed and upgraded on September 5th, 2005 (approximately 50 deaths, 400 cases of irradiation, 4000 cancers) are just as derisory and completely disregard the state of health of the children in the polluted zones - 8 % of whom are sick - as it does the number of deaths and invalids among the 600.000 - 1.000.000 liquidators who intervened to avoid a greater disaster.

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<sup>1</sup> Testimony of Dr Nakajima, Director-General of WHO in 1995, interviewed in Kiev in 2001 (Cf. *Nuclear controversies*, documentary of W.Tchertkoff).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Chernobyl catastrophe and health* by Michel Fernex <http://independentwho.info>

One has only to compare these figures with those issued on April 25th, 2005, by the Ukrainian Embassy in France and which concern this country alone : « *in 1986, 3.5 million inhabitants including 1.3 million children were subject to severe irradiation. In January 2005, there were 2.646.106 recognized victims. Among those who still live in the zones contaminated by radioactive fallout, 84.7 % are sick. In 2004, 94 % of the liquidators were sick; each year the proportion increases* ».

I demand that WHO / IAEA agreement should be amended, so that WHO may regain its independence :

- cease to act as an accomplice in the disinformation regarding nuclear technology;
- support the effort of the researchers of the ex-Soviet Union and elsewhere who are endeavouring to provide assistance to the contaminated populations in their struggle against the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster;
- initiate research and preventive treatment concerning the controversial issue of internal radiation by low dose caesium 137 and other radionuclides which remain active for periods ranging from several decades to hundreds of years.

All the research findings should be communicated to the public as nowhere are we free of the risk of an accident for which, so far, we remain totally unprepared.

Since April 26th, 2007, on each working day from 8 am till 6 pm, pickets have been posted in front of the WHO H.Q. in Geneva, in order to denounce the OMS- IAEA agreement and demand that WHO regain its independence. I endorse this action so that the WHO may fully carry out its mission.

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