

Report to the World YWCA

Recommendation6: Dangers of Depleted Uranium

YWCA of Japan

A resolution calling for research on the effects of depleted uranium was adopted by the 63rd United Nations General Assembly.

We would like to report that on 2 December a resolution was passed with a large majority by the United Nations General Assembly calling for research on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunition containing depleted uranium. A similar resolution was passed last year.

There were 141 countries that voted in favor of the resolution, while 4 countries, the US, UK, France and Israel, voted against, and 34 countries, including Russia, abstained.

The resolution, taking into consideration the potential harmful effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium on human health and the environment, (1) asks the Secretary-General to request relevant international organizations, such as WHO, IAEA and UNEP, to update and complete their studies and research on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium on human health and the environment, (2) encourages Member States, particularly the affected States, as necessary, to facilitate the studies and research, and (3) requests that the issue of depleted uranium weapons be placed on the agenda of the 2010 General Assembly, based on the research and reports of the Member States and relevant institutions mentioned above.

In keeping with the first resolution, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and which requested research on the harmful effects of depleted uranium armaments, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon issued a report this year titled "Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium". The report contains the opinions of 19 Member States and three international organizations, WHO, IAEA, and UNEP. But it was greatly regretted that there was no opinion submitted by Iraq, the country that has suffered the most from DU weapons.

The year 2010 was set by the resolution, one year being too short to compile a new report, and this time offers a big opportunity to follow up the treaty banning anti-personnel weapons and the treaty banning cluster bombs with action toward a ban on the use of depleted uranium. We call upon the World YWCA to make use of its network in 125 countries to publicize the terrible effects of DU, particularly the genetic destruction in women and children, caused by radiation.

This year the YWCA of Japan lobbied the Government of Japan, a country that has been atomic bombed, to take vigorous initiatives at the UN General Assembly toward the banning of DU weapons, and has cooperated with other NGOs to appeal to the public. Please find an attached photograph of the "Candle Message: Ban DU Next" rally that was held in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima on November 16th, 2008.