

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
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JAPAN

**NGO Report
in relation to the seventh periodic report of JAPAN**

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Research Group for Genetical Relationship Between Jomon People and Ainu

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Scientific Truth

The Ainu People are Japanese People, Not Indigenous People

1. Relevant paragraphs of the seventh periodic report of Japan (CCPR/C/JPN/7)

- Question 6 - Paragraph 18
- Question 29 - Paragraphs 226 - 229

2. Summary

At present, there is discussion of the indigenous rights of the Ainu people. The Japanese Government has defined the Ainu as an "indigenous people" and taken a policy

of protecting and aiding Ainu culture. In response to this, people who support the Ainu assert that this is insufficient and demand the Ainu be granted indigenous rights.

However, these demands are based on political claims without scientific grounds. Both the Japanese Government and people concerned with the Ainu claim that the Ainu are a northern people who advanced to northern Hokkaido around the medieval period and that the Ainu and the Japanese people are different. This is not true. The Ainu are in fact Japanese people. Japan is undergoing a campaign of ethnic divide and conquer, and, unfortunately, the Japanese Government has basically submitted to this campaign.

The reason that the Japanese Government has taken the wrong course is that it was pressured by the UN. The Japanese Government incorporated the views of activists who, at the UN, claimed that the Ainu people were different from the Japanese people and were being persecuted for being different. We request that the UN not support the baseless claim, that the Ainu people are an "indigenous people" which is without scientific justification.

3. Background

On May 2019, a joint research group consisting of 11 members from seven of Japan's foremost research institutions, including the National Museum of Nature and Science, the National Institute of Genetics and the University of Tokyo, announced that "the Ainu inherited 70% of the Jomon peoples' DNA." This research was published in *Anthropological Science, 2019, Volume 127, Issue 2*, titled 'Late Jomon male and female genome sequences from the Funadomari site in Hokkaido, Japan.'

This is a scientific fact. The Ainu are in fact descendants of the Jomon Japanese who have inhabited Hokkaido from the Jomon period. The claim that the Ainu are a northern

people who advanced to Hokkaido around the medieval period does not have any foundation.

From a historical perspective, the Ainu have played important roles in the history of Japan. In the Yamato court (from the 4th to the 7th century), brown bear fur was the highest of grants given by the Emperor to his subjects, which could be supplied only by the Ainu of Hokkaido. The Ainu bear the sea eagle tail feathers, which are regarded as sacred treasures in the 20-year shrine renewal process called *Shikinen Sengu*, at Ise Grand Shrine. In samurai society, production of armor and horse gear would have been impossible without large supplies of animal skins and feathers from Hokkaido. In particular, the finest goods from sea eagles and sea otters were accessible only by the Ainu of Hokkaido. Japan's core history, represented by the Imperial family, shrines and samurai society, have long been supported by the productiveness of the Ainu.

Some claim that the new Meiji Government (1868 - 1912) forced the Ainu into an unfortunate environment but Japan at that time underwent turbulence. The Aizu Domain of Tohoku had their territory reduced and transferred to a barren area, and many people died of hunger and of the cold. Warriors who were deprived of privileges they had been granted up to then were greatly disaffected. In the end, they were driven to southern Kyushu, where thousands of them were killed. The battle took 13,000 lives from all sides, including the government army. Even during this period, the Ainu did not suffer massive casualties. On the contrary, they were protected. In Japan, there were many Japanese placed in a much more severe environment.

4. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Declaration adopted on September 13, 2007 states on the territorial integrity and political unity of sovereign nations:

Article 46

1. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, people, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations or **construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States.**

The UN should not assist the forces that are scheming to divide the Japanese people by spreading lies concerning the Ainu. The UN is a place of cooperation, not a place of division.

5. Conclusion

1) We demand from the UN Human Rights Committee the following:

- The claim that “the Ainu are an indigenous people” has no scientific merit. The UN needs to support ethnic harmony, based on facts, and not division based on lies concerning the Ainu people.
- The UN is a place that fosters ethnic cooperation and harmony and not a place to provoke ethnic conflict. We demand that the UN respect this ideal and not accept extreme political ideologies.
- We request that the UN demand that the Japanese Government clearly state its understanding of the Ainu people.

2) We demand from the Japanese Government the following:

- The claim that the Ainu are a race different from the Japanese people is unscientific and incorrect. The Japanese Government must acknowledge the finding that “the Ainu

inherited 70% of the Jomon people's DNA”, which was made by Japan’s most prestigious research institutions.

- Nonetheless, the Ainu people are a valuable people, their culture handed down through the ages since the Jomon period--from this perspective, the Japanese Government should preserve and value the Ainu culture.
- The Ainu people, who have preserved their culture from mythical Japan to the present day, are a rare people and are the pride of the Japanese people. The Japanese Government should clearly communicate this thinking worldwide, as well as to the Japanese people.