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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Japan Society for History Textbook, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 August 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



The Chinese Government Should Stop Misusing History to Form a Public Opinion Falsely Asserting that Okinawa Is Part of China

Within China, a public opinion is being formed, claiming that Okinawa belongs to China, through distortion of historical facts from the period of the Ming and Qing dynasties when Ryukyu was a tributary state to the Chinese dynasties. If the United Nations should let China use the international opinion as a weapon with the intention of territorial expansion, based on historical sources, as it is, it would mean that the United Nations helps China expand its territories, not only in relation with Okinawa, but also all over East Asia.

1. Chinese Media Reporting

According to the Japanese newspaper Sankei Shimbun of May 25 this year, the former deputy general chief of staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Mr. Sun Jian-guo, who was invited to the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party Security Research committee, said, "Ryukyu (Okinawa) used to belong to the Chinese sphere. What if Okinawa should declare independence?" Following this, the People's Daily, the Communist Party organ, of June 4, reported that President Xi visited a historical museum in Beijing on July 1 and said, "While I was working in Fuzhou (Fujian Province), I learned that there was a deep-rooted exchange with Ryukyu." Ever since Governor Tamaki of Okinawa Prefecture decided to visit China at the end of April and until July, upon his arrival in China, the domestic Chinese media continued to largely report to the effect that it is not certain yet to which country Okinawa belongs or that clearly Okinawa belongs to China. At present, due to the strict restrictions on media reporting, even the statement made by a private person must have been based on the intention of the Chinese Communist Party.

2. China's Intentional Formation of Public Opinion -- Okinawa Belongs to China

Within China, a public opinion has been formed that Okinawa belongs to China, based on the historical fact that the Ryukyu Kingdom used to be a tributary state to the Ming and Qing dynasties. However, the present China is completely different from Ming and Qing and there is no tributary-state system in the international community today. Based on such subjugating relationship in the past, the assertion that the present Okinawa is part of China is utterly unacceptable internationally. If having been a tributary state to a Chinese dynasty should mean belonging to China, Japan under the subjugation of the Ming dynasty during the Muromachi period (1336-1573), the Korean Peninsula, Viet Nam, the Philippines and Mongolia should have all been designated as part of China.

3. China's Purpose

Thus, China, using the history of exchanges during the Ming and Qing dynasties, has been trying to form a public opinion that Japan has no sovereignty over Okinawa, presumably to check the movements of the United States of America Forces and Japan's Self-defense Forces and favorably proceed with the armed unification of Taiwan, (Province of) China. If the United Nations should let China wage its international public opinion warfare with the purpose of territorial expansion, it would mean that the United Nations is complicit in China's territorial expansion over the entire East Asia.

4. Conclusion

Thereby, we request the Human Rights Council to make the following recommendation to the Chinese Government:

The Chinese Government should stop forming the public opinion claiming that Okinawa Prefecture is part of China, intentionally misusing historical facts in its favor.

International Research Institute of Controversial Histories (iRICH), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.