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Statement by the Association of Young Okinawans

Mr. Shouta NAKAMURA Item 5 Education



Thank you. Chair Person

I am Shouta NAKAMURA, a member of Association of Young Okinawans. I appreciate that I can have a chance to present my statement here in the WGIP. My mother is Okinawan. I visit my grand parents every year and I believe Okinawa is my hometown even though I was born and have been brought up in Tokyo. As we have been insisting until now, Okinawans have been infringed on our rights of indigenous people⁵ in various situations. And I didn't know the fact. This is not because I live in Tokyo. In fact, Even the Okinawan young don't know the history of Ryukyus. Even worse, we can not be informed that the Kingdom of the Ryukyus was invaded by the Japanese imperial army. After the completed assimilation by them, today, we the young can not aware that our rights are infringed in daily life. Because we are not informed anything, we feel it is natural and never know that we are offended. So, I am going to give the statement is about such a terrible educational situation in Okinawa.

The Japanese government has forced to implant the way of thinking that Japan is a unitary state. In the other words, all Japanese text books are written by the Japanese for only Japanese with the unfair policy. Significantly, we can see it in the history text books. The issue of Okinawa has only one page of 302 pages in last text book and 200 pages in the newest one. We are only able to use the textbooks which are authorized by the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan so that we can not have our own text book at all. We are forced to study the history of Japan instead of our own history. Because of such an unfair educational system, we young okinawans are not in the situation we can aware that we are indigenous peoples. We are Okinawans, not Japanese. We have rights of learning our culture and history as indigenous people and the Japanese government are obligated to support us. The Japanese government has done nothing yet since we have been insisting. It is an invasion for the indigenous

the matters since 1996 in the WGIP.

people's rights. In my conclusion, the Japanese government should apologize for us to inforce the assimilation policy to Okinawans. And we insist the Japanese government to acknowledge the rights to educate our people by ourselves.

Thank you very much chair person