



37th Session of the HRC  
Geneva, 16 March 2018  
Item 6 – UPR outcomes Japan  
Speaker: Joseph VEDOVA

Oral statement submitted by  
**IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice**  
And co-signed by  
**VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education,  
and Development**

Thank you, Mister President.

IIMA and VIDES International welcome Japan's acceptance of the relevant recommendations concerning education,<sup>1</sup> and the prohibition of corporal punishment<sup>2</sup>. We consider that corporal punishment is still a common practice in domestic and educational settings and therefore request immediate action.

Furthermore, we note with concern that the highly competitive education system does not promote students' creativity or individuality, but instead fosters anxiety and depression. Familial and societal expectations pressure children to outcompete their peers, especially regarding national entrance exams to high school and university. In 2014, the year after Japan's previous UPR, the leading cause of death for 10 to 19-year olds was suicide.<sup>3</sup> Every year in Japan, suicide rates among this age group triple on September first, the day of the new school semester.<sup>4</sup>

**In response, VIDES and IIMA call on Japan to:**

- Reform the educational system to promote students' creativity, freedom, and individual talents.
- Effectively implement the prohibition of corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in schools, orphanages, and child welfare centres.

Thank you, Mister President.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of Japan, UN Doc A/HRC/37/15-Recommendations 161.34, 161.146-150, 161.163, and 161.201

<sup>2</sup> UN Doc A/HRC/37/15 Recommendations 161.149, 161.150, and 161.163

<sup>3</sup> [who.int/mental\\_health/suicide-prevention/japan\\_story/en](http://who.int/mental_health/suicide-prevention/japan_story/en)

<sup>4</sup> [bbc.com/news/world-asia-34105044](http://bbc.com/news/world-asia-34105044)