A 50-year-old agreement with the IAEA has effectively gagged the WHO from telling the truth about the health risks of radiation.

Fifty years ago, on 28 May 1959, the World Health Organisation's assembly voted into force an obscure but important agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency – the United Nations "Atoms for Peace" organisation, founded just two years before in 1957. The effect of this agreement has been to give the IAEA an effective veto on any actions by the WHO that relate in any way to nuclear power – and so prevent the WHO from playing its proper role in investigating and warning of the dangers of nuclear radiation on human health.

The WHO's objective is to promote "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health", while the IAEA's mission is to "accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world". Although best known for its work to restrict nuclear proliferation, the IAEA's main role has been to promote the interests of the nuclear power industry worldwide, and it has used the agreement to suppress the growing body of scientific information on the real health risks of nuclear radiation.