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More help in Japan's nuclear crisis is needed, Idaho expert says

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University of Idaho nuclear engineering professor Akira Tokuhiro says the international community should intervene in Japan's nuclear crisis because "radiation knows no boundaries."

Radiation levels around the Fukushima nuclear plant remain high after explosions and meltdowns disabled four reactors after the earthquake and tsunami of March 11. Tokyo Electric Power Co announced Wednesday it won't be able to restart the reactors because it was forced to cool them and fuel rod pools with seawater. And the company still has not been able to bring the four reactors under control.

The U.S. Department of Energy has 40 people on the ground in Japan, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has about a dozen there.

But is it enough? Tokuhiro said he and other nuclear academics and professionals in both the United States and Japan are worried that Japanese leaders are not acting boldly to solve the problems.

"The pace of developments is very frustrating," Tokuhiro said. "The Japanese community, because of its culture, is hesitant to ask for help."

Tokuhiro was born in Tokyo but now works at the Center for Advanced Energy Studies in Idaho Falls. He has more than 20 years of experience in nuclear engineering and has been closely monitoring the situation in Japan.

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