

Nagasaki Peace Declaration

People making atomic bombs!
Rest from your work for a while and close your eyes.
It was on August 9, 1945!
An atomic bomb that you had made
Claimed tens of thousands of precious lives and
Brought houses and assets to naught in a flash,
Completely devastating loving families.
Survivors had to
Recover from scratch
To follow a tough, long road to bloody lives
With deep concern that an “atomic bomb disease” would end their lives any day and
Infinite grievance over the loss of their families and relatives
Haunting them forever.

This is a quote from a poem by Ms. Fukuda Sumako, a poet from Nagasaki who was exposed to the atomic bombing at 23 and devoted the rest of her life to making people aware of the misery brought by the atomic bomb while combatting atomic bomb disease.

Since that day, *hibakusha*, or atomic bomb survivors, have lived with deep sorrow over the loss of their family members and friends, scars left on their body, the serious effect of radiation spoiling cells and causing various symptoms even after many years, and the hardships of discrimination and life due to being *hibakusha*. Their immense pain and suffering caused by the atomic bombing were not just of an immediate kind. Instead, *hibakusha* have experienced them throughout their lifetime. Nevertheless, *hibakusha* have continued to share their experience of surviving severe hardships with strong determination to ensure that no one in the world will again have the same experience as theirs.

For 79 years since the atomic bombing, we humans have conformed to the humanitarian norm of never using a nuclear weapon again. However, nuclear armament is accelerating, as seen by progress in the development and deployment of nuclear weapons in anticipation of their actual use on the battlefield.

Amid uncertainty about when the Russian invasion of Ukraine will come to an end and growing concern about the expansion of armed conflicts in the Middle East, we are currently facing a critical situation with the increased likelihood of the disappearance of the important norm that we have conformed to thus far.

That poem by Ms. Fukuda ends with the following call:

People making atomic bombs!
It is time for you to
Discard everything in your hands without hesitation.
This will be the first step toward genuine peace and
Our resuscitation as humans.

Leaders of the nuclear states and states under the nuclear umbrella, you must face up to the reality that the very existence of nuclear weapons has posed an increasing threat to humankind, and you must make a brave shift toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. To achieve this, please visit the atomic-bombed cities and listen carefully and conscientiously, as an individual, to *hibakusha* sharing their pain and thoughts. We also call for your dialogue and diplomatic efforts to explore a path

toward peaceful solutions, no matter how difficult the path is, instead of choosing a path toward arms expansion or threats of force.

The government of Japan, the only state attacked by atomic bombs in war, must express a serious attitude of pursuing a world without nuclear weapons. As a step toward this, we call for the Japanese government to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as soon as possible. We also call for the Japanese government to firmly uphold the principle of peace embodied in the Constitution of Japan and to demonstrate its leadership in international efforts to ease the heightened tension in Northeast Asia and advance disarmament in the region, such as the Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone initiative.

Moreover, we strongly request that further enhanced aid be given to *hibakusha*, whose average age exceeds 85, and that relief measures be adopted as soon as possible for those who were exposed to the atomic bombings but have not yet been officially recognized as *hibakusha*.

Everyone in the world, we are “global citizens” who live in the huge community of Earth.

Imagine what would happen if a conflict like those found in the current world escalated to bring about a nuclear war. It would have a devastating impact not only on the lives of people but also on the global environment, imposing a grave threat to the existence of humankind.

That is why the abolition of nuclear weapons is an absolute requirement for the survival of humankind, which can be viewed as a prerequisite for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) striven for by the international community.

Nagasaki has recently seen increasing vigor of long-term efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, mainly among younger generations. In May of this year, a peace-focused forum supported by One Young World, a global community for young leaders that is dubbed as the “junior Davos,” was held in Nagasaki for the first time.

Circles of younger generations around the world working together as leaders have expanded to various regions. They are the light of our hope of building a sustainable and peaceful future.

People making peace!

Even if each of you has only a little power, you are never powerless.

If we as global citizens speak up and work together, we will surely overcome the current difficult situation. If we share our wisdom with each other and partner with each other irrespective of any difference in nationality, religion, race, gender, or generation, we will surely fulfill our future vision. Nagasaki firmly believes so.

I would like to express my deepest condolences for the lives claimed by the atomic bombings.

Nagasaki will disseminate throughout the world a culture of peace, that is, a culture of respecting others, fostering mutual trust, and striving for solutions through dialogue in collaboration with global citizens who hope to contribute to peace making. I hereby declare that Nagasaki will continue its tireless efforts to abolish nuclear weapons and realize permanent world peace so that Nagasaki remains the last place to suffer an atomic bombing.

SUZUKI Shiro
Mayor of Nagasaki
August 9, 2024