

Nagasaki Peace Declaration

At this precise moment, 69 years ago, the sky over this hill was covered with a pitch black nuclear cloud. The single atomic bomb, dropped by a United States bomber, blew away houses and engulfed the city in flames. Many fled for their lives through streets littered with charred bodies. 74,000 precious lives were lost to the terrible blast, heat rays and radiation. A further 75,000 people were wounded. Those who narrowly survived were inflicted with deep mental and physical wounds that will never heal, even though 69 years have now passed.

Today, there are more than 16,000 nuclear warheads in existence. The *hibakusha*, atomic bomb survivors, who personally know the horror of nuclear weapons, have continued to desperately warn us that they must never be used again. The *hibakusha* and their appeal have prevented the repeated use of nuclear weapons since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

What would happen to the world if nuclear weapons were to be used in war today?

In February, the “Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons” was held in Mexico. There, representatives of 146 states examined the impact of nuclear weapons from various perspectives, such as the human body, the economy, the environment, and the climate. Their findings revealed just how inhumane these weapons are, and they made terrifying predictions regarding the consequences of a nuclear war. Not only would it be impossible to save the injured, but the advent of a “nuclear winter” would cause food supplies to run out. This means that more than 2 billion people around the world would starve.

Nuclear weapons are a continuing danger that threatens the present and future of our entire world. The terror that they bring is not confined to Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s past.

The nations which are focusing on the inhumanity of these weapons have begun to consider treaties, such as a nuclear weapons convention, which would have them banned. However, nuclear weapon states, and those that are under a nuclear umbrella, have been unable to relinquish the idea that they can protect their national security with nuclear weapons. They are attempting to postpone the ban. If we cannot overcome this opposition, then next year’s “Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)”, which is held every 5 years, will come to nothing.

I appeal to the nuclear weapon states, and to all states that are under a nuclear umbrella, to take the first step in overcoming this conflict. I ask that you create a forum for discussion with those countries which seek to legally ban nuclear weapons. Please discuss what has to be done, and by when, in order to realize a “world without nuclear weapons”. As the country that best understands the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, I ask that the government of Japan take the lead in these efforts.

One regional method of protecting the future from nuclear war is the creation of “Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones”. Currently, more than half of our Earth’s landmass is already covered by such a Zone. I suggest that along with enacting the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, Japan should investigate a “plan for a Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone”. This would be one method for protecting the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, and Japan from nuclear weapons. The leaders of more than 500 Japanese local governing bodies support this concept, and this circle of agreement will continue to grow.

Due to the debate over the right to collective self-defense, there are currently many opinions being exchanged regarding ways to guarantee Japan's national security as a "Nation of Peace".

Nagasaki has continued to cry, "No more Nagasaki!" and "No more war!" The oath prescribed in the Japanese Constitution that Japan shall "renounce war" is the founding principle for post-war Japan and Nagasaki; a country and a city which suffered the atomic bomb.

The *hibakusha* have continued to communicate this principle of pacifism by speaking of their personal experiences. However, the rushed debate over collective self-defense has given rise to the concern that this principle is wavering. I urgently request that the Japanese government take serious heed of these distressed voices.

In Nagasaki, young people are thinking about nuclear weapons for themselves, conducting discussions, and initiating new activities. Our university students have begun spreading networks overseas. Our high school students have collected over one million signatures for a petition which they presented to the United Nations calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. These high school students have a motto; "We are weak but not powerless". These words remind us that civic society, which is made up of many individuals, is a source of great strength. As a member of civic society, we, Nagasaki, will increase the number of our partners and continue our activities towards realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. We will join forces with NGOs, and cooperate with the UN and other countries that share our goal. Citizens of the world, let us give the next generation a "world without nuclear weapons".

Three years have passed since the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant operated by Tokyo Electric Power Company, Inc. Even today, there are many people being forced to live their lives in unease. Nagasaki continues to provide various forms of support to Fukushima in the hope that the region will achieve full recovery as soon as possible.

Next year will be the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the *hibakusha* continue to age, we desire support befitting their present situation, such as improvement of the recognition system for atomic bomb diseases.

We pray that between now and the 70th anniversary that we will make great advances towards our goal, which is shared by all peace-loving people, to achieve "a world without nuclear weapons". We also offer our most heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives to the atomic bomb.

I declare that together with the city of Hiroshima, we shall continue to strive to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons, and to achieve everlasting world peace.

Tomihisa Taue
Mayor of Nagasaki
August 9, 2014