

PEACE 平和文化 CULTURE



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The 74th Peace Memorial Ceremony since the Atomic Bombing

On August 6, for the 74th time since the atomic bombing, the City of Hiroshima held the Peace Memorial Ceremony in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Approximately 50,000 people attended, including A-bomb survivors, the *hibakusha*, and bereaved families, and they prayed for the repose of souls of the victims of the A-bomb and for perpetual world peace.

The ceremony started at 8am. First Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui and two representatives of the bereaved families dedicated three volumes of the Register of the Names of the Fallen Atomic Bomb Victims to the shrine in the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims. Over the past year, 5,068 people's deaths had been confirmed and their names were recorded in the Register. This brings the total number of names recorded in the Register to 319,186 people, in 117 volumes.

This was followed by an address by Mr. Haruo Yamada, chairperson of Hiroshima City Council, and a dedication of flowers by various representatives. At 8:15am, the time that the A-bomb was dropped, Ms. Akiko Mende, the representative of the bereaved families, and Aito Masakado, the children's representative, rang the Peace Bell, and all participants observed a minute of silent prayer.

Mayor Matsui then read out the Peace Declaration. In the Declaration, the Mayor said that due to recent global circumstances the movement to abolish nuclear weapons is now at a standstill. He said that under such circumstances, there is a need to appeal in particular to the young people who have never known war but will be future leaders, to aim for the ideal world where there is no war, for the survival of humanity. To this end, the Mayor spoke about the pleas and the experience of the *hibakusha* on August 6, 1945. He stated that it is important for the young people, our future leaders, to see the atomic bombing and war not simply as something that happened in the past. They need to internalize the voices and efforts of the *hibakusha* and others aiming to create a peaceful world, and move steadily forward.

The Mayor also called for the world's leaders to visit the sites hit by the atomic bomb, listen to the voices of the *hibakusha*, and visit the Peace Memorial Museum and Peace Memorial Hall so that they can come face to face with the individuals who lost their lives in the bombing and their bereaved families. He asked leaders to fulfill their obligation to negotiate on nuclear disarmament in good faith, as stipulated in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and to respond to the wish of civil society for entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which would be a step on the way to

achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mayor Matsui also made a strong request to the Japanese government, as the only government of a country to experience the nuclear weapon attack during war. He asked the government to seriously address the wishes of the *hibakusha*, who are asking that they sign and ratify the TPNW. He asked that they exercise their leadership to make further progress on realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. He demanded that they expand the "black rain areas", and strengthen support policies for the *hibakusha*, whose average age is now over 82, and for the many other people who are suffering in various different ways in daily life, both physically and emotionally, as a result of radiation.



Mayor Matsui reading out the Peace Declaration

After the Peace Declaration, the Children's Representatives Syuka Kaneda and Tadahiro Ishibashi read out the Commitment to Peace. They spoke of learning about the tragic past of their beloved city of Hiroshima, and stated that to build a future where there are no more wars, "We shall be considerate of one another and openly share our feelings. We shall continue to learn of our own volition. With our hearts and the hearts of the *hibakusha* as one, we shall bring the ideals of peace to the world."

The ceremony was attended by representatives of bereaved families from 36 prefectures, as well as ambassadors and representatives from 89 countries and the European Union (EU), including the nuclear weapon states of the U.S., England, France and Russia.

The ceremony was streamed live online. The video of the ceremony can be seen on the YouTube, TheCityofHiroshima channel. The full text of the Peace Declaration and the Commitment to Peace that were read out at the ceremony can be found on the City of Hiroshima homepage (<http://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/>). The Peace Declaration is available in ten languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Japanese).

(General Affairs Division)

Memorial Gathering for Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Victims

On August 9, the date that the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, this Foundation holds the Memorial Gathering for Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Victims, to express condolences from Hiroshima, which was also hit by the A-bomb, for the deceased in Nagasaki, and to renew our vow to achieve peace. The gathering has been held every year since 2003.

2019 Memorial Gathering was held in the east building of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. There were around 100 people who participated, including *hibakusha* and visitors to the museum from Japan and overseas.

The ceremony was opened with a speech by Mr. Takashi Koizumi, the Chairperson of this Foundation, followed by live television coverage of the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony. At 11:02am, the time that the atomic bomb was exploded over the city, all attendees observed one minute of silent prayer.

This was followed by a speech by Mr. Toshiyuki Mimaki, Chairperson of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers' Associations. The gathering ended with a performance of a picture-story show depicting the experience of Mr. Katsuji Yoshida, who survived the bombing of Nagasaki, by Ms. Eri Makino from the Faculty of International Studies, Hiroshima City University.



Performance of picture-story show depicting the experience of Mr. Katsuji Yoshida, a *hibakusha* from Nagasaki

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Former Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria Takashi Koizumi appointed as this Foundation's New Chairperson

On July 16, 2019, the former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Bulgaria, Takashi Koizumi, took office as the 10th chairperson of this Foundation.



Takashi Koizumi

[Profile]

Born in 1951. Graduated from Faculty of Literature, Tokyo University of Education. Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1976. Appointed as First Secretary at the Embassy of Japan in the United States; Deputy Director of Development Cooperation Division, International Cooperation Bureau; Deputy Director, Central and Eastern Europe Division, Asian and European Affairs Bureau; Senior Assistant Director, Non-Governmental Organizations Cooperation Division, International Cooperation Bureau; Senior Assistant Director, Inspection Division, Minister's Secretariat; Counselor, Embassy of Japan in East Timor; Director of International Emergency Assistance Division, International Cooperation Bureau; Director of Local Partnership Cooperation Division,

Minister's Secretariat; Director of Health and Welfare Division, Minister's Secretariat; Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Republic of Bulgaria. Retired August, 2016.

Greetings from the new chairperson

Having been appointed as chairperson of the prosperous Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, succeeding former chairperson Yasuyoshi Komizo, I am both honored and humbled by the great responsibility of becoming chairperson of the foundation that is the starting point and the basis for the "Spirit of Hiroshima", calling for peace. Under the leadership of the Foundation's President, Mayor Matsui, I will do my utmost to fulfill my duties.

The previous chairperson Mr. Komizo made a significant contribution to pushing forward the movement for the abolition of nuclear weapons, in particular by communicating the wishes of the atomic bomb survivors, the *hibakusha*, to the world. His achievements are too numerous to mention here, including the expansion of Mayors for Peace membership and the establishment of the Leader City system; preparations to achieve the visit to Hiroshima by former US President Obama; and initiatives to ensure the effectiveness of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was adopted in the United Nations. I will never reach Mr. Komizo's levels of ability or expertise, but I hope to make use of my forty years' experience and knowledge gained as a diplomat to contribute to promotion of the Foundation's activities and further development by calling for peace without nuclear weapons and further promoting cultural, youth and international exchange activities.

Throughout my forty-year career as a diplomat, I have keenly felt the importance of peace. When I was appointed to Bulgaria, as the Secretary of the Embassy of Japan in 1980s, which was under the communist regime in Eastern Europe, I experienced the Cold War and then the collapse of the communist system. Afterwards I was posted to the United States, and the Gulf War broke out soon after my arrival at Washington DC. When I worked in newly-independent East Timor in the middle of the 2000s, political unrest flared up again, and I was faced with a dangerous situation where gun battles would break out near my home. After that, I supported, as a Japanese diplomat, peace keeping operations (PKO) run by the United Nations, and this made me keenly realize how difficult it is to rebuild peace once it has been broken, and how important it is for the global community to cooperate and work together to build peace.

Here I would like to touch upon my thoughts regarding Hiroshima and the abolition of nuclear weapons. In 2015, when I was working as ambassador to Bulgaria, I gave a speech on the occasion of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-Bomb Exhibition Commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing, which was held by the Hiroshima-Bulgaria Association. In my speech, I said "As the only country to have been the victim of atomic bombs in war, Japanese people know better than anyone how cruel and inhumane nuclear weapons are. No matter what the reason, these are weapons that humankind must never use again." I then emphasized the point, quoting Mayor Matsui's message: "I want to share with the people of Bulgaria Mayor Matsui's message wishing for a world without nuclear weapons or war." At the Commemorative Lecture Commemorating 70 Years Since the World War II that I gave at the Sofia University, I also referred to the fact that it was 70 years since the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and

Nagasaki, and appealed for the importance of the abolition of nuclear weapons and of pacifism, which received a great response. In this way, I have made efforts on successive opportunities to communicate to the people of Bulgaria my thoughts on peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

I would like to say one last thing. I met an *hibakusha* who lives near my house in Tokyo, and was 7 years old (in East Asian age reckoning) when the atomic bomb was dropped, and lost ten relatives in an instant. He graduated only from elementary school and was sent to an apprenticeship in Osaka, experienced unspeakable hardship, and even today still suffers from the aftereffects of radiation by atomic bombing. I was moved by that *hibakusha*'s strong pleas that "the atomic bomb is absolute evil" and "No one else shall ever again suffer as we have", and that was one reason that I decided to become involved in the work of this Foundation.

When we look at international affairs recently, we must recognize that the situation surrounding abolition of nuclear weapons, which was once showing positive signs, is now looking increasingly bleak. Nonetheless, I believe that we can definitely realize the abolition of nuclear weapons. The reason I believe is that since nuclear weapons are made by human beings, there is no reason that they cannot be abolished by human beings. No matter how difficult it may be, we can absolutely never give up on realizing that. To do so, I believe that the most important thing is solidarity among civil societies—the voices of people have the power to change an era. In the current circumstances, it is clear that the roles of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and Mayors for Peace are becoming increasingly important. I myself cannot do a lot, but my intention is to put all my efforts into fulfilling my duties. I would like to appreciate and welcome understanding, cooperation, and support by all of you.

(July 16, 2019)

Mayors for Peace send delegation to coincide with third preparatory committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference

In April and May, 2019, Mayors for Peace (President: Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui) sent a delegation to New York at the time of the third preparatory committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, held in New York. The delegation communicated to United Nations and government representatives the sincere wish of the *hibakusha* for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and appealed for the importance of pushing for the execution of the duty to negotiate in good faith for nuclear disarmament and pursue the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as stipulated in Article 6 of the NPT. The delegation also communicated that Mayors for Peace, by expanding ties of solidarity with civic society, is working on creating an environment that supports the leadership of policymakers, to aim for the creation of a world that is free of nuclear weapons. There were also other activities, such as a youth forum organized by Mayors for Peace and a lecture by Mayor Matsui at the United Nations International School.

April 29

Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, made a speech at the opening of the preparatory committee.

She referred to the fact that next year is the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT, and stated that while the situation regarding nuclear weapons is a difficult one, sincere dialogue and negotiations by the participating nations are important to build an NPT framework that brings balanced and stable peace.

After observing the conference proceedings, the delegation met with the Japanese Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Nobushige Takamizawa. Mayor Matsui and Mayors for Peace Vice-President Tomihisa Taue (Mayor of Nagasaki) told the Ambassador that they had asked Mr. Syed Mohamad Hasrin Aidid, the Chair of the Preparatory Committee, to visit the areas affected by the atomic bombing, and Mayors for Peace Secretary-General Yasuyoshi Komizo (Chairperson of this Foundation) told him about moves being made for the adoption of a resolution by state and city councils in the United States for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

This was followed by a meeting with UK Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament Mr. Aidan Liddle. Mayor Matsui said that if other nations adopted the UK's stance of emphasizing transparency and dialogue then consensus could be reached, and he asked Mr. Liddle to take steps to achieve nuclear disarmament by understanding the strong wish of the *hibakusha* and leading other nuclear weapon states.

April 30

Mayor Matsui met with Mr. Thomas Hajnoczi, the head of the Disarmament Department in the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He talked about the importance of building momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons in civic society by increasing the number of Mayors for Peace member cities in nuclear weapon states, and said that he would particularly like to work on raising the awareness of the young generation.

Next, the delegation visited the United Nations International School together with the eight high school students dispatched from Hiroshima who were participating in the petition drive calling for all states to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as soon as possible.

Mayor Matsui gave a talk for around 130 high school 2nd year students. He spoke about the reality of the damage from the bombing and the wishes of the *hibakusha*, and stated that while it may be difficult to change the mindset of prioritizing the pursuit of national profit and the dependence on nuclear deterrence, it is important to work to ensure that more people in civic societies around the world are aware of the fact that nuclear weapons are not necessary to make the Earth a sustainable place where humankind can continue to live in peace. After Mayor Matsui's talk, the high school students dispatched from Hiroshima gave a presentation on their own peace activities in front of around forty first-year students from the UN International School, and also participated in an active group discussion on what young people can do to build a peaceful world.

After that, the delegation and the dispatched high school students visited Ms. Nakamitsu, and after Mayor Matsui had explained the high school students' activities, a representative of the high school students gave Ms. Nakamitsu their petition with around 120,000 signatures. In the discussion that followed, Mayor Matsui stated that Mayors for Peace is an organization of mayors that has the responsibility of ensuring that citizens can live safely with peace of mind, and for this reason

the organization will conduct activities on the theme of “a sustainable Earth”, to ensure that the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is never repeated. He also explained that the Peace Memorial Museum is being renewed and its display content is being enhanced, to communicate the reality of the damage from the bombing. He said he would like to develop public opinion by having many people come to the Museum.

Next, Mayor Matsui met with New Zealand’s Ambassador for Disarmament Ms. Dell Higgie. He requested that New Zealand continue to pursue ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons with countries in the region, and increase the number of ratifying countries. Ambassador Higgie said that she continues to have high expectations for activities in civic society.

May 1

Mayor Matsui and Mayor Taue spoke at the NGO session of the preparatory committee in their position as mayors from areas hit by the atomic bomb. With an understanding of the sincere wishes of the *hibakusha*, they expressed their determination to create an environment that supports policymakers in their efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, together with their partners all over the world. They also asked that all nations, including nuclear weapon states, engage in serious dialogue and combine their knowhow, and asked for initiatives by policymakers to shift from confrontational security to collaborative security.



Mayor Matsui (left) giving a speech at the NGO session with Mayor Taue

Following on from this, the group met with Mr. Daniel Hall, Director of PR Affairs at SGI (Soka Gakkai International), which works together with PSR (Physicians for Social Responsibility). At the meeting, Mayor Matsui said that Mayors for Peace would like to build public opinion to lobby governments for disarmament by increasing the number of member cities in nuclear weapon states, and he requested that Mr. Hall provide support in recruiting the US capital, Washington D.C., to become a member.

Next was a meeting with the chair of the preparatory committee, Mr. Syed. Mr. Syed said that he would like to develop a recommendation to reach a consensus for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. He also stated that he would like to obtain the support of civic society, in particular young people, on the promotion of nuclear disarmament, and that he has high expectations for the role that civic society will play in the development of public opinion. Mayor Matsui explained that he places great importance on the wishes of the *hibakusha*, talks directly with the people, and conducts activities to leave a sustainable Earth for the next generation. He said that leading up to next year, he hopes that nations will make decisions based on consideration of other countries, and that the conference will be an amalgamation of harmonized content that takes a broad perspective.

Mayor Matsui also met with the members of the NY Hiroshima-kai, an association of people with ties to Hiroshima. He expressed his gratitude that the association is conducting activities to widely communicate the “Spirit of Hiroshima”, and stated that he is moving ahead with city administration initiatives that place top priority on enabling a peaceful life for the citizens. He also said that he wants to pursue peace administration initiatives that encourage citizens to think about what each of them can do to continue to live peaceful lives.

May 2

The Mayors for Peace Youth Forum was held as a side event of the preparatory committee. The high school students dispatched from Hiroshima, as well as the Nagasaki Youth Delegation and young people from around the world who participate in the activities of peace NGOs, gave presentations on the content of their respective activities and their thoughts about peace. There was also a discussion.



Together with participants in the Mayors for Peace Youth Forum

Next, Mayor Matsui met with Mayor Frank Cownie, the mayor of Des Moines which is a Mayors for Peace leader city, and New York Mayor Bill de Blasio. Mayor Cownie explained that the United States Conference of Mayors has passed a resolution for thirteen consecutive years assenting to the abolition of nuclear weapons and Mayors for Peace activities. He also explained that a resolution calling for the United States government to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted at the Washington D.C. city council, and said that he wants to work together and conduct joint activities with Mayors for Peace, an organization of mayors that protects people’s lives, calling for other cities to join.

May 3

A discussion session for Mayors for Peace executive cities was held. In addition to the five executive city members that attended, another city participated via Skype. Each city gave a presentation on its activities on the theme of “Creating safe cities, full of vitality”, which is one of the goals of Mayors for Peace. Mayor Matsui stated that the important point is to think about how to make the places that our citizens live in safe and secure. He said that he wants the member cities to continue sharing their various initiatives with respect for different values, aiming for a world without nuclear weapons.

Mayor Matsui next attended the Disruptor Awards ceremony. This is an award in which the US Disruptor Fund recognizes individuals or organizations that are working towards the resolution of social issues. The Hersey Prize, established in 2018 to recognize particular contributions in the field of the abolition of nuclear weapons and world peace, was awarded to Mayors for Peace. After Mayor Matsui had made a speech at the awards ceremony, he brought down the trophy, which is in the shape of a hammer, saying “Let’s smash the doctrine of nuclear deterrence with this!” He also showed

the audience the wreath of a thousand paper cranes that he had brought from Hiroshima as a symbol of hope, and was given a warm round of applause.

April 30 – May 3

Mayors for Peace held an A-bomb poster exhibition at United Nations Headquarters where the preparatory committee was held, aiming to deepen conference participants' understanding of the reality of the atomic bombing.

Mayors for Peace has high expectations for the 2020 NPT Conference, which is being held in the historic year marking fifty years since the NPT came into force. To expand the common base of all the signatories regarding the basic objectives and aims of the treaty, on May 10 (the final day of the committee meeting) this Foundation's North American coordinator Ms. Jacqueline Cabasso presented committee chair Mr. Syed with a joint appeal asking for serious dialogue to overcome our differences and come up with creative solutions to definitely and concretely make progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures. The appeal was also distributed to all government representatives at the venue. It was also sent to the United Nations Secretary-General and all United Nations member states, and Mayors for Peace member cities were asked to widely communicate the appeal to the governments and civic society.

(Mayors for Peace and 2020 Vision Promotion Division)

Visit to United States to attend Annual Meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, the President of Mayors for Peace, and Yasuyoshi Komizo, Secretary-General of Mayors for Peace (and Chairperson of this Foundation), attended the 87th Annual Meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors held in Honolulu City in Hawaii. While they were in the U.S., a nuclear superpower, they made requests for support to expand Mayors for Peace membership and to develop momentum at the municipal and civic level for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Mayor Matsui also gave a lecture at the high school that former President Obama attended, Punahou School, where he spoke about the reality of the damage from the atomic bomb, communicated the earnest wishes of the *hibakusha*, and shared their desire for peace.

June 28

Mr. Komizo, representing the Hiroshima City Mayor, attended a discussion session with Ms. Kennedy, the former US Ambassador to Japan. Together with him in the discussion were a general secretary from Honolulu City; the Consul-General of Japan in Honolulu Mr. Ito; and the mayors of three cities in Japan (Uwajima, Chigasaki and Nagaoka) that have a sister city relationship with Honolulu. Mr. Komizo expressed his gratitude to former Ambassador Kennedy for her efforts in organizing the visit to Hiroshima of former President Obama in 2016. He also asked for the ambassador's continued support and cooperation in Mayors for Peace activities aiming for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Komizo then attended the Honolulu Sister City Exchange Summit, together with representatives of the

Japanese Consulate-General, Honolulu City and the three cities mentioned above. The attendees each gave presentations on the background to their sister city relationship with Honolulu City, and a discussion was held on how to position sister city exchange within the city's initiatives and how to expand such exchange activities in the future.

Mr. Komizo explained that the large number of immigrants from Hiroshima City in Honolulu was a factor in establishing the sister city relationship. He also spoke about projects being implemented by Mayors for Peace, and asked participants to be proactively involved in such initiatives.

There was also a discussion with Hawaiian peace activists who had gathered there thanks to calls by Jacqueline Cabasso, a member of this Foundation. Ms. Cabasso helped explain the Mayors for Peace activities.

June 29

Mr. Komizo attended the international committee to discuss a resolution to support Mayors for Peace activities aiming for the abolition of nuclear weapons. This committee had been proposed by the mayor of Des Moines City, an American Leader City for Mayors for Peace. There was no opposition to the resolution and it was decided to propose the resolution at the plenary session.

At the general conference in the morning, former Ambassador Kennedy gave a speech. She said that her father, former President Kennedy, believed that it is not only a government that changes a country, but that the efforts of mayors who work closely with citizens on a daily basis have a major impact. She also spoke about his desire for a world without nuclear weapons. She talked about the importance of "conciliation" and "moral awakening", themes from former President Obama's speech in Hiroshima, and about her thoughts on Hiroshima. Mr. Komizo then had an opportunity to speak. He expressed his gratitude for the efforts made to organize former President Obama's visit to Hiroshima, and asked for future cooperation in Mayors for Peace activities aiming to realize a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mayor Matsui, who had arrived later in Honolulu, paid his respects at the cenotaph for Japanese immigrants in Hawaii together with Mr. Komizo, commemorating the struggles of the people who immigrated from Hiroshima to Hawaii, and offered a silent prayer to the victims of the First and Second World Wars.

June 30

Mayor Matsui and Mr. Komizo attended the annual general meeting (day 3), and observed a session titled "The Path to 100% Renewable Energy in American Cities".

At this session, Honolulu's Mayor Caldwell made a speech. He first touched upon former President Obama's visit to Hiroshima in 2016, and then, introducing Mayor Matsui, he said "the mayor of that city, Hiroshima, is here with us today. Next year Hiroshima will commemorate 75 years since the atomic bombing. A tragedy like that which occurred in Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be allowed to happen again." Mayor Matsui then stood up and made some remarks, and was welcomed by applause by the attendees.

At the lunch session that followed, Mayor Matsui had the opportunity to make a speech. The Mayor of Columbia City in South Carolina, Mayor Benjamin, who is the chairperson of the United States Conference of

Mayors, introduced Mayor Matsui, saying that as President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor Matsui has tirelessly worked with Des Moines Mayor Cownie and mayors of other member cities throughout the world to build international public opinion for the realization of a world without nuclear weapons. He said that the United States Conference of Mayors has a long relationship with Mayors for Peace, and that the activities of Mayors for Peace are more important and timelier now than ever before, as we face an extremely chaotic global situation. Mayor Matsui then took to the stage.

After explaining Mayors for Peace activities, Mayor Matsui said that the *hibakusha*, whose average age is now 82 years old, are continuing to plea for us to realize a world free of nuclear weapons as soon as possible, based on the belief that no-one else should experience what they did. He also said that the budgets that are being spent by nuclear weapon states on modernizing and developing advanced functionality of their nuclear forces could be used more constructively on things like people's welfare or building city infrastructure. He said that he strongly hopes we can all work together toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, so that the tireless efforts of all like-minded people to protect the safe and secure life of the people will not be wasted through the use of nuclear weapons. He received a warm round of applause.



Speech at the Annual Meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors

At the afternoon session on Leadership of Mayoresses, Mayor Matsui listened to a speech by Ms. Tulsi Gabbard, a member of the US House of Representatives representing Hawaii who has announced that she will run in the presidential election. In the same way as Mayor Matsui's speech before her, Ms. Gabbard referred to the huge amount of taxpayer's money being spent on the development of nuclear weapons, and said that in the case of Hawaii, this is money that should be spent on aging infrastructure. She stated that she decided to run in the presidential election to appeal for the fact that national security issues have a direct impact on people's lives. After her speech, Mayor Matsui spoke to Ms. Gabbard, and asked for her to visit Hiroshima and for her future collaboration in Mayors for Peace activities.

After this, Mayor Matsui was interviewed by Hawaiian newspapers. The journalists, one of whom had a grandmother who was a *hibakusha* in Hiroshima, and another who had conducted interviews in Hiroshima, asked "What kind of impact does it have on your position as mayor when you have family members who were *hibakusha*?" The mayor replied that his mother and other relatives were *hibakusha*, but that they did not really want to talk about their painful experience to the family. He said that as he has spoken to many *hibakusha* after becoming mayor, he has heard about their experiences and feelings about the bombing, and now has a better understanding of the feelings of his mother and other relatives. In the second half of the interview, Mayor Doyle of Beaverton City Oregon, a Mayors for Peace member city, also attended. Every year, Mayor Doyle jointly proposes the resolution at the annual meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors affirming the

activities of Mayors for Peace and calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Mayor Doyle stated firmly that mayors change the country together with the people, and for that reason Mayors for Peace are going to bring about change throughout the countries of the world to create a world that is free of nuclear weapons.

July 2

At Punahou School, which former President Obama attended, Mayor Matsui gave a talk to around 130 students attending the summer school there who were learning about Asian history. He talked about the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing and the wishes of the *hibakusha*, and said that he wanted the students to walk together with him on the path toward creating a world without nuclear weapons. The students listened keenly to the mayor's talk, taking notes, and afterwards asked many questions. In response to questions such as "Is the abolition of nuclear weapons possible?", "how do you assess your achievements as the president of Mayors for Peace?", and "What can other countries learn from the dropping of the A-bomb?", Mayor Matsui replied "The dropping of the A-bomb was an extremely unfortunate incident for the whole of humankind. To ensure that such a tragedy does not occur again, it is important to think logically about how we can resolve differences of opinions in a peaceful way, and make the world sustainable." He gave the student representative paper cranes that had been folded by junior high school students in Kanagawa Prefecture, and conveyed the desire for peace.

In the morning session of the Annual Meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors, the resolution affirming the abolition of nuclear weapons and the activities of Mayors for Peace was adopted unanimously. This resolution has now been adopted for fourteen consecutive years, since 2006.

At the Annual Meeting on this day, Mayor Barnett of Rochester Hills City, Michigan, gave his first speech as president of the United States Conference of Mayors, saying "Everyone has the right to live happily. As mayors, we have to make efforts to achieve that." After the speech, Mayor Matsui handed Mayor Barnett paper cranes that had been folded by junior high school students from Osaka, and asked him to join Mayors for Peace.

In the evening, at an event organized by Honolulu City, Mayor Matsui made requests for membership of Mayors for Peace to Columbia Mayor Benjamin, who had been the president of the United States Conference of Mayors up until this year's Annual Meeting and had issued a Peace City Statement in August of this year, and to Mayor Callaway of Hillsboro City, Oregon, who is growing A-bomb ginkgo trees, and received a positive response. The membership request form was later submitted by Columbia City, and it became a member from October 1.

(Mayors for Peace and 2020 Vision Promotion Division)

Mayors for Peace Secretary-General visits the United States to attend the 2019 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference and other events

From March 5-14, 2019, Mayors for Peace Secretary-General Yasuyoshi Komizo (Chairperson of this

Foundation) visited the United States, where he met with the mayors of member cities in California and people involved in nuclear disarmament NGOs. He also attended an international conference on nuclear policy hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace held in Washington D.C.

Visit to California

Mr. Komizo visited the state of California, where he met with the mayors of member cities Oakland, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara and the head of the International Affairs Division of San Francisco. He asked that they work on revitalizing Mayors for Peace activities on the west coast and strengthen collaborative ties with Des Moines, a leader city in the United States, and reaffirmed that they will continue to work together.

The mayor of Oakland was proactive about cooperating in activities to increase membership. The mayor of Los Angeles explained that Los Angeles is promoting initiatives to address environmental issues as an SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) leader in the United States, and expressed active interest in cooperating in activities regarding A-bomb survivor trees. The mayor of Santa Barbara stated that they would like to focus even more on environmental destruction and peace issues.

Mr. Komizo also met with the former governor of California, a professor from Stanford University, the

Forum to commemorate 2nd anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

On July 7, 2019, which marked the second anniversary of the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), this Foundation held a commemorative forum titled “Young People Passing Down the Thoughts of the Atomic Bomb Survivors” together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Mayor Matsui spoke at the start of the forum, and made a call to the approximately 180 young people in attendance, saying “I want this forum to be an opportunity for you to think carefully about what kind of actions you can take to create a world that is free of nuclear weapons.”

This was followed by a talk by Magnus Løvold, Policy Adviser of the Arms Unit in ICRC’s Legal Division. He firmly stated that “the key to success for the TPNW is whether or not the young generation continue to be proactively involved. I want you to raise your voices and muster the courage to act with hope and conviction.” In the panel discussion, four young people spoke about the peace activities that they are each respectively involved in. These included A-bomb paintings that were created from listening to the experiences of the *hibakusha*, and petition activities calling for the prompt conclusion of the TPNW. They then held a discussion on the role that the young generation can play, together with Atomic Bomb Witnesses and Atomic Bomb Legacy Successors.



Panel discussion

(Mayors for Peace and 2020 Vision Promotion Division)

Japanese Consul-General in San Francisco and others. He explained to them that Mayors for Peace is focusing on the two goals of achieving a world with no nuclear weapons and creating safe cities that are full of vitality, as the path towards achieving perpetual world peace.

In addition, Mr. Komizo also took the stage at a lecture session of the Los Angeles branch of PSR (Physicians for Social Responsibility), an organization that was the driving force behind the adoption of the resolution supporting the abolition of nuclear weapons by multiple cities in the United States in 2018. He spoke about the importance of holding cooperative dialogue while recognizing diversity to achieve a peaceful world, and called for the promotion of initiatives aiming for peace.

Attendance at the 2019 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference

Mr. Komizo attended the 2019 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference held in Washington D.C. This is an international conference that is held once every two years by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, an influential think tank in the United States. At the conference, diplomats, researchers, experts and others meet to discuss issues that the global community is facing, such as nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, and look for solutions to the issues.

Mr. Komizo was a panelist in a session that forecast the global situation regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation over the next two years. In front of around 800 people who had gathered from 45 countries around the world, he spoke about the message of the *hibakusha* and the initiatives of Mayors for Peace. He emphasized the role to be played by local governments to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, and appealed strongly for the importance of the diverse members of civic society combining their strength to work together.



Panel discussion

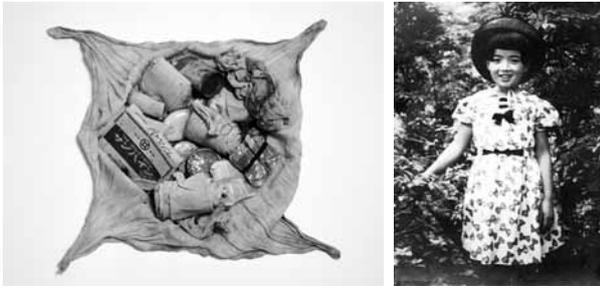
(Mayors for Peace and 2020 Vision Promotion Division)

New Arrivals Exhibit

Venue: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, East Building B1F, Special Exhibition Room
 Period: March 29, 2019 - March 1, 2020

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum collects and stores atomic bomb artifacts that were kept by the survivors (*hibakusha*) and their families, as precious materials to communicate the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing. In fiscal year 2017, 784 items were newly donated by 61 people. Some of those items are on display.

Seventy-four years have passed since the World War II ended, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to collect atomic bomb artifacts and detailed information related to them. Aiming for the abolition of nuclear weapons, the museum will continue to communicate to future generations the various types of damage caused



The first aid bag of Yoko Moriwaki (right photo, 13 years old at the time of the bombing)
Yoko was participating in building demolition work when the bomb hit, and died on the night of the August 6.
(Donated by Mr. Koji Hosokawa)

by the bombing. We appreciate further donations of atomic bomb artifacts to the museum.

(Peace Memorial Museum Curatorial Division)

Paintings of the Atomic Bombing Complete

Since 2007, with support from Hiroshima Municipal Motomachi High School Creative Expression Course, this Foundation has been involved in the creation of paintings of the atomic bombing. The high school students work together with Atomic Bomb Witnesses to create pictures of the atomic bombing that communicate the situation at the time, depicting scenes from the bombing that remain in the memories of the A-bomb Witnesses.

This time, five witnesses and eleven students completed eleven paintings that they had been working on since 2018.

At the completion ceremony held at Motomachi High School gallery on July 1, 2019, five A-bomb Witnesses attended, together with the students who created the paintings and other students in the Creative Expression Course, and others from this Foundation and Motomachi High School.

A student who depicted a scene of people fleeing to the outskirts of the city after the bomb was dropped and the people nearby who no longer had any energy to flee spoke about feelings during the process of creating the painting: "It was very painful thinking about the story of each individual. I was struck by the deep sadness of the people who experienced the bombing, and it was heart-wrenching."

Another student who made a painting of a person who experienced despair in the burning ruins in the city center and chose to wait to die said that for the student, who belongs to a generation that has never experienced war, it was impossible to imagine what it is like to go to die, or to wait to die, and the student had to show the painting many times to the teacher and look up materials



"People fleeing and people fallen" by Miharu Ono, Motomachi High School Creative Expression Course and Hiroaki Kawasaki, Atomic Bomb Witness



"Despair: person waiting to die" by Chiho Korenaga, Motomachi High School Creative Expression Course and Noboru Sueoka, Atomic Bomb Witness

from that time. After much trial and error, and after listening to the A-bomb Witness's story a number of times, the student said that there was a change of feelings: "I thought that I have to respect the feelings of the *hibakusha* who witnessed this scene. I thought that this is the best way to reconstruct that experience."

The paintings of the atomic bombing that were completed this time will be used to ensure that people have a deeper understanding of the A-bomb experience, by using the paintings when A-bomb Witnesses are giving talks on their experiences. The paintings will also be loaned out and offered as data images, to help pass on the reality of the damage from the bombing to future generations.

(Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

"Memoir of the A-bombing" Memories of that day



by **Hiroaki Kawasaki**,
Atomic Bomb Witness for this
Foundation

Prologue

In May 1945, as a 1st grade elementary school student, I was taken by my grandmother to evacuate to a relative's home in Yamagata County. Immediately after that, my younger sister, who was 2 years old, was also taken to my mother's parents' home in Mihara, but apparently, she was so lonely there that she was brought back to my parents in Hiroshima City before six months had even passed.

I too was feeling sad every day. Maybe my grandmother realized that, because every now and then she would bring me back to Hiroshima. We would spend two or three days with my family, and when I felt better, she would take me away to the evacuation location again. This happened a number of times. The last time I came back to Hiroshima was one or two days before the bomb was dropped.

Enveloped by a terrible flash of light

On the morning of August 6, my father, who was a teacher, went to school by bicycle as he always did. Just before the bomb was dropped, the six remaining members of the family were gathered in the cool living room, playing with my little brother, who was 1 year old. Eventually my mother took my little brother to the toilet, and feeling bored, I decided to go outside. I went to the entrance of the house, and I had just finished putting on my shoes when it happened.

Flash! All around me was a terrible flash of light.

Surprised, and with my shoes still on, I ran back to the living room that I had just come from. At around the same time as I fled to the living room, the building collapsed. The pillars fell over, the ceiling fell down to a height that even I, an elementary school student, could reach, and the dust flying around turned everything pitch black in an instant. My mother, carrying my little brother, felt her way back to the living room. We all thought that our house must have been directly hit by a bomb.

But no matter how long we waited, no-one came to

rescue us. So my mother went to the entrance, and came back with everyone's shoes and evacuation bags, and we went outside through a window facing on to the road. We then found that all the houses around us had collapsed just like ours, and there were already many people on the road, which was dark with dust. There were people crouched down investigating their children's wounds, people shouting something at their collapsed houses, and the children were all crying.

Flight

The adults consulted with each other, and it was decided that for the time being we would flee to the west. We fled along a road where all houses on both sides had collapsed, and the road was strewn with pieces of



"7-year-old me and my family fleeing"
drawn by Hinako Misaka and Hiroaki Kawasaki

tile and glass and bits of wood. We fled together with large numbers of people with wounds and burns. There were people staggering along, bleeding from head wounds, people being supported by their shoulders as they walked, people whose backs were stained with blood, people whose jackets were burned and in tatters; with many people we fled across Nishi Ohashi bridge. In the grassy area near the construction work on Ota River drainage canal, many people with wounds and burns were sitting or lying, having run out of strength.

After that we arrived at the town of Koi, and after a while, it suddenly began to rain, rain that was black as if the water was mixed with soot. We rested for a while in a nearby shrine, and then fled by a narrow farm road alongside bamboo groves and rice paddies in the direction of Kabe. When we got to that area, a huge fire had broken out in Hiroshima City, which we could see to our right, and we passed many people with burns and injuries. It was a horrific site for a 1st grade elementary student like me.

It was late at night when we arrived at a relative's home in Kabe Town. My father, who had gone to school, was rescued a few days later with serious burns, and was brought to the same relative's home.

Epilogue

At the time there were seven people in our family. In the fifty-something years since the bombing, I lost my grandfather, grandmother, mother, younger brother and father passed away, in that order, just like losing teeth. Now the only remaining family members are my younger sister and I. My father's burns and his damaged eyes and ears never healed, my mother died of a heart attack and my younger brother died of cancer. My younger sister is still alive but has had major operations for aortic dissection and to remove her ovaries, among others, and I have also had many operations for cardiac infarction. In all cases, our medical conditions were greatly impacted by radiation exposure.

Atomic bomb testimony activities – becoming a drop of water

I am involved in testimony activities with the intention of becoming a "drop of water" that is colorless,

transparent, with no taste and no smell. What I mean by that is, water honestly takes the shape of its vessel without being affected by any man-made rules, either political, religious, race-based or national, and possesses the energy expressed in the saying "Constant dripping wears away the stone." And when drops gather together, they have the great power to move mountains, as expressed in the story The Foolish Old Man Moves the Mountains. That is the backbone of my testimonial activities. And I believe that far ahead of that one drop of water is a peaceful world where our descendants, who we have never seen, can live with peace of mind.

Profile

[Hiroaki Kawasaki]

Born in 1938. Experienced the atomic bombing at home in Higashikan-on Town, 1.3km from the hypocenter. His family of six people mixed with other survivors and fled to a relative's house in the north of the city, passing through the Nishi Hiroshima area. On the way, witnessed many people fleeing with wounds and burns, and others sitting or lying down, having lost all their strength.

Became an A-bomb Legacy Successor in 2016, and active as an A-bomb witness from 2017.

Thinking about Peace:

Sharing the truth of "absolute rejection of nuclear power"

(February 2019)



by Haruko Moritaki

Co-Representative of the
Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear
Weapons Abolition (HANWA)

Since the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which bans nuclear weapons through international law, was adopted at the United Nations in July 2017, there are continuing struggles to reach enactment of the treaty. Amidst new global tension there is a heightened risk of nuclear war, and the situation concerning nuclear weapons is becoming extremely dire.

These are the circumstances in which various initiatives are under way in different fields to pursue research activities that further reveal and pass on the actual situation of the atomic bombings and the damage inflicted by nuclear weapons. As *hibakusha*, young people, researchers, and people involved in the anti-nuclear movement work together with governments in the atomic bombed areas and continuously conduct their activities, the expectation is that Hiroshima will train young people to lead and pass on such activities.

What the nuclear arms race has produced is the development of uranium mines, the production of nuclear weapons, damage from nuclear testing conducted all over the world, and nuclear war where atomic bombs were actually used. It has brought about the utmost inhumane tragedy, unprecedented in the history of humankind. At the same time, it has also caused irreversible nuclear damage from major accidents at nuclear power plants as the energy source. Even the residue from the enriched uranium for nuclear weapons and nuclear pow-

er plants are continuously used in war as depleted uranium weapons, and are increasing the nuclear damage.

In order to put an end to the negative legacy that humankind has created, the key is to first reveal what the actual situation is.

In 2015, 70 years after the end of the World War II, the World Nuclear Victims Forum was held, gathering together in Hiroshima City nuclear victims, including victims of nuclear testing, from all over the world. At the Forum, one of the actions taken to reveal the actual situation was to issue the Declaration of the World Nuclear Victims Forum in Hiroshima (Draft Elements of a Charter of World Nuclear Victims' Rights). This we also understand as the serious responsibility of regions that have suffered from nuclear war.

From the experience of suffering from this unprecedented inhumane tragedy of the atomic bombing, some of *hibakusha* of Hiroshima have arrived at the principles that "human beings cannot coexist with nuclear power" and "humanity must survive", and based on these principles have led the battle against nuclear powers. Absolute rejection of nuclear weapons means in reality the abolishment of nuclear weapons and the abolishment of nuclear power plants. Since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki until today, I myself have earnestly fought to achieve these things, but there have been times when I felt like hopelessly distant objectives.

However, with the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines in 1999, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2008, I saw that these were achieved by collaboration between citizens and willing nations, and I was then certain—I thought "This is it! This is the process to use to abolish nuclear weapons and depleted uranium bombs!" Since 2009, volunteers in Hiroshima has been appealing within Japan and overseas for a nuclear weapons convention and a convention to ban depleted uranium weapons, which are inhumane weapons, and has moved forward with the movement to prohibit such weapons through international law.

Following on from Oslo in 2013 and Mexico in 2014, in December 2014 I participated in the third International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in Vienna. At the Vienna conference, there was expansion and clarification of the movement to legally prohibit nuclear weapons, which are inhumane weapons. The practice whereby civic society works in collaboration with willing nations is a process based on the method that was used to prohibit cluster bombs. When I came back to Hiroshima from that conference I was filled with new certainty and hope, and with a determination to exert all my efforts to prohibit and put an end to nuclear weapons through international law.

The Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons was held at the United Nations in March and June-July, 2017. At the same time, we asked A-bomb survivor organizations and other anti-nuclear civic groups to appeal for "a nuclear weapons convention now!" as one voice from Hiroshima, the place of origin for the anti-nuclear movement. As a result, twenty-seven organizations gathered and held civic gatherings and a candle message gathering at A-Bomb Dome, and issued a joint statement to communicate to people in Japan and overseas. Hiroshima citizens also lit 1,000 candle glass lights to write "BAN NUKES NOW! 2017". A photo of this was sent to people at the United Nations, international NGOs and others to call for solidarity, and it created a huge impact internationally.

The United States and other nuclear weapon states

and nations that depend on nuclear deterrence capabilities such as Japan oppose the adoption of the TPNW at the United Nations and are frantically trying to somehow prevent its enactment. The US Trump administration has been pursuing a path towards nuclear war, starting with its declaration of the use of small-scale nuclear weapons in war with the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) in February 2018, through to its withdrawal from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty in February 2019. The government of Japan, the country that has been bombed by atomic bombs, completely opposes the TPNW and at the same time evaluates highly the NPR, and has become a target of distrust from the global community. However, it is no longer possible to stop the global momentum for legal prohibition of nuclear weapons: the TPNW has now been signed by 70 states and ratified by 22 states as of February 25, 2019.

The damage from war and nuclear weapon that I have seen, as one born and brought up in Hiroshima, is the violent deaths of innocent people caused by the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima by the United States, the *hibakusha*'s struggles with illness, and ultimately, "delayed death", the collapse of personal relationships, and producing A-bomb orphans and elderly *hibakusha* living alone.

However, that was not the only nuclear damage. Nuclear damage is caused at each stage of the cycle of use of nuclear power. That reality has been thrust in front of me in the uranium mines of India, the nuclear test sites in Nevada, the damage survey sites where depleted uranium bombs were used in the Iraq war, and at the site of the damage from the Fukushima nuclear accident. I have raced through life for decades while pouring all my energy into the fight against harsh reality. And this has all taught me that absolute rejection of nuclear weapons ultimately means a fight with the huge power of states and nuclear industry.

As long as the light of my small life is still alive, I will continue to take on the battle of those who came before me. And I believe that young people will definitely and powerfully take on this work.

Profile

[Haruko Moritaki]

Co-Representative of the Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (since 2001), Joint Facilitator of the Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (since 2010), Secretary-general of the Hiroshima Project for Banning DU Weapons (since 2003), operating committee member of the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) (since 2004), Secretary-general of the World Nuclear Victims Forum (since 2014), part-time lecturer at Hiroshima University (2015-2016).

Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation council member.

Winner of the 2018 Kiyoshi Tanimoto Peace Award.

A Tale of Two Brothers Across Time —Hiroshima Artist Gorō Shikoku and the Diary of Naoto on His Deathbed—

Venue: Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims B1F

Period: January 1 – December 29, 2020

Gorō Shikoku (1924-2014) was an artist who devoted all of his talent to plea for an end to war and the abolition of nuclear weapons. The incident that drove him to do so was the end of the short life of his beloved younger brother Naoto (1927-1945), who was killed by the

atomic bomb at the age of eighteen.

The death of his younger brother filled him with the determination to “create paintings on behalf of those who died. To express opposition to war and the abolition of nuclear weapons. Whether that becomes art or not...”

Near the end of the war, Gorō went to Manchuria and joined the Kwantung Army, while his younger brother Naoto was called to Hiroshima and was working in the city as a member of the security forces. Of the five siblings, the two brothers were the closest. Separated by around one thousand kilometers, they each continued to hope that the other was safe.

This exhibition reconstructs a dialogue between the two brothers across time, from the day of the atomic bombing until Naoto’s death. Mainly based on the diary that Naoto kept on his deathbed, the exhibition also displays the eulogy written by Gorō and his art works.

[Exhibition contents]

(1) Video (approximately 30 minutes in length, shown in a large 3-screen display)

On August 6, 1945, Naoto Shikoku experienced the atomic bombing in temporary military barracks in Nobori Town, around one kilometer from the hypocenter. Suffering a serious wound to his left leg, he returned home two days later, but despite the earnest efforts of his mother and younger brother to nurse him back to health, he passed away on August 28. Naoto recorded every day of that period in his diary. Gorō learned of his brother’s death from the atomic bombing when he returned home after three years of internment in Siberia, and speaks of his feelings to read out the diary as if he were in dialogue with Naoto.

The actress Midori Kiuchi plays the two roles of Gorō and Naoto, and the narration is provided by the film director and actor Shinya Tsukamoto.

(2) Display on information tablets (available in four languages: Japanese, English, Korean and Chinese)

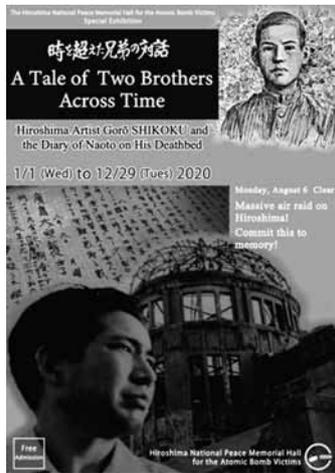
- Gorō Shikoku left behind many works commemorating his late younger brother. The exhibition includes all six poems that he wrote for Naoto, including “Requiem for my brother”.
- Gorō Shikoku firmly believed that the connection between mother and child, the most primordial element for human beings, is what supports peace, and he continues to paint pictures of the mother and child image. This may be viewed in the Gorō Shikoku Gallery together with works depicting Hiroshima’s bridges and others.

(3) Over ten of Gorō Shikoku’s actual works are on display.

(4) Talks and other outdoor events are also being planned.

The exhibition commences from New Year, 2020, and is highly recommended.

(Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims)



Thinking about Peace: Hiroshima Japanese Class and International Exchange (July 2019)



by **Suzue Mitsuahara**
Representative, Hiroshima
Japanese Class

Hiroshima Japanese Class was established as a grass-roots activity run by volunteers in November 1987. It was the first volunteer Japanese language class in Hiroshima City. After a six-month preparation period, the school started proper lessons from April 1988, and since that time, for over thirty years, we have aimed to support the Japanese language studies of foreign residents in Hiroshima, as well as creating a place to interact with Hiroshima’s Japanese residents, providing information to foreign residents, and providing a place where they can feel comfortable.

When we first started, the students at the school were Japanese returnees from China and their families, the foreign spouses of Japanese residents, international students and their families, the spouses of Korean residents, and others. Every Saturday morning, we held classes at Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and at night we rented a room in Mazda’s Fureiai Kaikan building. Later, we moved our classes to different venues including the Central Community Center, followed by Crystal Plaza, and then Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. At the same time, we also provided support for various international exchange events including the Asian Games and the international exchange festival “PeaceLove”, as well as support for visits by delegations from around the world and UNITAR Hiroshima (United Nations Institute for Training and Research) activities. In this way, we have been involved in various different activities.

In our classes, the students start by learning greetings and the *hiragana* letters, and go on to study Japanese grammar and conversation. It was also necessary to provide our students with daily lifestyle support for living in Japan, such as shopping, separating garbage, and what to do at a hospital or bank.

As Japan’s economy has grown, there has been an increase in the number of foreign workers and trainees coming to Japan, and there was a greater demand for Japanese language schools. At the same time, with the bursting of the economic bubble and the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, the Japanese economy started to slow down. This led to restructuring of foreign workers and many left Japan. This had a great impact on our school as well, but we have continued our activities to the present.

In addition to our previous students, we currently have businessmen and their families, trainees and technical students, English teachers, and foreigners who are staying for a short time in Japan for tourist or cultural activities. In this way, our students are in Japan for various reasons. Our classroom activities are not just the study of the Japanese language, but also include seasonal events such as cherry-blossom viewing and festivals, local walks to places like Hiroshima Castle, Shukkeien

gardens, and Futabanosato, experience making their own *okonomiyaki* savory pancakes, and other Japanese cultural experiences (calligraphy, origami, tea ceremony, flower arrangement and wearing kimonos). Through these various activities we aim to promote interaction with the students.

To ensure that our students are safe in their daily lives in Japan, with support from the fire brigade and police, we also hold disaster prevention drills to ensure that they can protect themselves in the case of an earthquake or other natural disasters, and safety workshops to ensure they do not get involved in an accident or incident.



On June 29, 2019, we conducted a hands-on study tour at Hiroshima Comprehensive Disaster Prevention Center.

There are students who could not speak any Japanese when they first arrived in Japan and came to our school looking very anxious. When I see these students smile as they gradually become able to converse in Japanese, and when they express their gratitude, saying how happy they were that our school helped them out when they were struggling, I truly feel that it was worthwhile steadily continuing with our activities. Students who returned to their home countries continue interacting with our volunteers through email and social media, and sometimes come back to Japan and have a fun time meeting up again.

Each foreigner has many family members, relatives and friends back in his or her home country. If the students go back to their country and tell their family and friends about their life in Japan, they too will understand Japan a little better, and come to like it, and I believe that this is a small step that leads to world peace.

From April 2019, a new residence status related to specific skills was introduced, and as a result, we have many skilled trainees coming to our school. Our school is operated based on the goodwill of our volunteers, and it is difficult to secure a stable venue, cover operating costs and recruit volunteers. There are also many other challenges, such as issues regarding the children of foreign residents, who require learning support. I feel that our volunteer-based efforts are reaching their limit. From now on, we will need to work together with government to create a city that is a comfortable living environment for both Japanese and non-Japanese residents.

The number of foreigners coming to Hiroshima will continue to increase. I aim to continue to run this Japanese language classes that people enjoy and that live up to Hiroshima's title of "International City of Peace". The international situation is changing in diverse ways. Under those circumstances, our volunteers

will continue our exchange activities with the people of the world as "small-town diplomats", and I hope that by doing so we can play even a small role in the realization of world peace.

We look forward to your continued understanding and support for our local Japanese language volunteer-based school.

Hiroshima Japanese Class

- February 2016: Awarded the Activity Encouragement Prize by Hiroshima UNESCO
- February 2019: Awarded the International Exchange Encouragement Award by Hiroshima Peace Creation Fund
- April 2019: Awarded the Hiroshima City Government Award of Merit by the City of Hiroshima

Hiroshima City Consultation Service for International Residents

At the Hiroshima City Consultation Service for International Residents, from September 2019, consultations are being provided every Tuesday and Friday by a Vietnamese-speaking consultant.

In addition to the consultations that had been provided to date in Portuguese and Spanish by consultants sent out to Aki Ward Office, consultants are also being sent to the Motomachi Administrative Office to provide consultations in Chinese.

From October 2019, employees from the Hiroshima Immigration Services Agency will come every second Monday to respond to consultations regarding status of residence (booking required). Please make use of this service.

[Hours open, location] (new services in bold)

Location	Languages	Days open	Time
International Conference Center Hiroshima (in International Exchange Lounge)	Chinese Portuguese Spanish	Monday to Friday	9:00am-4:00pm
	Vietnamese	Tuesday, Friday	
Motomachi Administrative Office (in Motomachi Danchi residential block)	Chinese	2nd Tuesday of every month	10:15am-12:30pm 1:30pm-4:00pm
Aki Ward Office (within <i>Kusei Chosei-ka</i> (Ward Policy Coordination) Department)	Portuguese	2 nd Wednesday of every month	
	Spanish	3 rd Thursday of every month	

[Contact information]

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Email : soudan@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp

[Closed]

Public holidays, August 6, December 29-January 3

Information

Our Newsletters Are Accessible on the Internet

You can read our newsletters (Japanese version and English version) on the Internet.

[URL] <http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/hpcf/paper/>

[Request] Please inform us if you change your mailing address.

HIROSHIMA PEACE CULTURE FOUNDATION

PEACE CULTURE



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