

PEACE CULTURE



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Open Letter to call on all UN Member States to actively participate in the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)

The establishment of a public working group to discuss legal measures for the abolition of nuclear weapons was decided in a resolution at the United Nations General Assembly last year, and Mayors for Peace (President: Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui) sent an open letter jointly from the 26 Mayors for Peace executive cities to all UN member nations prior to the organizational meeting for the working group held in Geneva, Switzerland, on January 18, 2016. The open letter called for proactive participation and constructive discussion on the abolition of nuclear weapons at the working group.

At the same time, the open letter was also sent to the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, requesting support for Mayors for Peace activities, and broad-based communication of the letter's message to all national governments and peoples.

[Open letter]

The letter can be viewed on the Mayors for Peace home page. (URL: http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english-activities/statement/request/160122_OEWG_en.pdf)

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Group of Eminent Persons Meeting — the 25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Group of Eminent Persons Meeting

On August 24-25, 2015, the 70th year since the atomic bombing, the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) Meeting was held for the first time in Japan, in Hiroshima City. GEM is comprised of internationally-recognized specialists and eminent people who have experience in political positions, such as former U.S. Secretary of Defense Mr. William Perry and former UK Secretary of State for Defense Mr. Des Browne. The aim of the meeting is to promote the issuance of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

In the opening session, Hiroshima Mayor Matsui stated “In the upcoming meeting, I expect that you will hold active and forward-thinking discussions on advancing the CTBT ratification and send out a strong message for creating a world without nuclear weapons from Hiroshima.”

In response to a proposal by the City of Hiroshima, the meeting program also included a tour of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and an opportunity to listen to an atomic bomb testimony, to share among



GEM member listening to an atomic bomb testimony by Ms. Ogura

all meeting participants the *hibakusha*'s experiences and wishes for peace, and to communicate the reality of the atomic bombing. After the end of these items of the program, one participant commented “We must all make efforts to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again,” indicating a renewed determination to address the abolition of nuclear weapons.

At the end of the meeting, the Hiroshima Statement was adopted, urging the eight nations that have not rati-

fied the CTBT, including the United States and China, to ratify it immediately.

25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues

Following on from the GEM Meeting, the 25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima was held from August 26 to 28. A total of 83 people from 23 countries and 5 international bodies attended the meeting.

The aim of this meeting is to heighten awareness of disarmament issues in the Asia-Pacific region and hold dialogue on disarmament and security. It has been held since 1989, and this was the fourth time it has been held in Hiroshima, and the first time in 19 years.

In response to a proposal by the City of Hiroshima, the conference program this time included items to convey the reality of the atomic bombing, the Opening High-Level Session with GEM members participating, and the International Student Meeting on Peace where young people from Japan and overseas make presentations about peace.

■Opening High-Level Session

On the morning of the first day of the conference, August 26, Professor Nobumasa Akiyama of Hitotsubashi University presided over the Opening High-Level Session entitled “Renewed Determination and Concrete Action towards the Realization of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons”. Former policymakers, *hibakusha*, the Hiroshima Mayor, the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture and others attended the session. Mr. Sunao Tsuboi, Chairperson of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers Organizations, stated “The pain caused by radiation from the atomic bomb will continue until my death, but until my last breath I will not give up



Opening High-Level Session, the 25th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Hiroshima



Hiroshima Mayor Mr. Matsui making a remark

on the pursuit of the abolition of nuclear weapons,” and there was active discussion on how to create a world free of nuclear weapons.

■Program Item to Communicate the Reality of the Atomic Bombing

On the afternoon of August 26, conference participants visited Peace Memorial Park. After paying their respects and presenting flowers at the Cenotaph, participants were given a tour of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum led by Museum Director Mr. Kenji Shiga, and this was followed by an atomic bomb testimony by Ms. Yoshiko Kajimoto.

Ms. Kajimoto stated “Nuclear weapons cannot coexist with humankind. Please cease all war and abolish nuclear weapons.”



Conference participants presenting flowers at the Cenotaph

■International Student Meeting on Peace

On August 28, the International Student Meeting on Peace was held in Hiroshima, the city that was atomic-bombed, and students representing the next generation gathered to make presentations on and discuss the abolition of nuclear weapons and peace issues. The aim was to have the students heighten their international awareness and to provide an opportunity for growth into people who can be active in the international community.

There were some strong presentations from the stu-



Students making presentations

International Student Meeting on Peace

dents during the conference, including one who said “Even small steps by us are important steps. I want to continue our activities so that we can make the world a better place.”

Through this series of events over five days, we reaffirmed that visiting Hiroshima, the city that experienced the atomic bombing, provides a good opportunity to share thoughts about peace. We were also able to communicate broadly to people in Japan and overseas the message that we aim to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition in the United States

In 2015, the 70th year since the atomic bombing, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibitions were held in the United States, the nuclear superpower. The exhibitions were held from June 13 to August 16 in the capital Washington DC, and from September 11 to October 18 in Boston City, Massachusetts State.

In the American University Museum, part of the Katzen Art Center at American University in Washington DC, were panels to explain the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and 25 A-bomb artifacts including the uniform and burned water bottle of junior high school students who lost their lives in the bombing while working as mobilized students. At the neighboring venue were displays of 6 “Hiroshima Panels” by the couple Toshi and Iri Maruki, as well as pictures drawn in 1947, soon after the war, by children at Honkawa Elementary School using equipment donated by a church in Washington DC. Visitors viewed all displays with great interest.

The opening ceremony was on June 13. American University Professor Peter Kuznick, who worked hard to hold the exhibition this time, first explained the background leading to the exhibition being held. Mr. Kenji Shiga, Director of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum,



A-bomb testimony in the American University

expressed his gratitude for the holding of the exhibition, and this was followed by a speech by Mr. Masato Otaka, Minister for Public Affairs

at the Japanese Embassy in the United States. Mr. Sadao Yamamoto, who experienced the bombing in Hiroshima, effectively used slides of maps and pictures as he gave his A-bomb testimony, and Mr. Yoshitoshi Fukahori, who experienced the bombing in Nagasaki, provided an explanation of the photographs used in the display panels. Visitors listened intently to their explanations, and afterwards there were some who spoke to the *hibakusha*, saying “We really grateful that you have come all the way to America to give your testimony and speak to us.”

On June 14, Mr. Shiga led the group from the United States National Park Service, including the Director, on a tour of the Atomic Bomb Exhibition, and the group viewed the panels and A-bomb artifacts with great interest. After the tour, the Director said “This is a powerful exhibition, with content that is truly painful to see.”

After the end of the Atomic Bomb Exhibition at American University Museum, it was also held at Boston University Art Gallery, communicating to visitors what happens when nuclear weapons are used.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

70 years since the Atomic Bombing “2015 NPT Review Conference – Civic Initiatives and Future Prospects”

(Article contributed October 2015)



by **Koki Takada**

Executive Director,
Hiroshima Prefecture Consumers'
Co-operative Union

Following on from the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), I participated in the 2015 NPT Review



Peace March

Conference as the Deputy Delegation Head of the 91-member Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) delegation, together with the 49-members of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations.

Our delegation provided support to the *hibakusha* in their on-site activities there, and at the same time we were also involved in initiatives to spread the reality of the damage of the atomic bombing, as well as making requests to major national governments. We submitted a petition calling for the start of discussions on a nuclear weapons convention to the United Nations, for which we had gathered signatures from people all over Japan. After returning to Japan I summarized what we had observed and felt at the conference in a report, aiming to be of some use in the formation of a public consensus at the grass roots level.



A-bomb testimony at the “Nuclear-Free World: Cries from Hiroshima and Nagasaki” exhibition in the UN

On April 26, 2015, after participating in the NGO joint action and demonstration at Dag Hammarskjöld square in front of United Nations headquarters, the signatures that had been collected by Mayors for Peace and the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs were handed over to Ms. Taous Feroukhi, President of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We in the JCCU support the initiatives of Mayors for Peace, advocated by the City of Hiroshima, and have been involved in shaping opinion at the civic level. When the signatures (of the 1,097,059 signatures, around 890,000 were collected by JCCU) were handed to Ms. Feroukhi by Hiroshima Mayor Mr. Matsui, I thought “this is truly the moment where civic activities have reached the United Nations.”



Hiroshima Mayor submits a petition to the UN

At the NPT Review Conference this time, it was the first time that we collaborated with Mayors for Peace leading up to the New York visit. From 2014 we held a number of meetings with the City of Hiroshima and Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, and as a result we were able to officially participate as the JCCU delegation in the Hiroshima Nagasaki Appeal Gathering in New York organized by Mayors for Peace. On April 27, ten representatives from JCCU attended the Gathering, which Japanese Foreign Minister Mr. Kishida also attended, and made a speech. Since the end of the WWII we have consistently worked on civic peace activities as one of our main activities, but this was the first time that we had made a speech at an event related to the NPT Review Conference.

At this gathering, three appeals were adopted as statements.

1. The policymakers of the world, especially nuclear states, must visit atomic cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
2. In further negotiations regarding nuclear disarmament, they must heed and deepen their understanding of the inhumane consequences of nuclear weapons.
3. As stated in Article VI of the NPT, all States Parties must reconfirm the fact that they are concerned parties regarding nuclear weapons abolition, and begin negotiations in good faith towards the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention.

Hiroshima Prefecture Consumers' Co-operative Union agreed with them too.

As you are aware, the Review Conference this time broke up in disagreement, with continued opposition between the nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear weapon states. However, the groundswell of opinion regarding the inhumanity of nuclear weapons is changing greatly, and the activities of *hibakusha* are spreading, reflected in the voices of the people of the world. Based on the issues faced by all nations, we lobbied representatives of the United Nations, the nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear weapon states. Representatives of all nations interacted with integrity. Nonetheless I keenly felt that at this point in time, the “inhumanity of nuclear weapons” has not yet become a global value for the coexistence of humankind.

After returning to Japan, the event “For a Peaceful World Free of War and Nuclear weapons – A Gathering of Citizens” was held on June 5, 2015 in Hiroshima City, organized by the Executive Committee made up of six civic organizations. This year marked the 5th time that this gathering has been held, and participation was a record 224 people, including Hiroshima Governor Mr. Yuzaki, Hiroshima Mayor Mr. Matsui, local administra-

tive chief and public officials of 8 cities and 7 towns in Hiroshima Prefecture, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, voluntary organizations, union members and executives from Consumers' Co-operative Unions from around Japan, and more.

Through this gathering, I felt once again that now is the time that the world's leaders must face the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing and fulfill their duties as leaders, and that it is important that we the citizens work together to promote peace activities as "one Hiroshima" and "one Japan", crossing differences in thought and beliefs, to have a major impact on nuclear weapon states and their allies.

Throughout the world there are new conflicts and with them a higher risk that nuclear weapons will be used. When we look back on history, the approach of deterrence is not one that has lasted long. On the contrary, with the increasing possibility of an upset of the world's power balance, which was centered on the West, there are growing fears that nations that possess nuclear weapons will provoke mutually assured destruction (MAD), leading to a crisis threatening the existence of humankind. We also need to manage the risk of nuclear matter itself.

In order to ensure that nuclear weapons are not used again, we must demand the immediate abolition of nuclear weapons, which are inhumane weapons of mass destruction.

What we must do is to carry on the wishes of *hibakusha*, communicate them, and build a network that many citizens can join that aims for a peaceful world without war and nuclear weapons. Through such a network, we must communicate peace to the world.

Profile

Koki Takada

Started working at Hiroshima Consumers' Co-operative Union in 1980. Worked in various positions including Joint Purchasing Business Manager, Corporate Planning Office Manager, Welfare Business Manager and others. Dispatched to the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union as Welfare Business Promotion Manager from 2006. After working as Director of Hiroshima Consumer's Co-operative Union, assumed current position in 2013.

2015 Japan Studies Association Hiroshima-Nagasaki Workshop

From June 28 to July 5, 2015, the "Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki: 1945-2015" workshop was held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki cities, to commemorate 70 years since the atomic bombings. The workshop was

organized by the Japan Studies Association (JSA), an American organization in which Japan researchers in various fields work toward the spread of Japan studies.

A total of 46 people participated in the workshop: 32 young university teachers from America and 14 teachers and students from Philadelphia Community College. They learned about and discussed Hiroshima and Nagasaki from various angles. The directors of Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and Hiroshima City University Hiroshima Peace Institute were the honorary joint chairpersons for the event.

Over the two days of June 29 and 30, mainly in the seminar room in International Conference Center Hiroshima, there was a lecture by this Foundation's Chairperson Mr. Komizo, an atomic bomb testimony by Ms. Keiko Ogura, and a lecture by the Director of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Mr. Shiga. There were also lectures given by Mr. Kikkawa, President of Hiroshima Peace Institute, Mr. Mizumoto the Vice-President, and Associate Professor Mr. Jacobs, and a discussion on atomic bomb literature. Participants also toured Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Radiation Effects Research Foundation and more.



Lecture "Towards a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons: Role of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and Mayors for Peace" by Mr. Komizo

The JSA had previously held a 4-day conference in Hiroshima in 2003 with support from this Foundation and Hiroshima Peace Institute.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study Course —Central Connecticut State University—

The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are asking colleges and universities around the world to establish and promote Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study Courses designed to analyze and disseminate A-bomb lessons as a common social and intellectual asset for humankind.



The group from Central Connecticut State University after listening to the atomic bomb testimony by Ms. Keiko Ogura

On June 6 and 7, 2015, fourteen students and two teachers from Central Connecticut State University (US), which offers the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study Course, visited Hiroshima for a field trip.

While in Hiroshima the group visited Peace Memorial Park and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, listened to an atomic bomb testimony by Ms. Keiko Ogura, and participated in a recital of atomic bomb poetry at the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims. Through such activities they learned about the actual damage from the atomic bombing. In addition they also had opportunities to interact with students from Hiroshima University of Economics.



Learning about the bombing at close hand through viewing the portrait of Professor Tomoda's (right) late mother

The teacher leading the students this time was Professor Tomoda, a second-generation A-bomb survivor whose late mother's picture is registered in the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims. In this way the participants felt even closer to the atomic bombing and communicating the memory of it to future generations.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

“Working as an Intern for Mayors for Peace”

by Busba Krajangchai,
from Bangkok, Thailand

My name is Busba Krajangchai, and I work for the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) in the Kingdom of Thailand. I have been dispatched by the BMA, which is a Mayors for Peace leader city, and have been working as an intern in the Mayors for Peace secretariat from the end of October 2015 to the end of March 2016. I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity to work at Mayors for Peace, which aims to create a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons.

My life in Hiroshima has proceeded smoothly. Before coming to Japan, I was worried about whether or not I would be able to blend into a completely different culture with inadequate preparation. However after coming to Japan I found that Hiroshima is a wonderful city, both for living in and for visiting. Here I have been able to get involved in work for the Mayors for Peace, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Hiroshima University,

and have learned about the working environment and lifestyle in Japan. My co-workers and supervisors in the workplace are very nice people



Ms. Krajangchai at work

– they look after me and give me a helping hand when I have problems. My experience in Hiroshima is one of the best experiences in my life and one that I surely will never forget.

In my home of Thailand, we have not experienced the damage of the atomic bomb, and for this reason, learning about what happened in Hiroshima and the suffering of the survivors has been a valuable experience for me. The scale and the tragedy of the atomic bombing and the suffering that resulted from it was even greater than what I had imagined when I was in Thailand. It pains me whenever I come across the reality of the damage from the bombing.

By coming to Hiroshima, learning from experts, related documents, the Peace Memorial Museum and the media, and speaking with A-bomb survivors, I have been able to gain a better understanding of the reality of the damage from the bombing. I have also visited the Radiation Effects Research Foundation and learned about the effect of radiation on people.

When I return to Thailand I want to tell people about what I have experienced and learned in Hiroshima, and communicate the importance of peace. I believe that we should reject any type of nuclear weapon, and should never possess nuclear weapons for any reason.

(Article contributed February 2016)

30th Children's Peace Drawings Competition

– Many outstanding works submitted –

The awards ceremony for the Children's Peace Drawings Competition was held on December 12, 2015.

The aim of the competition, which has been held every year since 1986, is to heighten children's awareness of peace. This year marks the 30th time it has been held. A total of 4,227 works were submitted by students from 122 elementary and junior high schools in Hiroshima City, and 237 works were sent in from elementary and junior high school students from 6 foreign countries (America, Australia, India, Iran, Korea and Russia), for a total of 4,464 works submitted in total.

The ceremony was attended by 33 of the Excellence and Distinction Award winners and their parents, and the winners received a certificate and commemorative gift at the ceremony.

In conjunction with the competition, there was an exhibition of the works held from the day of the awards ceremony to January 15 this year, in the foyer in front of the Memorial hall on floor B1 of the East Wing of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

On display at the exhibition were 102 of the works awarded the Excellence, Distinction and Merit Awards.

The names of the winners of the Excellence, Distinction, Merit and Honor Awards are listed in the Kids Peace Station section of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum home page. (<http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/>)



Excellence
(Elementary School Category)
Ayane Ueno
6th grade, Hiroshima Municipal
Yanominami Elementary School



Excellence (Overseas Category)
Seyede Saba-Mostafavi Montazeri
2nd grade, junior high school, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Report: Donations for Nepal Earthquake Victim Relief

On April 25, 2015, an earthquake of magnitude 7.8 hit Nepal, with the epicenter close to the capital, Kathmandu. Approximately 30,000 people died or suffered injuries, and many people were affected by the earthquake.

In consideration of the huge scale of the damage from the disaster, Hiroshima City and this Foundation conducted humanitarian fund-raising activities from May 15 to July 30. Many individuals and organizations donated generously, and the total amount raised was 1,572,741 yen. The funds raised were sent on August 14 to Japan Red Cross and to earthquake-hit Kathmandu City (a member city of Mayors for Peace) as aid for those affected by the disaster.

(International Relations & Cooperation Division)

Hiroshima City Consultation Service for International Residents

~ Consultation and interpreting services are available free of charge ~

Location: International Conference Center Hiroshima, 1st Floor

(1-5 Nakajima-cho, Naka-ku, Hiroshima City)

Date/Time: Monday to Friday / 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
(Except for national holidays, year-end and New Year holidays, and August 6)

Tel: 082-241-5010

E-mail: soudan@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp

Languages available: English, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, Korean

(Other languages are available with the cooperation of registered volunteer interpreters.)



We maintain strict confidentiality. Feel free to give us a call.

Peace Memorial Hall Special Exhibition “Memoirs of the Atomic Bombing: The Earliest Accounts of the Hiroshima A-bomb”

Period: January 1 (Fri.) ~ December 28 (Wed.), 2016

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

The Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims holds a special exhibition every year on a specific theme, to introduce people to atomic bombing memoirs and other materials.

The theme this year is Memoirs of the Atomic Bombing, which were collected through an invitation for submissions by the City of Hiroshima in 1950. At the time only five years had passed since the bombing,

and wounds had still not healed, and many people responded to the invitation by the City, the purpose of which was to build a peaceful world.

Japan was still occupied at the time, and with the outbreak of the Korean War, the Cold War between the East and the West also intensified. In light of this situation, the Peace Festival, which had been scheduled for August 6, was cancelled by GHQ at the last minute. The plan had been to compile the 18 memoirs and 16 excerpts that had been selected from those submitted into a book which would then be widely distributed in Japan and overseas. However because of this turn of events the documents stayed in the warehouse for a long period of time.

Reading through the documents now, which were recorded just five years after the bombing at a time when vivid memories of the disaster still clearly remained, the memoirs provide a direct depiction of the tragedy of the disaster and the situation at the time.

At the exhibition venue will be film versions of atomic bombing memoirs by three people, shown on a three-part screen. Visitors will also be able to read the full text of 17 people's memoirs in Japanese, English, Chinese and Korean.

Below are excerpts from two of the memoirs on display, those of Ms. Taeko Nakamae and Mr. Koichi Toda.

Ms. Nakamae was 15 years old at the time. She experienced the atomic bombing as a mobilized student working at the Hiroshima Central Telephone Exchange.

...But fire still kept drawing closer, making it unsafe for us to linger. Everyone started moving, desperate to reach Hijiya Hill on the other side of the river. But Tsurumi Bridge, the only way across, started to burn.....There was no time to lose. Everyone scrambled to get into the river in an attempt to swim across. Those around me advised against going into the water, saying my wounds were too bad, but there was no room for hesitation. I started to swim, clutching Ms. Wakita by the hand. Although I was normally never afraid of water, in this instance I ran out of breath after only a short distance; my limbs felt stiff, and it became more and more difficult to keep going. Perhaps I would be better off dead, that would cut short the pain, I started to think, but Ms.

Wakita encouraged me each time I began to nod off. Thanks to her help, I was able to reach the middle of the river, where I was picked up by a boat, which took us to an aid station on Hijiya Hill....

Mr. Toda was 33 years old at the time of the bombing, and was a dentist working in charge of aid in Kabe Town in Asa District.

...On the third day, however, approximately two dozen physicians and dentists came to the town to support us. Although this made the situation slightly better, there was still a shortage of physicians, hygiene products, and drugs. We tore kimonos and used them as bandages, and procured cooking oil.....There were no heart stimulant and Ringer's solution. Accordingly, we made an injection solution of caffeine and sodium benzoate or isotonic sodium chloride, and began to use the solution on the fifth day. This attempt was better than nothing. It had a profound psychological impact on patients, compared with when they were treated with only cooking oil and Mercurochrome. We did not even have enough time to eat. When a blackout was ordered, we had extreme difficulty treating patients when we did the rounds at night. As the proverb goes, "Man turns to God only in trouble." Physicians were like Jesus Christ for patients at that time. I had never been more satisfied with my mission as a physician than I was then. That motivated me to do my best to treat my patients....



Genbaku taiken-ki (Memoirs of the Atomic Bombing) (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Service Committee, 1950)



Manuscripts of personal accounts of the atomic bombing that the City of Hiroshima solicited from the general public (Collection of Hiroshima Municipal Archives)

The rest of the memoirs may be read at the exhibition venue and the Library in the Memorial Hall. Three people's memoirs are also viewable on the Memorial Hall's home page.

In addition to the memoirs, at the venue are also displays of A-bomb materials related to the writers, newspapers articles that indicate what kind of era it was at that time around 1950 when the atomic bombing memoirs were collected, and more. Videos will also be available for rental as DVDs as peace study materials. Please contact the Memorial Hall if you are interested.

Peace Memorial Hall receives 3 millionth visitor

The number of visitors to the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for Atomic Bomb Victims reached 3 million on February 2, 2016. The 3 millionth visitor was Mr. Kazuo Itakura, who was in Hiroshima City as a tourist. Director Masaki Kano presented Mr. Itakura with a commemorative gift of DVDs of the Memorial Hall's special exhibition "Children of Hiroshima (2014 and 2015 versions)", as well as an illustrated book showing the damage from the atomic bombing and a bouquet of flowers. Mr. Itakura said "Some of my acquaintances are A-bomb survivors. I want to reaffirm my awareness that we should never go to war again."

Director Kano commented "The A-bomb survivors are getting old, and there are fewer opportunities to hear their testimonies directly. This means that the role of the Peace Memorial Hall is becoming more important. We will continue to collect testimonies and translate them into multiple languages so that we can pass on to as many people as possible the wishes of the A-bomb survivors."



Mr. Kazuo Itakura (left), the 3 millionth visitor to the Memorial Hall

The Peace Memorial Hall opened on August 1, 2002, which means that the number of visitors reached 3 million in a period of 13 years, 6 months. The number of visitors in 2015 was around 253,000, marking a record high for one year.

The Peace Memorial Hall includes the Hall of Remembrance, and the facility also has a registration of the names and photographs of the A-bomb victims as well as a collection of A-bomb testimonies and videos of testimonies on display. The A-bomb testimonies are also used in recitation sessions, to talk about and pass on the horror of war and the atomic bomb and the importance of peace. The Memorial Hall receives many chil-

dren, students and others visiting Hiroshima to learn about peace.

There are also many visitors from overseas, and some of the testimonies have been translated into English, Chinese, Korean, and 22 languages in total, so that people can read them in their mother tongue. There are also other activities to broadly communicate the content both in Japan and overseas, including English readings of A-bomb testimonies, and the posting of A-bomb testimonies and videos of the testimonies on the Peace Memorial Hall's home page.

(Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims)

Thinking about Peace

"Together with the World Friendship Center"

(Article contributed February 2016)



by **Michiko Yamane**

Chairperson of the Board,
World Friendship Center

More than thirty years have passed since I got involved in the World Friendship Center (WFC). While raising children, I started coming to WFC when I was in my early 30s and since then, I have really improved my understanding of Peace issues. Through volunteering activities such as interpreting *hibakusha* stories and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park guiding, I have had many chances to meet wonderful people from abroad and to broaden my horizons. About 40 director couples have come to WFC from America and I know as many as 25 of them. Though each had a unique personality and different skills, all of them were pacifists and very dedicated to their duty. I could not help admiring their hard work.

I was appointed the third chairperson in May 2012. Since then, on top of daily activities, WFC has held a number of important events like the One World Peace Concert, the opening of the Schmoie House, and the staging of "Breaking the Silence", a play depicting the plight of Japanese-Americans in American internment camps during the World War II. We celebrated the 50th anniversary of WFC in April 2015 with 27 guests from abroad, including former directors and descendants of Barbara Reynolds. We had a series of memorial events for a week as well as the 50th Anniversary ceremony.

This summer, WFC will accept teachers from the

Middle East and support their workshop on peace education.

Barbara Reynolds and the World Friendship Center

Barbara came to Hiroshima in 1951, when her husband Earle was dispatched to the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC) by the U.S. government. She was shocked to see the devastation brought about by the American atomic bomb. She identified herself with *hibakusha*, and left the words, "I, too, am a *hibakusha*." The Barbara Reynolds Monument was erected in Peace Memorial Park in 2011. These same words are inscribed on the monument.



Barbara Reynolds

In 1962, along with two *hibakusha*, Barbara went on a Peace Pilgrimage to the nuclear countries, and again in 1964, she went around the U.S., Canada, the U.K., and Europe with 42 *hibakusha*, teachers, doctors, and interpreters. She appealed for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In 1965, Barbara founded the World Friendship Center with Dr. Tomin Harada. She was given the title of a Special Honorary Citizen of Hiroshima for her dedication to world peace and for making Hiroshima known to the world.

WFC activities

Hibakusha accounts

The WFC provides rooms for overnight guests, and with advance request, we provide international visitors from around the globe with a chance to listen to first-hand accounts by *hibakusha* of how their lives were affected by the A-bombing. They tell their experiences with the wish that "No one else should ever suffer as we did." I have been interpreting *hibakusha* accounts for a long time. The average age of *hibakusha* has reached 80 and the time left to listen to their stories is limited. WFC needs to determine how to preserve these stories for the future.

Guided tour in Peace Memorial Park

Knowledgeable trained Japanese volunteers provide our guests with guided tours of the main 15 monuments in Peace Memorial Park in English. We have a study group meeting once a month.

Peace Ambassador Exchanges

Peace Ambassador Exchanges (PAX) are the evolution of Barbara Reynolds' idea that world peace begins with the building of personal and lasting friendships. PAX programs are now conducted between America and

Japan and between Korea and Japan. The Korean PAX started in 2003. It is a good opportunity to exchange ideas related to peace and reconciliation. Eight delegates including young people and a *hibakusha* are going to Korea in March 2016.

Youth Peace Camp

Junior and senior high school students from China, Korea and Japan get together in an annual summer camp. After spending several days together, they become good friends overcoming misunderstandings in their past shared history.

Visits to Mutsumi-en each month

WFC directors and English class students have visited an A-bomb survivors' nursing home on the third Thursday of each month since 1985. Funairi Mutsumi-en was the first nursing home for A-bomb survivors in Japan, established in 1970 next to Funairi Hospital. There are 100 residents there. They cheerfully welcome us and my sidekick for ventriloquism. We celebrate birthdays, share stories, and play games together.



Mutsumi-en visit

Other activities

There are English conversation classes taught by the American directors, translation classes to translate A-bomb related texts, Peace Seminars to study nuclear issues, Peace Choir which practices monthly and presents concerts, the publication of the "Yu-Ai Newsletter" three to four times a year, the monthly "Fun Time in English" activity, and a Christmas party. You cannot get bored at WFC.

Profile

Michiko Yamane

Appointed as the third Chairperson of the Board of WFC in 2012. 1987-1990, lived in Hong Kong, volunteering at Hong Kong Red Cross Hospital and the camp for Vietnamese boat people. 1994-1995, lived in Washington, D.C., volunteering at a Soup Kitchen for homeless people and at Meals On Wheels for elderly people. 2001, participated in a trip for healing and reconciliation supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and met British former POWs. 2010, visited University of Central Missouri as an interpreter for *hibakusha*. Dispatched to the U.S., Germany, Poland and Korea on WFC's Peace Ambassador Exchange program to date.

Memoir of the A-bombing

“Passing on the Hiroshima Story to Future Generations”



by **Yoshinori Kuniwake**,
Atomic Bomb Witness
for this Foundation

At home with family when the bomb was dropped

On August 6, 1945, I was 16 years old and a 4th year student at a junior high school under the old system of education. At just after 8am I was just about to leave the temple (Hoshoin Temple in Hakushima town) that was my home to head for my work site as a mobilized student, and I was sitting on a chair near the window on the south side of the main hall.

Suddenly I heard the sound of a plane nose-diving, and thinking it sounded strange, there was a flash of light and my head was hit with a boom. I was thrown and nearly lost consciousness. Coming to my senses I looked around in all directions in the dark, and I saw a ray of light shining in. Aiming for the light, I feverishly removed obstacles and escaped from there. I had been under the collapsed building.

I got out together with my younger brother, who was in 5th grade at elementary school. When the two of us called out for our parents, our father made his way out. When my father saw the wound on my forehead, he brought some cloth and tied it to stop the bleeding. The three of us divided up and called out for our mother. It was then that we heard the crying voice of what sounded like my younger sister. Listening for her voice we removed tiles and other rubble and found my four-year-old sister and got her out.

When we removed the rubble in the area where my sister had been we could see part of a kimono. It was my mother. A thick piece of wood was lying across her body, and she had died instantly, holding my one-year-old brother. Our neighbor brought a saw, but we were not able to cut through the thick wood. When I think about it now, I tell myself that the one good thing was that at least she was not burned while she was still alive, but after she had died.

Looking around, we saw that there were flames coming from the tearoom. We put out the fire with water from the pond in the courtyard. This was a place where fire was not used, so I think the heat wave from the atomic bomb must have started the fire. There were

cracks in the storehouse from the bomb’s blast. The tearoom started burning again, and fire was approaching from all side. Realizing that we had done all that we could do, we left my dead mother and brother under the main hall and fled.

Tragic scenes at the riverbank where we fled

My father brought a kettle that was lying in the kitchen. We filled it with water from the well pump and set off. My sister could not stand so I carried her on my back. When we finally reached the nearby riverbank, I was amazed at the unbelievable scenes there.

Many soldiers were lying down, or sitting down, with their shirts off, and there were some who were crawling into the river and drinking the water there. When I got closer, I saw that the only hair remaining on their heads was where they were wearing a hat, and from the rest of their head to their trousers their skin was black, and the skin from their arms to the tips of their fingers had peeled away and was hanging down. The soldiers were all saying “Give me water, please give me water” and holding out their hands. My father was formerly an army medic private first-class, and he had some medical knowledge. Saying “With burns like that they’re not likely to survive” he gave them water from the kettle we had brought, and they thanked him.

Suddenly rain started to fall. As the rain fell on our clothes they started to turn black. My father said “There’s something strange about this rain”, and we fled from the rain to an iron roof. This was what became known as “black rain”.

When we looked from the river embankment to the direction of the temple we could see that it was now a huge fire with flames in a whirlwind swirling up to the sky. We returned to the riverbank, lay down and rested.



“Tragic scenes at the riverbank where we fled”
Created by Ms. Yuki Tochida, Hiroshima Municipal Motomachi High School Creative Expression Course, and Mr. Yoshinori Kuniwake

Temple completely transformed

Close to evening, the fire had died down, so we decided to head for the temple.

The fire was out around the temple gate but the storehouse and main hall were still burning. The carp in the pond were all floating belly-up, dead. When I put my hand in the pond's water it was hot.

The bright red sun set in the west, and a bright red moon rose from the east. The area where my mother and brother were buried under the main hall was still burning steadily with red and blue flames. I stood there wondering which flames were my mother's and which were my brother's, and thinking that I should have died there with them, I could not control my tears.

Praying for peace

In 1945 there were nine in my family – my parents, older sister, myself, three younger sisters and two younger brothers – but because of the atomic bomb I lost four members of my family – my mother, two younger sisters and one younger brother.

I am currently involved in activities to send to people in Japan and overseas the seeds of the Bodhi tree and saplings of camellia tree that survived the bombing in the grounds of the temple. I pray that the camellia flowers and the Bodhi trees envelop the world with their fragrance, and that we can achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons and peace throughout the world.



Two Bodhi trees survived the atomic bombing in the grounds of Hoshoin Temple and one of them was transplanted to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

HIROSHIMA PEACE CULTURE FOUNDATION

PEACE CULTURE

Profile

Yoshinori Kuniwake

Born in 1929. Experienced the atomic bombing at the age of 16 as a 4th year junior high school student, while he was just about to leave his home (Hoshoin Temple in Hakushima) 1.8km from the hypocenter. After the war spent many years serving as a Buddhist priest. In 1998, when working as the head of the local residents' association, built the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims on the riverbank where many of the A-bomb victims had been cremated, as a prayer for world peace.

Information from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum The East Building is closed until October 2016

Due to the renovation works, the exhibition rooms of the Museum East Building are closed until October 2016. Currently, the Main Building is open to visitors. We apologize for any inconvenience that may cause and ask for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

The location of the entrance remains in the East Building. The summary panels of the closed East Building are displayed in the gallery of the Main Building.

Information of other facilities is as follows.

- Coin-Lockers: Available
- Audio Guide: Available only for the Main Building.
- Museum Shop: A temporary museum shop is set up on the 1st floor of the East Building.
- Video Theater: Closed
- Library: Regular opening
- Rest Space / Café: Regular opening

Renovation leaflet: http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/topics/renovations_e.pdf

Inquiries: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Curatorial Division / TEL: +81-82-241-4004

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.



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