

PEACE CULTURE



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US President Obama's Visit to Hiroshima

On May 27, 2016, taking the opportunity of his attendance at G7 JAPAN 2016 Ise-Shima, U.S. President Barack Obama visited Hiroshima with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. It was the first time for a sitting president of the United States to visit the atomic-bombed city.

Tour of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

After arriving at Peace Memorial Park, President Obama was met by Prime Minister Abe and they made their way to the Peace Memorial Museum together. In front of the museum, they were met by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, and Hiroshima Prefecture Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki. In the museum the President looked intently at displays such as paper cranes made by Sadako Sasaki and listened to explanations by Foreign Minister Kishida. The President then handed two paper cranes he had folded himself to the elementary school student and junior high school student who had met him there, and he also added two paper cranes to the guest book that he wrote in.



Paper cranes folded by President Obama

President Obama wrote in the guest book: "We have known the agony of war. Let us now find the courage, together, to spread peace and pursue a world without nuclear weapons." Prime Minister Abe wrote: "I express my sincere condolences to all the victims of the atomic bombings. I pray for lasting peace and will do my utmost to realize a world free of nuclear weapons."

Laying of Wreath and Speech at Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims

After touring the Peace Memorial Museum, the two leaders proceeded to the Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims, led by U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy, Foreign Minister Kishida, Mayor Matsui and Governor Yuzaki. They laid wreathes that they had been handed by high school students who have been designated as Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons, and offered a silent prayer.

Both leaders then made speeches.

In his speech, President Obama touched on the horrors of the atomic bombing, and expressed the impor-

tance of communicating the atomic bombing experience to later generations. He stated "But among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them", thus calling for the political leaders of the world to renew their resolve to create a world free of nuclear weapons. Finally, he said that if we choose a peaceful future, it will be "a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare, but as the start of our own moral awakening." In this way he expressed the importance of using the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombing experience as the starting point for facing the future.



Speech by President Obama

These statements by the President demonstrate that he understands and accepts the sincere wish of the *hibakusha* for the abolition of nuclear weapons, their wish that "no one else should ever suffer as we have." It also created an opportunity for many people who had not taken an interest in this issue before to think about the abolition of nuclear weapons and consider the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Prime Minister Abe stated in his speech that the fact that the President of the United States had seen for himself the reality of the damage caused by the atomic bombing and renewed



Speech by Prime Minister Abe

his resolve to realize a world free of nuclear weapons, had given great hope to the people of the world who fervently believe in a nuclear-free world. He also stated that carrying on the wish of the *hibakusha* to never repeat such a tragic experience anywhere in the world, and continuing tireless efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, is the responsibility of us living now, and he vowed to fulfill that responsibility.

Speaking with *Hibakusha*

After his speech, President Obama exchanged some words with Mr. Sunao Tsuboi, who is himself a *hibakusha* and chairperson of the Japan Confederation of A and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations, as well as with Mr. Shigeaki Mori, also a *hibakusha*, who conducted a survey on twelve American prisoners of war who lost their lives in the atomic bombing.



Hibakusha in conversation with the two leaders (top: Mr. Tsuboi, bottom: Mr. Mori)

Explanation of Atomic Bomb Dome

The two leaders then proceeded to Atomic Bomb Dome, and looking at the Dome from the North side of the Flame of Peace, listened to the explanation by Foreign Minister Kishida. President Obama also listened intently as Mr. Kishida provided explanations of the Children's Peace Monument and the paper cranes that have been sent from all over the world, which can be seen in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome.

Press Conference by Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

After President Obama's visit to Hiroshima ended, Mayor Matsui was interviewed together with Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue. He expressed his gratitude to the governments of Japan and the United States for achieving the visit to a region hit by the atomic bomb by a sitting American president, something that both cities had been calling for over many years.



Press conference by mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

He also commented that by actually seeing the damage caused by the bombing and coming into contact with the experience of the *hibakusha* and their desire for peace, President Obama now had an even stronger resolve to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. He also expressed his expectation for the Japanese government to take the lead in international debate on the abolition of nuclear weapons, in its role as a bridge between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.

Mayor Matsui said that this visit by President Obama could lead to visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by other world leaders, and as such is an historic starting point to make progress together toward a world free of nuclear

weapons.

The Mayor said that for future initiatives, Hiroshima City will work together with Nagasaki City to build international momentum, by continuing with calls for the people of the world to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and calling for the abolishment of nuclear weapons through Mayors for Peace activities.

(Photographs: 'Paper cranes folded by President Obama' provided by Peace Memorial Museum, others provided by the City of Hiroshima)

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

G7 Hiroshima Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The G7 Hiroshima Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on April 10 and 11, 2016, chaired by Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida. Foreign ministers including US Secretary of State John Kerry, Italian



Laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph for the A-Bomb Victims

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Paolo Gentiloni, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary Philip Hammond, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Stephane Dion, German Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier, French Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault, and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, gathered in Hiroshima for the meeting. They held discussions on urgent global issues such as countermeasures against terrorism and violent fundamentalism, refugee issues, disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation, and maritime security, as well as the regional situation in North Korea, the Middle East and Ukraine. In response to a proposal from the City of Hiroshima, the program also included a visit to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and a laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph for the A-Bomb Victims, so that the participants could see the reality of the damage from the bombing and share the desire for peace.

At the Peace Memorial Museum, Foreign Minister Kishida, together with Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, Chairperson of this Foundation Yasuyoshi Komizo, and Director of the Museum Kenji Shiga, gave an explanation about the reality of the bombing to the G7 foreign ministers. The foreign ministers participated in the tour attentively, and stayed in the museum far longer than originally planned. At the end of the visit was the signing of the guest book. US Secretary of State Mr. Kelly wrote "This memorial compels us all to redouble our efforts to change the world, to find peace and build the future so yearned for by citizens everywhere".

At the Cenotaph for the A-Bomb Victims after this, the foreign ministers were welcomed by Hiroshima City elementary school students, and placed wreaths there.

In response to Secretary Kelly's proposal, there was a sudden change of plans and the group proceeded to the Atomic Bomb Dome. At the press conference after, Secretary Kelly said that he would definitely report to President Obama on what he had seen there, and communicate to him how important it is to visit Hiroshima.



Mayor Matsui provides an explanation in front of Atomic Bomb Dome

The participants at the meeting this time confirmed the need to send out a strong message to achieve a world without nuclear weapons from the G7 group, which is made up of both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states, and issued the G7 Foreign Ministers' Hiroshima Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.

(Photographs provided by the City of Hiroshima)

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Memoir of the A-Bombing

So that Hiroshima does not just become an old folk tale



by **Reiko Yamamoto**
Atomic Bomb Witness
for this Foundation

Experiencing the bombing in the schoolyard

Although the national school that I attended was in an area neighboring Hiroshima City, it was a rural area, so in 1945 there were no group evacuations. The summer holidays were scheduled to start from August 10.

August 6 was a Monday, and it was a hot morning. I was a Grade 1 student, and when I arrived at school I put my bag in the classroom and went out into the schoolyard to play.

I heard voices yelling "It's a plane!!" "It's a B-29!!", and when I looked up at the sky two planes gleaming silver in the morning sun were flying up and down. I thought "How pretty", and at that moment there was a flash of light, and I thought "The sun has fallen!!"

The clouds of dust turned the schoolyard an ochre color, and everything went dark as if it were dusk. Children running around trying to escape were bumping into one another and falling over. I also tried to escape with my friend. The clouds of dust gradually settled, and as it became lighter and I could see around me, I left the school through the back gate and crouched under the veranda of a house nearby. There were around ten older students near me.

The older students eventually went back to school, so I followed them back. The two-story schoolhouse was standing as is, but roof tiles had fallen and the win-

dowpanes were smashed and scattered. I tried to go in the classroom, but the corridor ceiling had fallen down and I could not get in, so I went home.

The second floor of my home was partly twisted, the shutters and sliding doors had blown away, and drawers and cupboards had fallen over. I could not get inside the house, so I was playing on the veranda with my younger sister when the sky turned dark and it started to rain. Our cat Tama walked slowly out to the garden in the rain. We had a cat in our family to catch mice, as they would get into the rice and barley that we had harvested. Tama was a black and white spotted cat, but the rain turned the cat's white fur black. It was unusual to see black rain, so I went outside too and caught the rain in both hands. This was the strange, sticky 'black rain'.



Gym uniform with stains from black rain
(Donated by Toyoko Matsumiya to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)

The man's burns

A man that we knew came into the garden wearing only his underwear and carrying a *futon* (mattress). Saying "Water, give me water!!" he collapsed on the veranda. He had horrible burns, and it looked like he could not move.

My grandmother and mother laid him on the *futon* and gave him water. He then vomited something that looked like yellow water. His clothes were hanging down from his arms, so my mother cut them off with scissors, and when she did, we saw that it was not just his clothes hanging down – stuck to the clothes was the burnt skin from his shoulders, neck and arms. They put oil on his burns, but there was not enough oil, so they also applied some grated cucumber, which was thought at the time to be good for burns. Before we knew it countless flies were swarming around his wounds.

The man had a high fever, and passed away just after noon on August 7.

Everyone working together for peace

Life after the war was tough, with little food. As my family home was a farm, we did have simple food to eat. However, relatives whose houses had burned and were left with nothing came to live with us, and life with so many people in the house was hard.

My daily chore in the fall was collecting grasshoppers from rice fields after the harvest. I would catch the grasshoppers with a net, and put them in a large bottle. When left in the bottle for a day, waste is discharged from their bodies. After that, we would roast or fry them and eat them. On school days when we had to bring a box lunch to school, everyone would come home to eat lunch. Our staple foods were rice gruel with sweet potato and soup with dumplings, and these could not be taken to school in the lunchboxes used in those days.

From about ten years after the war ended, more and more people started dying from diseases like leukemia. The grade 1 and grade 2 students who experienced the bombing because they were not evacuated as a group fell ill and suffered from poor health, and some even

committed suicide.

War is started by people. If we want to protect humankind and the Earth, we must not wage war, and we must definitely not use nuclear weapons. I hope that we can work together to protect the world and achieve lasting peace with no nuclear weapons.

Profile

Reiko Yamamoto

Born 1938. Experienced the atomic bombing as a grade 1 elementary school student, aged 7, in the schoolyard of a national school 4.1km from the hypocenter, when looking up at the B-29 heavy bomber. After the war, worked at a casualty insurance company, then left to focus on child rearing. Working at an after-school childcare facility since 1980. Active as a Hiroshima Peace Volunteer since 2005.

71th Peace Memorial Ceremony

-There still remain 15,000 nuclear weapons that could destroy the Earth itself-

On August 6, 2016, the 71st since the atomic bombing, the Peace Memorial Ceremony was held by the City of Hiroshima in Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park. At the ceremony, approximately 50,000 people including *hibakusha* and bereaved families prayed for the repose of the souls of the deceased and perpetual peace.

The ceremony commenced at 8am. First Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui and two representatives of the families of the deceased dedicated three volumes of the Register of the Names of the Fallen Atomic Bomb Victims, in which are recorded the names of 5,511 people who have passed away over the past year, to the shrine in the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims. This brings the total number of names recorded in the Register to 303,195 people, in a total of 111 volumes.

This was followed by an address by Mr. Masanori Nagata, Chairperson of the Hiroshima City Council, and a dedication of flowers by various representatives. At 8:15am, the time that the bomb was dropped, Mr. Sosuke Kamemoto, representing the bereaved families, and Yui Takeda, the children's representative, rang the Peace Bell, and all participants observed a minute of silence.

Mayor Matsui then read out the Peace Declaration. He spoke of the fact that at 8:15am on August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb – the 'absolute evil' – was dropped on Hiroshima, and by the end of that year 140,000 precious lives had been lost. Even those who barely managed to survive suffered from radiation sickness, faced discrimination in employment and marriage, and bore deep physical and emotional scars that they still carry today. He also read out graphic testimonies from *hibakusha*.

The mayor also said that today, 71 years later, there are still over 15,000 nuclear weapons that are far more destructive than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and which could destroy the Earth itself. It is now known that there have been many incidents and accidents that could lead to nuclear war or a nuclear explosion, and there are concerns about nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. In the face of this reality, he said

that we must listen to the calls and appeals from the *hibakusha* and take further action. The mayor strongly stated that we must respect diverse values and continue to strive to create a world where we can all live together.



Hiroshima Mayor Matsui reads out the Peace Declaration

The mayor also made reference to the remark made by President Obama when he visited Hiroshima in May, the first visit to Hiroshima by a sitting president of the country that dropped the bomb: "... among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them". The mayor said that these words were proof that President Obama's accepts the *hibakusha*'s heartfelt plea that "no one else should ever suffer as we have", and demonstrate to the people of America and the world a passion to eliminate all remaining nuclear weapons. They show that the spirit of Hiroshima, which refuses to accept the 'absolute evil', reached the President.

The mayor also spoke of the fact that now is the time to act in solidarity and with passion, based on the spirit of Hiroshima, to build the path toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. In April, the G7 foreign ministers gathered together for the first time in Hiroshima and, going beyond the lines dividing nations with and without nuclear weapons, issued a declaration where they called for the world's political leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, called for early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and fulfillment of their obligation to conduct disarmament negotiations based on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The mayor stated that this was a real step toward unity.

After the Peace Declaration, the children's representatives Yuta Aoki and Tariho Nakaoku read out the Commitment to Peace. In the Commitment, they said that today, as they get closer to the time when they will no longer be able to directly ask the *hibakusha* about the atomic bombing, they feel that peace is spreading when they see many people from all over the world visit Hiroshima and feel for themselves the terror of the atomic bomb, and promise to convey to others what happened on that day. They stated: "We have a duty to convey the *hibakusha*'s words, which have been entrusted to us. Each of us, in our own, deliberate words, will communicate and pass on to those who do not know war, to members of the next generation, and to people around the world, the treasure of life and the desire for peace".

This was followed by an address by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. He stated that it is the responsibility of those living now to make tireless efforts to ensure that the horrific tragedies that took place in Hiroshima and Nagasaki 71 years ago are never repeated. He stated: "As the only country to have experienced the horror of nuclear devastation in war, Japan will appeal for the importance of maintaining and strengthening the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

(NPT) while firmly upholding the ‘Three Non-Nuclear Principles’. Japan will continue to make various efforts to bring about ‘a world free of nuclear weapons’ by calling for cooperation from both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states and having world leaders and young people become directly acquainted with the tragic reality of the atomic bombings.” He also expressed his intention to steadily promote relief measures, properly taking into account the current situation of the *hibakusha*, whose average age is now over 80 years old.

At the ceremony were representatives of bereaved families from 37 prefectures, as well as ambassadors and representatives from 91 countries, including the European Union and the nuclear weapon states of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Russia.

The ceremony was broadcast live on the Internet, and the video of the ceremony can be viewed on ‘ThecityofHiroshima’ channel in YouTube. The full text of the Peace Declaration can be accessed via the City of Hiroshima homepage (‘Atomic Bombing/Peace’ → ‘Peace Declaration, Protest Letters, etc’), and is available in ten languages (Japanese, Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Korean, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish).

(General Affairs Division)

Memorial Gathering for Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Victims

On August 9, 2016, 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 bomb, for the deceased in Nagasaki, and to renew the vow to achieve peace.

This year’s Memorial Gathering was held in the foyer on B1 floor of the east building of the Peace Memorial Museum. There were around 50 people who participated, including *hibakusha* and visitors to the museum from Japan and overseas.

The ceremony was opened with a speech by Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, the Chairperson of this Foundation, followed by live television coverage of the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony. At 11:02am, the time that the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, all attendees observed one minute of silent prayer.



Opening Speech by Chairperson Komizo

This was followed by a speech by Mr. Kunihiro Sakuma, Chairperson of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers’ Associations. The gathering ended with a video of a Nagasaki atomic bombing testimony by Ms. Tokuko Kimura, an atomic bombing witness.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Attendance at the 9th Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace and Opening Ceremony of A-Bomb Exhibition

In November 2015, Mayors for Peace (President: Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui) held the 9th Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace in Ypres, Belgium, one of the Mayors for Peace Vice-President cities. Mayor Matsui took the opportunity of being in Europe to also attend the opening ceremony of an A-bomb exhibition at the United Nations Office at Vienna, and also visited Manchester and London in the United Kingdom to attend related events and hold discussions with the mayors and others.

Mayor Matsui’s main engagements November 11

Prior to the Executive Conference, Mayor Matsui met with the Deputy Mayor of Ypres Mr. Jef Verschoore. He presented Deputy Mayor Verschoore with an explanatory plaque for a sapling of the ginkgo tree that survived the atomic bombing, which were donated to Ypres in 2012, and said that he would like the people of the city to share Hiroshima’s desire for peace.

November 12 and 13

The 9th Mayors for Peace Executive Conference was held, attended by 11 executive cities. Participants discussed future initiatives.



9th Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace

On the first day, attendees discussed the 2020 Vision, the action guidelines to demand the abolishment of nuclear weapons by 2020. One of the objectives listed in the 2020 Vision is the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention by 2015. The term ‘by 2015’ was deleted, and the decision was made to continue to pursue this objective. Additionally, the following items (and others) were decided as the subject of concentrated efforts moving forward: (1) activities to educate people on the humanitarian impact and risk of nuclear weapons (2) requests to policymakers in each nation to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki (3) the increase of Mayors for Peace member cities to 10,000 cities by 2020 (4) pass on the facts of the damage from the bombing through youth exchange activities (5) invite interns to the Hiroshima Secretariat.

In addition to activities aiming for the abolition of nuclear weapons, it was also decided to address urgent issues such as poverty, refugees and climate change, in line with the regulations in Article 3 of the Mayors for Peace Covenant. It was confirmed that the next General Session will be held in 2017 in Nagasaki, and the session after that will be brought forward by one year to be held in 2020 in Hiroshima.

The Executive Conference closed on the second day

with the adoption of a Resolution that included a call for all governments to participate in the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group.

Following on from the Executive Conference, the General Meeting of the 2020 Vision Campaign Association was held. The secretariat for the Association was set up in Ypres City in November 2007, and since then, Ypres had promoted the global roll-out of the campaign. However, with the move to establish regional groups centered around the leader cities in each region of the world, it was decided to move the Association's secretariat to Hiroshima.

November 14

Mayor Matsui visited Manchester City, which is implementing proactive activities as a Mayors for Peace member city. He presented Mayor Paul Murphy with a Leader City Certificate, and asked him to implement even stronger initiatives in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Following this, Mayor Matsui attended a commemorative event for Project G that is being implemented by Manchester. In this project, a contest among elementary schools on art and poetry on the topic of peace is held, with the top schools awarded ginkgo tree seedlings from the Hiroshima tree that survived the atomic bombing so that they can grow the tree themselves. The aim of the project is to develop an awareness of peace among the young generation.

November 16

In a conference room at the House of Lords in the Palace of Westminster, the Mayor made a presentation on the state of Hiroshima before and after the atomic bombing, the path to recovery, and the activities of the Mayors for Peace, in front of an audience of around 50 people, including members of both houses of parliament and mayors from Mayors for Peace member cities in the United Kingdom. There was an active discussion after the presentation.

The Mayor then visited Mr. Edward Lister, Deputy Mayor of London, explained the Mayors for Peace activities, and stated that he would like to work together to think about how to achieve a peaceful world that is not dependent on nuclear weapons, through dialogue with the people of the United Kingdom, which is a nuclear weapon state. Deputy Mayor Lister said that London would cooperate in the Mayors for Peace activities.

A terrorist attack occurred on November 13, 2015, in Paris, and in light of this, a statement signed by the 26 Mayors for Peace executive cities was sent to all member cities, together with a request to widely publicize the statement to national governments and the public in the respective countries.

November 17

Mayor Matsui visited Mr. Franz Prokop, the District Director of the 16th District of the city of Vienna. He was welcomed by the Mr. Prokop and a residents' exchange group in front of a peace monument that had been built using stones that survived the atomic bombing, donated by the City of Hiroshima.

Next, the Mayor had a meeting with Mr. Sebastian Kurz, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs. He expressed his gratitude for Austria taking the lead in de-

bate focused on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, including the Humanitarian Pledge. Mr. Kurz promised that the Austrian government would continue to work to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mayor Matsui then attended the opening ceremony for an A-bomb exhibition being held at the United Nations Office in Vienna. This exhibition follows on from exhibitions held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and Europe. The venue was filled with over 100 visitors and media, indicating the high level of interest in the exhibition. In his speech, Mayor Matsui said that he would like many national governments and leaders of international bodies to see the displays, and appealed for them to make the utmost effort to eliminate nuclear weapons, the ultimate evil, from the earth.

Future activities of Mayors for Peace

Through the discussions and the debate at the Executive Conference this time, we could confirm that moves to form regional groups based on initiatives by leader cities are making definite progress, and see that further moves to revitalize the activities in the future are taking shape. We will forge even closer ties with leader cities, and make the most of the Mayors for Peace network, to implement activities to accelerate moves towards the conclusion of the nuclear weapons convention, as well as proactively implementing initiatives to spread and communicate the truth of the atomic bombing and the message of the *hibakusha*.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

5th Japanese Member Cities Meeting of Mayors for Peace and Submission of a Letter of Request to the Japanese Government Regarding a Nuclear Weapons Convention

On November 9 and 10, 2015, the 5th Japanese Member Cities Meeting of Mayors for Peace was held in Hiroshima City.

This is a meeting that is held once a year to enhance Mayors for Peace activities in Japan. This time, 126 people (including 39 heads) from 86 municipalities attended.

Opening

Firstly, Mayors for Peace President, Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, made a speech to open the meeting, in which he stated "I believe that it is important that each member city moves ahead with initiatives to create global momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons." He also made special mention of the promotion of youth exchange activities, and called for member cities to cooperate fully in such activities, as a top priority matter for the Japanese Member Cities Meeting.

Program to communicate the reality of the atomic bombing

This was followed by a screening of the documentary film *Hiroshima no Kioku* (Memories of Hiroshima),

and an A-bomb testimony by Ms. Yoshiko Kajimoto. The attendees then went to the Peace Memorial Park to pay their respects and lay flowers at the Cenotaph for A-bomb Victims, as well as taking a tour of the Peace Memorial Museum.



Participants paying respects and laying flowers at the Cenotaph for the A-Bomb Victims

Session I (Presentation on peace activities in Hiroshima City)

Next were presentations by various groups in Hiroshima city that conduct peace-related activities, on their day-to-day activities. The groups that gave presentations were Hiroshima Jogakuin Senior High school, Honkawa *Omotenashi* group, the Chugoku Shimbun Newspaper Junior Writers, and Associate Professor Atsuko Morikawa of Hijiya University.

Session II (Reports on examples of peace-related activities)

The first item on the program for the 2nd day was reports from Mayor Kobayashi of Kodaira City in Tokyo and Mayor Muroto of Motosugun Kitagata Town in Gunma Prefecture, on examples of peace-related activities being conducted in their respective municipalities. These reports helped to contribute to future activities by member cities.

Session III (Deliberation on agenda items, Discussion, etc), Session IV (Adoption of meeting summary document) and Closing

Next, Mayor Matsui fulfilled his duties as chairperson of the meeting to facilitate the deliberation on the agenda items.



Hiroshima Mayor Matsui (left) and Nagasaki Mayor Taue (right) at the 5th Japanese Member Cities Meeting of Mayors for Peace

The first item to be deliberated was new and extended activities in the Mayors for Peace Action Plan from 2013 – 2017. The items agreed upon were: the promotion of youth exchange activities between member cities, activities to educate people on the reality of the atomic bombing and the risk of nuclear weapons, and the enhancement of petitioning activities aiming to bring the number of member cities to 10,000 by 2020. Agreement was also reached on submitting a Letter of

Request to the Japanese government to call for the promotion of actions to aid in the early realization of a nuclear weapons convention.

The secretariat then provided an explanation on the 6th Japanese Member Cities Meeting. This was followed by a free discussion by participants, during which there were many constructive opinions on future activities.

The meeting closed with the adoption of the Summary document, which included an overview of the meeting.

Submission of Letter of Request to Japanese Government

Based on the decision made at the meeting, on December 24, 2015, Mayor Matsui and Mr. Kazuya Okubo, Director of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum



From the left: Foreign Minister Kishida, Hiroshima Mayor Matsui

Promotion Office of the City of Nagasaki, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and presented the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Fumio Kishida with a Letter of Request to the Japanese government to call for the promotion of actions to aid in the early realization of a nuclear weapons convention.

Minister Kishida, receiving the document, said “I sincerely accept the wish of Mayors for Peace, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki. Nuclear disarmament can proceed only if nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states work together. As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan would like to play a leading role in providing a bridge between countries with nuclear weapons and those without them.”

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Participation in the Manhattan Project National Historical Park Scholars' Forum

On November 9 and 10, 2015, the Manhattan Project National Historical Park Scholars' Forum was held in Washington DC by the National Park Service, US Department of the Interior. From Japan, Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, the Chairperson of this Foundation and Dr. Masao Tomonaga, Honorary Director of the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospital, attended.

The aim of this forum was to gather together experts and hold discussions on topics that should be included in and can be reference material for the development of the commentary plan for the Manhattan Project National Historical Park that is being planned. The park will include facilities related to the Manhattan Project that was used to develop the atomic bomb by America during World War II.

At the start of the forum, Mr. Komizo communicated the thoughts of a city that has been bombed by the atomic bomb regarding the commentary plan for the park.



Manhattan Project National Historical Park Scholars' Forum

Specifically, he requested that the displays are based on fact, to fairly and justly communicate the background leading up to the development and dropping of the atomic bomb, and that they also communicate the awful impact that the dropping of the bomb had on people and their lives. He also asked that the displays are focused on the future, and toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. He requested that opinions of Hiroshima and Nagasaki be included in future studies on the content of the displays, and he said that if the displays are based on the intentions of the cities that have been subject to the atomic bomb, then he is prepared to cooperate, such as by loaning A-bomb artifacts. Dr. Tomonaga provided an explanation of the burns and wounds inflicted by the bomb from a medical perspective, and the damage to people's health caused by radiation.

In the discussion that followed, they communicated the wishes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for each of the respective display themes, as described above, and received wide support for their requests. As a result, in the sorting of the main themes for the displays, the items based on Mr. Komizo's proposal were selected: the background leading up to the bombing, the impact of the bombing, and peace.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

A-Bomb Survivor Testimonies via an Online Conference System

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum provides A-bomb Survivor Testimonies via an Online Conference System to broadly communicate the true damage from the bombing, and develop global momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In fiscal year 2015, four testimonies were provided to four nuclear weapon states.

Firstly in July, the Museum linked with the British Parliament committee room in London, to provide an hour-long A-bomb survivor testimony to approximately 80 people, including members of the House of Lords, House of Commons, and others working in Parliament. The session was organized by a member of the British Parliament who visited Hiroshima in April 2015. The member



An A-bomb survivor giving her testimony to British Parliament committee room

took an interest in the initiative, which was explained by Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, the Chairperson of this Foundation, and as a result the session took place. One of the people in the audience commented "Listening to the vivid testimony of the bombing I could picture the horrible scenes. It was a moving experience." In the question and answer session after the testimony, there were comments and questions such as "Don't you feel hatred towards the United States?", showing the high level of interest of the participants. It was a meaningful session.

In August, another testimony was held for visitors to the National Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, the United States, talking about the damage from the bombing and life for a survivor after that.

In September, a testimony was held for around 30 junior and senior high school students in Haridwar District, Uttarakhand State in India. The students listened attentively. After the testimony, the students expressed their gratitude, and performed a song praying for peace.

In January 2016, a testimony was given for around 80 high school students in Zelenogorsk, Russia, and students commented that it helped them to understand the situation of damage from the atomic bombing.

The Museum will continue to use various tools such as the online conference system to proactively communicate the true damage from the atomic bombing to people in Japan and overseas.

(Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Attendance at UN Open-Ended Working Group Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations

At the United Nations General Assembly in December 2015, it was decided to establish the UN Open-ended Working Group Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations (OEWG). The aim of the group is to discuss legal measures among all member nations, including nuclear weapon states.

Sessions of OEWG were held in February and May, 2016, at the United Nations office in Geneva, Switzerland. Mayors for Peace participated as members of civic society in both session.

February Session

Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, Secretary-General of Mayors for Peace (and Chairperson of this Foundation) attended the meeting, and as the representative of Mayors for Peace, strongly appealed for understanding of the need for legal prohibition of nuclear weapons. He also met and held discussions with national representatives attending the OEWG and people from NGOs and the UN.

February 21

Mr. Komizo participated a meeting held by peace NGOs, and asked for cooperation from civic society in the abolition of nuclear weapons.

February 22

Prior to the opening of the OEWG, Mr. Komizo met

with Mr. Thani Thongphakdi (Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva), who served as the Chair of the OEWG, and presented him with an open letter from Mayors for Peace calling for nations to participate proactively in the OEWG discussions and start constructive deliberations.

Next, Mr. Komizo gave a speech at the opening session of the OEWG. In the speech, he reconfirmed his support for discussions on a nuclear weapons convention, and expressed his hope that the discussions would result in the identification of effective legal measures to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, based on the participants' awareness of the importance of making progress on nuclear disarmament.

In addition to his speech, Mr. Komizo met with national government representatives and made requests to proactively participate in the discussions and hold constructive deliberations. There was also a discussion with members of NGOs on enhancing connections with those organizations.

February 23

Besides attending the OEWG session, Mr. Komizo also visited the permanent A-bomb Exhibition set up at the United Nations office in Geneva by Hiroshima City, Nagasaki City and the UN, and met with government officials.

February 24

Mr. Komizo attended the OEWG session and made a speech as representative of Mayors for Peace. In his speech, he called strongly for all signatories, including non-nuclear weapon states, to sincerely fulfill their obligations to negotiate on nuclear disarmament based on Article 6 of the NPT. He also called on the policymakers of the world to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as an initiative to build peace and security, as a way to exercise their political leadership on disarmament, and as a way to understand the truth of the inhumane damage caused by the atomic bombing.

Mr. Komizo also held discussions with members of the UN on connections between the UN and Mayors for Peace.

February 25

In addition to attending the OEWG session, Mr. Komizo presented the Chair Mr. Thongphakdi with the joint statement issued in Hiroshima On August 6, 2015, by Mayors for Peace, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and World Religions for Peace.

May Session

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui, President of Mayors for Peace (and President of this Foundation), attended the OEWG together with Mr. Komizo, Secretary-



Chairperson Komizo makes a speech as the Secretary-General of Mayors for Peace on the first day of the OEWG February Session.

General of Mayors for Peace, and called for policymakers to exert their leadership for the further acceleration of efforts for the legal prohibition of nuclear weapons. He also called for world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Mayor Matsui presented to the United Nations a sapling of a tree that survived the atomic bombing, and communicated the message of Hiroshima, a wish for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons. He also held discussions with members of national governments and NGOs.

May 1

Mayor Matsui attended a conference held by peace NGOs, and called for cooperation to achieve a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. He also met with peace ambassadors Ms. Setsuko Thurlow and Dr. Kathleen Sullivan, who were attending the conference.

May 2

Prior to the start of the OEWG session, there was a ceremony to present the sapling of a tree that survived the atomic bombing in Hiroshima to Michael Moller, Director-General of the United Nations office in Geneva. The aim was to communicate to the attendees the message of Hiroshima to create a peaceful world without nuclear weapons, and to heighten awareness of the need to abolish nuclear weapons. With around 60 people in attendance, including those from the UN, national governments and NGOs, Mr. Moller said that as the sapling grows at the UN Geneva office, it will remind people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and will become a symbol of hope for a world without nuclear weapons.

At the OEWG session, Mayor Matsui gave a speech as representative of Mayors for Peace. He spoke about how US Secretary of State Mr. Kelly had seen the actual damage from the atomic bombing when he was in Hiroshima in April for the G7 Hi-



Mayor Matsui makes a speech as the president of Mayors for Peace on the first day of the OEWG May Session.

roshima Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and had said "This has reminded me of our responsibility to make efforts to build a peaceful world with no nuclear weapons." Mayor Matsui stated that he wants to fully support such intentions together with a wide range of partners in civic society. He also called for the world's policymakers to exercise decisive leadership to change the mindset of nuclear deterrence, and to work together under a shared awareness that we all belong to the same human family to conclude a nuclear weapons convention. In addition, he called on them to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki so that they can further strengthen their resolve.

May 3

There was a meeting with members of peace NGOs, to explain the Mayors for Peace activity policy and further strengthen mutual connections.

May 4

Mayor Matsui met with Mr. Moller, the Director-General of the United Nations office in Geneva, and presented him with a request to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon asking for the promotion to achieve the prompt conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention, in which Mayor Matsui asked that the participating national governments hold realistic and productive discussions on achieving the common goal of abolishing nuclear weapons, without adopting a structure of opposition between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states. Based on that, Mayor Matsui also asked the UN to exercise further leadership and provide support for policymakers to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with a view to realizing the 5 items for nuclear disarmament proposed by the UN Secretary-General in 2008.

Mayor Matsui also met with the chairperson of the OEWG Mr. Thongphakdi, and requested that he runs the sessions to ensure that the discussions on legal measures are concrete and realistic. He also explained how important it is for policymakers to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to understand the truth of the atomic bombing and the earnest wishes of *hibakusha* that “no one else shall ever again suffer as we have.”

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-Bomb Exhibition Held in Ise City

At the same time as G7 Ise-Shima Summit was held in Mie Prefecture in Japan on May 26-27, 2016, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki A-Bomb Exhibition was also held from May 22-29 at Iseishi Kanko Bunka Kaikan (Ise City Tourism and Culture Hall). There were 3,290 visitors to the exhibition.

On the 22nd was the opening ceremony, attended by the mayors of Hiroshima City and Nagasaki City, Mie Prefectural Governor, the mayor of Ise City, as well as the prefectural assembly chairperson and representatives of the children of Ise City.



Speech by children's representatives at the opening ceremony

At the A-Bomb Exhibition were displays of A-bomb artifacts from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, photo panels communicating the actual damage from the bombings, and A-bomb pictures drawn by A-bomb survivors. At the venue were also screenings of DVDs on the topics of the atomic bomb and peace, and a message section was also set up on the theme of “Let's all grow the flower of peace”. There were many messages written there, in-

cluding messages such as “We should never again go to war. Let us pray for world peace”, and “We should abolish nuclear weapons”.

During the exhibition period the British Consul to Japan and consulate directors from the Korean, Taiwanese and Vietnamese consulates in Japan also visited the exhibition, leaving messages there, and three high officials from the EU delegation also visited, listening intently to the staff's explanations of the panels and articles of the deceased, and also sometimes asking questions.

On the 28th, in the conference room there was an atomic bombing testimony by Mr. Sadao Yamamoto, an A-bomb witness for



Atomic bombing testimony by Mr. Sadao Yamamoto

the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, and atomic bombing testimony recitals by the Nagasaki National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims volunteers, Ms. Hisako Otsuka and Ms. Naomi Harao.

This exhibition in Ise, far away from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, communicated the truth of the damage of the atomic bombing, and therefore represented one step forward for world peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Aiming to Contribute to Regional Revitalization and Internationalization in Chugoku region - JICA Chugoku



by Shuichi Ikeda

Director General, Chugoku International Center, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

1. Developing countries requiring know-how from regions in Japan

I used to work in the Kingdom of Thailand for approximately three years until March 2016. Both the population and the economy of Thailand are heavily concentrated in the metropolitan area of Bangkok, and the economic disparity between the capital area and the other regional areas is more increasing. In terms of the GDP per capita of the different regions, Bangkok is over US\$14,000, and has already surpassed the economic level of developing countries and is close to the level of developed countries. However, in regional areas other than Bangkok and its surrounding industrial areas, the average regional GDP per capita is only around US\$3,000. Thailand is said to have already reached the level of medium-developed country, but this is only be-

cause the Bangkok metropolitan area brings up the Thai average overall. It means that most of the regional areas in Thailand are still at the level of developing countries. This situation is not unique to Thailand – it is a problem that is common to many developing countries. Even if the metropolitan area's economy is developing well, with the sudden urbanization the urban environment deteriorates and there is a gap between the rich and the poor, and in most rural areas there is an acceleration of depopulation, reduced regional activity, and increase regional disparities. These increased regional disparities lead to social instability. In addition to this, in Thailand there is also a declining birthrate and aging population, and the country has been already facing issues for developed countries even before it has moved on from the status of developing country.

In Japan too, the concentration of power and population in Tokyo, poor performance of regional economies and outflow of population from regional areas have been major issues for many years. Additionally, another blow to the country is the declining birthrate, aging population and declining population of Japan overall. On the other hand, Japan has for a long time had a great diversity in its regions, and each region had its own culture and wisdom. Currently, as well as encouraging regional revitalization, each region is reviewing the local resources, and implementing a variety of different initiatives. Japan is a developed country facing many new challenges that it must address head on, and I believe that the experiences and practices of regions in Japan for such challenges, including failures or lessons learnt, are full of insight that can be provided to the people in developing countries which will be one day also facing the similar challenges.

2. Direct international cooperation from regions, and overseas expansion of SMEs

Up until the 1990s, when the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) by the Japanese government was the largest in the world and Japan was known as the top donor, the ratio of ODA in the overseas funds going to developing countries was large, and the majority of Japanese people working in developing countries were involved in ODA-related activities. Now, however, the “top billing” for social and economic development in developing countries has clearly shifted to investment funds and human resources from overseas private corporations. The role of ODA has changed to a catalyst-type role of stimulating and supporting private-sector activities. In line with this transformation, the main actors in ODA are not only limited among the traditional groups such as central government agencies, national research institutes, national universities, development consultants, major trading companies, major construction companies, internationally active NGOs, and young people with a strong interest in developing nations, but also other players in the regions has become as more important actors. In the past, technical experts from municipalities and regional Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) did sometimes participate in ODA projects, and this was usually because they were requested to do so by central government or were subcontracted by big companies. However, now people and organizations in regions are moving more proactively to strategically implement international cooperation on

their own initiative. They have various aims in doing so: to revitalize the region through international cooperation and exchange activities, for instance, or to help local companies do business overseas. Regional SMEs also see that developing countries, expected to grow in the future, are where the real business opportunities are, and are now more proactively considering moving into developing countries.

3. Linking the knowledge of the Chugoku region with the needs of developing countries

At JICA Chugoku International Center, we would like to play the role of a bridge, to take the experience and know-how on social and economic development that has been developed throughout the Chugoku region, as well as outstanding technologies and business models that are socially useful, and effectively utilize them for the development issues being faced by developing nations. We would also like to provide support for Chugoku region municipalities, research and education institutes, private companies and NGOs, in their efforts to implement region-based international cooperation or moves to do business overseas. By doing so, we believe that as a result we will be able to make a contribution to transmitting the strengths and appeal of the Chugoku region to the rest of the world, revitalizing regions through international cooperation, and overseas business expansion in the Chugoku region.

To realize sustainable social and economic development in developing countries, development assistance by government to government (GtoG) is not enough. For example, even if assistance is provided to universities and facilities are built, education and research materials are upgraded, teachers' skill level is raised and the educational content is improved, there has to be a wide range of places for the students educated at those universities to work after they graduate. Even if economic infrastructure is developed through financial cooperation, if there are no private companies that can energetically implement economic activities, sustainable economic development will be impossible. Even if hospitals are constructed and medical staff are trained, private pharmacies are also required to provide medicines to people on a continuous basis, and private companies are needed to maintain and refill medical supplies and equipment. Private businesses entry into hospital management itself is likely to be important for improving the quality of medical services. Even if support is given for decentralization and enhancement of the administrative capabilities of the regions, if that region's economic activities cannot be promoted, then it will impossible to revitalize the region. For a country's sustainable social and economic development, the development of the private sector is indispensable. However, it is not possible to achieve this using only the funds and human resources available in developing countries, and therefore essential to secure investment, human resources, and technology from overseas private sector. In addition to cooperation between governments, JICA focuses on the fact that there are many technologies and business ideas in Japanese SMEs that can make great contributions to resolving the issues faced by developing countries, and in 2012 we initiated a new program to help Japanese SMEs move into overseas markets. In the Chugoku region, we have already provided or are in the process of providing

support for 29 proposals from 23 SMEs. JICA has overseas offices in 92 countries, and possesses strong and wide range connection with national government organizations, research institutes, universities and regional organizations. We also have a wide range of information related to the situation and issues in each country. If we can effectively use JICA's overseas network and information, we should be able to provide developing countries with effective technology from Japanese companies, and Japanese companies with business opportunities in overseas markets. In this way, I believe we can achieve a win-win situation.

In addition to the above mentioned program to provide support to SMEs to move overseas, we are focusing even more strongly on and strategically pursuing connections with the Chugoku region for the traditional JICA international cooperation scheme of grass-roots technical cooperation, technical training programs and overseas volunteer dispatch programs. By doing so, I believe that we will be able to more effectively provide developing countries with knowledge from the region, and contribute to regional revitalization in the Chugoku area. For example, waste management. In Japan, the responsibilities of the administrative bodies, people, and private businesses on waste management are clearly stipulated based on the Waste Disposal and Public Cleansing Law, and the whole region must work together to ensure that such responsibilities are appropriately fulfilled. Waste management is currently an issue in many urban areas in developing countries. The Hiroshima Environment Business Promotion Meeting, organized mainly by the Commercial and Industrial Labor Bureau of Hiroshima Prefecture government, has been utilizing JICA's grass-roots technical cooperation scheme, and from January 2016 started the General Waste Management Improvement Project in Bogor City, Indonesia. This is planned to be a three-year project, providing support for the establishment of a system for separate collection, reduce and recycle of general waste in Bogor City. We can truly say that the knowledge of the Hiroshima Prefecture is being utilized in projects like this. Some companies in Hiroshima that possess excellent technologies and products related to waste management are also participating in this project, and the project is also an opportunity to show the excellence of their technologies to the people of Indonesia. Therefore there is potential that this could contribute to such companies starting business in Indonesia. Another example is Ama Town, in Oki-gun, Shimane Prefecture. There, the town is implementing a unique initiative to revitalize the town, where they have issued a statement, "*Nai mo no ha nai.*" — It means "It's OK that we have all that we need." This initiative in Ama Town and its results to date, their current efforts, adjustments and future plans all represent a treasure house of knowledge. When considering regional development in many of the rural areas, and remote regions and islands in developing countries, such information should prove extremely useful. In 2016, JICA Chugoku will be working together with

Ama Town to start a training program for administrative officers in developing countries.

4. Collaboration with Hiroshima's peace promotion initiatives and to share Hiroshima's experience of reconstruction to the people of the world

Since 2004, JICA overseas volunteers from Hiroshima Prefecture have been actively holding atomic bomb exhibitions in the countries they are dispatched to. As of March 2016, they had planned and held 145 exhibitions in 65 countries, offering the people in those countries a very eye-opening experience and also a wonderful opportunity to think about peace and war.

At JICA Chugoku International Center, we hold a half-day training session for training participants from developing countries who are staying in the Center's accommodation facilities soon after they have arrived in Japan, with the title of Hiroshima Peace Training. In the training, participants take a tour of the Peace Memorial Museum, listen to a lecture entitled The History of Hiroshima City for Peace, and go to Peace Memorial Park. Every year, approximately more than 300 trainees had participated in this program. In questionnaire results, 98% of trainees said that they understood the importance of peace, and 84% said that they understood it very well. There were also many moving comments by the participants on peace and recovery after the atomic bombing.

"I greatly admire the people who poured their efforts into rebuilding Hiroshima, rather than revenge."

"I too want to become an ambassador for world peace."

"Hiroshima's peace project is truly astonishing."

"I hope that the people of Hiroshima will continue to transmit the message of peace to the world."

"Seeing what happened to Hiroshima made me very sad. But I believe that what happened here will become the driver for continued world peace."

(Article contributed June 2016)

Profile

Shuichi Ikeda

Graduated from Graduate School of Environment Science (Msc.) of Tsukuba University in 1985, and joined JICA in the same year. Since then, has worked at JICA headquarters in charge of natural environment conservation, higher education and international emergency aid. Worked overseas for a total of 13 years. After working in Burma (currently Myanmar), the United States and Laos, served as Chief Representative of JICA Thailand office from 2013 to 2016. Assumed current post from April 2016.

Information

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