

# PEACE CULTURE



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## Hiroshima Mayor's Visit to Norway to Attend the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony

Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui (President of Mayors for Peace) visited Oslo City in Norway for five days from December 8-12, 2017, to attend the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony to award ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), as well as other events.

### Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony

The ceremony was held on December 10. There were around 1,000 guests invited to the solemn ceremony, including Mayor Matsui and Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue. In front of the main members of ICAN who had gathered from countries all over the world, *hibakusha*, and government representatives from countries supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Ms. Beatrice Fihn, the director of ICAN, stated that she thinks it is abnormal that nuclear weapons have been accepted as a fixture in the world, and pointed out that it is nothing but luck that has enabled us to avoid a nuclear war up until now. She stated "They don't keep us safe" and rejected security policies that are dependent on nuclear deterrence. She said that choosing the end of nuclear weapons, rather than the end of the human race, is the rational choice, and urged all nations to participate in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

At the ceremony Ms. Setsuko Thurlow, who survived the atomic bombing in Hiroshima, spoke about her own experience of the bombing, stating that nuclear weapons are not a necessary evil but an absolute evil. She strongly urged participants to begin work to end nu-

clear weapons with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The audience broke into loud applause a number of times during Ms. Thurlow's speech, and when she finished everyone at the venue stood up to pay their respect to the award winner.

This prize ceremony was a great opportunity to say to the people of the world that achieving a world free of nuclear weapons will be indispensable for creating a peaceful world, and for urging people to work together to achieve that goal.

### Meetings with other state government members

Before and after the award ceremony, Mayor Matsui held discussions with Foreign Minister Gonzalez and Ambassador Whyte from Costa Rica, which is President of the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as Foreign Minister Videgaray and two ambassadors from Mexico, who led discussions at the Review Conference, and ambassadors and others from states that support the Treaty such as Austria and Ireland. Mayor Matsui told those he met with that it is important for policymakers in nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states to consider and discuss what is important now to achieve our common objective of a peaceful world, rather than a world of conflict. He also said that Mayors for Peace would like to create an environment and develop public support to push policymakers to exercise their leadership and requested each country's support in efforts to expand Mayors for Peace membership in each country, in order to extend the influence of the organization. The people he met with expressed their strong agreement with the significance of civic activities going beyond national borders.

### Attendance at other events

On December 9, Mr. Raymond Johansen, the Governing Mayor of Oslo, Dr. Svein Stølen, Rector of Oslo University, Hiroshima Mayor Matsui and Nagasaki Mayor Taue planted in pots the seeds of Hackberry, Jujube, Kurogane Holly and Ginkgo trees. The seeds had been taken from trees that survived the atomic bombing. The planting was held at Oslo University Botanical Garden in front of just over twenty A-bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Mayor Matsui gave a speech, in which he said that he hoped the seeds would take root in Oslo's soil as a symbol of peace, and



Together with *hibakusha* Ms. Setsuko Thurlow (second from right)

that as they grew, the momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons would also heighten and that the desire for peace would be shared widely over a long period of time.

On the same day, Mayor Matsui viewed an exhibition about the Nobel Peace Prize held at the Nobel Peace Center. At the exhibition, as a display related to ICAN being awarded the Peace Prize, there were articles that belonged to people who lost their lives in the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the articles will be on display until November 2018. The articles of those who died communicate a quiet yet powerful message to people about the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. It is hoped that the many visitors to the exhibition will reaffirm the need to abolish nuclear weapons, and that it will lead to an increase in the number of people who cooperate in Mayors for Peace activities.

### Through this trip

In Oslo we keenly felt once again the importance of the role of civic society in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, and the potential of civic society to influence the global community.

The abolition of nuclear weapons is not something that can be achieved overnight. The current global situation means that it is hard to be optimistic for progress on nuclear disarmament, and in that light, the fact that the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to an international campaign made up of members from non-nuclear weapon states and civic society that contributed to the adoption of Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which clearly prohibits nuclear weapons by law, has great significance. The Nobel Peace Prize 2017 has surely given further courage and motivation to many people who are taking action for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In addition to all those who attended the award ceremony, many people who joined in parades to celebrate ICAN winning the prize and saw the ceremony in the media strengthened their solidarity with others who have the same aspirations. It became an opportunity to further raise their voices so that they reach nuclear weapon states and other states under the nuclear umbrella.

In order to create an environment that encourages the policymakers of nuclear weapon states to move away from the illusion of nuclear deterrence, we would like to communicate the truth of the damage from the atomic

bombing and the inhumanity of nuclear weapons to more people, increase the number of cities that are members of Mayors for Peace, and strengthen our influence on the development of opinion in the global community.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## Executive Director of ICAN's Visit to Hiroshima

On January 15, 2018, the Director of ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), Ms. Beatrice Fihn, visited Hiroshima together with Mr. Akira Kawasaki, a member of ICAN's International Steering Group. ICAN is the organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017.

In the morning, Ms. Fihn paid her respects and offered flowers at the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic



Ms. Fihn and Mr. Kawasaki lay a wreath at the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims

Bomb Victims, took a tour of the Peace Memorial Museum, and listened to a testimony by an A-bomb survivor, learning about the reality of the damage from the bombing. In the afternoon there was a dialogue session with young people held by the City of Hiroshima and this Foundation, titled "In Conversation with Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate: Towards the Realization of

## Loaning of Atomic Bomb Artifacts to the Nobel Peace Center

The Nobel Peace Center, located in Oslo, Norway, is holding an exhibition on ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), the organization that won the Nobel Peace Prize 2017, from December 2017 to November 2018.

The exhibition includes displays on the history of ICAN's activities, as well as on the damage from the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum and Ritsumeikan University's Kyoto Museum of World Peace loaned atomic bomb artifacts for the displays.

The artifacts loaned by Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum were a bag and air raid hood belonged to 13-year-old Yukitoshi Masuda, who was exposed to the bomb at his building demolition worksite, and went missing. Yukitoshi's father searched throughout the city looking for him, but his body was never found, and this bag with the air raid hood inside it were found by a person in the neighborhood on August 7 and became a memento of Yukitoshi.

(Peace Memorial Museum Curatorial Division)

a Peaceful World”, where Ms. Fihn gave the keynote lecture and participated in a discussion with young people from Hiroshima. Approximately 340 young people and other citizens attended the dialogue session and shared with Ms. Fihn their wish for peace.

In the first part of the dialogue session, there was a speech by Mayor Matsui, followed by the keynote lecture by Ms. Fihn, titled “We Shall Not Repeat the Evil: How Japan Can Lead us Towards a Nuclear Free World”. In her lecture, Ms. Fihn praised the activities of the *hibakusha*, saying that without the *hibakusha* who have continued to proactively talk about the tragedy that they experienced when they were faced with the horrors of nuclear weapons, we would not have the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. She also spoke about her passionate wish for the abolition of nuclear weapons, stating that it should be Japanese people above all, who know better than any other country the results that nuclear weapons bring, to take the lead in nuclear disarmament.



Ms. Fihn speaks to young people during the keynote lecture

She addressed the young people attending, saying that she wants them to make use of their strengths of hope, energy, and social media to link up with like-minded people and take action to create a better future.

In the question and answer session that followed, there were many questions for Ms. Fihn, and it was a lively session. When asked about the secret to maintaining hope when circumstances make it difficult to continue with activities, Ms. Fihn replied that it is important to believe that they are doing what is right, and to stay positive. She encouraged the participants by saying that positive energy brings in more people and leads to major transformation.

In the second section, four young people from Hiroshima gave presentations on their respective peace-related activities, and this was followed by a dialogue between the four and Ms. Fihn. Ms. Fihn said to the four young people that ‘peace’ is a very difficult topic and there is not a lot of progress made, and because of this it is hard to maintain one’s motivation, but nonetheless it is important to be ambitious and set small objectives. At the same time, she also encouraged them, saying that rather than waiting for someone to give you a chance, you have to move forward and find chances yourself, and that you have to try to find enjoyment in the process of doing so. She also cheered them on, advising them that it is important to use SNS and lobby the Japanese government, which is turning its back on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to change its policy.

For the young people who participated in this dialogue session, they were able to see the young Ms. Fihn who has fully understood the wishes of the *hibakusha*, properly thought about what should be done to achieve a



Four young people from Hiroshima receive words of encouragement from Ms. Fihn

world free of nuclear weapons, and is taking action, and because of this the session became a precious opportunity for them to think about what actions they themselves can take.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## First-ever Hiroshima Training for United Nations Tour Guides —Communicating the spirit of Hiroshima to the world—

Together with Nagasaki City, Hiroshima City set up permanent atomic bomb exhibitions consisting of A-bomb artifacts and photo panels at United Nations facilities in New York, Geneva and Vienna.

Large numbers of government members and international organization leaders from all over the world gather at the UN facilities to play an important role in achieving a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. Many tourists from countries throughout the world also visit these facilities. Tours of the UN facilities are provided for those people, and around 400,000 people from all over the world join the tours each year.

In order to more effectively communicate the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing through those exhibitions set up at the locations that have a great influence on international politics and global public opinion, it is essential that the tour guides and staff in charge of guided tours grasp the reality of the atomic bombing. For this reason, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum for the first time invited six tour guides and guided tour staff members from three UN facilities to come to Hiroshima, where they participated in the Hiroshima Training for United Nations Tour Guides, to understand the reality of the damage from the atomic bombing. The training was held for the first time for four days from December 1-4, 2017.

### Day 1

At the start of the training, Mr. Kenji Shiga, the Director of the Museum, gave an overview of the reality of the bombing in a lecture, saying “Through your guided tours, we want you to communicate to many people what human beings lose when they are hit by a nuclear weapon, what happens when a nuclear weapon is used.”



Listening to a lecture

The afternoon session was led by the Hiroshima Peace Volunteer Mr. Kenichi Harada, who took participants on a tour of memorial monuments in Peace Memorial Park that



Observing the inside of the A-bomb Dome

included the inside of the A-Bomb Dome. Afterwards the participants toured the Museum and gained an understanding of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons by observing the items left behind by those who lost their lives in the bombing.

## Day 2

The participants received lectures intensively: “The Impact of the Atomic Bombing on the Human Body” by Dr. Kenji Kamiya, Vice-President of the Hiroshima University, “Tracing the Background from the US Atomic Bomb Development to the Dropping of the Bomb, and Diplomatic Intentions” by Professor Yasuhiro Yamada, Osaka University Graduate School, “International Situation Regarding Nuclear Weapons Regulations and Transitions in International Treaties” by Associate Professor Yasuhito Fukui, Hiroshima City University Hiroshima Peace Institute, as well as an A-bomb testimony by Mr. Takashi Teramoto, an Atomic Bombing Witness for this Foundation.

## Day 3

In the morning, participants were taken on a tour of Miyajima, led by volunteer Ms. Akemi Yagi, where they learned about Hiroshima’s history and Japanese traditions and culture. This was followed by a courtesy visit to Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui. Mayor Matsui expressed his gratitude to the participants for their work guiding people at the atomic bomb exhibitions, stating “I hope that this gives you a good understanding of the pain that the atomic bomb inflicted on people, and that you will be able to share the inhumanity of nuclear weapons both from a theoretical and emotional perspective.”

After this, the participants visited the Radiation Effects Research Foundation. They toured the Foundation and listened to a lecture by Mr. Otsura Niwa, the Foundation’s Chairman, on surveys and research on the health impacts of atomic bomb radiation, as well as the social impact.

## Day 4

On the final day, Professor Robert Jacobs of Hiroshima City University Hiroshima Peace Institute gave a lecture on the way the atomic bombing is understood in America. The participants then listened to an A-bomb testimony by Ms. Yoshiko Kajimoto, an atomic bombing witness for this Foundation. In the afternoon, participants visited the Hiroshima Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), where they listened to an explanation by staff there about various activities, including initiatives regarding trees that survived the bombing.



Listening to Ms. Kajimoto’s testimony

As a final overview of the training, a discussion was held. The participants shared their opinions on how to make use of the knowledge and experiences they gained through the training in their future work, and how to make it useful for the people who participate in tours at UN facilities.

They provided comments on the training, saying “We

were able to change our fundamental awareness and approach to the reality of the bombing,” and “The most memorable part of the training was the A-bomb testimony. The two A-bomb witnesses spoke vividly and in great detail about their horrific experiences during the bombing and their life after that. I really understood the terrible situation at the time.”

After the participants went back to their countries, their respective UN facilities contacted us, saying “We want to set up a tour on the theme of nuclear disarmament,” “We will include A-bomb drawings in our tour’s visual materials,” and “We’re planning a new exhibition.” It seems that this training provided an opportunity for the United Nations to reaffirm the need to more strongly communicate the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

The Hiroshima Training will continue in the future, as an attempt to give the “spirit of Hiroshima” a louder voice on the world stage, as we work to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons and perpetual world peace.

(Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

### 2017 Peace Memorial Hall Special Exhibition **The Twinkling Stars Know Everything: Collection of Memories by Fathers and Mothers of the Annihilated First-Year Hiroshima Itchu Students**

Period: January 1 (Mon.) – December 29 (Sat.),  
2018

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

At the Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims, a special exhibition is held every year on a set theme and A-bomb testimonies are introduced, to communicate the reality of the bombing. This year, the exhibition is about the memoirs contained in a book, *The Twinkling Stars Know Everything: A Collection of Memories by Fathers and Mothers of the Annihilated First-Year Hiroshima Itchu Students*. The exhibition has the same title as the book.

Hiroshima Prefectural Hiroshima Daiichi Junior High School (Itchu) was established in 1877, and as it was renowned as one of the most prestigious schools in the prefecture that produces many people with promising talent, it was a school that many young boys aspired to go to.

First-year students who started at the school in April 1945 were mobilized together with older students, as the war conditions became tougher.

On the morning of August 6, the first-year students gathered together, and after the attendance check and some explanations about the work they would do, odd-numbered classes were sent to clean up building demolition sites in the area behind city hall, and even-numbered classes were told to wait in the classroom. They experienced the bombing at point-blank range, less than one kilometer from the hypocenter when the bomb was dropped. Some of the students who were working outside died immediately, most of them suffered burns

and serious injuries, and even the students who somehow managed to make their way home all died. Many of the students who were trapped under the school building, which was completely destroyed, also died.

The year after the bombing, an association for the bereaved families was organized. To remember their lost children, the association published the collection of memoirs *Our Recollections* in 1954. The collection was covered by a nationwide weekly magazine and attracted much attention. In August of the same year, a selection of the memoirs was edited and published as *The Twinkling Stars Know Everything*. This book has been republished many times and is still read today. The feelings of the parents missing their children bring tears, and their desire for peace is strongly communicated to the reader. By basing the exhibition this time on this collection of memoirs that communicate the tragedy of the atomic bombing, it was thought that this would help to tell people about “the spirit of Hiroshima”, wishing for the abolition of nuclear weapons and perpetual world peace.



Parents of the children who died and others involved with Hiroshima Itchu school gathered at the memorial monument (August 1946 / Photograph: Syoyo Akita)

In the 3-screen theater that is the central part of the exhibition, a video of A-bomb drawings together with narration is screened, showing the memories of the children in those days and their final days. These are seven selected memoirs written by the parents and an older sister of first-year students who died in the bombing. The final memoirs of the seven is by Toshie Fujino, and it moves many visitors who come to the exhibition: “There was absolutely no change in the beautiful sky from the previous night. I remembered my son said ‘I hope that war will stop. There should be no war on the earth.’ I thought that these words were not from 14-years-old boy, but from God. Hirohisa and his friends of Itchu who died together with him...I felt that the spirits of all these boys had risen up into the sky and become stardust, hoping that such a disaster would never again occur on the earth. I felt that they are watching over us quietly.”

At the venue there are displays of the clothes that the students were wearing when the bomb hit, a notebook in which one of the Itchu teachers, Mr. Goro Toda, had recorded the details of the situation at the time of the bombing and is kept in the Peace Memorial Hall, and other articles, in addition to the 26 notes.

The exhibition video may be viewed in the Memorial Hall Library as well as on the homepage, and includes footage filmed in the past as well. The video will be available for rental as a DVD for peace studies. Please contact the Peace Memorial Hall if you would like to borrow the video.

(Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims)

## 9<sup>th</sup> General Conference of Mayors for Peace

The General Conference of Mayors for Peace, held once every four years, was held in Nagasaki City from August 7 to 10, 2017.

This year marks the 9<sup>th</sup> time that the conference has been held. The keynote theme this year was “Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons—What We Can Do Toward 2020—”.

There were 314 participants from governments, NGOs and other organizations from 157 cities in 35 countries. Participants discussed specific measures to abolish nuclear weapons by 2020.

### Opening ceremony

Hiroshima Mayor (and President of Mayors for Peace) Kazumi Matsui was unable to attend initially because of a typhoon, so the Chairperson of this Foundation (and Secretary-General of Mayors for Peace) Yasuyoshi Komizo gave a speech in his place on behalf of the conference organizers. In order to make the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted in July 2017 at the United Nations legally viable, he urged civic society to unite to call for nuclear-weapon states and nations under the nuclear umbrella who did not participate in the treaty’s adoption to conclude the treaty as soon as possible.

Next was a speech by Nagasaki Governor Hodo Nakamura, representing the invited guests. There were also video messages from those who were not able to attend the conference, including the mayors of overseas member cities and Costa Rica’s Ambassador Whyte, who was the chairperson of the negotiation conference for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

### Keynote speech

Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, gave the keynote speech on the topic “The Imperatives for Disarmament in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. Ms. Nakamitsu stated that for future disarmament, it will be essential to take into consideration security, a humanitarian viewpoint, development and the environment. She also expressed her view that in order to put an end to unlawful and unstable activities such as terrorism, the outflow of weapons in illegal transactions, and the illegal use of chemical and other weapons, we should first create standards and deal with these issues with global solidarity.



Keynote speech by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu

## A-bomb testimony

Ms. Sachiko Matsuo, who experienced the atomic bombing in Nagasaki, looked back on her own experience, and said “I do not want anyone to have that experience.”

## Session I

Mayor Matsui joined the conference from this session, where he was MC. There was discussion on resolutions such as the selection of executive cities and the action plan from 2017 to 2020. The resolutions were passed without amendment.

A new initiative objective, “Realization of safe and resilient cities”, was added to the previous objective of “Realization of a world without nuclear weapons” in the action plan. The new initiative objective is to work on the construction of a peace culture, and to revitalize proactive activities in each region to address diverse issues such as terrorism, refugees, and environmental destruction.



General Conference

## Session II

Mr. Tatsujiro Suzuki, director of the Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, acted as moderator for this session on the topic of The Role of Cities. There were presentations from Hanover City, Germany; Muntinlupa City, the Philippines; Malakoff City and Grigny City, France; and Ayabe City, Kyoto Prefecture. Each city spoke about the active initiatives in each region, and there was a discussion on future prospects for peace and disarmament activities.

## Session III

At the start of the session, the recently-appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Taro Kono gave a speech, where he said that as the only nation to have been bombed by nuclear weapons in war, Japan must become a bridge between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states.

The session was then held on the topic of The Role of Young People, moderated by Ms. Keiko Nakamura, associate professor at the Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition. There were group works by students from Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the mayors of member cities, where participants held discussions on topics such as progress on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, peace education and peace activities, and developed peace activity plans that can be executed in each city.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Japanese Member Cities Meeting

In Session (1), Yao City, Osaka Prefecture and Himeji City, Hyogo Prefecture gave presentations on examples of their activities.

In Session (2), a resolution was passed to implement activities to recruit new member municipalities and to submit a request to the Japanese government to put efforts into promoting activities for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

In Session (3), the summary document of the meeting was adopted, and Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue (Vice President of Mayors for Peace) closed the meeting with a speech.

Participants were also told that the 8<sup>th</sup> Mayors for Peace Japanese Member Cities General Meeting in 2018 will be held in Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture.

## Session IV

This session was moderated by Mr. Masao Tomonaga, Chairperson of the Nagasaki Global Citizen’s Assembly for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. The topic was The Role of NGOs, Civic Organizations, and Survivors’ Organizations, and there were activity presentations by Hanover City, Germany, Jeju Special Administrative Province, Korea, and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors’ Council, as well as discussions.

## Session V

With Mayor Taue as chairperson, the moderators from each of the sessions gave reports on the sessions.

Next, Mayor Matsui summed up the conference by reading out the Nagasaki Appeal and the Special Resolution Requesting the Early Bringing into Effect of the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons. The resolution was passed with a round of applause and all conference items were completed.

## Closing ceremony

The mayor of Manchester City, UK, Mr. Eddy Newman (Vice President of Mayors for Peace) and Mayor Taue made speeches, and the General Conference concluded with a speech by Mayor Matsui. He thanked participants for their participation and support for the conference, and stated his determination for all members to work together and do their best to make definite progress towards a nuclear weapon free world by the time the next General Conference is held in Hiroshima in 2020.

The Nagasaki Appeal and Special Resolution Calling for the Early Validation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons were sent to the UN Secretary-General and national governments at the end of August. These documents and the agendas can be viewed on the Mayors for Peace homepage (<http://www.mayorsfor-peace.org/english/>).

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## Secretary General Komizo's Visit to Russia and Switzerland to strengthen cooperation between Mayors for Peace member cities

In October 2017, Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, Secretary General of Mayors for Peace, visited Volgograd, Russia and Geneva, Switzerland. He visited Volgograd, a Vice President and Lead City of Mayors for Peace, to further promote Mayors for Peace activities in Russia based on the newly adopted Action Plan. In Geneva, he met with key figures in nuclear disarmament and discussed their possible collaboration with Mayors for Peace member cities and other organizations in order to encourage all states to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

### Visit to Volgograd State University

Mr. Komizo gave an introduction about the "Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study Course", and expressed his hope that Volgograd State University will start offering the course in the near future. Rector Tarakanov showed a positive attitude to it and mentioned that his university is committed to preserving memories of the past, and conveying them to future generations.

### Meeting with Mayor Kosolapov of Volgograd

Mr. Komizo expressed his strong hope to continue working with the City of Volgograd to achieve our common goal of a world without nuclear weapons. He also asked for Volgograd's help in expanding Mayors for Peace membership in Russia. Lastly, Mr. Komizo presented Mayor Kosolapov with a wreath of paper cranes.



Meeting with Mayor Kosolapov of Volgograd (right)

### Meeting with Mr. Bernard, Head of the Office of External Affairs, the City of Geneva

Mr. Komizo visited the City Hall of Geneva, a member city of Mayors for Peace to meet with Mr. Steve Bernard, who is in charge of the City's external affairs. Mr. Komizo asked the City of Geneva for further support of Mayors for Peace activities.

### Visit to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Mr. Komizo visited UNIDIR, a UN research institute which provides objective research and creative thinking on disarmament and security, and introduced the work of Mayors for Peace and expressed his hope for future

collaboration between UNIDIR and Mayors for Peace.

### Meeting with Ms. Fihn, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Mr. Komizo visited the headquarters of ICAN, Nobel Peace Prize 2017 winner, and presented Ms. Fihn with a letter of congratulations from Mayor Matsui and a wreath of paper cranes.

Mr. Komizo discussed which steps must be taken now that the prohibition treaty has been adopted, and stressed the importance of continued efforts to overcome mutual distrust through dialogue. Ms. Fihn mentioned that ICAN is already on its way to developing new plans and will continue to reach out to the general public to convey in an easily understood manner the risks that we currently face, and the civil society initiatives currently being undertaken.

### Meeting with Ms. Lawand, Head of Arms Unit of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Ms. Lawand said that the one of the priorities after the adoption of the prohibition treaty is reducing the risk of the use of nuclear weapons through encouraging dialogue with nuclear-armed states and other key actors.

Mr. Komizo agreed and mentioned that Mayors for Peace will seize opportunities, such as the meeting of a group of eminent people to be hosted by Japan in 2017, to facilitate dialogue with nuclear-armed states.

### Meeting with Mr. Moller, Director-General of United Nations Office at Geneva

Mr. Komizo briefed Mr. Moller about the decision of Mayors for Peace to seek solutions to disarmament and security challenges comprehensively, while encouraging Lead Cities in each region to address regional issues such as terrorism, refugees, etc.

Mr. Moller commented that good news like the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and ICAN's receiving of the Nobel Peace Prize can change the course of nuclear disarmament favorably, and the role of Mayors for Peace will become increasingly important.

### Meeting with Ms. Whyte Gómez, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Ms. Whyte pointed out the lack of knowledge on nuclear weapons among young generations and stressed the need for education.

Mr. Komizo said that he would like the aging *hibakusha* to see the global nuclear disarmament moving forward by the year 2020 and give them a sense of confidence and peace of mind.

### Meeting with Mr. Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Mr. Komizo introduced Mr. Türk to Mayors for Peace and spoke about the new objective, the "Realization of safe and resilient cities," under which each regional group seeks to address regional issues such as the refugee crisis.

Mr. Türk mentioned the importance of utilizing networks of cities and mayors, like Mayors for Peace does, in addressing the major refugee crisis.

### Through this visit

Volgograd City has the historical background of being the site of Russia's bloodiest battle during World War II, and we found during this visit that Volgograd has a strong awareness of the importance of peace and high aspirations as a Mayors for Peace Leader City.

Meetings with various dignitaries in Geneva became precious opportunities to help strengthen connections with international peace research bodies and build networks with international peace organizations and NGOs. At the meetings with Ms. Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN, and Costa Rica's Ambassador White, Mr. Komizo had fruitful discussions regarding initiatives after the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## Mayors for Peace Staff Member's Attendance at the Obama Foundation Summit

This Foundation manages the Mayors for Peace Secretariat. Since December 2016, this Foundation has been in communication with the Obama Foundation, established by former US President Obama, and discussed the possibility of future collaboration between the two foundations. As a part of that collaboration, a staff member from this Foundation's Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division attended the Obama Foundation Summit that was held in Chicago, Illinois State in the United States on two days from October 31 to November 1, 2017.



Former US President Obama at the opening event

This summit was attended by around five hundred young people who play the role of leaders in various fields in the United States and sixty countries around the world. Participants held discussions on the ideal state of active citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, explored solutions to common issues, and built cross-border networks of young leaders. There were also breakout sessions and talks by public figures from a variety of fields, including Prince Henry of England, Italy's former prime minister Matteo Renzi, and others from regional communities, business, the arts and cultural fields.

Our staff member held discussions with young civic leaders from around the world, and also explained the initiatives of Mayors for Peace, asking for understanding and cooperation in future activities. The staff member was also fortunate enough to have the opportunity to

directly tell Mr. Obama that he had come from Hiroshima, and also had a conversation with Ms. Caroline Kennedy, the former US ambassador to Japan, who was the MC for a breakout session. Ms. Kennedy said "the Mayors for Peace initiatives are really wonderful".

At the end of the Closing Session, Mr. Obama said that he considered the summit a success because the participants inspired each other and they inspired him. After confirming that the participants will not be alone because of the people they met at this summit, Mr. Obama concluded, "Let's get to work!"

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## 14<sup>th</sup> Peace and Friendship Delegation to China by Hiroshima Citizens

The Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) is a nationwide organization in China that works to promote peace and disarmament.

This Foundation and the CPAPD have conducted mutual visits for the past 29 years, starting with the first visit by the Hiroshima Citizen's Peace and Friendship Delegation to Beijing and other locations in 1988. This time marked the 14<sup>th</sup> visit to China: a group of six people led by Mr. Ohtsura Niwa, Chairman of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation and a Councilor of this Foundation, visited the cities of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai from November 10-14, 2017.

### November 11

In Beijing, the group visited the large-scale achievements exhibition Five Years of Sheer Endeavor, deepening their understanding of the achievements of the Xi Jinping administration over the five years since 2012.

### November 12

In Tianjin City, the group visited a memorial hall commemorating the Chinese people who were forcibly taken to Japan at the end of World War II. They toured the facility together with bereaved families.

This was followed by a courtesy visit to the Tianjin Municipal People's Government, where they requested that the city become a member of Mayors for Peace.

Next, the group moved to Tianjin Foreign Studies University. At the university, Mr. Hiromi Hasai and Mr. Mutsuhiko Segoshi spoke about their atomic bomb experience in Japanese to around thirty students studying Japanese. This was followed by a testimony by the bereaved family member of a Chinese person who was forcibly taken to Japan. During the question and answer session, students asked about what life was like in Japan at the time of the bombing and about nuclear power generation today. It was a very meaningful session.

### November 13

In Beijing, the group toured the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. After this, they held a discussion with An

Yuejun, chief secretary of CPAPD, and others on relations between Japan and China, and talked about future exchange activities between the two organizations. The group agreed to continue with future-focused exchange and promote mutual understanding.



Discussion with Chief Secretary An Yuejun and others from CPAPD

During this visit, members of bereaved families of Chinese people forcibly taken to Japan also attended the discussion with students from Tianjin Foreign Studies University. It was extremely beneficial for the students' mutual understanding for them to be able to hear both the Japanese and Chinese stories. We would like to continue with such exchange sessions in the future.

(Peace and International Solidarity Promotion Division)

## 2017 International Festival

The International Festival event was held on November 19, 2017 at various venues including International Conference Center Hiroshima and the green belt on Peace Boulevard. This was the 18<sup>th</sup> time that the event has been held.

A total of 65 civic groups and companies that are involved in international exchange and cooperation activities in Hiroshima and the surrounding areas held a variety of 38 different events related to intercultural understanding, the global environment, multicultural cohabitation and Japanese culture experiences. A total of 10,500 visitors, the highest number ever, came to the event.

Visitors from both Japan and overseas spent the day experiencing the cultures of many different countries around the world.

### Talk show: "Tell us Bobby! What kind of place is Nigeria?"

The famous Nigerian TV personality Mr. Bobby Ologun was invited as guest and spoke about life in Nigeria, and the role of sport in Nigeria.

The venue was quickly filled, and the audience were entertained throughout the show with the humorous talk. An audience said "the fast-paced talk was funny" and another said "Nigeria feels more familiar to me than it did before".

### Introduction to international exchange and cooperation activities

In the section introducing the activities of civic groups, sixteen organizations set up booths and provided information on their respective international exchange and cooperation activities. There were also other booths set up by governmental organizations, NGOs, university students, companies, and more, and visitors enjoyed themselves looking at displays of photos and other materials, dressing in national folk costumes, participating

in quizzes and more. There were also presentations and report sessions on international exchange and cooperation activities by young people and university students and the story hour in foreign languages.



The story hour in foreign languages

### Foreign cultures and Japanese culture: introductions and hands-on activities

In terms of experiencing foreign cultures, there were sections where visitors could learn how to design a traditional Scottish kilt, try Chinese paper cut-out art, and Chinese-style rope-tying. There were also sections where participants could experience Japanese culture: trying on kimonos, tea ceremony, *ikebana* flower arrangement, Japanese calligraphy and more. Both foreigners and Japanese visitors could directly experience wonderful cultures of different countries.



Experiencing Japanese culture (tea ceremony)

### World cuisine and traditional crafts bazaar

At the green belt on Peace Boulevard on the south side of International Conference Center Hiroshima, sixteen organizations set up stalls selling foods from all over the world, as part of Hiroshima International Village—World Food Stalls. At the International Cooperation Bazaar, eleven organizations sold traditional crafts from various countries.

There was also a quiz rally where participants answered questions at each of the event venues to win a prize; the *Chikyu Hiroba* (global space) where people of all ages could have fun experiencing foreign cultures; a section where participants could learn about Hiroshima City's sister and friendship cities while making crafts; an outdoor stage with performances of dances and music from other countries; a free visa consultation corner for non-Japanese visitors; a section with information on Japanese language classes in Hiroshima City; a section where visitors could donate coins from all over the world to support children in developing nations; and more. Each of the sections were bustling with people, and participants furthered their knowledge and understanding of international exchange and cooperation.

Many citizens and foreign exchange students participated in this event as volunteer staff and enjoyed the day together with the visitors.

(International Relations & Cooperation Division)

## Memoir of the A-bombing

“Exposed to the bombing upon entering Hiroshima City, walking through the A-bomb hell”

(March 2017)



by **Yoshio Asano**  
Atomic Bombing Witness  
for This Foundation

### Exposed to the bomb while doing weeding work

When the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, I was a second-year student at Hiroshima Second Middle School. On August 5, 1945, the day before that fateful day, I had been on the river bank at Hon River, on the south side of what is now Peace Memorial Park, for building demolition work. Then on the 6<sup>th</sup>, the 321 first-year students and 4 teachers who took their turn to do the building demolition work lost their lives in the atomic bombing.

On the 6<sup>th</sup>, the second-year students were to do weeding work in a potato field at the Eastern Drill Ground. It was around 2.1 km from the hypocenter. All the students were thrown by the blast and suffered horrible burns to their face, arms and elsewhere. In the year that we survived, second-year students at the time, turned sixty, we gathered memoirs written by 88 of us and made it into a book, so that we would leave a written record of the A-bomb experiences.

There were various expressions used to describe the moment of the blast: “it was like the flash of a camera,” “it was like lightning had struck,” “it was like someone had laid out a carpet of orange light.” The memoirs record that the students’ bodies were thrown, and when they came to, they saw that their friends’ faces and hands were red with the skin peeling away in tatters, so they were saying to each other “What happened to you!?” “No, what happened to you!?”, and as they were doing so they came to feel the pain from their own burns.

### Seeing the mushroom cloud from the sea at Kure military port

The reason that what should be a description of my personal A-bomb experience sounds like a record of what happened to someone else is because when the atomic bomb was dropped I was not in Hiroshima.

As we would be working in a potato field on the 6<sup>th</sup> and doing building demolition work on the 7<sup>th</sup> and there were no classes, my mother asked me to go to my grandfather’s house in Kamagari island to get some sweet potatoes. So I skipped work, and on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> I was on a boat that had left Hiroshima Port at 7am heading for islands on the Seto Inland Sea.

At the islands near the military port at Kure were battleships and aircraft carriers that had been bombed and sunk and were in a pitiful state. I was looking at them regretfully, thinking “So this is what war is,” when there was a flash of light.

Wondering what it was, I looked up at the sky. There was something that looked like an advertising balloon shining pink and orange that drifted up to the sky. A cumulonimbus cloud then covered the whole sky as though it was chasing it.

On the boat were many voices, saying things like maybe an ammunitions warehouse or gas tank had exploded. We had only left Hiroshima Port an hour before that, and it was unimaginable that there had been an air attack by a B-29 fighter plane, not to speak of an atomic bombing. When we arrived at the Kamagari island and I was telling my grandmother that I had seen a huge explosion off the coast of Kure, my grandfather then came home from the Town Hall, saying that Hiroshima is completely destroyed, and that the mayor of a village neighboring Hiroshima had called to say that he is going there to rescue.

I spent that night at my grandfather’s house. The following day, the 7<sup>th</sup>, I went home to Hiroshima from Kawajiri Station on the Kure line, which runs along the coast opposite the island. Trains coming from Hiroshima were full of people with severe burns and injuries. The train that I took to Hiroshima stopped temporarily a number of times on the way. It reached Yano Station, which is three stops before Hiroshima, but did not go any further than that, so I walked the 12-13 kilometers to my home in Hiroshima.

### Procession of ghosts

When I was walking, there were endless groups of people, who had experienced the bombing, fleeing from Hiroshima. They were wearing burned clothes that remained on their bodies, which had severe burns, and from the end of their hands that they held out in front of them hung down burnt skin, like rags. They looked exactly like a “procession of ghosts”.

As I came closer to Hiroshima, the damage became greater, with houses around me going from semi-destroyed to completely destroyed.

Our house too, at 2.3 km from the hypocenter, had broken pillars, collapsed walls, the cupboards and paper screen doors were in a mess, and the tiles from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rooves looked like a giant had rummaged through them. Even so, miraculously my mother and younger siblings were safe.

### Walking through ground zero on the 8<sup>th</sup>

At the time, whenever there was an emergency such as an air raid, we were supposed to contact the school. So on the 8<sup>th</sup>, I walked the approximately 4 km to Hiroshima Second Middle School. On the gatepost was a piece of paper that said “Site for corpses”, and around 30 dead bodies were lying in the playground. The school building had been leveled to the ground and there was no one around who looked like a teacher, so pulled by my curiosity, I headed for the city center. At the time, we had absolutely no idea about the atomic bomb, and had no knowledge of radiation—we did not even know that word. So without any concern I headed for the city center.

The tragic sights I came across on the way were so awful that they cannot be explained in written or spoken words, and there were a number of scenes that I still cannot forget to this day. Next to Aioi Bridge, which is near the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion

Hall (the Atomic Bomb Dome), was a train that had been derailed by the blast and was completely burned, and there were the white bones of four or five people sitting on what must have been the seats on the train. They must have died instantly.

In a fire cistern nearby, several charred corpses were there burned and dead, looking like chopsticks standing. In the midst of the huge fire that was burning tens of thousands of buildings, the water in the cistern had evaporated, and of the dead bodies that had soaked themselves in the water remaining at the bottom of the cistern, the only flesh remaining was below their knees.

When I recall these bloodcurdling scenes, all color is drained from my memories, and they appear in my mind like a black and white film.

### Motivation to give my atomic bombing testimony

The reason that I decided to give my testimony of the atomic bombing happened a few years ago. I was watching television, where a foreign tourist visiting Peace Memorial Park was saying “It’s good that this was a park. If people had been living here, there would have been even greater damage.”\* Previously when I was a newspaper reporter I had reported many times on the atomic bombing and peace, and in this way, had been involved in recording and passing on the pleas of the *hibakusha* in writing. But as one of the few “surviving witnesses”, I thought once again that I should pass on the message speaking in my own words.

Now 71 years had passed since World War II ended, and still it is said that the nuclear weapons nations have a total of 15,000 nuclear weapons. There is also no end to the indiscriminate terror attacks by ISIS in the Middle East even now. Just thinking of what could happen should such fanatical groups obtain nuclear weapons makes my blood run cold.

In May 2016, President Obama visited Hiroshima for the first time, and dedicated flowers at the Cenotaph for A-bomb Victims. I hope that the visit to Hiroshima by the American president, who has huge influence around the world, will become great momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and with that wish in mind I will continue my atomic bombing testimony activities.

\* The area now known as Peace Memorial Park was previously an urban district called Nakajima. It is estimated that at the time of the atomic bombing, about 6,500 people lived in the Nakajima district.



Mr. Asano reading a memorial address at the Hiroshima Second Middle School ceremony for the victims of the atomic bomb (August 6, 2016) (from the City of Hiroshima records of the Peace Memorial Ceremony, an event commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing)

## Profile

### [Yoshio Asano]

Born in 1931. Formerly a reporter at Chugoku Shimbun newspaper. Head of sports department, culture department, assistant managing editor, bureau chief and auditor before retiring. While working at the newspaper, was awarded the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association Award in 1965 as a member of the investigative team for the long-running series “Hiroshima 20 Years Later”. Visited Italy in 1982 on the invitation of a Christian group as representative of *hibakusha*. Chugoku Shimbun advisor.

### Memoir of the A-bombing

“Mission of an atomic bomb witness”

(August 2017)



by **Kunihiko Iida**  
Atomic Bomb Witness  
for this Foundation

The tragic reality of the damage from the atomic bombing was kept a secret by the military until the end of the war, and then by GHQ after the war. Recently, there is a stronger movement to communicate the reality of the bombing, from the need to link that to the abolition of nuclear weapons. However, even today the true tragedy of what happened is not fully conveyed. Different awareness of the tragedy of the bombing leads to different measures to deal with nuclear weapons and different stances to initiatives for a ban on such weapons. Some people look at the way Hiroshima has recovered and then underestimate the atomic bombing as a result.

The use of atomic bombs not only cuts off all human life, but all life on the planet. These are evil weapons that destroy the environment and turn the Earth into a planet of death. Some people describe the bombing as a “living hell”, but that is a misunderstanding. Originally, “hell” refers, in Buddhist terms, to the lowest level in the endless reincarnation in six posthumous worlds, and the level of wretchedness there is such that if the person repents, they can somehow crawl out of that place. It does not include scenes such as those witnessed in the atomic bombing, where bodies were destroyed, burnt and turned into skeletons instantaneously. Neither Buddhist mandalas or pictures of hell depict the horror seen in the atomic bombing.

### The reality of the atomic bombing

At the hypocenter and the area in close proximity (0 to around 500-600 meters), there was a blast of approximately 400m/sec, and a heat wave of 3,000-4,000 degrees, and as a result tens of thousands of people in this area had their heads split open, their eyeballs coming out, their heads, arms and legs torn apart, and their stomachs falling out—in that state, they were left lying, charred, on top of and under the rubble. (Reference: An Introduction to the Atomic Bomb Tragedy by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum “The Spirit of

Hiroshima” [p.67], Collection of Photographs “HIROSHIMA” by the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation [p.33], “The outline of atomic bomb damage in Hiroshima” by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum [p.18-34], etc).

A little further away (500-600 meters to 1.2km from the hypocenter), people had their clothes burned and skin peeled away, and they walked like a line of ghosts, looking for water, and very soon the riverbanks and rivers were full of their dead bodies.



The day after bombing City center still smoldering Hondori (Photo by Mitsugi Kishida, 490m from the hypocenter, Harimaya-cho, August 7, 1945)

There were miscarriages of fetuses that were deformed because of the radiation, and many babies were born with congenital illnesses such as microcephaly. Later, many people died from radiation sickness such as leukemia and cancer, and there are others who suffer after-effects such as bura-bura disease, and even now suffer from the effects of radiation, and die from diseases such as myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS), also known as “the second leukemia”.

If this tragic reality is not communicated properly, there will be a divergence in opinions about the abolition of nuclear weapons. I have very high expectations of the new exhibits in the main building of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which is currently being renovated.

### My atomic bomb experience

I experienced the atomic bombing at the home of my mother in Kako Town 900m from the hypocenter. My mother took the hand of my older sister (4 years old), and I (3 years old) was carried by my aunt (Hiroko Yamamoto, a 1<sup>st</sup> year student at First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls' High School), and we fled to the east end of Sumiyoshi Bridge. The scenes that we saw there: at the end of the bridge, closest to the hypocenter, a huge number of dead bodies were lying in a heap, ruptured and charred; while in the area near Sumiyoshi Bridge countless numbers of people were dying one after the other on the river banks and in the river, their clothes burned and skin peeled away. When my uncle (Dr. Yasuhiro Shinnaka, my mother's younger brother) who was studying physics at Kyoto University at the time,

saw this scene, he said “This bomb is an atomic bomb,” and it is said that he was the first person to say so.

After that we reached our relatives' house in Shinjo Village. My mother and older sister had necrosis from the legs down, and they died there. Miraculously, I survived, but I was in poor condition both emotionally and physically, and this was the start of a life of suffering.

### The path to peace

As the international situation worsens, there are 15,000 nuclear weapons that exist in the world. Moreover, the majority of those weapons are dozens of times powerful than the Hiroshima-type atomic bomb. In addition, nuclear weapons have advanced to the stage where they are now compact and highly-functional, and can be dropped on multiple remote targets at the same time, and it is not certain whether or not they can be intercepted. Nuclear weapons nowadays are weapons of evil that will make more than ten million people suffer with just one. Nuclear weapons have no deterrence capability against nuclear weapons.

If people develop awareness, like President Obama, of the horror of nuclear weapons, which will destroy the planet itself, it is certain that they would not want to use nuclear weapons ever again. The writer of ‘Barefoot Gen’, Keiji Nakazawa, said “The real horror of nuclear weapons is too horrific, and cannot be conveyed in comics or novels.”

I only have a little time left in my life, but I believe that communicating the truly inhumane horror of the atomic bomb is the only path to world peace, and to that end I intend to continue with my A-bomb testimony activities in Japan and overseas.

### Profile

#### [Kunihiko Iida]

Born in Manchuria in 1942. Father died in the war when he was 2 years old, and mother and older sisters died in the atomic bombing when he was 3. Raised by grandmother, uncle and aunts, graduated from Hiroshima Prefectural Hiroshima Technical High School.

Employed at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, dispatched to Caterpillar Mitsubishi and rose to the position of branch manager. After retirement, employed as a managing director at Daiichi Rental Co. Ltd.

While working, also studied psychology, and assumed positions of director at the Japan Transactional Analysis Association, consultant at Shinri Sodaninkai (Psychological Consultants Association), and posts as university professor and instructor.

University presidents' awards: Armstrong State University, San Francisco State University (US)

Conciliation commissioner service award: Presiding justice at Toyama Local Family Court

#### Information

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HIROSHIMA PEACE CULTURE FOUNDATION

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