

PEACE 平和文化 CULTURE



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Children's representatives reading out the "Commitment to Peace" at the Peace Memorial Ceremony, August 6, 2023
(provided by the City of Hiroshima)

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Peace Memorial Ceremony —78 Years Since the Atomic Bombing

On August 6, 78 years since the dropping of the atomic bomb, the City of Hiroshima held the Peace Memorial Ceremony in Peace Memorial Park, Hiroshima City.

Approximately 50,000 people attended, including *hibakusha*, bereaved families, and guests. They prayed for the repose of the souls of those who lost their lives in the bombing, and for perpetual world peace.

The ceremony started at 8:00am. Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui and two representatives of the bereaved families dedicated two volumes of the Register of the Names of the Fallen Atomic Bomb Victims to the shrine in the Memorial Cenotaph for the Atomic Bomb Victims. Over the past year, 5,320 people's deaths had been confirmed and their names were recorded in the Register. This brings the total number of names recorded in the Register to 339,227 people, in 125 volumes.

This was followed by an address by Mr. Tatsunori Motani, chairperson of the Hiroshima City Council, and a dedication of flowers by various representatives. At 8:15am, the time that the bomb was dropped, Ms. Rena Sumida, the representative of the bereaved families, and Minato Tanaka, the children's representative, rang the Peace Bell, and all participants observed a minute of silent prayer.

Mayor Matsui then read out the Peace Declaration. He started by introducing a comment made by a *hibakusha* who was 8 years old at the time of the bombing, "I want the leaders of all countries with nuclear weapons to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki and learn the realities of the atomic bombings." He followed this by saying "The heads of state who attended the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May this year visited the Peace Memorial Museum, spoke with *hibakusha*, and wrote messages in the guestbook. Their messages provide proof that *hibakusha* pleas have reached them. As they stood before the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims, I conveyed the Spirit of Hiroshima underlying its inscription. I believe our spirit is now engraved in their hearts."

Mayor Matsui then appealed to all policymakers, saying "Leaders around the world must confront the reality that nuclear threats now being voiced by certain policymakers reveal the folly of nuclear deterrence theory. They must immediately take concrete steps to lead us from the dangerous present toward our ideal world." Following on from the



Mayor Matsui reading out the Peace Declaration

leaders who visited Hiroshima for the G7 Hiroshima Summit, Mayor Matsui strongly urged them to visit Hiroshima to convey their desire for peace, to immediately halt nuclear intimidation, and to take steps toward building a security regime based on trust through dialogue.

Mayor Matsui also made an appeal to citizens: "To create that social environment, let us promote initiatives to instill the culture of peace everywhere. If we do, elected officials, who need the support of the people, will surely work with us toward a peaceful world."

Mayor Matsui urged the Japanese government to play a role in reconciling the differences between the nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states, and to participate as an observer at the Second Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Weapons Convention. Furthermore, he strongly urged the government to strengthen support measures for the *hibakusha*, whose average age is over 85 years old and many of whom are suffering from a variety of physical and mental effects of radiation.

In his speech that followed, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida expressed his belief that, as the road to a "world without nuclear weapons" becomes more difficult due to the widening division in the international community over approaches to nuclear disarmament and Russia's nuclear threat, it is imperative for us to reinvigorate international momentum once more towards the realization of a "world without nuclear weapons", and that the starting point for making firm progress towards the realization of a "world without nuclear weapons" is accurately understanding the tragic realities of

the atomic bombings.

The Prime Minister also spoke about the G7 Hiroshima Summit, where world leaders listened to the voices of atomic bomb survivors and encountered firsthand the realities of the atomic bombings and the desires of people yearning for peace, and the Japanese government urged not only world leaders but also young people and others to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He said “We will continue to work actively to bring about a world without nuclear weapons, giving proper consideration to the discussions of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons.”

At the ceremony this time, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, read out a message from UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in Japanese.

The Secretary-General pledged to support *hibakusha* as they continued sharing their accounts and the lesson of what happened in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945.

The Secretary-General also commended the world leaders who visited Hiroshima for the summit, seen its monuments, spoken with its brave survivors, and emerged emboldened to take up the cause of nuclear disarmament. However, he urged that more leaders must take nuclear disarmament seriously now that the “drums of nuclear war are beating once again.” He then introduced the Policy Brief on A New Agenda for Peace, released at the end of July, which places disarmament at its center, stating, “We will not rest until the nuclear shadow has been lifted once and for all.”

Hiroshima Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki said “From the viewpoint of the sustainability, we should pursue the total elimination of nuclear weapons, upholding it as a common goal of the international community.”

Children’s representatives Erena Katsuoka and Tomoru Yonehiro expressed their gratitude for those who survived the devastation of the atomic bombing and saved the chain of life, and read out the Commitment to Peace, saying “We will treat the ardent wish of the *hibakusha* as something personal and use our own words to convey that wish. We will each take action to pay forward the peace around us. We, the children of Hiroshima, will build a future that everyone can recognize as peaceful.”

In attendance at the ceremony were representatives of bereaved families from 31 prefectures, in addition to representatives and ambassadors from the European Union (EU) and 111 nations, including the nuclear weapon states of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France.

The full texts of the Peace Declaration and the Commitment to Peace that were read out at the ceremony are available on the City of Hiroshima website.

(General Affairs Division)



(The City of Hiroshima website)

Hanover Day Commemorative Event Held on August 6

Hiroshima and Hanover in Germany marked the 40th anniversary of their sister city affiliation in 2023.

In 1968, under the Japan-Germany Cultural Agreement, a delegation of 130 Japanese youth representatives traveled to Germany. During this visit, the International Youth Association Hiroshima (IYAH) dispatched the Secretary-General and two university students from Hiroshima City. Subsequently, youth exchanges at the grassroots level between Hiroshima City and Hanover City continued to thrive with the leadership of the same association. In 1972, for the first time, the Mayor of Hiroshima visited Hanover City, leading to increased interpersonal exchanges at the administrative level. In 1983, as momentum grew, the two cities established a sister city partnership. Currently, Hanover City is playing a significant role as a Vice President City for the Mayors for Peace.

To commemorate the 40th anniversary, a 21-member delegation from Hanover, including Mayor Belit Onay, visited Hiroshima during the first week of August. In conjunction with the delegation’s attendance at the Peace Memorial Ceremony on the morning of August 6, the City Diversity & Inclusion Division of this Foundation held an event entitled “Hanover Day” in the afternoon to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the sister city affiliation and to allow Hiroshima citizens to experience and become familiar with German culture and deepen their understanding of our sister city.

Before the ceremony, many citizens enjoyed German cultural experiences such as sausages, *Baumkuchen* cake, tasting of bread and wine directly from Germany, and paper crafts of German trains, as well as the Ueda Sōko tradition of tea ceremony, which has a close relationship with the city of Hanover.

The *Lüttje Lage* (drinking shots) experience corner, which is unique to the city of Hanover, was a lively event held by about 30 young people, mostly members of the IYAH, which has played a central role in civic youth exchange between the cities of Hiroshima and Hannover. This corner also featured a panel presentation on the history of youth exchange between the two cities to date.

On the commemorative stage, members of the International Youth Conference for Peace in the Future, in



The crowded *Lüttje Lage* booth
(IYAH students in traditional German costume)

which high school students and others from Hiroshima City exchange opinions with youth from around the world to deepen mutual understanding and think together about world peace, gave a report on their visit to Hanover in May. In past years, this conference has alternated between Hiroshima City and its sister and friendship cities, bringing together youth from around the world. This year's conference was held in Hanover, coinciding with the May 27 signing date of the sister city affiliation agreement with Hiroshima City. The reports by the visiting youths included anecdotes in which they used music to express their thoughts and feelings that they had developed in Hanover, and other anecdotes that showed the rich creativity of the next generation, transcending national borders.

Other highlights included an introduction to the city of Hanover by Hiroshima Messengers, a classical concert by Hiroshima musicians with ties to Germany, and a wonderful performance by the 17-member Hiroshima City Fire Department Band. Approximately 500 people attended the event.



Hiroshima City Firefighters Band impressing the audience with their rendition of "Matsuri", a classic *enka* song.

(City Diversity & Inclusion Division)



**Memoir of the A-bombing;
The Parting of Father and Son**
-The experiences I had when I was five years and ten months old-

Masaki Hironaka
Atomic bomb survivor registered with our Foundation

August 6, 1945—Atomic Bombing and Black Rain

I was five years and ten months old when the atomic bomb was dropped. I was living in Koieue town which was about 3.5km from the Hypocenter.

On the morning of August 6th, I was playing in the stream near my house. Then suddenly something flashed and in a matter of seconds everything became orange before my eyes and I heard a sound like fireworks. After a few more seconds a brown blast of wind from downstream struck me with furious speed. I couldn't stand still and I fell backwards. I remember hearing the noise of the windows of the houses nearby breaking and the sound of the tiles being blown off the roofs and smashing on the ground. I knew that something had just happened but I was little so I kept playing in the stream under the bridge.

I heard my mother shouting. She said, "Masaki, go to the mountain shelter right now. We will go ahead and will be waiting for you!" I got out of the stream and went back to the house in my bare feet. I couldn't go inside because it was too dangerous. There were pieces of broken glass from the front door and from the room windows scattered all over the floor. It was then, for the first time, that I realized something serious had happened.

As I hastily ran to the shelter, I saw the mushroom cloud from the atomic bomb getting bigger and bigger.

After meeting my mom and sister in the shelter, we had to stay still for a long time in the dark and crowded shelter, unable to move. I was very bored. It was then that the radioactive black rain started falling.

Tragic appearance of the A-bomb survivors

Eventually the rain has gotten lighter so we returned home. There were two survivors sitting in the front room littered with shards of glass, and two further people were lying down in the tatami room beyond. As soon as they saw us they all said, "Excuse us, please give us water." My mother and I gave them water right away. They were very grateful and said, "Thank you" to us many times. They were badly burnt. Their faces, hands, chests, legs and hair were all burnt and crinkled. Pieces of skin hung down like string and elsewhere their skin was red and blistered. They looked like they were about to die.

One after another, people who were burnt walked past our house. They were bent over and their arms hung a little forward. Their whole bodies were burnt and the skin of their arms was hanging off them like strands of cotton. Their clothes, both their tops and bottoms, were burned and tattered.

When I looked up, the mushroom cloud was even bigger, expanding in the early evening sky. The top half was get-

ting longer and drifting toward Miyajima.

My mother had hurt her face and hand in the blast. That morning, after she had seen my father off to work, she had been putting on makeup in front of the mirror so that she could go out to receive a distribution of rations. It was then that the explosion had happened. Glass, broken by the blast of the atomic bomb, had flown into her. My sister had been near my mother at the time, but fortunately she had only received small cuts.

My father exposed to the A-bombing

That evening at about seven o'clock, when it was a little darker, we heard from a teacher at Koi Elementary School that my father was at the elementary school. My mother got ready and then, taking my sister's hand and my hand, we headed to the school, which was about 500m away. While we were walking down the hill to the school we kept asking "Dad?" to the people who are coming up the road but we couldn't find him.

At Koi Elementary School there were many people who were lying down because they were injured and also many people who were looking for members of their family who also hadn't come home. In front of a shelter near the school my mother said to me, "Don't move from here until I come back." She went into the school building still holding my sister.

After a while my mother came back and said, "I couldn't find him so let's go home." I think it was about eight o'clock. As we were walking home we were still asking the people who were sitting on the street and walking by if they were my father but no-one was. Thinking back about that moment I wonder how worried my mother must have been.

When we got home, at about eight-thirty my father was sitting in the dark in the kitchen. My father was pretty weakened. He was burnt from his head to his back and his trousers were tattered. My father called me on his way upstairs, and said "Masaki, pull out the pieces of glass in my back." I tried to pull it out but it was imbedded deeply in the muscle. I couldn't pull it out even with pliers so I asked my mother to do it.

Later my father said, "I was on the train when *Pikadon* hit. The window of the train was blown away by the blast and the hot, hot light and that pieces of glass got stuck in my back." My father worked at the Hiroshima railway center in Ujina. He would have been passing by 'Kamiya Cho', near what is now known as the A-Bomb Dome, at eight fifteen; the moment atomic bomb hit. My father had passed out on the train because of the shock from the explosion. When he came to, there were still many people passed out and some who were dead; so many bodies lying about the train. He soaked himself in the river nearby to cool down before walking for a long time until he arrived at Koi Elementary



In the candle light, Pulling out the pieces of glass stuck in my father's back (Author Masaki Hironaka)

school, about 3km away. As he walked he stopped frequently to cool himself again in the river. Because of the extreme heat and with fire spreading across Hiroshima city, the river was the only place that those suffering from burns could go.

August 7th—The death of my father

When I woke up the next day, August 7th, my mother was giving my father rice porridge and she was talking to him. When I saw him he looked in terrible pain. At about three or four o'clock on, my mother called to me, "Come here and stay with your father because he seems weak and in pain." I was in the corner under the eaves. I heard her but I couldn't go near him. That was because I was embarrassed to cry in front of people even though I was young. Under the eaves I put my head against the pillar and cried because I was very sad. The tears didn't stop. I realized how sad I was to be apart from my father.

My mother said, "Father has passed away." I cried even louder. He was thirty nine years old. After a little while, I went near to him. I held his hand and cried with my mother. His face didn't look in pain; it was a gentle face as usual.

Thinking back now, I wonder if he might have said something to me if I had been there with him... I think he would have told me to take care of my mother. Now I have become a grown-up myself, I understand how sad my mother must have been. After cremating him at a cemetery in Koieue, my mother and the two of us, my sister and I, went back to my father's home town of Fukuyama on August 23rd.

There is something I want to ask you

I was only five years and ten months old when it happened but I cannot forget the terrible things in my head because they were so horrible. Even after 77 years, when I talk about my experiences remembering what had happened back then tears come flooding out and I got very sad. However, I have made an effort to get the sorrow and anger out by drawing and writing this story of what my own eyes saw and my own head remembers.

Hibakusha have been suffering hardships ever since the atomic bombing. There is an expression, "human lives are heavier than the earth." The worth of human lives is incalculable. It only took an instant to drop the bomb, but tens of thousands of people died because of it. My father was one of them. Although, to the country, he was just one person from the tens of thousands of people, but he was everything for us and for me. He was the pillar of our family. Even if a lot of money is piled up he won't come back. Please everyone; take good care of the lives you have been given by your parents.

Finally there is something I want to ask you as a favor. I wanted you to know about my atomic bomb experience because I don't want anyone else to have a similar experience. And everyone, please study the past and think about the future.

Profile

[Masaki HIRONAKA]

Born in 1939. For many years, he has testified about his experience of the atomic bombing both in Japan and overseas. Since 2022, he has been commissioned by the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation to serve as a witness to the A-bomb experience. His motto is "Gratitude for life, live in the present."

Starting with this issue, experts who are active in various fields will be making relay contributions on the “humanitarian and humankind’s approach” towards the abolition of nuclear weapons. As the atomic bombed city of Hiroshima, which aims to create a “world free of nuclear weapons”, we believe it is necessary to develop our efforts while deepening our understanding of this approach, which is spreading internationally.



A Humanitarian and Humankind’s Approach to the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Mitsuru Kurosawa

Professor Emeritus of Osaka University and Osaka Jogakuin University. Ph.D. of Law, Osaka University. Advisor to the Japanese delegation to the NPT Review Conference (1995, 2000, 2005, 2010, 2015). First President of the Japan Association of Disarmament Studies (2009-2013). Editor of “Nuclear Disarmament in the 21st Century: A Message from Hiroshima” (Hiroshima Peace Institute).

At the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), for the first time, the Final Document that achieved consensus among all countries included the so-called humanitarian approach, an approach to nuclear abolition for the sake of human survival, bearing in mind “the devastating inhumane consequences of nuclear weapons”.

Subsequently, after the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons (2014) and the Conferences on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (2013, 2014), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted by a Majority of the world’s nations on 7 July 2017.

1. What is “humanity”?

The TPNW is commonly referred in Japan as a humanitarian approach to nuclear abolition. Humanitarian means “to be in accordance with the path that we should follow as humans and to take such a standpoint.” In the scope of this definition, “humanity” is translated as “human nature” in Japan. Discussions on the TPNW in Japan are currently focused only on this aspect of “humanity”.

However, the English word “humanity” contains another important meaning, that of “humankind”. When discussing the issue internationally, one must adopt this definition in order to be able to participate in the discussions and accurately understand the basic nature of the TPNW.

For example, the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, an extremely important document for nuclear weapons abolition, calls to us as human beings to forget about other things and always keep “humanity” in mind, as its most important message. This manifesto states that it is a question of choosing “not as a member of a particular nation, continent, or creed, but as a member of the human race, a species whose existence is in jeopardy,” and that it is a question of “whether to bring about its extinction, or whether humankind will renounce war.”

In this way, “humanity” has an important meaning of “humankind”, and it should be understood also that the TPNW

is a treaty that strengthens not only the humanitarian aspect but also the security of humankind. In this sense, what the TPNW advocates is “humanity” in the sense that it includes both meanings, and in terms of content, it should be interpreted as a humanitarian and humankind’s approach.

The *hibakusha*’s desire for peace, which is rooted in their atomic-bomb experience, transcends grief and hatred, and leads to a truly “humanitarian and humankind’s approach”, as they have called for nuclear abolition for the sake of human survival.

2. What is human security?

The term “security” is now used extremely broadly and is frequently used to emphasize the importance of a concept, such as environmental security or economic security. The original definition of security is “how to respond to external threats,” and historically and traditionally it has meant military security, and this remains a fundamental and central concept today.

Military security in the international community has traditionally been used in the sense of protecting one’s own country against threats from other countries. This has been discussed as “national security”. National security as a matter of military response, including war among nations, was the most important issue in international relations. When the League of Nations and the United Nations came into existence, the concept of “international security”, or security among nations, was proposed. The primary objective of the United Nations is defined as “to maintain international peace and security.”

The current vision of the TPNW is the “security of humanity”. This goes beyond the security of individual nations and security among nations and aims to ensure the security of all peoples of the earth.

3. How should the TPNW be strengthened?

Nuclear weapons states and nuclear allies have expressed strong opposition to the TPNW, arguing that it undermines the NPT and seek to deny the very existence of the latter

treaty. However, at the NPT Review Conference in August 2022, the draft final document of the conference specified the adoption, opening for signature, and entry into force of the TPNW, and the holding of the Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW. Although it was not formally adopted due to Russian opposition, it is believed that there was general agreement on the content of the TPNW.

In order to strengthen the TPNW, efforts should be made to increase the number of signatories and ratifying nations from the current status of 93 and 69, respectively, as of September 2023. In particular, the participation of states that are parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and have not signed or ratified the TPNW should be encouraged, and the participation of the 122 countries that agreed to adopt the TPNW should be targeted. The TPNW and the NPT, while sharing the same basic recognition of the “humanitarian and humankind’s approach”, in other words, the inhumanity of the use of nuclear weapons, for the time being, we should lobby non-nuclear weapon states, to strengthen compatibility and complementarity.

4. What should the Japanese government do?

The Government of Japan is absolutely opposed to the TPNW and is also opposed to participating as observer in the Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty. Prime Minister Kishida cites the fact that “not a single nuclear-weapon state has joined” as the reason for this. He has also often stated that the Treaty is the exit for nuclear weapons abolition. If so, this end point should be pursued. Regarding observer participation in the Meeting of States Parties, since NATO members Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway, which are in the same position as Japan, participated in the First Meeting of States Parties and are pursuing the possibility of cooperation, Japan can and should actively cooperate in areas such as assistance for the victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons.

(October 2023)



Communicating the Reality of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki through a “Humanitarian and Humankind’s Approach”

Shiro Tani
Vice Chairperson, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation

The humanitarian and humankind’s approach in dealing with the use of nuclear weapons is gaining universal acceptance in the international community. It represents a paradigm shift in the way nuclear weapons are handled, from being discussed primarily from the perspective of national

security to a wider perspective of protecting human survival – a shift that reflects the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. The motivation of this shift is to revive nuclear disarmament, which has not been making any progress, through a fundamental change of mindset both inside and outside of government.

I believe that all who seek to achieve world peace and security would benefit from communicating the tragic reality of the atomic bombings as the ultimate foundation for the humanitarian and humankind’s approach to disarmament. In other words, this approach builds on the belief that the devastating heat rays, blasts, and radiation from the atomic bombings prove that such weapons threaten the survival of the human race, and must therefore be abolished on the basis of these facts. Together, they represent the harshest of realities.

The humanitarian and humankind’s approach offers great potential to overcome conventional approaches to dealing with nuclear weapons issues, such as the illusion that such weapons serve a useful purpose of deterrence. The intent of this alternative approach is to address directly the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of even a single use of such weapons, let alone the unimaginable horrors of a nuclear war.

Below, three specific benefits of this approach are discussed.

First, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are compatible and complementary as concrete paths toward nuclear weapons abolition. Both of these treaties share the same basic recognition of the humanitarian and humankind’s approach, with its mission to prevent the destruction of humanity by the use of nuclear weapons. For this reason, it is significant to emphasize the reality of the atomic bombings in conjunction with this approach in order to create a common ground for discussions between parties to these treaties.

Second, motivated young people sometimes ask what they should do for nuclear weapons abolition. If we take the humanitarian and humankind’s approach, they will understand that communicating the reality of the atomic bombings will itself play a major role in shaping public opinion to support nuclear abolition. Foreign visitors and Japanese students on school excursions to Hiroshima will also be able to understand that the reality of the atomic bombing, as perceived through the exhibits at Peace Memorial Museum and testimonies of the *hibakusha*, represents the destruction of humanity through the use of nuclear weapons. They will be convinced that there is no other way for the survival of humanity but to abolish nuclear weapons.

Third, in response to the explanation of the reality of the atomic bombings, various opinions may be raised, such as “many deaths have also occurred in other air raids,” or “nuclear deterrence is necessary from a geopolitical perspec-

tive.” Yet despite these varying opinions, no one can deny the fundamental reality that atomic bombings inevitably lead to the destruction of human race, given the indiscriminate effects from the use of nuclear weapons. This further reinforces the need to work for the global abolition of all such weapons.

As described above, we believe that the role of Hiroshima will become even more important as it will be able to

contribute to international discussions on a world free of nuclear weapons based on the humanitarian and human-kind’s approach. Having experienced firsthand the horrific effects of these weapons, our city is both willing and able to communicate the reality of the atomic bombings in a way that is linked to this approach. We must approach nuclear disarmament as a solemn and effective means to reaffirm our common humanity. (November 2023)

A Scheme to Promote the Culture of Peace among Japanese Cities

A major theme of the 11th Japanese Member Cities Meeting of Mayors for Peace, held in 2023 against the backdrop of critical situations in Ukraine and Gaza, was the importance of promoting the culture of peace among Japanese Cities, a theme reflecting the legacy of the G7 Hiroshima Summit.

As *hibakusha* and the people having the war experience in Japan grow older, the meeting participants shared the view that now is an important time to further promote the culture of peace in civil society.

In order to understand the current status and needs of peace-related initiatives, a questionnaire was sent to all member cities (1737) in Japan. A total of 715 cities (41%) responded.

Among the cities that responded, 83% said that they have implemented initiatives for the culture of peace and 17% said they have not. Regarding the initiatives implemented, in addition to memorial ceremonies, exhibitions, and other activities related to the atomic bombings and air raids during World War II, there were also events for the next generation to pass on the war experience, peace education, and dispatches to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Thus, it is clear that each city is emphasizing the importance of developing the younger generation as the future leaders of the culture of peace.

We hope that cities will actively consider the establishment of the Month for the Culture of Peace, as it will enable us to reach out to the younger generation through a wide variety of programs.

The following are Mayors for Peace measures to support Japanese cities based on the issues and needs in implementing initiatives for the culture of peace: (1) Expansion of programs to accept school students in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, (2) Dispatch of A-bomb legacy successors, volunteer readers of atomic bomb memoirs, (3) Enhancement of dissemination of good examples, (4) Expansion of internship programs (group training of three days and two nights), (5) Establishment of a new web-based training program that can be easily and widely participated in by public servants nationwide, and (6) Request for financial measures for local governments

from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communication (given to the Minister on November 20).

Of these, activities under (1) above such as (i) attendance at Peace Memorial Ceremony in Hiroshima (August 6), (ii) interaction and dialogue with *hibakusha* and school students living in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and (iii) fieldwork to see artifacts and monuments, will enable participants to learn the reality of the atomic bombings and to become leaders of the culture of peace.

In activities under (2) above, the program allows the use of officially certified A-bomb legacy successors as instructors for war experience lectures, peace education at schools, and advance study for dispatch and school excursions to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, at no cost.

The web-based training in (5) is designed also for the staff of non-implementing cities to join.

We hope that each city will take the initiative in using these support measures, and that the culture of peace will take root steadily and even more widely in civil society.

The Japan Designated Cities^{*1} Mayors Association’s Activities related to the Culture of Peace

The 2023 U7 Mayors Declaration^{*2} issued by the Japan Designated Cities Mayors Association, along with the Mayors’ Organizations of the G7 nations, in advance of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, states “We, the cities, firmly believe ...local governments have a crucial role to nurture the culture of peace among citizens.”

In addition, on November 20, the Japan Designated Cities Mayors Association issued a Consensus Document regarding the Promotion of the Culture of Peace. It states that it was agreed by all the designated cities to “steadily implement diverse and varied initiatives to promote the culture of peace amongst a wide range of citizens, including the establishment of the Month for the Culture of Peace.”

^{*1} 20 big cities with populations of approximately 700,000 or more

^{*2} https://g7u7.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Materials/Summit_2023/2023_U7_Mayors_Declaration.pdf



Delegation attended the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference

A Mayors for Peace delegation attended the first session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which met in Vienna, Austria. Headed by President Kazumi Matsui (Mayor of Hiroshima), Vice President Shiro Suzuki (Mayor of Nagasaki), and Secretary General Takehiro Kagawa, the delegation conveyed the *hibakusha*'s sincere desire for the abolition of nuclear weapons and emphasized the need for advancing nuclear disarmament to representatives of national governments and the UN.

Furthermore, to develop youth leadership for future peace activities, Mayors for Peace sent high school students engaging in peace activities in Hiroshima to the PrepCom and organized events and meetings including the Mayors for Peace Youth Forum.

Speeches at the NGO presentations session of the First PrepCom

President Matsui mentioned that the G7 Hiroshima Summit provided an opportunity for the G7 leaders, including those from nuclear-weapon States, to deeply understand the “will of Hiroshima”. He emphasized that the flawed theory of nuclear deterrence, which is now in a state of collapse, must be abandoned, and that we must now start taking tangible action for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. He concluded his speech by expressing the



President Matsui delivering his statement

hope to witness a significant and unwavering step forward in advancing concrete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures during the session.

Vice President Suzuki elaborated further on the importance of comprehending the realities of the atomic bombings, emphasizing that it is the starting point on the path toward a world without nuclear weapons and serves as a driving force in bringing about change in the world. He continued, stating, “Nuclear weapons are not only a threat confined to Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s pasts; they are a present and future issue with which everyone living on Earth must contend,” and closed his statement by sharing the message, “Make Nagasaki the last wartime atomic bombing site.”

Meetings with representatives of the G7 states

The Mayors for Peace delegation met with representatives

of four of the G7 states: France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Japan. In the meetings, the delegation referred to the G7 Hiroshima Summit, mentioning that the Summit provided the G7 leaders with the opportunity to directly encounter the realities of the atomic bombing. The delegation also discussed the leaders’ messages written on the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum guestbook, stating that these entries demonstrate their deep understanding of the “will of Hiroshima”, the conviction that nuclear weapons must never be used again. The delegation further called on the representatives to take concrete actions toward a world without nuclear weapons based on the Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament, which the G7 leaders issued at the Summit. The delegation presented their willingness to support policymakers to take tangible actions toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons and requested support for the expansion of Mayors for Peace membership.

Moreover, the delegation requested Ambassador Ogasawara, Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, that Japan sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and, as its first step, participate in the second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW as an observer.

Meetings with representatives of the UN

Meeting and delivering petition to UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

After President Matsui introduced the high school students and the activities they engage in, a student representative handed over the certificate of approximately 44,000 signatures calling for all states to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the earliest date to UN Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu, stating: “each and every one of these signatures represents the people’s earnest hope to abolish nuclear weapons.”

Ms. Nakamitsu responded with words of encouragement, expressing that she gained courage from the tangible actions taken by the young people of the atomic-bombed city of Hiroshima, standing on the streets to collect signatures after considering how they can commit to the elimination of nuclear weapons. She encouraged them that nothing stands



UN Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu (center) and high school students from Hiroshima

in their way to make persistent efforts, and keep raising their voices to be heard.

After the meeting, a high school student who received advice on mutual understanding and information dissemination from Ms. Nakamitsu said, “I realized the importance of respecting diversity and sincerely listening to those with different opinions. I want to try to communicate in a way that appeals to the public.”

Meeting with Chair of the first session of the NPT PrepCom

President Matsui referred to the G7 leaders’ encounter with the realities of the atomic bombing on the occasion of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, and expressed hope that the first session of the PrepCom serves as a starting point for new processes for nuclear disarmament amid the current challenging international circumstances.

Chair Viinanen referred to the significance the peace messages from the atomic-bombed cities have for all the national representatives attending the session. Furthermore, he expressed his view that the culmination of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation leads to a world without nuclear weapons and emphasized the need to transform the current situation facing the stagnation of nuclear disarmament.

In addition to the aforementioned representatives of national governments and the UN, the Mayors for Peace delegation met and exchanged views with PrepCom delegations from Brazil, the Republic of Korea, Austria, and Kiribati.

Events

Mayors for Peace Youth Forum

Mayors for Peace Youth Forum, held as a side event for the PrepCom, featured presentations by eight groups of young people from around the globe, including high school students from Hiroshima and Vienna. Amid a crowded audience where many stood, the youth groups presented on and discussed their hopes and thoughts on peace gained through their peace activities, and called for the realization of a peaceful, nuclear-weapons-free world. In response, an audience member expressed their appreciation, noting how deeply the person was impressed and encouraged by the commitment of young Japanese individuals to nuclear disarmament. Words of determination were also voiced from the floor, underscoring the importance of working in solidarity among the gathered youth, building net-



Presentations at the Forum

works, and collectively striving toward their common goal.

To conclude the Forum, UN Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu offered words of encouragement to the participants. She expressed her hope that these young people, the leaders and driving force of the future, would deeply learn about international relations and disarmament, so that they will become influential communicators, capable of motivating government officials and diplomats for positive changes.

After the forum, the high school students from Hiroshima expressed their thoughts, saying, “We were happy that our activities were known,” “It was a new inspiration for me to hear stories from people from various countries.”

Executive Cities’ Meeting for Exchange of Views

Delegation members from 5 Executive Cities, including Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Ieper (Belgium), Evora (Portugal), and Granollers (Spain), gathered for a meeting, presented their own city’s activities, and actively exchanged their views.

Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition

At the venue of the first session of the NPT PrepCom over the session’s period (July 31 – August 11), Mayors for Peace hosted the Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, aiming at having the PrepCom attendees and UN-related individuals deepen their understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons, and the initiatives of Mayors for Peace. On July 31, President Matsui and Vice President Suzuki received a visit at the Exhibition from the State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Mr. Takei, and offered an explanation of the exhibits.

(Mayors for Peace Administration Division)

Youth Peace Volunteer's Guide Activities

A total of 76 Youth Peace Volunteers for this fiscal year began full-fledged guiding activities in September 2023 to convey the reality of the atomic bombing in English to foreigners visiting the Peace Memorial Park. Of the 76 volunteers, 54 newly joined in fiscal year 2022, undertook training from May to July, actually guided JICA trainees in August, and began guiding foreigners visiting the Peace Memorial Park in September.

From April to November 2023, Youth Peace Volunteers had guided 136 tourists from 22 countries and territories, including the United States, Australia, and India. They have received many positive comments from international tourists who were satisfied with their guided tours. Some people shed tears as they listened to the young people’s sincere explanations.

Youth Peace Volunteers made comments such as “I want to acquire a wide range of knowledge so that I can deal with a variety of topics from the tourists’ point of view,” and “I



Youth volunteers during guiding activities

want to be able to communicate in my own words depending on the situation.” The young people will continue to improve their own skills and convey the spirit of Hiroshima to others.

We also hope that many high school and university students will participate in Youth Peace Volunteers project.

(Public Collaboration for Peace Division)

Acceptance of UN Disarmament Fellows

Every year, this Foundation accepts participants from the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, which is implemented by the United Nations to train disarmament experts. In 2023, the Foundation accepted 24 young diplomats and others from 24 countries for three days from September 30 to October 2, and conducted various training programs, with the help of atomic bomb survivors and Youth Peace Volunteers.

During the training this time, participants listened to an explanation of efforts toward nuclear abolition by Takehiro Kagawa, Chairperson of this Foundation, a lecture by Keiko Ogura on her A-bomb experience, and a lecture by the Radiation Effects Research Foundation, and also toured Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Peace Memorial Park.

In each program, partici-



participants received lectures

pants actively exchanged opinions and asked questions with the lecturers and appeared to be highly aware of the atomic bombings and peace.

Participants made comments such as “I was able to deepen my understanding of the damage caused by the atomic bombing and the dangers of nuclear weapons,” and “I renewed my determination to do my utmost for nuclear abolition from now on.”

Since the fundamental reason why nuclear weapons must be abolished is the destruction of humanity through the use of nuclear weapons, we believe that this training program, which allows young diplomats and others to deeply understand the reality of the atomic bombing, will be of great significance in helping to realize a “nuclear-free world”.



Participants in the UN Disarmament Fellowship Programme

(Public Collaboration for Peace Division)

Nine New A-Bomb Paintings Completed Hibakusha and high school students express A-bomb experiences in paintings

In cooperation with Hiroshima Municipal Motomachi Senior High School Creative Expression Course, this Foundation organizes the creation of A-bomb paintings, in which students work with *hibakusha* to depict scenes that remain deeply in *hibakusha*'s memories.

We are pleased to announce the completion of nine paintings that five *hibakusha* and nine students have been working on since last school year. Since 2007, more than 160 students have created 191 special paintings, which have become a valuable asset to convey the reality of the atomic bombing.

On July 3, 2023, a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the paintings was held at Motomachi High School. In attendance were five *hibakusha*, the nine students who created the paintings, and other students in the Creative Expression Course, as well as staffs of this Foundation and Motomachi High School.

Ms. Junko Yamase, a *hibakusha*, and third-year student Mitsuki Kimura created a work entitled “A mother holding her baby, blood spurting from her arm, screaming ‘Help!’”

According to Ms. Yamase, shortly after the bombing, a woman who lived next door and worked at a pharmacy, with a baby in her arms and blood spurting from her arms, went out on the street in front of her house to ask for help. However, no one was able to help her, and everyone in the neighborhood was in a state of panic. Later, Ms. Yamase's brother, who happened to be at home, stopped the bleeding.

Unable to forget the sight of the woman who kept screaming, Ms. Yamase decided to use it as the subject of the painting. She thanked Ms. Kimura, who painted the picture, saying, "This picture conveys the tragedy of war to future generations."



"A mother holding her baby, blood spurting from her arm, screaming 'Help!'"

Created by: Mitsuaki Kimura, Junko Yamase

Ms. Kimura found it difficult to express the three elements of "a screaming face", "gushing blood", and "holding a baby in her arms". She made her own screaming face many times to develop her image of the scene. She also worked with Ms. Yamase over the phone and by e-mail until three days before the completion of the painting regarding details such as the amount of blood spurting and how it was spurting, as well as the color of the blood. She also said, "I tried to convey to people viewing the painting what it was actually like at the time and to create a work that would resonate in their hearts."

Ms. Kimura concluded her speech at the completion ceremony by saying, "I hope that through this painting, as many young people as possible will learn about the tragedy of war and be inspired to think about how fortunate we are to have peace, which is something we can never take for granted."

The A-bomb paintings completed through the sincere efforts of the *hibakusha* and students will be used in talks by *hibakusha* to provide a concrete understanding of the A-bomb experience, and the paintings will also be loaned out and image data provided to citizens and the media to continue to help pass on the reality of the atomic bombing to future generations.

(Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)

Hiroshima City & Aki County International Resident Consultation Service

This service will offer guidance on life in Japan to non-Japanese people living in Hiroshima City, Fuchu-cho, Kaita-cho, Kumano-cho and Saka-cho in Aki County.

Counselors who can speak Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, English, and Filipino can help you with various notifications to government agencies and any problems you may have. Moreover, foreign citizens who have recently moved to Hiroshima City can receive information about life in Hiroshima City from counselors.

Additionally, staff from the Immigration Bureau provide on-site consultations from 1:30pm to 4pm on the second Friday of every month. (Advance reservation is required.)

We maintain strict confidentiality. Feel free to use this service!

Location: Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, City Diversity & Inclusion Division (3rd floor of International Conference Center Hiroshima in Peace Memorial Park)

Days & Times: Monday to Friday, 9:00-16:00

Closed Days: National Holidays, August 6th and December 29th through January 3rd

Supported Languages: English, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese and Filipino (Filipino is available only on Fridays and 1st and 3rd Thursdays)

Telephone: 082-241-5010

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

URL: <https://h-ircd.jp/en/guide/consultation-en.html>



Information

Our newsletters (Japanese and English version) can be read on our website at: (URL) <https://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/hpcf/english/paper/>



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