

# PEACE 平和文化 CULTURE



No.91 (semiannual)



Children's Peace Monument erected for Sadako Sasaki (who died of leukemia at the age of 12, 10 years after the A-bombing), and all children who died as the result of the A-bombing



A school building that was exposed to the A-bomb (Honkawa Elementary School)



donated by Nobuo Tetsutani

A tricycle that belonged to a 3-year-old boy killed by the A-bombing (exhibited in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)



Atomic Bomb Dome  
A symbol of "No more Hiroshimas."



Genotaph for the A-bomb Victims  
"Let all the souls here rest in peace;  
For we shall not repeat the evil."



Students listening carefully to the lecture from a hibakusha

**School excursions to Hiroshima give students from all over Japan a profound understanding of the atomic bombing and the war from a multitude of perspectives.**

(Photo: Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims)

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## **The Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons underscore the Urgency for Nuclear Disarmament**

**Ambassador Alexander Kmentt**  
Director of the Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Department of the Austrian Foreign Ministry

At its core, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), also known as the nuclear ban treaty, makes the argument that the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons are too grave and their risks too high for nuclear deterrence to be a sustainable basis for international security. This is underpinned by a growing body of new scientific evidence, which demonstrates how these consequences would be more global, cascading and catastrophic than previously understood. The same goes for the – increasing – complexity of risks associated with nuclear weapons. All States and peoples anywhere on Earth are at risk of becoming collateral damage in a multitude of ways of even a “limited” regional nuclear exchange. The Treaty’s conclusion is, thus, that the nuclear deterrence security paradigm is not only highly precarious, fragile and not sustainable but also seriously affects and diminishes the security of non-nuclear states and, ultimately, all humanity. This concern is not only justified, given that global nuclear risks are on the rise, it also expresses a legitimate and evidence-based security perspective. TPNW supporters have highlighted this perspective countless times, in the treaty itself, though national or joint statements and in the declarations adopted at their First and Second Meetings of States Parties.

Nevertheless, the belief that nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence provide an “ultimate security guarantee” reigns supreme in nuclear armed states and many of their allies. This is the main reason that hinders actual progress toward nuclear disarmament and progress towards a world without nuclear weapons. If we actually want to see such progress, a paradigm shift is required and the discourse about nuclear weapons needs to change. It needs to move beyond the assumption of nuclear deterrence stability and that nuclear weapons will in the end not be used in a conflict to a critical and evidence-based challenge of these assumptions and the concrete consideration of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear deterrence failing.

This was the focus of the so-called Humanitarian Initiative, which was the precursor of the TPNW. It fo-

cussed on an international discussion of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons explosions and to assess in concrete terms and based on scientific evidence what happens when nuclear weapons are used and on the complexity of risks are associated with these weapons.

From 2012-2015, several international conferences took place dedicated to presenting new evidence on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and understanding the risks of these weapons. One particularly important element on the humanitarian consequences was the new evidence that even a so-called limited nuclear war – using a small fraction of today’s arsenals – could lead to a nuclear winter. Huge amounts of soot would be transported by firestorms that would result from nuclear explosions into high layers of the atmosphere. This would disperse across the globe leading to a nuclear winter lasting several years with significant temperature drops in most moderate climate areas. Staple food production would be severely impacted globally. This new scientific research – a spin off from the climate change science – had a great impact. If a nuclear war between two states in the northern hemisphere leads to a famine in the southern hemisphere, say sub-Saharan Africa, this raises profound legal and ethical issues and questions about the legitimacy of the nuclear status quo.

Not only, is it impossible to appropriately address the immediate humanitarian emergency and long-term consequences of nuclear weapon detonations, the new science highlighted that these consequences would be truly global. In short, this was new scientific evidence that the practice of nuclear deterrence – if it goes wrong even in a so-called “limited nuclear conflict” – means that all humanity and the world as a whole ends up as collateral damage in much more severe ways than previously understood.

Similarly, understanding the complexities of nuclear risks featured prominently in these conferences. Most states were shocked to learn historical cases that demonstrated how risky and vulnerable nuclear weapons system appeared to be and how often humanity escaped from nuclear disaster or accidents mostly through good fortune.

Maybe the most consequential aspect, however, was to give a voice to survivors of nuclear weapons use and testing. Hibakusha attended the conferences and gave witness accounts of their harrowing experiences. Victims of past nuclear testing campaigns, such as from the Pacific or from Kazakhstan did the same. This moved the discussion from being an abstract topic that is difficult to understand or imagine very much to a concrete human experiences. This new discussion about the humanitarian consequences and

risks of nuclear weapons generated enormous momentum among non-nuclear weapon states. By 2015, 159 States supported a joint statement in the UN expressing their deep concern about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. 138 States supported a Pledge that Austria had presented – to “*fill the legal gap for the prohibition of nuclear weapons (...) due to their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks*” and generated the momentum for the negotiation and adoption in 2017 in the United Nations on a ban treaty.

The TPNW is still a young treaty. As of this writing, 93 countries have signed the treaty, with 70 having ratified it. The ban treaty has already had a significant impact by giving voice to the majority of countries that are largely disenfranchised by the global nuclear order. The universalization of the TPNW and the debate on the prohibition of nuclear weapons are key objectives of the treaty. TPNW signatories, together with civil society organizations, will continue to pursue this goal gradually and steadily. This entails convincing more countries to join the treaty, as every ratification and signature of the TPNW strengthens its normative value on a global scale. At the same time, it is equally important to continue the promotion of the underlying rationale regarding the humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons, which underscores the urgency of seeing progress on nuclear disarmament and moving away from the precarious nuclear deterrence paradigm.

The TPNW’s multilateral effort points to an alternative approach to the problem of nuclear weapons and security. While it cannot coerce anyone to give up its nuclear weapons, the treaty can provide a convincing rationale for the lack of legitimacy, legality, and sustainability of nuclear weapons through strong arguments and evidence. The ban treaty can lay the groundwork for when nuclear-armed countries are ready to engage in concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament and away from the precarious nuclear deterrence paradigm.

When most nuclear developments point in the opposite direction of nuclear disarmament and the leadership of nuclear-armed countries on this issue has all but disappeared, the TPNW is an indispensable and potentially consequential ray of hope against an otherwise very bleak backdrop of currently failing leadership on nuclear disarmament.

(May 2024)

《The views expressed in this commentary are the author’s and do not necessarily represent the positions of the Austrian Foreign Ministry.》

## Profile

(Alexander Kmentt)

In his diplomatic career, Ambassador Kmentt has worked extensively on disarmament and non-proliferation issues in several functions in Vienna, Geneva and in the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization. From 2016-19, Kmentt served as Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Political and Security Committee of the EU. Kmentt is one of the architects of the initiative on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the TPNW. Kmentt chaired the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW.



## Initiatives by the International Committee of the Red Cross for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

**Shoko Hanzawa**

Head of Delegation in Japan for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC’s efforts to abolish nuclear weapons date back to 1945. On August 29, 1945, Fritz Bilfinger was the first foreign delegate of the ICRC to enter the A-bombed Hiroshima. The next day, he sent a telegram to the ICRC Delegation in Tokyo, informing them of the dire situation on the ground and requesting immediate assistance. In response, Marcel Junod, who had just arrived as Head of Delegation in Japan, formed a rescue team. Bilfinger’s telegram read, “VISITED HIROSHIMA THIRTIETH CONDITIONS APPALLING STOP CITY WIPED OUT EIGHTY PERCENT ALL HOSPITALS DESTROYED OR SERIOUSLY DAMAGED INSPECTED TWO EMERGENCY HOSPITALS CONDITIONS BEYOND DESCRIPTION FULLSTOP EFFECT OF BOMB MYSTERIOUSLY SERIOUS STOP MANY VICTIMS APPARENTLY RECOVERING SUDDENLY SUFFER FATAL RELAPSE DUE TO DECOMPOSITION OF WHITE BLOODCELLS AND OTHER INTERNAL INJURIES NOW DYING IN GREAT NUMBERS STOP ESTIMATED STILL OVER ONEHUNDREDTHOUSAND WOUNDED IN EMERGENCY HOSPITALS LOCATED SURROUNDINGS SADLY LACKING BANDAGING MATERIALS MEDICINES STOP”

The following sentence is from the end of *The Hiroshima Disaster* written by Junod, who, following Bilfinger, saw the devastation of Hiroshima with his own eyes: “In conclusion, for someone who was a witness, albeit one month later, of the dramatic consequences of this new weapon,



there is no doubt in his mind that the world today is faced with the choice of its continued existence or annihilation.” Shortly after the world’s first use of the atomic bomb, the ICRC expressed its clear stance against nuclear weapons and communicated to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies across the globe the view that nuclear weapons should be eliminated. This stance has never wavered and continues to the present day.

However, the debate over nuclear weapons has traditionally been dominated by security and geopolitical arguments, and nuclear weapons were seen as a useful tool to ensure national and regional security and to maintain geopolitical balance. Against this backdrop, on April 20, 2010, just prior to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Jacob Kellenberger, then President of the ICRC, referring to the indescribable human suffering and threat to the very existence of humanity posed by the use of nuclear weapons, stated that the use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the principles and rules of international humanitarian law and called on nations to put an end to the era of nuclear weapons for the interests of humanity. Following this ICRC statement, the Red Cross Movement adopted a resolution reaffirming its long-standing and consistent position on nuclear weapons and calling on states to work toward their abolition, along with a 4-year action plan. Subsequently, the concept of a humanitarian approach to nuclear weapons gained momentum, which led to the adoption and entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which will lead humanity toward a world without nuclear weapons.

We are concerned that in response to the recent global situation, there are continued threats of the use of nuclear weapons and that there is an increasing focus on nuclear weapons once again. The bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 and killed about 140,000 people by the end of that year had a nuclear output of 15 kilotons, but today, it would be classified as a small nuclear weapon. No country or international organization is capable of meeting the enormous humanitarian needs, saving lives, that would result from the use of nuclear weapons. The only way to prevent what cannot be addressed or dealt with is to prevent it from happening, and the only way to prevent nuclear weapons from being used again is to abolish them. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will play an indispensable role in achieving this goal. The ICRC will continue to urge all States to sign and ratify this important treaty.

The ICRC Delegation in Japan is also focusing its efforts on initiatives to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons.

One such initiative is the empowerment of young people. Keita Takagaki, a native of Hiroshima, is passionate about working for the abolition of nuclear weapons with the belief that this mission was entrusted to him by his two great-grandfathers who were involved in atomic bomb relief efforts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He has also participated in the past two meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as an ICRC Youth Representative and made significant contributions, such as reading the ICRC statement in front of government representatives and, of the youth participating at side events from around the world, he spoke out about the reality of the atomic bombings. Through Mr. Takagaki’s activities, I met many people in Hiroshima, one of whom is Chieko Kiriake, an atomic bomb survivor. My first encounter with her was a visit to the former Hiroshima Army Clothing Depot, an atomic-bombed building, in September 2021. Ms. Kiriake, who lived with her family near the clothing depot, saw the night sky of Hiroshima after the atomic bomb was dropped, and it was divided into two parts: one side was bright red with burning flames, and the other side had beautiful

stars. There is one message that Ms. Kiriake always has: “I think peace is in jeopardy. If you let your guard down for a moment, it will escape from your grasp, just like a balloon. So, we all need to hold it tightly and protect it so it doesn’t get away.” Taking



“The night sky of August 6, 1945”  
Drawn by Chieko Kiriake

these important words from Ms. Kiriake, who experienced the A-bombing, to heart, the ICRC will continue to do its utmost to promote a humanitarian approach toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.

(February 2024)

## Profile

### [Shoko Hanzawa]

Joined the ICRC in 2019; worked to promote humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law as Humanitarian Affairs Advisor to the Delegation in Japan. Assumed position of Head of Delegation in Japan from June 2023. Prior to the ICRC, worked in the field of humanitarian assistance for more than 10 years, including at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.



## Memoir of the A-bombing; Toward a Nuclear Free World

**Megumi Shinoda**

Atomic bomb survivor registered with  
our Foundation

### August 6, 1945

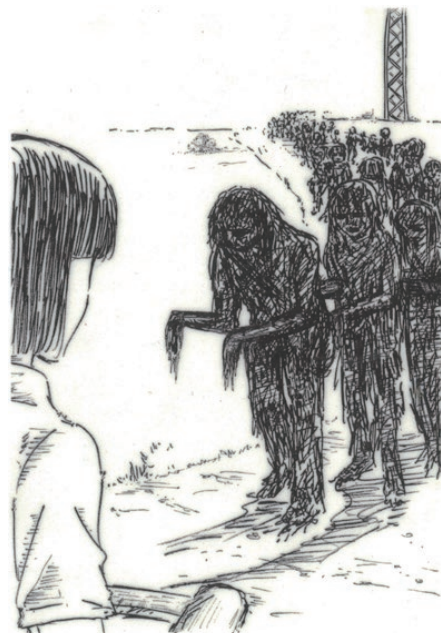
I was in the second grade of girls' school (age 13). That day I was scheduled to go to work on building demolition work near the Tsurumi-bashi Bridge at the foot of Hijiyama Hill, but I was tired from day after day of work and decided to take the day off. In the morning, a neighbor lady came to borrow a millstone, and my younger brother stood up cheerfully and offered her a bowl of roasted beans, saying, "You should have some too."

At that moment, with a roar, a huge flame entered the back of the house. The sliding paper door near me burst into flames, and I thought, "I have to pour water on it," and started to get up... At that moment, the tatami floor under my feet slid down to the ground, and I fell too, holding my head to protect myself. The blast that came immediately afterwards blew everything away, leaving a one-meter hole in the roof and the house with only the pillars remaining. The futon that was hanging out to dry in the yard was blown through three rooms and into the kitchen, along with a clothesline that had snapped into an L-shape. My mother was severely burned on her face and limbs, and my younger brother was severely burned on his hand that was holding out a bowl.

It was not safe to stay home, so I went to my mother's aunt's house to borrow a big cart to carry the two burned people. The houses in the neighborhood looked seriously damaged.

When I told her what had happened, she pushed the big cart up to the road on the bank and told me to bring them to her quickly.

On my way home along a straight road in the rice paddies, I saw what looked like a black belt coming toward me from the distance. As I approached, I saw it was a group of people, all with mussed hair, reddish-black faces, hands stretched out in front of them around their chests, and something dangling from their fingertips. Their clothes were in tatters, and they looked like ghosts. Dozens, hundreds of such people were coming toward me. I was so scared that I wondered if I had wandered into hell. I looked down and



People fleeing the city after the atomic bombing (by Akina Niimiya)

headed toward my house, step by step, looking only at my own toes. By the time I reached home, it was getting dark.

I was informed that my older sister, who was working at Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, was safe, and my other older sister who was mobilized as a student at a factory in the mountains returned safely. However, my sister Sachiyo, who was working at a credit union in Sakan-cho, closest to the hypocenter, did not return.

My father, who was working at the army clothing depot, came home in the middle of the night. All I could manage to say was, "Sachiyo is still not home..." My father's eyes were wet with tears, as if he had guessed everything.

### Went to the city to look for my sister

On the 7<sup>th</sup>, my father and I went to Yokogawa to look for my sister, Sachiyo, thinking that she might have returned to Yokogawa, because the head office where she worked was located there. When we opened the burnt-out door of the head office, we found ourselves in another hellish scene. People were lying on the ground, their bodies red and swollen, their eyes vacant. As if they had sensed our presence, they kept repeating, "Mother... Water..." I stood there, unable to take a single step inside. My father looked inside for my sister, but she was not there.

We headed south on the train road to Tokaichi. There, the train was burned to the ground, and one person was found dead in his seat. When we looked toward the Aioi bridge near the hypocenter, we saw lying there the charred dead bodies of people whose gender was unknown. Some of the corpses could be identified as soldiers by the gaiters

on their burnt legs. Three horses were also burned to death, their bellies torn open and overflowing with yellow guts.

We put our hands together in front of the credit union and prayed, “Dear God and Buddha, please protect Sachiyo.”

As we walked north along the river bank from the Aioi Bridge back to our house, we saw many evacuees gathered at Oshiba Elementary School, my old school. As we walked back to the house, I heard a thin voice from the back of one of the big carts say, “You must be Sera (my maiden name), aren’t you?” I looked into the person’s face, but could not recognize her because her face was red and swollen and her physiognomy had completely changed. I knew the person pulling the big cart, so I realized that the person was my classmate, Okada-san. I was unharmed.... I realized that if I had gone to the building evacuation yesterday, I would have ended up like this or even died, and I could not find any words to say to Okada-san. I wonder what happened to Okada-san after that. I will never forget this until the day I die.

We could not find my sister that day. I felt I had to look for my sister, but for now I had to clean up our broken home and rest. I was very happy to be able to sleep on the tatami mats. But from that day on, my mother never lay down at night, but sat leaning against a pillar, waiting every night for my sister Sachiyo’s return.

### Anxiety that continues to this day

On August 15, 1945, I learned of the defeat in the war through the broadcast of the voice of Japan’s Emperor. My father had foreseen the defeat, and I knew that what he had predicted came true. After the war, my brother and cousin were safely demobilized.

The bandage on my younger brother Haruki’s arm was removed by mid-September, but diarrhea, one of the A-bomb diseases, began around October. He would say things like, “I don’t want sweet potatoes,” or “I don’t eat pumpkin,” much to my mother’s dismay. I can imagine how difficult it must have been for my mother, as there was nothing else she could feed her sick child. I still cannot forget the way she gently wiped her tears from her eyes while hiding. My brother, emaciated like a skeleton, passed away on October 22 with his mother holding him tightly to her chest, joining Sachiyo.

A few years later, my father developed liver cancer, my mother stomach cancer, and my eldest sister lung cancer. My brother and cousin both died of leukemia, probably from digging up ashes from the burnt ruins of the bombing during restoration work. I was diagnosed with pancreatic

cancer during a medical checkup and underwent major surgery at the age of 78. More than 78 years after the war, *hibakusha* are still anxious.

### What I want to tell you

War is evil. It is said that there are about 13,000 nuclear bombs in the world today, and that they are tens or hundreds of times more powerful than the “Little Boy” that was dropped on Hiroshima. The use of such weapons would destroy the Earth. I will continue to share my A-bomb experience with as many people as possible so that we can have a peaceful world without war and without nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, I would like to share the words of Ichiro Moritaki, an ethicist and activist against atomic and hydrogen bombs, and Suzuko Numata, an A-bomb survivor who was my high school teacher.

“Nuclear weapons and mankind cannot coexist.”

“Peace cannot come from a heart of hate.”

### Profile

#### [Megumi Shinoda]

Born in March 1932. When she was 13 years old, in the second grade of girls’ school, she was exposed to the atomic bomb at her home 2.8km from the hypocenter and left school due to poor health. She later graduated from Yasuda Gakuen High School. Since 2017, she has been commissioned by the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation to serve as a witness to the A-bomb experience.



**School excursions to Hiroshima as a starting point for children to acquire a ‘culture of peace’**  
-From the results of a survey of each school-

**Shiro Tani**  
Vice Chairperson, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation

The number of children visiting Hiroshima on school excursions was approximately 344,000 in FY2023. Assuming that each child goes on a school excursion to Hiroshima only once, this indicates the significant fact that about one-third of children throughout Japan have visited our city. The percentages of visits by region were 102% for the Chugoku region, 76% for the Shikoku region, 49% for the Kansai region, and 22% for the Kanto region.

In order to expand such school excursions to Hiroshima, we conducted a survey of 1,121 elementary, junior high and high schools across Japan this March, and received re-

sponses from 41%, or 456 schools. I really appreciate their cooperation.

Three important matters that were found in this survey can be mentioned here.

**First**, we have found that children come to feel war and the atomic bombing as real things through the Hiroshima school excursion.

The synergy of various learning experiences such as tours, lectures and peace gatherings conducted on site in Hiroshima, such as the Atomic Bomb Dome and Peace Memorial Museum, which show how Hiroshima was at that time; the people of Hiroshima, including *hibakusha*, who speak about peace in the first person; the unique atmosphere of Peace Memorial Park that inspires visitors to pursuit world peace; the foreign tourists who visit the park with great enthusiasm to learn about the A-bombing; and the damage suffered by children of the same generation and the grief of their families, all contribute to the realization of a real and vivid experience of the tragedy and foolishness of war, and the horror of the A-bomb damage. In other words, they will begin to think about it not as something that happened in the past or in other regions, but as something that feels like one's own experience or the experience of a loved one.

**Secondly**, the process by which children develop a sense of respect for peace, taking this realization as a starting point, has become clear.

War and the atomic bomb are the direct opposite of peace, so understanding them as reality leads to the realization that the peaceful days we used to take for granted should not in fact be taken for granted at all, but were hard earned through the efforts and many sacrifices of our ancestors. This is why peace is not something that can be given to us in silence, but rather, it awakens in us the awareness that we must actively protect it.

This awareness will grow into an awareness of our own commitment to peace.

Specifically, children will understand that all forms of violence must be rejected, and that even if a conflict arises, it must be resolved peacefully through discussion. This will be accompanied by efforts that children can make in their daily lives, such as practically valuing relationships with their friends, obeying rules, and doing the right thing.

Furthermore, as members of society, they will recognize their responsibility to pass on their war and A-bomb experiences to future generations, and to raise their voices with an interest in the abolition of nuclear weapons and lasting

peace in the world.

**Thirdly**, the needs of the schools were clarified.

In terms of developing a more diverse peace education program, schools were highly interested in the following items: 1) the Peace Museums at Honkawa and Fukuromachi Elementary Schools, 2) professional guides such as Hiroshima Peace Volunteers, 3) peace gatherings at the Peace Memorial Hall, 4) the new soccer stadium as a lunch site, and 5) exchange with children in Hiroshima. On the other hand, there were also requests for support for 6) easing the crowding at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, 7) accommodating exhibits and other activities according to children's characteristics, and 8) support for prior learning at each school.

In response to this survey, we would like to provide feedback on the **first** and **second** benefits of peace education to schools that currently offer school excursions to Hiroshima so that they may be useful for them, and also to schools outside of western Japan, that don't usually offer school excursions to Hiroshima to deepen their awareness of the need for peace education and the importance of the Hiroshima school excursion. Through such activities, we will also strive to develop a methodology for peace education in Hiroshima.

Furthermore, based on the **third** point, regarding the needs of the schools, Hiroshima would like to develop concrete necessary support measures.

### Comment by Yumiko Suzuki, Executive Vice-President, Hiroshima University



Many elementary, junior high, and high schools have chosen Hiroshima as their school excursion destination to provide children with peace education. This survey revealed that actually visiting the A-bombed city of Hiroshima and experiencing the reality of the atomic bombing is a highly effective way to develop children's awareness of peace, as it leads them to feel war and the atomic bombing in a realistic way. We hope that school excursions to Hiroshima will spread throughout Japan, to continue to convey the importance of building a peaceful world that transcends time and countries.



## Peace education in Hiroshima including children outside Hiroshima

### —Main opinions at the Hiroshima City Comprehensive Education Council (February 1, 2024)—

#### General remarks

- In order to create a sustainable International City of Peace and Culture, Hiroshima should simultaneously aim for two goals in peace education: 1) to encourage children in Hiroshima to acquire a culture of peace and become active on the world stage, and 2) to encourage many young people outside of Hiroshima, in Japan and overseas, to experience and learn about a culture of peace in the city of Hiroshima. This is because in order to build world peace, we need to promote a culture of peace, not only in Japan, but throughout the world.
- The above activities to promote a culture of peace in civil society are unique to Hiroshima, so the City of Hiroshima should make its presence felt through these activities. There is great power in continuing to communicate these things.
- The meaning of ‘peace’ in this case must be taken broadly, including, of course, the absence of war and conflict, but also the denial of all forms of violence. That is, the building of a society in which people can live together peacefully in a spirit of tolerance and find hope for the future. For this reason, sports and the arts are also effective teaching materials that can help people experience peace.
- Considering the importance of mutual recognition of peace through exchange and dialogue between the children of Hiroshima, who have learned about peace culture, and the younger generation in Japan and abroad who have visited Hiroshima, the two goals of peace education in (1) and (2) overlap. It is also important to pay consideration to nurturing a rich sensitivity to respect peace, respect for self and others, and a spirit of compassion, taking into account issues such as bullying.

#### Detailed comments

- It is important to increase the number of children welcomed to Hiroshima through school excursions and the Hiroshima Peace Study Acceptance Program. The children of Hiroshima must also have the opportunity to communicate peace in these programs, as this becomes peace education for them as well. We should actively encourage the proactive participation of Hiroshima children in the program.
- In order to increase acceptance of school excursions, we should enhance the peace education package offered in Hiroshima while widely publicizing the learning benefits to teachers in charge of school excursions. As items to be incorporated in the future, the use of VR and the enhancement of inter-school exchange would be useful.
- The Youth Volunteer Organizations that play a part in receiving participants should be expanded in cooperation with schools, and the practical English language training required for peace activities should be enhanced. Furthermore, a consistent framework for peace volunteering among young people should be reestablished, including private schools, with the aim of enhancing human resource development beyond school boundaries and age groups.
- In school education in Hiroshima City, with the help of teachers and a budget, and with the cooperation of the local community, the city could promote advanced peace education as Peace Education Research Promotion Schools. It will also be important to improve the training and development of teachers.
- It is necessary to strengthen the system and secure a budget to build a new system in which the Board of Education and the Peace Culture Foundation will work together toward the goal of raising peace awareness among the younger generations.



## Mayors for Peace Delegation attended the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

### My impressions on the Second Meeting



President  
Kazumi Matsui

At the Second Meeting of the States Parties, we called on government officials from various countries to work together to advance efforts toward the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons, and emphasized the efforts of Mayors for Peace.

Attending this Meeting has once again solidified my belief that nuclear weapons should never exist. Going forward, we would like to focus on the younger generation, who will inherit the atomic bomb survivors' desire for peace, and further our efforts to help them understand the reality of the atomic bombings and the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons, and to inspire them with the determination to never allow nuclear weapons to be used again.

The current international situation regarding nuclear weapons is extremely severe, but that is exactly why it is so important to hold up the high ideal and increase the number of supporters.

We would like to further expand the number of member cities of Mayors for Peace, with the goal of reaching 10,000 member cities.

Mayors for Peace sent a delegation, including President Kazumi Matsui (Mayor of Hiroshima), Vice President Shiro Suzuki (Mayor of Nagasaki), and Secretary General Takehiro Kagawa (Chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation), to the Second Meeting of States Parties (2MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), held in New York City in November 2023, and they called for increased efforts to further assure the effective implementation of the TPNW, and emphasized the need for advancing nuclear disarmament toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons to the representatives of national governments and the UN.

Moreover, Mayors for Peace hosted a joint side event for the 2MSP with ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) aimed at building momentum for achieving a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons.

### Speeches at the General Exchange of Views of the TPNW 2MSP

President Matsui delivered the Mayors for Peace statement during the General Exchange of Views session. He pointed out that distrust is escalating between nuclear-armed states and non-nuclear-weapon states due to nuclear threats, and this could potentially lead to a situation that completely undermines the fervent plea of the hibakusha. He expressed the resolve of Mayors for Peace to foster a sense of peace among citizens and to promote a culture of peace that negates all forms of violence, and concluded his speech by appealing to all delegations to share the same goal of real-

izing a nuclear-weapon-free world and to take steady steps together to achieve it.



President Matsui delivering his speech

### Meetings with Delegation Representatives

Mayors for Peace representatives met with the head of the delegation of Ireland, Kazakhstan, Thailand and Australia, and exchanged views on future efforts to improve the effectiveness of the TPNW and the importance of education for young people, and further expressed hope for future possible collaborations to expand Mayors for Peace membership.

They also met and exchanged views with the United Nations Secretary-General, the President of TPNW 2MSP, the Executive Director of ICAN, and members of the United States House of Representatives.

## Events

### Mayors for Peace and ICAN Joint Side Event

Mayors for Peace and ICAN hosted a Joint Side Event for the 2MSP, Voices of Civil Society for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World.

The event began with opening remarks from Ms. Parke, ICAN's Secretary General, and was facilitated by Ms. Suzuka Nakamura, representative of KNOW NUKES TOKYO.

As part of the "Message from Hiroshima" session, following an introduction from President Matsui, Mr. Toshiyuki Mimaki, a hibakusha of the Hiroshima atomic bombing, shared experiences of his family and his own. He called upon policymakers around the globe to take action for the eradication of war and the elimination of nuclear weapons. As part of the "Message from Nagasaki" session, following an introduction from Vice President Suzuki, Dr. Masao Tomonaga, a hibakusha of the Nagasaki atomic bombing, mentioned his involvement in the formation process of the TPNW, and urged for a sense of solidarity among citizens across the globe.

Following a presentation from young representatives from the U.S. and Germany, the "Interactive session between the hibakusha and youth" was held.



Joint Side Event

The event concluded with closing remarks by Mayor Frank Cownie of Des Moines, U.S., Vice President of Mayors for Peace. He introduced his city's initiatives and appealed for increased support for the activities of Mayors for Peace.

### Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition

At the venue of the 2MSP, over the Meeting's period (Nov. 27-Dec. 1), Mayors for Peace hosted the Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, aimed at having the 2MSP attendees and UN-related individuals deepen their understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and the initiatives of Mayors for Peace.

(Mayors for Peace Administration Division)

## Mayors for Peace Internship Program for international and domestic staff

Mayors for Peace has been implementing the Mayors for Peace Internship Program in which we invite young officials from international and domestic member cities to the City of Hiroshima. The purpose of this internship is for interns to gain a deep understanding of the reality of the atomic bombing, and then, after returning to their home city, to promote efforts for peace while strengthening collaboration with the secretariat and other cities.

### 《Overseas Member Cities》

For two weeks from January 17<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, the Mayors for Peace Secretariat hosted two interns, Ms. Montserrat Cata Llado from Granollers (Spain), a Vice President City and the Chair of the European Chapter, and Ms. Phoebe Lockett from Wellington (New Zealand), an Executive City. They also interacted with students at Hiroshima Municipal Funairi High School, which is passionate about peace activities.

Ms. Cata Llado said, "The European branch's 10 executive cities hold monthly web conferences to exchange opinions. In the future, I would like to move forward with initiatives for Peace Culture Month," and Ms. Lockett said, "In Wellington, a 'Peace Walk' has been established. I would like to hold an atomic bomb poster exhibition in the future."

We hope that they will continue to enhance their cooperative relationships with other cities in the future.



Ms. Teruko Yahata (middle), an atomic bomb survivor, and two interns

### 《Japanese Member Cities》

For three days from January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 2<sup>nd</sup>, we accepted 19 interns from 19 member cities in Japan, from Hokkaido to Kagoshima Prefecture.

In addition to learning about the reality of the atomic bombing and the humanitarian approach toward nuclear ab-

olition, they also had a Q&A session and exchanged opinions about the efforts of their home cities.

Group work was also conducted on the theme of “peace promotion projects that member cities should carry out in the future.” Each group expressed their opinions such as “We want to train the junior high school students we sent to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to become peace leaders in the region. Therefore, could we consider continuing interaction with children of Hiroshima and Nagasaki?” and “Is it possible to relive the war using VR and AR?”

Through this program, we have received comments such as “Working in groups and exchanging opinions with officials of other cities was a very valuable experience,” and “We would like to carry out various efforts to foster peace awareness among citizens,” from participants.



Group work

(Mayors for Peace Administration Division)

## Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb and Peace Exhibition in the UK

— In a historic city with a World Heritage Site, and at the main site of the Northern Ireland conflict —

Since 1995, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have jointly held the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb and Peace Exhibition to convey the reality of the atomic bombings and to foster international public opinion toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb and Peace



Hajime Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan to the United Kingdom, and his wife visit the exhibition before the opening (Durham City)

Exhibition was held in the city of Durham, England, from June 7 to September 10, 2023, immediately after the G7 Hiroshima Summit, and in the city of Bel-

fast, Northern Ireland, from January 8 to February 28, 2024. On display were 20 artifacts, including an armband worn by a junior high school student who was exposed to the atomic bombing while working as a mobilized student, a replica of a burnt-out lunch box, and paper cranes folded by Sadako Sasaki, as well as 30 panels explaining the reality of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The exhibition in Durham was held at the Oriental Museum at Durham University. During the exhibition period, workshops on origami paper cranes were held, and on August 1, Hiroshima City and Durham City were connected online, with A-bomb survivor Kiyomi Kono giving a testimony of her experience of the atomic bombing. In addition, in September, we dispatched volunteer readers to the area to read A-bomb poems and accounts of the A-bombing.

In a survey conducted in Durham, respondents left comments such as “the exhibition was a very timely reminder of the devastation caused by nuclear weapons,” “Witnessing the inhumanity inflicted by humans upon their fellow human beings left me utterly appalled,” and “All leaders of countries that have or are planning to have nuclear weapons should visit this exhibition.”



Visitors viewing the exhibit with great interest (Durham City)

The Linen Hall was the venue for the exhibition in Belfast City. During the exhibition period, workshops on origami paper cranes and calligraphy were held, as well as two A-bomb testimonies by Teruko Yahata, an A-bomb survivor, via online connection between Hiroshima and Belfast.

At that time, a survivor of the Northern Ireland conflict also shared her own experience, saying, “By coming into contact with the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I am reminded of the history of our city and reconfirmed the preciousness of peace and reconciliation, which I would like to pass on to the younger generation.” In this way, participants shared the message that tragic history must never be repeated.

(Peace Memorial Museum Outreach Division)



## Selection results: Mayors for Peace Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" 2023



**Mayors for Peace President's Award winner**  
Hina Suemitsu in Seiyō City, Japan (8 years old)

### 《Message from Hina Suemitsu》

I made sunflowers by cutting paper. In the language of flowers, sunflowers have a meaning of "Looking into the future". I created this work hoping that the peaceful days, when we hold hands with our family and

people around us and smile together, will continue forever.

We received 4,766 submissions from children in 115 member cities of Mayors for Peace in 19 countries around the world, and 15 of these were selected as winners.

The winning work will be printed on file folders and used to advocate for peace in various settings, such as United Nations conferences.

All the winning works are introduced on the Mayors for Peace website along with a message from children. They are all wonderful works, so please take a look.

(Mayors for Peace Administration Division)



Mayors for Peace website

## Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Special Exhibition Memories of Friends

The junior high school students who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima suffer lingering guilt over their deceased friends. When walking on the street, holding hands with their loved ones, seeing the growth of their children or grandchildren, and noticing their parents getting old, they suddenly recall that day. For them, the Cenotaph is also a place where they can reunite with their deceased friends.

This exhibition displays belongings left behind by the deceased schoolchildren, drawings, diary record, as well as video testimonies of A-bomb survivors, to introduce the situation which decided their fates: dead or alive, the hardships and burdens of the surviving students, and the records that the survivors left as prayers for the repose of their de-

**Period** March 1, 2024 - September 10, 2024  
**Venue** Peace Memorial Museum, East Building 1F Special Exhibition Room

ceased friends.

This exhibition is designed to be easily understood by children. We expect a lot of children to come and experience it.



Entrance to the venue

### 【Contact information】

Peace Memorial Museum  
Curatorial Division  
Phone: 082-241-4004



Museum's website

## Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims Special Exhibition Akatsuki Corps in the Face of Apocalyptic Fires: Hiroshima and the Child Soldiers of the Suicide Attack Squad

At the end of the Pacific War, the child soldiers of the special cadet program who were assigned to the Army Marine Headquarters (known as the Akatsuki Corps) were assembled on Etajima Island and began training for suicide attacks upon enemy ships using a single-seater plywood motorboat known as a Maru-Re.

Although they were well aware of their certain deaths, what awaited them was not a suicide attack, but the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. They were ordered to rush to the city of Hiroshima and provide aid even if it meant disregarding their main duties, but what did they see and feel in the city of death? This special exhibition



**Period** March 1, 2024 - February 28, 2025  
**Venue** Peace Memorial Hall, Special Exhibition Area (Upper Level)

will explore their thoughts and experiences. You can also feel the reality of the A-bombing through this exhibition.

### Featured Exhibits

Visitors can view a film based on first-hand experiences of the atomic bombing (approx. 30 min.).

Related materials such as military uniform, chest badge, and water bottles of former members of the Akatsuki Unit are on display, and visitors will be able to use the touch screen to browse through 18 accounts of A-bomb testimonies.

In addition, a full-scale replica of the Maru-Re boat (5.6m long×1.8m wide×1.0m high) is displayed at the south entrance.

### 【Contact information】

Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall  
for the Atomic Bomb Victims  
Phone: 082-543-6271



Hall's website