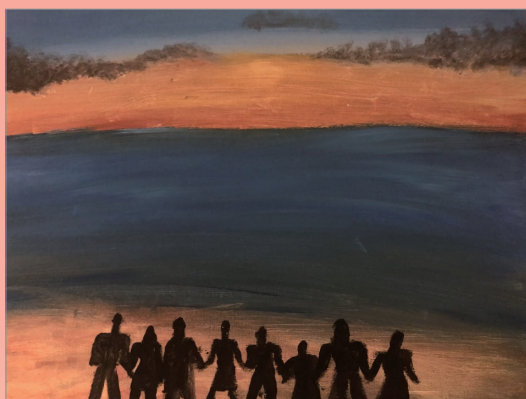


# PEACE 平和文化 CULTURE



No.93 (semiannual)

## Selection results: Mayors for Peace Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" 2024



1st Place Winner (Ages 6-10)  
Shaviva Winslade (10) Tasman, New Zealand



2nd Place Winner (Ages 11-15)  
Yuriko Kondo (15)  
Hiroshima, Japan



2nd Place Winner (Ages 6-10)  
Dominika Derkach (9)  
Nova Ushytsia, Ukraine



2nd Place Winner (Ages 11-15)  
Arshida Jahanpour (11)  
Shahinshahr, Iran



2nd Place Winner (Ages 6-10)  
Pol Calzado (6)  
Caldes de Montbui, Spain



Mayors for Peace President's Award /  
1st Place Winner (Ages 11-15)  
Sui Ochi (13) Hiroshima, Japan

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## A Wake-Up Call to Humanity

**Melissa Parke**

Executive Director of the International  
Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons  
(ICAN)

Amid increasing global nuclear dangers, it is more important than ever that world leaders hear – and heed – the warnings of the *hibakusha*. Thus, the decision to award last year's Nobel Peace Prize to Nihon Hidankyo was not only well-deserved recognition of their decades of tireless and courageous work; it was also an urgent wake-up call.

Unless we change course now, the kind of devastation that was inflicted upon the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki eight decades ago will almost certainly be repeated.

As the Norwegian Nobel Committee observed last October, the “taboo” against the use of nuclear weapons “is under pressure”.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, proliferation risks abound, the nuclear arms race continues apace, and not a single nuclear-armed state has shown genuine commitment in recent years to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Indeed, we appear to be sleepwalking towards catastrophe. As the *hibakusha* have warned time and again, in the starkest terms: “Nuclear weapons and humanity cannot co-exist.”

But there is a glimmer of hope that an alternative path will be taken. Half of the world's countries have now accepted binding obligations under international law never to support nuclear weapons in any way. They have banded together to lay the legal and normative foundations for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

I am referring, of course, to the states parties and signatories to the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, or TPNW. The UN secretary-general, António Guterres, hailed this treaty's entry into force in 2021 as “an extraordinary achievement and a step towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons”.<sup>2</sup>

Not only does it impose a blanket ban on nuclear weapons; it also establishes, for the first time, a legal framework for verifiably eliminating nuclear-weapon programmes in a time-bound matter, and includes novel provisions to assist victims of nuclear use and testing.

The preamble acknowledges “the unacceptable suffering of and harm caused to” the *hibakusha*, as well as their role – alongside civil society groups, the Red Cross, religious leaders and others – “in the furthering of the principles of humanity” by pursuing disarmament.

In fact, many *hibakusha* were instrumental in making the TPNW a reality. They addressed the negotiating conference in 2017 and the preceding conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in Norway, Mexico and Austria. They collected signatures in the streets and raised public

awareness about the urgent need for a ban.

When the final text of the treaty was adopted at the United Nations headquarters in New York, Setsuko Thurlow, a *hibakusha* from Hiroshima who has been a leading voice in our campaign since its inception, described that moment as “the beginning of the end of nuclear weapons”.<sup>3</sup>

She asked the assembled diplomats and campaigners to “pause for a moment to feel the witness of those who perished in Hiroshima and Nagasaki ... hundreds of thousands of people. Each person who died had a name. Each person was loved by someone.”

For most of the world's governments, the need for a comprehensive prohibition on nuclear weapons was clear given the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of their use. Anything less than an outright ban would have been inadequate.

The negotiations for the TPNW came about as a result of the deepening global awareness of these consequences. They followed the same approach as had been adopted for other inhumane weapons, such as chemical and biological weapons, anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions.

Thus, the discourse on humanitarian consequences served as an essential foundation for the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Our challenge now is to ensure that the TPNW achieves its high aims. We must work relentlessly to bring more countries on board. That includes, of course, Japan – and ultimately all nine of the countries currently armed with nuclear weapons.

Those that are not yet willing to accept the treaty's binding obligations should, at the very least, observe TPNW meetings to enhance their understanding of efforts to implement the treaty. They will also have the chance to share their views and expertise on important topics such as disarmament verification, safeguards and victim assistance.

Japan's voice in these diplomatic discussions would be especially meaningful as the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks in war.

But the ultimate goal must be for Japan and all other countries to join the treaty, not simply observe its meetings. As the TPNW states parties declared in 2022: “We will not rest until the last state has joined the treaty, the last warhead has been dismantled and destroyed, and nuclear weapons have been totally eliminated from the Earth.”<sup>4</sup>

The states parties have also been unequivocal in their rejection of “nuclear deterrence” theory. In 2023, they stated: “The perpetuation and implementation of nuclear deterrence in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies not only erodes and contradicts non-proliferation, but also obstructs progress towards nuclear disarmament.”<sup>5</sup>

They pledged not to “stand by as spectators to increasing nuclear risks and the dangerous perpetuation of nuclear deterrence”.

No one is safer as a result of the existence of nuclear weapons. We are all infinitely less safe. These instruments of terror and mass destruction only contribute to enmity, fear, instability and unparalleled risk. They serve no useful or le-

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2024/press-release/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common\\_Agenda\\_Report\\_English.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://hibakushastories.org/setsuko-thurlow-gives-final-remarks-at-ban-treaty-adoption/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/TPNW/MSP/2022/6>

<sup>5</sup> <https://undocs.org/TPNW/MSP/2023/14>



gitimate purpose and must be abolished for everyone's sake, as a matter of urgency.

As Guterres said in 2022, "They offer no security – just carnage and chaos. Their elimination would be the greatest gift we could bestow on future generations."<sup>6</sup>

We have a duty to the world's children to do everything in our power to advance disarmament, including vehemently resisting all national policies and programmes that perpetuate nuclear dangers and burden future generations with this ultimate menace.

In the event of a nuclear attack against a city today, it is children who would suffer the greatest harm, as they are more vulnerable than adults to the effects of ionising radiation and more likely to sustain life-threatening burn and blast injuries. This fact alone should spur urgent action by all of

6 <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sgsm21492.doc.htm>

the world's governments.

As we approach the 80th anniversaries of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we must reflect on their enormous human toll, including the death and suffering of tens of thousands of children. And we must rededicate ourselves to the cause of disarmament.

Weapons that are designed to kill and maim human beings on a massive scale, indiscriminately and across generations, have no place in our world.

(November 2024)

Melissa Parke is the Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its groundbreaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons".



## The reality of the experiences of the *hibakusha* should be at the core of nuclear disarmament debate

**Shoko Koyama**

Journalist, NHK Nagasaki Broadcasting Station

Shoko Koyama has been based in Nagasaki since 2024. She previously worked in Tokyo and Paris covering social and political issues and Geneva-based institutions in Switzerland. She started her career as a journalist at NHK Hiroshima in 2011 and has been focusing on issues associated with nuclear weapons ever since. She is a co-translator of *The Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons: How it was Achieved and Why it Matters* (Alexander Kmentt, first published in 2021 by Routledge)

In February this year, I was on a Shinkansen bullet train heading from Tokyo towards Osaka. Through the window, I saw Mount Fuji, dusted with snow. This vision of the mountain, illuminated by the setting sun, was so beautiful that I couldn't help but talk to the foreign woman sitting next to me, "That's Mount Fuji." She was visiting Japan from India with her family. She told me they were going to stay overnight in Kyoto and then continue their journey to Hiroshima afterwards.

When I asked, "Why Hiroshima?" she replied that her purpose was to visit the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. With some hesitation, I asked her, "What do you think about India possessing nuclear weapons?" Her answer was, "There is no problem with possessing nuclear weapons as such. Most countries have them, don't they? The issue is not to use them."

### The minority's advocacy of 'nuclear deterrence'

In reality, the claim that "most countries possess nuclear weapons" is factually incorrect. Currently, nine countries possess nuclear weapons: the five nuclear-weapon states defined by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, and China—as well as non-NPT states Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea, which has unilaterally withdrawn from the treaty. In addition, there are 34 countries, including Japan, which rely on the security guarantees of nuclear-weapon states, often referred to as being under a 'nuclear umbrella'. Given that the world has around 200 countries, the total number of nuclear-armed and nuclear-reliant countries (43 in total) remains a minority globally although they include those

with the most power and the majority of the world's population.

These countries adopt a strategy called 'nuclear deterrence', where the threat of nuclear weapon use is intended to deter an enemy's attack. However, the reality of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki reveals the horrific consequences of nuclear weapon use: these weapons indiscriminately kill large numbers of people, and atomic bomb survivors – referred to in Japanese as '*Hibakusha*' – suffer from long-term health effects and discrimination. Even if nuclear-armed states do not intentionally use these weapons, accidental detonations could have impacts spreading across borders.

In other words, for the vast majority of countries that do not adopt a nuclear deterrence strategy, nuclear weapons are not a means of security but a threat to the lives of their own citizens.

### The Humanitarian Initiative

Around 2010, a small group of leading disarmament diplomats, researchers, and NGO experts began to re-frame the discourse on nuclear weapons by focusing on the humanitarian consequences. This approach later became widely known as the 'Humanitarian Initiative'.

This approach challenged the existing order established by the nuclear-armed states and generated significant momentum. On this basis, seven years later, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted by a United Nations conference (by a vote of 122 States in favor, with one vote against and one abstention, among those that attended the conference) on 7 July 2017 and came into force on 22 January 2021.

## Preserving the memories of the *hibakusha*'s experiences

As a journalist, I have followed this process and covered the commitment of *hibakusha* speaking out about their experiences at international conferences. One such *hibakusha* is 81-year-old Masako Wada, Assistant Secretary General of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo).

Wada was 1 year and 10 months old at the time of the bombing, and she shares her testimony based on stories she has heard from her mother. Their home was sheltered in the shadow of a mountain, so the family survived, but many people with burns all over their bodies sought refuge nearby. Furthermore, the vacant lot next to their home was used as a cremation site for bodies.

I interviewed Wada for the first time in 2016. Not being familiar with Nagasaki at that time, even when she told me that her home was 2.9 kilometres from the hypocentre, I struggled to imagine the reality of that location. When I was assigned to the NHK Nagasaki Broadcasting Station last September and met Wada again earlier this year, I asked her about her home's location. She told me, "It's Imahakata-machi in Nagasaki. You can see it from your apartment balcony."

The 'cremation ground' Wada described has now become a park where children play. How many people must have suffered and died there 80 years ago in this peaceful place? Without those who pass on these stories or preserve records, the humanitarian tragedy will soon be forgotten and, within just a few decades, effectively erased from memory. Even as someone who has been covering nuclear issues carefully, I was confronted with the reality that I still know very little.

## As global citizens, let us work together

As of March 2025, there are 99,130 *hibakusha* from Hiroshima and Nagasaki living in Japan (source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare), with an average age of 86.13 years. Some *hibakusha*, like Wada, who were very young at the time, have no memory of the events and others have difficulty communicating today. While the number of *hibakusha* is declining due to ageing, there are still as many as 99,130 alive today. It is our mission to record and pass on their testimonies and thoughts until the very last *hibakusha* has gone. Since it was human beings who created nuclear weapons, it must also be human beings who can put an end to them. Humanity must have the wisdom to do so, and we need to continue to draw on that wisdom as long as we live. And at the heart of discussions on nuclear weapons should always be the reality of what the *hibakusha* endured.

Watching news of ongoing military clashes between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan in May reminded me of the conversation I had with the Indian tourist on the Shinkansen. I wonder what she felt after visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. Having encountered the reality of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima, how will she now cope with the continued existence of nuclear weapons? As members of the global community, I can only hope that we can join forces to think about what kind of world we should try to create together. (July 2025)

(This article reflects the author's personal views and does not represent the organisation she belongs to.)



## Memoir of the A-bombing:

## Toward the abolition of inhumane nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace

**Shingo Naito**

Hibakusha registered with our Foundation

## Profile

He lost six of his seven family members by the bombing and was left alone at the age of 14. In April 2022, he became a registered hibakusha who shares his testimony, hoping that this tragic event would never be allowed to fade away. He continues to work for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace.

On August 6, 1945, at the age of six, I was exposed to the atomic bomb at my home in the town of Yoshijima-hagoromo, 1.7 km from the hypocenter. That morning, under a clear, beautiful blue sky, the air-raid alert was lifted at 7:31 a.m., and life was about to begin as usual.

## Memories of that day that cannot be erased even if I try

I found a Benkei crab at the entrance to the bomb shelter in my garden and squatted down to catch it. Suddenly, after the flash of light, I heard a cacophony of a great many loud bangs erupting over one another and I was blown into the air-raid shelter. At that moment, my surroundings were pitch black, and I huddled on the floor, braving the dust and pebbles that were blowing in my face, praying that the situation would soon be over.

Eventually, the blast wind began to subside, and I felt the surroundings grow faintly brighter. Cautiously crawling outside the shelter, I saw that every building in our town had been flattened by the blast, leaving a vast expanse of rubble as far as the eye could see.

My father, who was standing in the yard in his undershirt, was standing there stunned, burned and charred black from the intense heat rays that had been hitting him all over.

My mother, with severe burns from her left shoulder to her elbow, was tearing off roof tiles with her hair disheveled and a look of desperation, standing atop the collapsed roof. This was because my four-year-old brother and two-year-old sister were buried alive beneath her. With my mother carrying two young children, both covered in blood, at her sides, I followed behind, supporting my father, who was badly burned all over. We began our evacuation, aiming for the aid station at the Yoshijima Army Airfield, about 3 kilometers from our home.



"The Love of a Family, Bound by a Single Stick"

(Creator: Ichigo Hashimoto)

Center: Shingo Naito, Right: His Father

I climbed over the piles of debris and stepped out onto a wide street, where I found a line of people who had been severely burned, their entire bodies bright red. People formed a silent line of evacuees, with the skin peeled from their bodies hanging from their hands like tattered rags, heads bowed as they moved forward. It was a scene of devastation beyond anything imaginable in this world. Here and there, people could be seen on the side of the road, trapped in the rubble, calling for help, and others who had run out of strength and were just dying. When we went out to the riverbank, we found many dead bodies floating on the surface of the river, which had come from upstream.

After a while, my father's face, which had been burned all over, became swollen, and his eyelids were completely closed, rendering him blind. It was almost evening when we finally arrived at the aid station at the airfield while helping my father as best we could. The place was crowded with many victims, but the treatment was limited to applying oil to prevent the surface of the burns from drying out. At this time, my young brother and sister had already died in my mother's arms and never received medical treatment.

We were able to enter a small air-raid shelter in a corner of the airfield, where my father fell asleep and passed away before the dawn on August 10.

### Death of two brothers

On August 11, after a miraculous reunion with my second brother, who had been missing since the bombing, the three of us—my mother, my brother, and I left the air-raid shelter and walked 20 kilometers to the village of Miyauchi, where we had been evacuated. I was able to sleep soundly on the tatami mats for the first time in a long time and soon recovered my strength, but my older brother began to suffer from fever, vomiting, and diarrhea. In hindsight, it may have been acute A-bomb sickness. However, he was diagnosed with typhoid, and we three were quarantined in the hospital, where my brother passed away on August 30, with my mother taking care of him.

### Mother's death

In September, my mother began searching again for my brother, a seventh grader, who had disappeared after leaving for building demolition work. 10 or so days later, she finally found some of his remains in a small box and a piece of paper that had "Died on September 14" written on it. My mother broke down in tears and could not stand for a while.

After that, my mother looked for a job and was hired as a factory worker at a company in Hiroshima City, which required a two-hour commute by train each way. Around this time, her health visibly began to decline. Even though she was feeling unwell, she continued to work without a day's rest while taking medicine, and in the early morning of November 7, 1953, she passed away while suffering from a severe headache.

I somehow felt that the fact that my mother's health did not improve even eight years after the war might be due to the effects of the atomic bombing, but in the end, the cause of death was given as "probably a cerebral hemorrhage and heart attack due to overwork".

At that time, I was in the third year of junior high school.

My relatives took me in, and upon graduating from high school, I was able to find a job and become a part of society, and here I am today.

### My thoughts

The feelings of hatred and anger toward the inhumane atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima for the first time in human history will never disappear. However, peace will never come from hatred. Though the hatred and sorrow can never be forgotten, I believe it is my mission today to transcend them and to continue telling my A-bomb experience to the next generation for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting peace in the world.



"A-bomb Drawings by Survivors"  
(Creator: Kichisuke Yoshimura)

## The Mayors for Peace Japanese Member Cities Meeting in Musashino City: A Starting Point for Nationwide Peace Education

The Mayors for Peace Japanese Member Cities Meeting was held in Musashino City, Tokyo, January 16-17, 2025, with the participation of 100 cities, marking the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings and the end of World War II.

On the first day, an event titled "Peace from Musashino," organized by Musashino City, was held. The program focused on how to pass on war experiences to future generations.

The event began with a wonderful performance by a children's brass band, followed by a video titled "Connecting the Memories of War to a Peaceful Future" featuring messages from four war survivors, including hibakusha. The video conveyed that Nakajima Aircraft

Company, a leading aircraft manufacturer located in Musashino City at the time, was subjected to nine air raids, resulting in many civilian casualties. It also highlighted that, after the war, hibakusha from Hiroshima and Nagasaki settled in Musashino City and formed the Musashino Keyaki Association to carry out awareness-raising activities. Although the association once had over 100 hibakusha, that number has now declined to fewer than 30, and the core of its activities is gradually shifting to the second- and third-generation members. Yoshino Oishi, a photographer and Musashino resident, gave a lecture titled



Listening to testimonies by war survivors  
(Photo: Musashino City)



“Overcoming the Tragedy of War,” in which she vividly conveyed, through her photography, the tragedies of people who had experienced war in various parts of the world.

On the second day, reports were presented on peace-related initiatives. The Tokyo Tama Regional Peace Network (the branch of the Mayors for Peace), which comprises all 26 cities in the Tama region, announced plans to send the “Tama Region Peace Youth” (tentative name), a group consisting of one high school or university student from each city, to Hiroshima. These students are also scheduled to present policy proposals at the “Peace Summit” (tentative name) to be held in Tama City in February 2026. Koga City in Fukuoka Prefecture highlighted the importance of experiential learning about historical events through the production and study of the picture book *The Story of Tetsu Nakamura* and through school excursions to Nagasaki, Hiroshima, and Chiran. Obu City in Aichi Prefecture reported on sending junior high school students as peace ambassadors to Okinawa and atomic-bombed cities. Kyoto City shared its initiatives for and the significance of the Month for a Culture of Peace, which offers an opportunity to reflect on the value of peace.

Afterwards, a presentation on “Support Measures for Member Cities’ Peace-Related Initiatives,” focusing particularly on peace education for younger generations was made. And the following five points were explained.

- “Peace culture” and “peace education,” which fosters civic awareness, work in synergy to reinforce each other in a positive spiral. However, as the generation with a high level of peace awareness is decreasing, there is a strong sense of urgency that unless such awareness is effectively fostered among younger generations, a negative spiral may occur, making it difficult to sustain peace culture.
- Therefore, peace education for younger generations has emerged as an urgent and common issue across all regions of Japan.
- It has been shown that engaging in peace education at atomic-bombed sites or former battlefields allows participants to directly grasp the realization of the atomic bomb and war, both of which are the very antithesis of peace. Such experiences can lead to a shift in awareness, helping people think that peace is not something to be taken for granted, but something precious. These thoughts often serve as major turning points, fostering stronger peace awareness and encouraging action.
- In this context, in order to advance the initiatives of member cities, Hiroshima City is considering establishing a grant program, supported by national subsidies, to help cover the costs of sending young peace leaders to participate in the Peace Memorial Ceremony in Hiroshima and attend related peace education programs.
- As a result of these developments, over 1,800 people from 100 cities have applied to join the FY2025 Hiroshima Peace Study Acceptance Program, marking a significant increase in participation from member cities. Nagasaki City is also actively promoting participation in the Youth Peace Forum, held at the time of its memorial ceremony.

In response to this, the Japanese Member Cities Meeting unanimously adopted the “proposal for the development of peace education for the younger generation starting from the 80th anniversary of the



Scene from the General Conference  
(Photo: Musashino City)

end of World War II.” This signifies a shift from previously individual efforts to a more coordinated approach. With the active participation of member cities and the establishment of a grant program supported by national subsidies, a structure and framework have now been put in place to promote peace education. The creation of this framework marks a starting point for peace education to be addressed as part of the national administrative agenda, and it is positioned as one of the legacies of the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings and the end of the war.

The main points of discussion at the meeting were as follows: Mayor Omino of Musashino City, the host city, stated, “The greatest challenge going forward is to use various methods to deliver peace education that helps younger generations truly grasp the reality of war.” Mayor Watanabe of Higashimurayama City remarked: “War, especially nuclear war, causes the great violation of human rights. In human rights and peace education, we must place even greater emphasis on the message that discrimination must never be allowed.” Mayor Otsubo of Hino City commented: “Implementing peace education is a universal issue that transcends political party lines and is expected of all local governments. To advance this effort, it is essential to receive cooperation and support from nationwide coalitions such as the Japan Association of City Mayors and the National Association of Towns and Villages.”

Furthermore, Mayor Matsui of Hiroshima City, the President of Mayors for Peace, remarked: “This meeting has become an opportunity to advance peace through administrative efforts. I hope this year will serve as a starting point for nationwide education initiatives aimed at building peace.”

(Peace Culture Planning Division)



### Background to the “Development of the 19 Initiatives Starting from the 80th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings” on Hiroshima

**Shiro Tani**

Vice-Chairperson, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation

This article presents key perspectives underlying the “Development of the 19 Initiatives Starting from the 80th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings,” compiled by the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. (Please note that any opinions expressed herein are those of the author.)

This vision is accompanied by the subtitle “To Fulfill the Role Expected of Hiroshima as a City Symbolizing World Peace.” Many “peace-loving cities and citizens” both in Japan and abroad have expressed their desire to pursue peace in solidarity with Hiroshima by showing sympathy for Hiroshima, which has recovered from the inhumane devastation caused by the atomic bombing and continues to strive for peace (see page 12, “Hiroshima as Seen from the World” by Michihiro Nobumoto). This subtitle reflects Hiroshima’s commitment to appropriately fulfilling a leading role as a city symbolizing peace, with the participation of many Hiroshima citizens.

In this context, the vision outlines two major approaches to embody Hiroshima’s role.

The first approach is raising international public opinion toward the abolition of nuclear weapons.

This perspective is based on the belief that the humanitarian initiative, which has provided a strong argument, must continue to be at the center of all international discussions on nuclear disarmament. Ambassador Alexander Kmentt, Director of the Disarmament at the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chair of the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), emphasized the importance of the humanitarian initiative in nuclear disarmament by stating: “The Humanitarian Initiative has shown that the more the nuclear weapons discourse is opened up to include other voices, in particular from a humanitarian perspective, the stronger the impact is on this discourse. ... ‘Deflection’ from the humanitarian consequences and risk arguments [that] proved such a counterproductive tactic for the nuclear weapon States before the TPNW was adopted, ... It is much harder to grip the more fundamental questions relating to the sustainability and ethical defensibility of nuclear deterrence, in view of the humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons. ... What was initiated as a successful ‘humanitarian reframing’ of the nuclear weapons issue, was not continued sufficiently after the TPNW was adopted. It will be necessary for the TPNW supporters to refocus on this aspect.”

This humanitarian initiative – the idea that the only way to ensure the survival of humanity is through the abolition of nuclear weapons – has its roots in the experiences of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In this regard, the Nobel Committee explained the reason for awarding the Nobel Peace Prize for 2024 to the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) as follows: “In response to the atomic bomb attacks of August 1945, a global movement arose whose members have worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons. Gradually, a powerful international norm developed, stigmatising the use of nuclear weapons as morally unacceptable. This norm has become known as “the nuclear taboo.” The testimony of the Hibakusha – the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – is unique in this larger context.

Meanwhile, Mr. Kiyoshi Tanimoto, who engaged in extensive testimony activities in the United States immediately after the war, wrote in connection with the (Hiroshima) Peace Center initiative “We must develop ways to

make a lasting contribution to world peace based on our own experiences of the atomic bombing” and “Although we have sufficient emotional appeal, we do not yet possess the universal principle to express it powerfully.” Today, the humanitarian initiative is a concept endorsed by over 180 nations, and it is precisely the kind of “universal principle” that Mr. Tanimoto identified as lacking.

For this reason, Hiroshima’s role in linking the factual reality of the atomic bombings to the principle of the humanitarian initiative and instilling in people around the world the conviction that nuclear weapons must be abolished is becoming all the more vital.

The second approach is the promotion of peace education for younger generations both in Japan and abroad.

This perspective is based on a sense of urgency that, amid the rapid aging of the hibakusha and other war survivors not only in Hiroshima but all across Japan, unless we promptly establish a system for educating the younger generation about peace, it may become difficult for civil societies to maintain the fundamental principle of valuing peace that these people have long upheld.

Another important point is that on-site learning is essential for peace education to be truly effective. This is why promoting peace education both domestically and internationally is considered a key role of Hiroshima. In his book, Tamotsu Eguchi, a pioneer in organizing school excursions to Hiroshima 50 years ago, cited the words of poet Sadako Kurihara: “Through careful preparations, including teachers’ field studies and advance visits, and the students’ active participation, the school excursion to Hiroshima became a great dramatic event. By participating, the students were mentally exposed to the atomic bomb. They came to regard the issue of nuclear weapons not as someone else’s problem but as their own and learn the importance of life, human rights, and peace.” This is consistent with the findings of a survey conducted last year on school excursions to Hiroshima. It revealed the process of shift in awareness: students who, before visiting Hiroshima, had only a vague understanding of the atomic bombing, came to realize that it had actually happened. This realization led them to understand that a peaceful daily life is not something to be taken for granted, but something that must be cherished.

In this context, a large peace education program, Hiroshima Peace Study Acceptance Program, is scheduled to take place in Hiroshima around August 6 this year, with approximately 2,100 people, including children from across Japan. As a symbol of friendship and shared commitment to peace, over 100 peace-loving cities from all over Japan that will participate in solidarity with Hiroshima will be presented with a “Peace Ticking Clock” made from pruned branches of atomic-bombed trees that have lived since 80 years ago.

In addition, discussions have begun regarding the development of a “peace education exhibit for children” at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which is scheduled to open in April 2028.



Development of the 19 Initiatives Starting from the 80th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings

## Dispatch of the Mayors for Peace Delegation Calling for Nuclear Disarmament

### Third Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (March 2-8)

A delegation, led by Vice President Belit Onay (Mayor of Hannover, Germany) and including Secretary General Takehiro Kagawa (Chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation (HPCF)) and Shiro Tani, Vice-Chairperson of the HPCF, was dispatched to participate in the Third Meeting of States Parties (3MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

In the absence of the mayors of both atomic-bombed cities, Vice President Onay delivered a compelling message, referring to the crisis in Europe and the initiatives of Mayors for Peace, which includes over 900 German cities. As a representative of the world's largest network of local governments for peace, he spoke with strong persuasiveness.

### Speeches at the General Exchange of Views of the TPNW 3MSP

Following Secretary General Kagawa, Vice President Onay delivered a speech during the General Exchange of Views session. Secretary General Kagawa emphasized that Mayors for Peace places the utmost importance on the TPNW. He also stressed that the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) sends a renewed message to the entire international community, including nuclear-armed states, that the use of nuclear weapons is never acceptable. Vice President Onay then spoke about the severe destruction that the City of Hannover suffered during World War II. He also highlighted that, amid the growing threat of nuclear war, the TPNW has opened a pathway toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. He strongly urged all governments to ratify the treaty and to shift their diplomatic approaches toward peaceful conflict resolution through sincere dialogue.



Vice President Onay delivering his speech

### Meetings with United Nations and Government Representatives

The delegation met with H.E. Mr. Akan Rakhmetullin, President of the TPNW 3MSP, as well as with government representatives from Thailand, Mexico, Ireland, South Africa, and Austria, all of which are TPNW States Parties. These meetings provided an opportunity to build a shared understanding on key issues, including the importance of peace education for younger generations.

### Side Event Co-hosted by Mayors for Peace and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

In collaboration with the International Campaign to

Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), Mayors for Peace held a side event for the 3MSP titled “*Voices of Civil Society for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World*.” The venue was packed to capacity with an audience of approximately 70 people, with some standing. Facilitated by Associate Professor Keiko Nakamura of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA) at Nagasaki University, the event featured Mr. Jiro Hamasumi, Assistant Secretary-General of Nihon Hidankyo, who, as a representative of the hibakusha, shared his experience of being exposed to the atomic bombing in utero, discussed the reasons for receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, and emphasized the need for nuclear abolition. His presentation deeply moved the audience. In response to a question from a young attendee about what he expects from the younger generation, Mr. Hamasumi shared with the young attendees the importance of passing on the hibakusha’s experiences to the younger generation, saying, “I hope that many people will listen to the testimonies, including those given online, and share what they’ve heard with their families and friends, helping to broaden global awareness of the hibakusha’s experiences.”



Scene from the side event

### Participation in a Side Event Co-hosted with Back from the Brink, ICAN, and Others

A side event, organized primarily by Professor Hirokazu Miyazaki of Northwestern University, focused on discussions regarding establishing organizations and policymaking for nuclear disarmament at the city level. With participation of mayors from U.S. member cities of Mayors for Peace, the event explored the need for cities to be involved in nuclear abolition, given that it is cities, not national governments, that would be the primary targets if nuclear weapons were used. Since the foundation of the TPNW lies in “human security,” the discussion further deepened the shared recognition that, as trust among nations is increasingly fragile, it is crucial to strengthen peacebuilding efforts at the city level to protect the lives of citizens. The role of cities in advancing peace will continue to be a key focus moving forward.

In this regard, during a meeting with President Rakhmetullin, he expressed his hope that efforts to raise citizens’ awareness for peace would continue to progress steadily, step by step.

### Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, Children’s Art Competition “Peaceful Towns” Exhibition, and VR Experience

During the 3MSP, Mayors for Peace held the Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, the Children’s Art Competition “Peaceful Towns” Exhibition, and a VR experience at the United Nations Headquarters to help conference attend-



Scene from the co-hosted side event



ees and UN officials deepen their understanding. In particular, the VR experience, which was introduced for the first time at this event, allowed visitors to virtually experience the devastation of the atomic bombing through VR footage. Approximately 80 people experienced it each day, continuously throughout the day, and the exhibit received high praise. Visitor comments included “This footage is beautiful,” “The footage allowed me to virtually experience the situation at the time and understand how horrific it was,” and “This kind of footage is something we should never forget.”

### The Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 11th NPT Review Conference (April 27 - May 2)

Mayors for Peace dispatched a delegation to attend the third 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). The delegation consisted of President Kazumi Matsui (Mayor of Hiroshima), Vice-President Shiro Suzuki (Mayor of Nagasaki), and Secretary General Takehiro Kagawa (Chairperson of the HPCF), among others.

Held amid the ongoing war in Ukraine and continuing conflicts in the Middle East, this PreCom session served as the final meeting in preparation for next year’s Review Conference. A shared sense of crisis prevailed among many participants, as the very significance of the NPT was being called into question. Consequently, many expressed their expectations for Hiroshima and Nagasaki to play a leading role in conveying the reality of the atomic bombings and sending a message of peace to the world.

### Speeches at the NGO Session

President Matsui expressed concern that, even now, 80 years after the atomic bombings, more than 12,000 nuclear weapons still exist on Earth and that the growing view that practices such as nuclear sharing, which go against the principles of the NPT, are effective could undermine not only the principles of the NPT but also the United Nations itself, the peacebuilding framework established after World War II. He reaffirmed Mayors for Peace’s commitment to raising awareness of peace in civil society and creating a world filled with a “peace culture” and called on government representatives to implement nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures in a sincere and steadfast manner.

Following this, Vice-President Suzuki shared the words of a hibakusha, drawn from their personal experience: “Nuclear weapons are the ultimate evil that deny us the dignity of both living or dying. They can never coexist with humanity.” As a representative of a city that suffered a wartime atomic bombing, he also stated: “Nuclear weapons must never be used. The only way to protect humanity from their threat is to abolish them.” He concluded with



President Matsui (right) and Vice-President Suzuki at the NGO session

a powerful appeal: “Let Nagasaki be the last city to suffer from an atomic bombing in war.

### Meeting with Representatives of Nuclear-Armed States

In a meeting with government representatives from the nuclear-armed states of France, the United States, and the United Kingdom, the Mayors for Peace delegation conveyed that, from the standpoint of civil society, it aims to promote a “peace culture” and support national-level initiatives in a bottom-up manner in cooperation with mayors around the world. The delegation also called on these governments to conduct nuclear disarmament negotiations in good faith in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and requested their cooperation in expanding membership in Mayors for Peace and supporting its initiatives.

### Meeting with United Nations Officials and Others

UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated: “Local governments not only play an important role in promoting peace but also influence various challenges such as climate change and terrorism, and culture is something that is built within communities. For this reason, it is essential to strengthen local and regional capacities. We at the United Nations must listen carefully to the voices of local communities and their leaders and work to ensure that more people can truly believe in peace.” In response, President Matsui said: “We are honored by the great trust placed in local governments. In solidarity with the United Nations, we are committed to engaging in activities that contribute to its peace initiatives.”

President Matsui also met with Mr. Harold Agyeman, Chair of the third session of the PrepCom for the 11th NPT Review Conference. He stated: “Precisely because of the current severe international situation, it is all the more important to remain committed to ideals. I expect Chair Agyeman to demonstrate leadership in fully upholding the obligation to negotiate in good faith under Article VI of the NPT.” He also requested support for expanding Mayors for Peace membership in Ghana. Chair Agyeman responded: “Our efforts to ensure security are urgent. We must reaffirm a new framework for peace that goes beyond the NPT. Furthermore, the principles of action of Mayors for Peace align with ours, and it is essential that we move forward together.” They then exchanged views on future cooperation.

### Visit to the United Nations International School (UNIS)

President Matsui, together with Vice-President Suzuki and Mayors for Peace youth representatives, visited the UNIS Manhattan Campus, which is attended by children of diplomats from around the world, and delivered a lecture. He explained the reality of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the initiatives of Mayors for Peace, which are grounded in the hibakusha’s desire for peace. He also encouraged the students to take part in the organization’s efforts. After the lecture, the youth representatives gave presentations to the UNIS students about their own activities and thoughts on peace. Their presentations were met with enthusiastic applause from the audience, perhaps due to their high quality.

## Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" Exhibition, and VR Experience

During the third session of NPT PrepCom, Mayors for Peace held the Mayors for Peace Atomic Bomb Exhibition, the Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" Exhibition, and a VR experience.



Scene from the VR experience

On April 28, Minister of Foreign Affairs Iwaya visited the exhibition and appeared particularly surprised to learn that approximately 8,500 cities are currently members of Mayors for Peace.

## Activities of Mayors for Peace Youth Representatives

Eight high school students engaged in peace activities in Hiroshima were dispatched as Mayors for Peace youth representatives, as part of efforts to foster the next generation of leaders in peacebuilding.

The youth representatives presented a list of approximately 34,000 signatures calling for the early conclusion of the TPNW to Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, who expressed her appreciation for their efforts.

At the Youth Forum held by Mayors for Peace as a side event of the PrepCom, 11 groups of young people, including the Mayors for Peace youth representatives and participants from around the world, shared their initiatives and exchanged views on the roles of youth. Participants remarked that they had once again recognized the importance of addressing issues related to nuclear weapons and other social challenges with a sense of initiative and ownership. In closing, Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu offered words of encouragement: "Young people have the right to speak up for their future. Please exercise that right and do not hesitate to express your opinions."



Mayors for Peace youth representatives visiting UNDP



Scene from the Youth Forum

During a meeting with Ambassador Tomiko Ichikawa, Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, the Ambassador stated to the youth representatives: "Disarmament is an issue that cannot be overlooked. It is important for every citizen to take an interest in the matter and explore ways to work together. I look forward to seeing the younger generation actively engage with the international community."

The youth representatives also gained valuable experiences through visits to UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women).

(Mayors for Peace and International Policy Division)

## The Nobel Peace Prize Celebration Ceremony Held

On December 10, 2024, in conjunction with the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony held in Oslo, Norway, a celebration ceremony titled "Spreading the Hibakusha's Wish for Peace to the World" was held to commemorate the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) and to share the hibakusha's desire for peace and the spirit of Hiroshima with many people.

This Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in recognition of Nihon Hidankyo's long-standing efforts to share, both domestically and internationally, the message that "nuclear weapons must never be used again" through the eyewitness testimonies of hibakushas. Furthermore, in the process by which the "humanitarian initiative," grounded in the catastrophic and inhumane nature of nuclear weapons, led to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the hibakusha's testimonies have been recognized as unique.

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum Memorial Hall provided a fitting venue to honor the historical significance of the award and share in the joy of the occasion. Despite the late hour, the hall was filled to capacity with around 300 attendees, including approximately 30 hibakusha and representatives of related organizations, approximately 25 members of the Hiroshima City Council, and approximately 15 Directors from the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation (HPCF), along with many local citizens and university students from overseas. In addition, a panel exhibition was held in the lobby in front of the venue to commemorate the award and showcase the activities of hibakusha, including those of Nihon Hidankyo. (The exhibition is currently on display on the first floor of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.)

At the beginning of the ceremony, Mayor of Hiroshima, Kazumi Matsui offered his congratulations and stated: "This award is a testament to the international recognition of the hibakusha's achievement in transcending their painful experiences and hatred and in transforming their wish that "no one else should ever suffer as we have" into a noble ideal — a heartfelt desire for peace of all humankind, which they have continued to communicate to the world. I will continue to encourage policymakers who still rely on nuclear deterrence to shift toward diplomatic approaches that promote peaceful resolution through dialogue. I also hope that the hibakusha's wish will be shared more widely and that efforts toward the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace will spread around the globe."

Next, Ms. Chieko Kiriake, a hibakusha, took the stage and shared her thoughts: "The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Nihon Hidankyo is a warning that the threat of nuclear war is real and present. While I felt encouraged by the recognition, I also felt a renewed sense of crisis. I believe this marks a new beginning. Protecting your own life and the lives of your family and your friends is a meaningful first step toward protecting peace. Let's join forces and start safeguarding peace from the places closest to us."

Following this, Ms. Sachi Okamoto, a graduate student at Prefectural University of Hiroshima and a youth peace volunteer who shares the realities of the atomic bombings in English with foreign visitors, took the stage on behalf of the younger generation. Referring to her research on peacebuilding in graduate school, she expressed her determination: “The hibakusha have continued to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons, shown the path to peace over many years, and have now been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This gives us both hope and strength for building peace. I, too, am determined to contribute to the realization of a nuclear-free world.”



(Left) Ms. Kiriake offering congratulatory remarks on behalf of the hibakusha  
(Right) Ms. Okamoto delivering a speech on behalf of the youth

Afterward, a public viewing of the award ceremony in Oslo was held at the venue, allowing attendees to watch the event together. When certificates and medals were presented to Mr. Toshiyuki Mimaki and other representative committee members of Nihon Hidankyo, the audience erupted in a round of applause. During the subsequent acceptance speech, the audience listened with deep emotion to the heartfelt and powerful words delivered by Mr. Terumi Tanaka, also a representative committee member.

Finally, Mr. Shiro Tani, Vice-Chairperson of the HPCF, expressed his deep respect for the hardships endured by the hibakusha over the years. He also noted that last year, through their testimonies, the hibakusha conveyed the reality of the atomic bombings and the “spirit of Hiroshima,” which embodies a call for peace, to over 113,000 children. He concluded by stating: “We will continue to create more opportunities like this and focus on raising peace awareness among younger generations. Furthermore, in light of the current international situation, we aim to make the wish for peace a shared consensus within civil society and encourage national leaders around the world to take action toward peace, led by the initiative of civil society.” With this, the ceremony came to a close.

Building on the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Nihon Hidankyo, the HPCF will continue to work in solidarity with all of you to convey the hibakusha’s wish for peace to the world and to promote initiatives aimed at the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace

.(Peace Culture Planning Division)

## FY2024 Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb and Peace Exhibition Held

In light of the fact that the catastrophic and inhumane devastation caused by the atomic bombings is not always fully recognized overseas, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum has been holding the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atom-

ic Bomb and Peace Exhibition abroad since 1995 in order to convey the reality of the bombings to as many people around the world as possible and to foster a shared awareness of the need to abolish nuclear weapons.

In fiscal year 2024, the exhibition was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from October 2 to November 3, and in Maribor, Slovenia, from December 3 to February 28. Argentina has been making significant contributions to the promotion of nuclear disarmament and the proper management of nuclear materials and technologies in the international community in recent years, having produced the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Chair of the most recent Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Slovenia, on the other hand, is strongly committed to building a peaceful world without war, drawing on its experiences of persecution by the Nazis and air raids by the Allied forces during World War II. President Nataša Pirc Musar also attended the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

The Atomic Bomb and Peace Exhibitions in both cities displayed 20 artifacts, including an armband worn by a junior high school student mobilized for wartime labor, a lunch box with its contents charred by the firestorm, and origami cranes folded by Sadako Sasaki, as well as 30 panels explaining the reality of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The exhibitions also included screenings of hibakusha testimony videos and related films, and workshops on folding origami cranes. In Buenos Aires and Maribor, hibakusha Teruko Yahata and Sadae Kasaoka, respectively, gave testimony at the exhibition venues and local schools, sharing their horrific experiences and their hopes for peace. The many citizens and students who gathered at the venues listened intently to the testimonies with solemn expressions, and some were seen in tears, moved by the devastating scenes of the bombings and the suffering and sorrow of the hibakusha. People who listened to the testimonies shared comments such as “This was the first time I learned how horrific the atomic bomb damage was,” “It was heartbreaking to see that hibakusha still suffer both mentally and physically even after the bombing,” and “Nuclear weapons, which lead to such inhumane consequences, must never exist.”

We believe that holding the Atomic Bomb and Peace Exhibitions was a great achievement, as it allowed us to convey to many people overseas the horrors and inhumanity of the atomic bombings and especially to raise awareness that nuclear weapons are an absolute evil by directly sharing the testimonies of hibakusha.

(Mayors for Peace and International Policy Division)



Scene from the exhibition venue in Argentina



Slovenian President Musar holding Ms. Kasaoka's hand



## Prize-Winning Works Selected for the Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" 2024

A total of 4,208 artworks were submitted by children from 123 cities in 21 countries around the world, all members of Mayors for Peace. Of these, 20 were selected as prize-winning works.



**Winner of the Mayors for Peace President's Award**  
Sui Ochi (13 years old) from Hiroshima City

### <Message from Sui Ochi>

To me, the white dove shone most beautifully in the blue summer sky. Not in a blazing fire, a pale blue flash, or a foreign airplane. If I had been under that sky at that time, I would have drawn a picture with a charred feather that had flown from somewhere. I wonder if anyone would want that picture.

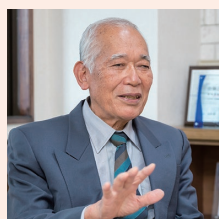


Prize-winning works

These works, which convey children's messages of peace, have been actively exhibited during conferences related to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and are planned to be showcased at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

(The first- and second-place winning works are featured on the cover.)

(Mayors for Peace Administration Division)



### "My Notes"

## Hiroshima as Seen from the World

**Michihiro Nobumoto**  
Director, Nobumoto Dental Clinic

There are many "Hiroshima Streets" and "Hiroshima Squares" in cities around the world.

Although peace rallies, peace walks, and other events are held on August 6 and 9, most people in Hiroshima are not aware of them.

In Berlin, Germany, the street in front of the Japanese Embassy was formerly called Graf-Spee-Straße, named after a German national hero, but it was renamed Hiroshimastraße. The bridge that follows is now called Hiroshima Bridge.

In Cologne, there is a "Hiroshima-Nagasaki Park" featuring a plaque that commemorates the world's first nuclear devastation, along with an origami crane sculpture. In Dortmund, there is a "Platz von Hiroshima" (Hiroshima Square). On August 6 and 9, peace walks are held in these cities, with participants arriving by chartered buses from neighboring cities.

In Potsdam, in the front yard of the house where former U.S. President Truman stayed, there is a "Hiroshima-Nagasaki Platz," established through the efforts of Professor Hideto Sotobayashi, who was residing in Germany at the time. A monument stands there, featuring stones exposed to the atomic bombings and bearing an inscription that reads, "...with the approval of the American President, the military order to drop the atomic bomb was issued..." Some Germans believe that Germany avoided being targeted by atomic bombs because it surrendered earlier than Japan. In fact, all monuments and memorials related to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in cities

across Germany were unanimously approved by local parliaments and installed by German citizens themselves. In London, the United Kingdom, a peace rally is held on August 6, and a lantern-floating event takes place on the River Thames on August 9, similar to those held in Japan.

In Aranjuez, Spain, a central street in a newly developed town was named "Avenida Memorial de la Paz de Hiroshima" (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Avenue), following a proposal from a local resident who was deeply moved by Hiroshima's postwar recovery.

In the Canary Islands, the mayor and city council opposed the construction of a NATO naval base and installed a monument featuring Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution in the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Square.

In Montreal, Canada, over 300 people gather to listen to the Peace Declaration issued on August 6 in Japanese, English, and French and to ring bells in prayer for peace. In Vienna, Austria, a monument incorporating a stone from Hiroshima that was exposed to the atomic bombing, along with an inscription about a thousand paper cranes and Sadako Sasaki was installed at the proposal of the then-Austrian ambassador to Japan.

We all share a fear of nuclear bombs, which have the power to destroy people, cities, and cultures in an instant.

I hope that young people not only in Hiroshima and Nagasaki but also throughout Japan will come to know that on August 6 and 9, people around the world take action in remembrance of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These actions reflect the empathy and solidarity with Hiroshima and Nagasaki shown by cities around the world that strongly aspire for peace. It is my sincere hope that Japanese youth will fully embrace the sentiments of people around the world and as citizens of the only country to have experienced atomic bombings, continue to take strong and determined steps toward world peace.