

## **Facing Inhumanity of A-Bomb Damage, Hibakusha Speak Out to Aspire for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons**

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Chairperson, delegates and dear friends,

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak before you on behalf of the Hibakusha, A-Bomb survivors.

On August 6, 1945, I was 7 years old, a second grader in primary school of Hiroshima. I was inside the wooden school building and fortunately escaped major injuries.

On my way home, carried on the back of my father who came to the school to find me, I witnessed a hell on earth. I saw a man with his skin burned heavily, peeled and dangling. A mother with heavy burns was carrying a baby, which was burned-black and looking like charcoal. Others with their eyeballs popped out or holding their protruding intestines in their hands frantically ran around, trying to escape.

The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9 instantly killed so many people, and those who barely survived those days would eventually die one after another from the delayed effects of radiation. The atomic bombs did not allow the Hibakusha either to die or live as humans.

The Hibakusha who miraculously lived out of those days had to suffer from survivor's guilt and hellish scenes, sounds, voices and smells burned in their mind, while struggling to make a living and facing prejudice and discrimination from the world. Hibakusha's suffering is deep and still persisting. Even after 73 years, "that day" will continue to haunt them.

So that no one in the world should ever experience that hell on earth, the Hibakusha have travelled around the world to witness the damage and aftereffects of the atomic bombing, appealing, "No More Hibakusha" and "Don't fight nuclear war, and abolish nuclear weapons".

Turning into the 2010s, our appeals seem to have reached the international community. The "unacceptable suffering and damage" caused by the use of nuclear weapons and the "intolerable damage from the A-Bomb" have been accepted widely. This current eventually bore fruit at the U.N. Conference which adopted the "Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons" in July 2017.

Hibakusha rejoiced with each other to witness a door to the abolition of nuclear weapons finally

opened. But we regret that the nuclear weapon states and their allies do not support this treaty. Especially, we Hibakusha are furious with the government of Japan, the only country to have experienced the A-bombing in wartime, refusing to support the treaty. There is still a long and bumpy road ahead to eliminate nuclear weapons.

I want to ask all the government delegations present today. Please implement without delay the “unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals”, agreed upon in the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and was reaffirmed in 2010.

The year 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of the coming into force of the NPT. We ask you to take a bold step to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons, shifting to a security policy based on mutual trust, not on nuclear deterrence with the assumption of using nuclear weapons.

We stand at the crossroads: whether to protect the blue planet or choose a path of destruction. Without abolishing nuclear weapons we cannot defend people’s life and safety. As one of those who experienced the nuclear destruction, I reiterate my call on you. Please work together with us to abolish nuclear weapons. Thank you.