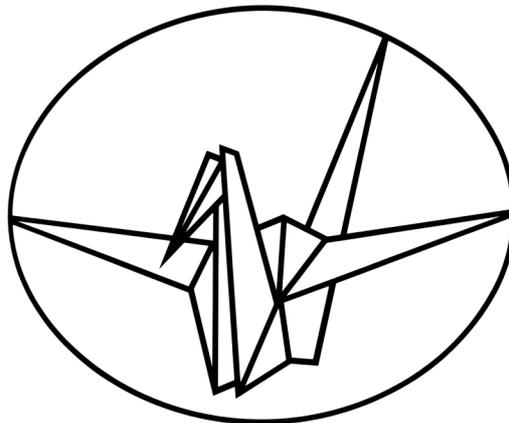


70 Years after the bombing of HIROSHIMA & NAGASAKI

Messages from Hibakusha

For the 2015 NPT Review Conference



NIHON HIDANKYO

(Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations)

No More Hibakusha Project-Inheriting Memories of the A-and H-Bomb Sufferers

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The Wish of the Hibakusha, the Hope of Mankind A World without Nuclear Weapons Now

This year is the 70th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hibakusha (A-Bomb survivors) who survived the hell of the atomic bombs formed "Nihon Hidankyo" (Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations) in 1956. Our vow was to save not only ourselves but also mankind through our experiences. With that solemn intention, we've been appealing, "No more Hibakusha!" ever since.

Two atomic bombs destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in a matter of seconds and indiscriminately robbed countless people of their lives. Watching people walk like ghosts, I regained consciousness and touched my face, chest and arms. I realized that my body was also badly injured. It was bleeding and burnt and my skin was peeling off. The terror of maggots eating my motionless body and the treatment that followed made me scream in agony. "Kill me!", I cried.

Even if we survived, we suffer from sicknesses caused by the A-bomb. Hibakusha even experienced prejudice and discrimination in our daily lives, from employment to marriage. Our parents, brothers and sisters, friends and children were killed by atomic bombs. Some gave up living and took their own lives. For Hibakusha, "to keep on living" is a constant state of suffering.

Hibakusha believe in the wisdom of human beings and our mutual understanding. Hibakusha have a mission to tell our children, grandchildren and the future generations to create a world without nuclear weapons. Therefore, we have been appealing, "No more nuclear wars!" "No more nuclear weapons!"

We experienced A-bombs at the end of a war that was initiated by the Japanese government. In order to prove our determination to allow no more Hibakusha, we have been seeking compensation for our sufferings.

Atomic bombs / nuclear weapons can't coexist alongside mankind. America has a moral obligation as an advanced country which was the first to use nuclear weapons. Japan has the responsibility as the only country in the history of mankind that has been bombed with atomic weapons in war time. Both countries must work together. If both of them take the leadership towards the abolition of nukes, we can change the world.

The "No More Hibakusha Project - Inheriting Memories of the A- and H-Bomb Sufferers" was formed by people who share the spirit of No More Hibakusha in order to continue the work of the Hibakusha as a memorial to their lives and deaths. The members have been holding Hibakusha storytelling sessions. Many Hibakusha shared stories of their A-bomb experiences and of their lives filled with anxiety and sufferings. They also talked about their mission to live as Hibakusha, while people of all ages, especially the younger generation, listened eagerly.

"Messages from Hibakusha" is a collaboration of Hibakusha and the younger generation; Hibakusha shared their experiences and young people wrote them down. Even though it's a small booklet, it is full of messages of hope from Hibakusha and from people who want to carry on our mission.

We sincerely hope that our earnest wishes will be received by as many people as possible.

[Structure of this booklet]

The booklet is broken into four parts: Hibakusha testimonies and appeals (1~3), and Readers' remarks

1. A-Bomb Experiences
 2. Life After the A-Bombs
 3. Appeals from the Hibakusha: what Hibakusha want to tell the world and the next generation
- ©. Readers' Remarks: what the successors want to tell the world and the next generation

[Introductory Note]

Listed at the front of each testimony in the following in order are: place of exposure to A-bomb, type of survivor, distance from the hypocenter, sex, and age at the time of bombing.

*Entry survivor: those who were within 2km of the hypocenters within 2 weeks of the bombings.

[Front Page Illustration] Folded Paper Crane is the symbol of the Hibakusha Movement

1. A-Bomb Experiences

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, unknown, M, age 15

Mobilized to a gas factory as a 3rd grader of junior high school, I was carrying coke (smokeless coal) loaded on lorries and bringing it to the furnace. I was sitting against the window of the factory. At that moment, a very strong light was all around us. I thought one of the gas tanks had exploded. Light came to me first, then sound, the blast, and shattered debris in that order. For a moment, inside the factory was complete silence. Everyone seemed to have almost fainted from the shock. Above us was blue sky where the ceiling used to be. Wooden posts and board walls had fallen. I was in a triangle created between railings and walls, so I escaped from injury. Then, I walked along the beach to an air-raid shelter. I saw black smoke and fire rising from the city. There were people bleeding from their faces and whose clothes were torn to pieces.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.2 km, M, age 16

My mother was trapped under the collapsed house. I screamed "Mom!", then, I heard from under the roof, "I'm here!" I peeled off the roof shingles and put my face in, but I couldn't go any further because big joists overlapped one another on the concrete bedding. Through the narrowest gap, I saw my mother lying on her back about 1 meter away. She was bleeding around her closed eyes. She never opened her eyes no matter what I said, and she didn't even try to turn her head to me. I decided to dig up my mother from another side, but shortly, a very strong fire storm approached to us. Sparks from the fire were falling on me. I desperately screamed "Mom, I can't. Fire is coming. I can't come any closer from my side." My mother answered, "Then, run away. Hurry up." Next moment, she started to chant "the Heart Sutra". She must have prepared for death. I reluctantly left my mother to die. I ran away hearing her voice behind me.

Several days later, I searched for my mother among the ashes of my house. I was able to find what seemed like a corpse on the site where she was lying. But it didn't look like a human. She was a small oily object, looking like a child manikin burnt and coated with coal tar. My mother was killed as an "object" not as a human. I was distraught.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, M, age 13

After a while, I realized that I was alive because I could faintly hear someone crying, "Help!" I crawled out from the destroyed school building and got outside. There I saw the mushroom cloud rising up into the gloomy sky. "What is that!?" I asked. But no one answered. After a while, darkness became moonlight, then I found out that not only the school building, but nearby houses were also all destroyed. I had no idea what had happened. Some marks of small hands were left on my shirt. My friend pulled me out of the building, I was told. We stayed there until a little after 9, but no adults were around. No teachers either. My friends were calling for help but fire was coming, so I left them and ran away.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.4 km, F, age 2

My grandmother was down on bended knees, putting her hands together and saying, "Please forgive me. Please forgive me," in the direction of voices she could hear. They were voices of women who lived in the neighborhood. There was no way to help them, so the only thing she could do was apologize. My mother saw a hand pulling my leg. It seemed like a middle-aged woman who lived next door. Her face and hands were sticking out, but the rest of her body was covered by debris. Her eyes showed she was in deep pain, and her painful look calling for help had a hold on my mother. Nevertheless, she hardened her heart and smacked the hand away from my

leg. Ever after, my mother sometimes remembered those women's faces, faces of women who she could not help. She often said to me. "I became a devil. That moment, I was a devil." The thought tormented my mother for almost 70 years.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

My mother was barely conscious and couldn't get any treatment. We put her on my grandfather's two-wheeled cart and escaped uptown to Furuta Town where my mother's parents lived. I don't remember what time it was exactly, but the site I saw on the way there is still stuck in my eyes. I cannot forget it.

What I saw there was a line of people exposed to the A-bomb around the epicenter and trying to get out of the city. Exposed to the blast and the heat rays, they seemed to be covered by ashes, their hair stood on end, and burnt skin of their arms or bodies hung down like rags. As a child, I first thought their clothes were torn and hanging down, but my grandmother told me later it was burnt skin. On the other hand, some people were almost naked or bare foot. Their clothes must have been blown away or burnt off. I heard that the blast blew away even shoes around the epicenter. Covered with dust and ashes, and indistinguishable as men or women, those people were walking slowly and weakly, without saying a word. The scene was like "ghosts on parade" in hell.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.6 km, F, age 9

I saw people swarming out of buildings destroyed by the blast. Their faces were all covered in blood, and their clothes were torn to pieces. There was no fire around me. Many Korean people lived around a public bath and they start to walk, uttering "Aigo, Aigo" (a Korean word to express frustration, annoyance, tiredness—comparable to "oh my" in English). I decided to follow them hoping that things would be alright.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.5 km, F, age 4

My house was located next to a small

square at the base of Waseda Shrine and there were stone stairs there too. Both the square and the stairs were filled with evacuees after the bombing. Students from a girl's school come for labor services were there in a line, but I couldn't tell if they were girls or boys. When their parents came to search for their children, they could not distinguish them by their faces so they checked the name tags on their clothes.

My mother tried to pump water from a nearby well, but the water run out by the time she came back to the house. She gave water to those girl students on the way, because they were begging her "please, water please". She never told this story. I suppose that it is because she was desperately struggling to make our living, and it might have been taboo to talk about something like this. It wasn't until she was in her late 70's that she finally talked about those girl students and how she had scooped water with her hands and given them a suck of water one by one. Even then, she couldn't talk anymore and cried as she remembered those girls' faces at the end of her fingertips when she tried to give them water. I never asked her about it again.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

The scene that I saw on the way home is branded on my memory. I cannot forget it, even though 68 years has passed. I saw those people, one whose eyeball was out of its socket, one whose skin was burnt and hanging down from the arm, one who was burnt black, and another whose bowels were hanging out. Then I saw a fallen girl of about my age. Our eyes met. She seemed not to be able to speak, so she appealed to me with her eyes: "Help me." I still regret that I could not help her, that I could not give her a cup of water. Even now I remember vividly her eyes pleading for help.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, M, age 13

A mother was running with her headless baby in her arms. I saw the scene like a vision from hell when I was 13 years old.

Hiroshima, entry survivor, M, age 19

The railway sleepers were smoldering in the station. As we were walking in the dark to the city, a burnt smell pervaded the air. An empty streetcar was burned black. We advanced in file to Aioibashi (Aioi Bridge), our destination. When it gradually dawned, we saw that there was nothing remaining of the houses, except wreckage of buildings of ferroconcrete or stone. We were overwhelmed by the grotesque sight and smell of bodies burnt black. We continued to advance and saw swarms of burnt people.

Tiles of roofs had become so fragile that they crumbled at the touch. Bodies were turned into white bones. Only their skulls were still damp. There were burnt and swollen bodies floating on the surface of Ohtagawa (Ohta River) and Motoyasugawa (Motoyasu River). I was appalled at the sight. It was like a scene from hell.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

When we came to the Nishi-ohashi, many people who had somehow managed to make it there crowded into the river to quench their unbearable thirst, as if the river was a crowded beach in summer. Standing on the bridge, we saw some people floating in the river. They might have been already dead and floating downstream.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7km, F, age 5

As my mother worked near ground-zero, she was exposed to heat rays from head to foot. Even though she was heavily burnt, she came back home by herself. Many people who went with her were lost. They could not bear the heat and pain, so they jumped into the river and were lost. But my mother came back. The road to our home was blocked by broken buildings and a lot of debris. My mother was burnt all over, her mouth was parched, but she passed through this road which would have been hard even for uninjured people to traverse. At last she made it home. As soon as she heard from my grandfather that I was safe, she fell down unconscious. I think she would have kept on looking as long as she could until she knew that I was safe.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 20

In my family my brother's wife was killed outright. At the time she was in the detached part of our house. From there she was thrown into the main part, then crushed under the two-story house and died.

The house burned down and none of her bones remained.

My eldest brother, who served in the prefecture office, went to work by bicycle a little late. When he was on his way to the office the Atomic-bomb was dropped. He fell down and hurt his leg.

On September 16, when I returned to Shikoku, our place of refuge, I was astonished to hear that my eldest brother had died on August 23. Though he was not burnt, but only hurt his left leg, he bled from his eyes, nose, mouth and ears and from all over until he died. The doctor of Shikoku didn't know about atomic bombs, but I believe my brother died from illness caused by atomic-bomb radiation.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.4 km, F, age 2

We spent 3 days and nights in a field. Around us were bodies scattered here and there. They were infested with flies; black bodies covered with flies.

I have heard that flies also swarmed around injured people and laid their eggs in the wounds. Crawling maggots were so painful that the injured picked them out with the end of a stick. But one after another they died.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 16

The medical department of the army began to treat the injured people. We heard voices saying "Help me!", "Give me water!" We dabbed Mercurochrome, rivanol (name of a disinfectant) and butter on their burns.

A mother whose whole body was burnt except the arches of her feet desperately came to have a doctor treat her baby. I looked at the baby which she was carrying on her back and said involuntarily "It doesn't have a head." Immediately the mother fainted and died. Why did I say that? I still have feelings of remorse towards her.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

There was a woman who was a member of a women's volunteer group who had injuries to half of her face. She said "Give me some water, please." I gave her water, saying, "Here you are." As soon as she had drunk the water, she fell flat on her face. Now, I think that I should have asked her name and where she lived. But at the time I myself didn't know how the members of my family were, so I could not be thinking about strangers. I was not concerned about the people lying around. I was numbed by worry.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 16

On August 9, I went through the city to Koi to get my younger sister. There were heads, arms and bodies with their bowels hanging out here and there in the city. There also was a dead man holding a strap of a tram. As I passed the city, I was exposed to radiation from the atom bomb not only directly but also secondarily. The treatment at the army was done for high-ranking soldiers first of all and for people who could survive. When the broadcast of the Emperor's announcement of Japan's surrender was heard, I was attending the captain. It was very hard to change the bandage on his wound. It was hardened by pus. Taking off it, his stuck flesh also came off.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 4.0 km, M, age 9

On summer vacation, from August 7 of 1945, I and my younger sister, who was a first year elementary school pupil, were staying at our relative's house about 4km from ground zero.

After the atom bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, my aunt, cousin and I went to my house to search for my father and brothers. My grandmother died crushed under the house. My mother and youngest sister were also killed on the spot.

My elder brother, a fourth year secondary school student, died at the place where he was mobilized and my elder sister came back home from mobilization and died. My father was burnt on the backside of his

neck and died the following year of an illness caused by radiation from the atomic bomb.

Hiroshima, entry survivor, M, age 11

About 10 or 11 o'clock, people who were burnt and stripped of their skin fled to our elementary school. We, sixth grade pupils, helped to care for the people lodged in the school. We removed maggots from them with tweezers, but the next day they died. The corpses were gathered and burnt in the playground. Ashes were divided into the number of corpses.

I will never forget the voices saying, "Water," "Water." I should have given them water, but we were stopped from giving water to soldiers.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 2.2 km, M, age 20

A boy in 5th or 6th year of elementary school slept next to me. His brother, a 1st or 2nd year secondary school student, was with him. The head of the little boy was split open and we could see his white brain. Even in the night, he roared to his brother, "Where is father? Where is mother?" Someone sleeping near him shouted at him, "Don't be noisy!" His older brother was at his wits end. Soon I fell asleep. When I woke up, the boy was dead. He was a really pitiable boy.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

Shinkozen Elementary School was a shelter for injured people. Fifteen people in a row were laid in 4 rows in the same direction. The school was filled with them from the first to the third floor. As the treatment given there was only to irrigate wounds with water boiled once in a drum can and there were neither medicines nor applications, they were dying one after another. Dead people were carried on stretchers to the playground and piled in a quadrilateral shape, then gasoline was poured over them and they were burned. I had seen many black burnt bodies, so I felt nothing about them. But bodies burned thus were moving. I could not bear the sight. It was the sight of hell. It always lies under my consciousness and sometime it

comes to mind: their ragged hair, male and female indistinguishable. I thought there is no God, but only the Devil in this world.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.3 km, F, age 5

The state of August 9 has been branded in my mind like a vivid picture scroll, especially the bloody shapes of my father and young sister. The Japanese mattress on which I lay in colic at the moment of the A-bomb was torn in two and hung from the willow in the corner of our garden. A-bomb victims lying in agony on the mats in the schoolyard of a Buddhist monks' school; victims walking in a ditch; bodies of parent and child with maggots crawling over them in the playground of an elementary school; the smell of burnt bodies in a playground of an elementary school everyday evening; the operation without anesthesia on my younger sister's head to remove pieces of glass 3 weeks after the bombing: these memories are even now in my mind.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

My cousin who was A-bombed at a place 500 meters from ground zero came to our home for help. She was burnt from her back to her hips and a stick penetrated her foot from arch to instep. I could not recognize her, though I was very fond of her.

I wiped her body fluids with a boiled towel and removed maggots from her wounds. I nursed her hard but a few days later she died in my arms. She was 14 years old.

Another cousin also came to our home for help. He was 10 years old. He did not receive severe injuries but was suffering from diarrhea. At the end of August, he suddenly bled from his ears and nose, then spat a mass of blood from his mouth and died. It was the effect of radiation.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, F, age 1

My elder sister died on August 26, burnt by the strong flash. My elder brother, a first year secondary school student, had been mobilized to work from early morning on a road near ground zero. He was killed by the bomb with all his classmates and

their teacher. I have heard that for some time after, at the sound of windows and doors rattling in the wind, my mother would jump out of bed thinking, "Hisashi (my brother's name) has come back". I suppose that the way her son died was always on her mind. Losing two of her children like that must have been very painful for my mother.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, M, age 13

When I am asked "What do you remember about the atomic bomb?", I answer, "I remember maggots, flies and smell." At the time, I wondered why there were so many flies. They didn't come from just anywhere; they came from human bodies alive or dead.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

I tended my mother. In the over 30°C heat of August, a bad smell pervaded the air.

The smell of burnt fish is quite strong, isn't it. But I think only their families can bear the smell of people who were burned from head to foot. I lose my appetite just remembering it. It took me several years to forget the smell.

Hiroshima, entry survivor, M, age 15

In Shimonoseki, I had experienced air raids twice and been surrounded by fires. Though I had accustomed myself to air raids, and seen the ruins of fires and many dead people, the sight of bombed Hiroshima in August was more terrible. It looked like the whole city had been flattened.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.6 km, F, age 9

After the fires went out, we could see straight to the Hiroshima Station. Many unidentified people burnt black and swollen were floating, stirred by tides on or in the Honkawa River.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.4 km, F, age 2

In the meantime, for public hygiene the bodies were loaded one after another into trucks and carried away, then gasoline was poured on them and they were burned. My mother said that large fields were filled

with the smell of burning bodies, and she could not forget the stench. There were heaps of ashes all over the place. As time went by, winds blew and rain fell. The heaps gradually became flat, so that we could not know how many people had died. We could not know who was who. No doubt there were people searching, but it was impossible to find them. Each one must have had loved ones, but the dead were deprived of the opportunity to die a human death. My mother said that she was distressed at the thought of it.

Hiroshima, entry survivor, M, age 11

We went to the Hiroshima Daiichi Secondary School to look for my elder brother, but we could not find him. After that my mother looked for him for about a week on her own. At last, she found an aluminum lunch box on which his name was carved beside the swimming pool. I think that he died before eating the lunch my mother made with rice that she had managed to scrounge from our neighbors.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.5 km, F, age 4

On September 11, my father died. I have heard from my mother that his whole body looked like it was covered with cobwebs and its color was turned to purple. He died after suffering for about 3 days. I remember the atmosphere as I looked at my father from behind a sliding paper door.

Though I was told, "Come here," I didn't go.

I think I was afraid of his groans. My mother told us that it was so hard to get wood to cremate him. We six, my mother, younger brothers, younger sisters and I, saw off the smoke from my father's cremation on the river bank.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 16

In April 1946, my father was sick in bed. Looking at my father's bloody stool and vomit, a doctor from the neighboring village said, "It might be typhoid fever, an infection."

He said that our diarrhea also might be caused by typhoid fever. On the morning of April 19, my father looked in the mirror and said, "The shadow of death is already upon

my face. I'm done for. You are the eldest daughter. I realize I have brought great hardship upon you, but I ask you to take care of your mother, sister and brother." Those were his last words. His hair fell out in bunches one after another and purple spots broke out on his face. He took a sip of rice gruel and a bit of grated apple which my mother had managed to scrounge, then he passed away.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 16

On the morning of August 6, my mother was to go to evacuate houses for the war. She was not in good health, so she asked the woman next door to go for her, while she herself rested at home. Though our house didn't burn, the areas of the other side of Miyuki-bashi (Miyuki Bridge) burnt.

The woman next door came back heavily burnt from the work. Her baby couldn't recognize his mother because of her burnt face, so he cried and would not suck her breast. Then his mother turned her face away from him and gave him her breast. My mother saw the scene and regretted what she had done. For the rest of her life she kept saying, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry."

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.1 km, F, age 13

I escaped death, because I was absent from school, but all my classmates were killed.

Though I made it to the school somehow, I could not do anything for my friends.

I cannot say that I was happy to be alive because of my absence. It has been my trauma.

When I went to the house of my best friend, I could not enter the house and hold her hands.

I have felt nothing but regret.

2. Life After the A-Bombs

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, Age 5

It was one or two years later that a young man who was one of my relatives who had come to find us in the burned-out ruins passed away due to the effects of residual radiation. He had looked for us only 4 or 5 days after the bombing in every nook and cranny of the city from the tip of eastern Hiroshima, across the city central to the west. It was clear that his death was caused by the Atomic Bomb radiation. A carthorse he took with him in his search for us also died a while later. I remember being disconsolate about the two unnecessary deaths as a little girl since it felt as though they died in place of us. Since then, I have always lived with a fear of death that was happening everywhere. It could just happen to us at any time.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 16

I would have a bloody nose or some kind of bleeding almost every day until 1950.

But my hair that had fallen out began to grow back. In 1991, I was diagnosed with gall bladder cancer and had it taken out. Since then, it has not become metastatic yet. I have had spinal problems, and I suffer from backache and sore knees, so the doctor puts me in traction. What's found even now is uric blood every time I get a check-up.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

It was 4 years after being exposed to the Atomic Bomb when I was in 4th grade in an elementary school that I got an unknown disease. I felt listless, lost my appetite and became bedridden. Besides, I was living in a rural area with only one clinic owned by an elderly doctor so I was not able to receive adequate treatment. The cause was presumed to be related to the Atomic Bomb.

As my condition got worse, I could not eat anything at all and even threw up the medicine that was my only hope and

resulted in me wasting away to skin and bone. I was absent from school for 4 months and the doctor gave up on me. At one point, I was wandering between life and death. However, I miraculously recovered. That surprised the doctor and my family. It is still unclear what the cause was and what brought me back to life.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

Although I felt listless, I tried to think that it came from my mental weakness. But what really bothered me was that when I was injured, it would not heal properly. Even a mosquito bite became infected.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.4 km, F, age 2

In my adolescent years, I would often experience the so-called bura bura disease which is an unexplained strong fatigue similar to seasickness and anemia, and commonly seen among Hibakusha, the Atomic Bomb victims. My father would angrily say to me in my tired state, "Pull yourself together!" On the contrary, when my father was out of the house, my mother would come to me and tell me that she was sorry over and over again. My father would also reprimand my mother for taking the children along with her to her parents' home in Hiroshima that day which resulted in us being exposed to the Atomic Bombing.

He said she did it without any regard for the family she had married into.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

My second daughter developed a cancer in 2010. It was hard when she asked me why she had to suffer from cancer. I was stung with remorse. In the following year, my daughter passed away.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.0 km, M, age 3

Two years after my father died from pancreas cancer, I was also diagnosed with

rectum cancer. Then, I was convinced that it was attributed to the exposure to Atomic Bomb. I have always lived with the fear of the Atomic Bomb affecting not only myself but my children and my grandchildren. The Atomic Bomb never ends for us, Hibakusha, the survivors. It always remains within our body, damaging our cells to develop another disease which will come in 10 years.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, F, age 1

Miss Sadako Sasaki would have been my own age and I grew up worrying about what if I came down with leukemia like Sadako. Even after marriage, I was distressed and always doubted if I would really be able to give birth to a healthy baby. At the age of 40, I developed breast cancer and was saddened that it had finally happened to me as I was always hoping to live until my children were in high school and be alive when they turned 20 years old. Fortunately, early detection of the cancer saved my life and I am still alive today.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, unknown, F, age 10

It was not until 1960 when I gave a birth to my child that I first came to consider myself to be a Hibakusha, an Atomic Bomb victim, because I had constant bleeding for the whole year. The doctors in Tokyo who were not well-acquainted with radiation sickness did an operation on me. Not only did it not work, but it has prevented me from ever falling pregnant again. I became thin and I suffer from anemia. I was a mental and a physical wreck when I had to raise my child.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

When I found out that I was pregnant, I was so upset because I had heard a news report of a female Hibakusha having a baby with a disability, A-Bomb microcephaly. I worried myself into a severe hyperemesis where I was not able to eat and intake the adequate nutrition a pregnant woman needs.

In such a condition, I was not physically able to have a normal delivery. I had to wear an oxygen mask. Fortunately though,

despite fearing the worst, I was blessed with the birth of a healthy baby.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 20

I kept to myself the fact that I am a Hibakusha, a Atomic Bomb victim, for a very long time. Even when I got married, I never mentioned it nor even where I was from. So, I had no intention of getting an Atomic Bomb Survivors' Certificate and the insurance until my mother suggested it to me before she passed away in 1951. The doctors did not know how to treat Atomic Bomb-sicknesses. My mother had severe bleeding from the mouth, gums, nose and eyes when she passed away.

I also had three miscarriages. I tried hard to convince myself that it was just because I was doing the laundry and cleaning the bath tub in the cold weather. I never had a baby. Looking back, having a baby was perhaps not for me because I had wandered through the burned-out ruins of the town of Hiroshima that day. I could never have been genuinely happy anyway.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.3 km, F, age 5

Every August weekly magazines feature stories on Hibakusha, the Atomic Bomb survivors. The stories are about who they are, where they lived and how they died.

My family and I always read these stories with a pounding heart to see if they were about anyone we knew. Even the times when none of our acquaintance were listed, we still had a heavy heart and suffered from an acute fear of when death would come to us. Every year when August comes, the pain of the memory is the last thing I want to recall and I never feel like being in Hiroshima.

Nagasaki, unknown, F, age 1

At the time of marriage, I could not bring myself to tell my husband that I was exposed to the Atomic Bomb. I did not hold the survivor's insurance certificate. It was nerve wrecking for me going through my baby's delivery without the insurance and I never felt at ease while raising my child. But when my child was in Grade 3, I

decided to confide in my family. After that, I received the insurance.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 3.0 km, F, age 13

I've had a number of death threatening experiences because of atomic Bomb illnesses. I am not sure if it was one of the after-effects, but I had overlapping warts on my fingers and the kids in my village picked on me, calling me "Demon."

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

Being a Hibakusha, I was discriminated against in my job hunting. When I decided to marry someone whom I truly loved, his father was really against our marriage because they did not want Hibakusha's blood in their family and we were not given permission to marry. At the time, it was said that one in four of all Hibakusha thought of taking their own lives. My father who also had thought the same said he could not kill himself when he watched us children sleeping.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 3.0 km, F, age 13

After marriage I gave birth to healthy children and they have kept my spirits up.

My daughter, however, had her engagement broken off because she was the daughter of a Hibakusha. As her parent, that was the most agonizing feeling of my life. She has now 3 dogs and treats them as if they were her children but I still feel her pain at the back of my mind.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, unknown, F, age 10

The black rain that fell in the late afternoon of the day the Atomic Bomb was dropped was highly radioactive. It made me fall sick and I was short of physical strength compared to my peers. Seeing the horrific site as a child, I later became neurotic and it did not heal even after the age of 20. That image of the mushroom cloud has been burnt into my memory like the endless loop of a film. The fierce red of that cloud is the color that burnt the entire city and over 200 thousand people. Every year when summer

approaches that memory mentally and physically wears me out. At one point, the internal medicine department did not know what to do with me as there was no mental care they could provide at the time. The doctor told me "go back home."

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.5 km, F, age 4

When my mother was almost 80, she moved up to Tokyo and found a nursing home to live in on her own. There, she began writing notes on her story of that day and of the depression she suffered from later. Not only did she refuse injections in the nursing home but she also refused to eat, saying that she wanted to die. So I took her back to my home. She had long suffered from medically unexplained chest pains but the pain and the depression may have been caused by the fact she sealed off many of the unbearably painful experiences she endured at the time of the Atomic Bombing.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 16

I do not know how many times I thought of taking my own life and I would have ended it if it had not been for my family. Before my father passed away, he asked me to take care of my younger sister and brother, and I have stayed alive just because of that promise. And because I am still alive, I want to tell my story of that day, how people died, and how much they wanted to live. I will be 85 years old in 3 months, but I want to keep telling the story until my last breath. If you really understand the facts of war, you know why war can never be justified.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

Although I went through quite a hardship that could not be told easily, given those who died in the blink of an eye and suffered to death from after-effects, I feel like what I experienced is insignificant. Instead, I have lived day by day with a gratitude for being kept alive from the hellish situation. I also feel strongly that I should live for my mother whose life was ended at the age of 31.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 2.2 km, M, age 20

My third son who works for a research institute was told not to take a job involving radioactive materials due to his low white blood cell count. It was discovered in a check-up that he did not meet the prescribed standard of the Industrial Safety and Health Law. When I heard about it, I felt discouraged. Some years later, I heard that my grandchild in junior high school had the same problem and was advised by the track club teacher to have a complete physical examination. Then, I shed tears of frustration. I just have to pray that my grandchildren and great-grandchildren will never be affected by nor suffer from any physical problems caused by the Atomic Bomb.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

Eleven out of 30 of my classmates at the same elementary school died in their fifties and sixties due to various causes such as stomach cancer, aplastic anemia, chronic myelodysplastic syndrome, multiple functions incompetence, and tuberculosis. Two of them took their own lives. Although their deaths may not be related to the Atomic Bomb and that link may just be in my imagination, I cannot help but think that it is all connected with the Atomic Bomb as I have seen many of friends pass away one after another.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 3.6 km, F, age 3

Fortunately, my family and I were not affected by the Atomic Bomb, and I did not worry much until March 1964 when my younger sister developed a malignant cancer and passed away within three months of the discovery. She was exposed to the Atomic Bomb when she was 8 months old and she died at the age of 19. It happened all too suddenly for my sister who had a lot ahead of her after graduating from college. Her death was obviously brought on by the Atomic Bomb. The University hospital in which my sister was hospitalized asked us for permission to conduct an autopsy. After thinking about it, my parents came to the conclusion that they should

approve. They hoped that it will be of help to other Hibakusha.

I was bitterly shocked myself and by the thoughts of my sister's sorrow, and the pain my parents suffered. I was reluctant to talk about my experience and remained silent. However, in 1980, I set up a Hibakusha's Association in my area. When one of the members who was 4 years older than me passed away at the age of 68 from cancer, she said to me "There is nothing more frustrating". On behalf of my sister and many of those who died due to the Atomic Bomb, I will keep on raising my voice to abolish nuclear weapons and to call on our government to make amends.

3. Appeals from the Hibakusha: what Hibakusha want to tell the world and the next generation

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 20

Never start a war, it is nothing more than murder. If you do not kill your opponent, you will be killed. That is why I am absolutely against war. In movies or in animations, war is depicted as something 'cool' or 'exciting' but it is nothing like that. It is just homicide. What I would like the next generations to know is only this. They should never start a war. Moreover, we live in the Atomic Age, in an atomic war everything will be consumed by flames in a flash. I am lucky to be alive. If another war breaks out, it might not turn out the same. You have only one precious life which you were given by your parents. Please do not waste it.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

There is a theory which justifies the use of Atomic Bomb. It explains that by dropping the Atomic Bombs, many Japanese lives were saved. Thanks to the Atomic Bombs the war ended earlier than expected and so, the dropping of the bomb was the right thing to do. And that is what makes us feel shame.

Hiroshima, unknown, M, age 4

The two Atomic Bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki took the lives of a few hundred thousand people in a flash. Even though we know it was in the midst of a great war, it is still an inhuman act and it should never be forgiven. These bombs burnt down everything that was standing, destroyed the lives of many people and killed many other people. 69 years has passed but the surviving victims of the bombings are still suffering from after effects caused by radiation.

My message is "Please, get rid of all the nuclear weapons in the world" because I believe that is the only way to make the vision of "NO MORE HIROSHIMAS, NO

MORE NAGASAKIs and NO MORE HIBAKUSHAs" come true. The US President Barack Obama made a speech to the world in which he said that he will pursue "a world without nuclear weapons." But nuclear weapons still exist. Japan must legalize the three antinuclear principles and leave the Nuclear Umbrella.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

"The first bombs were dropped by America, so we should fire one back at the Americans". Such a spiral of hatred must be stopped. My ultimate wish is to get rid of all the Atomic Bombs.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

There are a hundred different stories of a hundred different bomb victims. The fact is, there are many who experienced the Atomic Bombings but only a few are willing to speak up and talk about what they saw. Many people refuse to talk about it even to their own families because it is too painful to even think about it. And some victims have passed away without ever telling anybody about their experiences. 69 years have passed and some people still hide their identity as bomb victims. Those who found the courage to tell people about their experiences -including myself- can't tell all their stories because there are many theories about the risks to human health after exposure to radiation. Many people have been forced to live under the fear that the after effects might affect their own children and grandchildren as well.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.1 km, F, age 13

Dispose of all atomic weapons immediately.

That was the reason President Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Japanese government's attitude at the United Nations gives me a feeling of

righteous indignation. Foreign peace activists also feel disappointment. On top of that, I feel the same about the Japanese news media which does not cover enough of these stories of the Atomic Bombings. Mankind cannot coexist with nuclear power. All people must be more aware of the risk of radiation.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, unknown, M, age 15

Anything that is related to nuclear technology, whether it is a weapon or a power plant must be banned. Accidents will occur, and yet Japan still sells its technology even to foreign countries. Something terrible will happen and the price will be unbearably huge.

We the Atomic Bomb victims have pledged "Let all the souls of the people who have died here in Hiroshima and in Nagasaki rest in peace; for we shall not repeat this evil." Those lives were sacrificed for the establishment of Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan. Protect the core values of today's Japan, Article 9 of the Constitution and we will live. We should not die for the Constitution, but live because of it.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, unknown, F, age 10

Recently there are many nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons spread widely throughout the world. And radioactive waste still has not been disposed of. Atomic Bombs are weapons. Nuclear power plants are for energy production. The two are used for different purposes but both are equally dangerous. All nuclear power plants could become nuclear weapons. There is no peaceful way of using nuclear power.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 4.0 km, M, age 9

War is sorrowful. I have had so much trouble, looking for a job, and getting married because of the fact that I lost both of my parents in the bombing. Long ago, when my older brother and I were sleeping side by side at our aunt's house, I asked my brother "Why do we have to go through this much of pain and suffering?" I still can't

stop my tears from flowing down my cheeks when I try to talk about war. I don't want my daughter and grandsons to have to endure such sorrow.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 3.6 km, F, age 10

My message is "Please maintain the peace constitution and do not start a war."

To the government of America: "There is no way, that nuclear weapon can act as a deterrent. To reduce the number of the nuclear weapons is not good enough. They must all be disposed of." To the government of Japan: "Do not blindly follow the ways of the American government. Be proud as the only Atomic Bombing victim nation in the world and act as a leader of the peaceful world."

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.3 km, F, age 5

It is needless to say war is a foolish act. With the wisdom of mankind, I hope we can end this nuclear war era. The peace constitution must be protected, as it is precious to mankind.

I want to leave these two messages: Accuse those responsible for bombing and protest against the inhumanity of the Atomic Bombing. But also accept the fact that we too are the guilty culprits in the course of this history. There is no such thing as good excuses. Have the courage to abandon war and dispose of nuclear weapons.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

A new generation of politicians who don't know war are moving to change Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, saying it is necessary to become free of post-war politics. That terrifies us very much. Almost 70 years has passed since the war ended and no one in Japan's Self-Defense Forces has died in combat in that period. This is thanks to Article 9 of the Constitution. Now, how many times has America gone to war since the end of WW II. These wars have not all been justified. Considering those facts, I want to pass this peace on to younger generations and maintain the present system.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.0 km, M, age 3

My fear is that one-day all the people of the world will forget the tragedy of war and the lessons taught by war. And we will do the wrong things all over again. Especially in Japan, some people are trying to change the present constitution. I worry that our country might become a nation that gets involved in war again. We cannot give our children "a country, which starts war" And now, I feel the fear of war more than ever. Peace, does not come to us just by itself. All of us, together, have to stand up and protect it.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.5 km, F, age 4

I testified about the Atomic Bombing in Washington DC and was questioned, "How can you manage to testify in front of your adversary, don't you feel a great anger?"

I answered, "I do not stand here with anger, nor with hatred. I cannot testify and protest against nuclear weapons with feelings like that." However, my answer wasn't delivered, to the audience because the interpreter could not stop crying. I do not feel anger. Maybe that's because I was too young at the time, but I also think it may be because my mother has taken the sin of those feelings to the next world. That's why, I say to the world "Don't let the mothers of the world cry".

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.6 km, F, age 9

All we can do is to let others know how terrifying the Atomic Bombs are, in the hope that one day, peace will come, and there will be no more war. There aren't many people who can tell personal stories of that time anymore, and even when we do, many people just walk passed us. We all have to do what each of us can do, since there are those, who have lost their lives and their dreams.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

The Atomic Bomb victims are aging day by day. I want to tell the younger generations the true history of what

actually happened as much as I can. The future of this world depends on the thoughts and the actions of young people. The sufferings, we the Atomic Bomb victims have experienced is not a story of the distant past. It will be close to us as long as nuclear weapons exist. And it could very well happen to the next generation. I say, "We do not want any more Atomic Bomb victims" To speak of my experiences is to prevent the world from making the same mistakes.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.7 km, F, age 5

For more than a half century, the Atomic Bomb victims along with people wishing for peace of the world, have continued to tell people inside of and outside of Japan not to "make more bomb victims" and to "create a world without war and without nuclear weapons". Now that I have lived to the age of 78, it is not so hard to guess that my wish to see a world without nuclear weapons will not come to be. It is time I pass on my wishes to the next generations. I wish all the young people will learn from history that you cannot sit and wait for peace to come. You need to make efforts to acquire peace. From that lesson, I want them to look for and to find the way for "the world to prioritize peace and life most of all" and to avoid being involved in wars. I believe, that "peace will happen through communication between different people". So for the younger generations, I want them to communicate with lots of people in their own fields all over the world and exchange culture because the closer you become with strangers, the farther away war will be.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.2 km, M, age 16

I want you to take over, and be the leader of Atomic Bomb victims and nuclear accident victims, and tell the world that everyone needs to think of the disposal of nuclear waste problem as it is their own problem. We say, "Today, you are a listener, tomorrow you will be the story teller". If you cannot ask your listener to tell the next person to spread the story of what they have heard, you cannot change the tide of

public opinion and dispose of nuclear weapons.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 3.5 km, F, age 7

After the war, the Japanese government covered up the effects of the Atomic Bombs.

While we are working for the bomb victims, the Tohoku Earthquake occurred in 2011. Once again, the government did not reveal the true damage caused by the damage to the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plants. After all, the government has not changed from that time.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.4 km, F, age 2

Stories of Atomic Bomb victims are not just about the hardships that they have been through. You should be aware that we too are, in fact, facing the same problem and that we live in the same era, as we listen to the stories. Wouldn't that be the least we can do for those who died? I have pledged at my mother's gravestone "To make a world without nuclear weapons, and to think of it as my own problem". I will do the same for the people who are suffering from the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant accident, and think of the problem as my own as well.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 1.3 km, M, age 13

The government of Japan has stated, "In an emergency situation which is a threat to the entire nation such as war, all citizens will be required to make contributions to the nation, either with their lives, bodies, or positions. As those sacrifices are *public sacrifices*, all citizens have to equally endure the hardships". That statement still exists and it has not been over turned. The bomb victims are telling the nation to apologize to those killed. If they do, the government cannot start another war. The average age of the Atomic Bomb victims is now over 80, so we hope to hand over the baton of life and pass on.

Nagasaki, directly exposed survivor, 3.0 km, M, age 13

Not only for the damage caused by the

Atomic Bombs, but we must also make "that" country admit that they have responsibility for that war. We cannot change the recent movement to revise the constitution so that the country can start a war again. The Atomic Bomb victims are not clinging to the past damage. If we don't make the government admit their fault, in future there will be more bomb victims. These are the messages that I want to pass down to the next generations.

Hiroshima, directly exposed survivor, 2.2 km, M, age 1

2.3 million soldiers, and 3.1 million if you include civilians, have lost their lives. I want to make it apparent to everyone that the country went into an unwinnable war. Couldn't we have saved half of the losses if we had ended the war, a year earlier? Over 100 thousand people also lost their lives in air-raids in Tokyo and in Okinawa. It is hard to tell who and what is responsible for that.

Nagasaki, entry survivor, M, age 12

It isn't possible to understand and explain the absurdity of war, just by listening to the experiences of victims or just by talking about it. You first need to learn the historical background and then start building up on that knowledge what you hear from others. The fact that your understanding of war is logical can be the core of your anger, and it also can make your peace activities last longer.

Readers' Remarks: what the successors want to tell the world and the next generation

Sections one through three in this booklet are voices from Atomic Bomb survivors, Hibakusha, and these words were listened to and transcribed by young people hoping to hand down the messages of the Hibakusha to posterity. In this section, the sentiments and resolution of those who worked together with the Hibakusha in this project are introduced.

Note: People from all walks of life, including students, joined this program. As for the comments given by students, their school year at the time they listened to the Hibakusha's testimonies is indicated in brackets following their comments.

■ Among the Hibakusha who have struggled with their pains ever since the end of the war, only a few are brave enough to talk about what they experienced on that day. How can I satisfy them with my reaction to their stories while living my ordinary everyday life? “ Maybe you can't understand the situation. It's totally beyond imagination.” That's probably true. Even so, I am determined to accept everything I heard from them, and pass it down to our generation. The time remaining for the Hibakusha is limited, but they are trying to convey things that are hard to understand. Let me receive the baton from Hibakusha. So, I shall take it. (2nd year high school student)

■ I was able to listen to the stories of an Atomic Bomb survivor: not only the story of how she couldn't confess that she is a Hibakusha to her husband and his family, but also the story of how she felt guilty when her daughter got sick and then asked her if she was one of the survivors.

It was my first time to hear the stories of Hibakushas' experiences , and although I was really shocked by the truth that the Atomic Bombs destroyed the most bright, promising time of their lives, and by the stories that described how the impact of

the Atomic Bomb and the war continued for such a long time after the end of the war. I strongly hope that our generation should try to understand their experiences and pass the stories on to other people so as not to forget their “heart”. (3rd year high school student)

■ Although there are many high school students who are interested in peace and social issues, not many of them have the initiative to take part in an actual event like this. What we need to do right now is to think about how we can motivate those young, people, especially junior and senior high school students, to think together about peace. (2nd high school student)

■ What's left most in my heart is the truth that the pain and discrimination brought by Atomic Bomb never ends. I feel very sad because wars are still waged even though many people are strongly against war. I truly wish that more and more people would pray for peace. (3rd year high school student)

■ When I asked “What was the most difficult experience of being a Hibakusha?” I was told that because their daughter is a second- generation of Hibakusha, her marriage proposal was declined by her

partner's parents. I thought this is terrible. However, the parents of the partner would have also thought about the life of a future grandchild. What is truly terrible is not the parents' reaction who were just being honest as human beings, but the war itself which eventually dropped Atomic Bombs on Japan. (2nd year high school student)

■ No matter how much we grieve over this tragedy that already happened, the hurt and loss will never come back. This is why we must have power to imagine what war is and learn from the past in order to keep conveying our thoughts about peace to the rest of the world. “War should be gone from our world forever no matter what happens.” Here I would like to pledge that I will do my best to make the wishes of the Hibakusha come true. Let's keep the strong messages of the Hibakusha engraved in our hearts, and be determined to stop war. Listen to the voices unheard. Cover the invisible pain with our tears, and hold them tight. (2nd year high school student)

■ Amid ongoing controversy over a proposal to amend Article 9 of Japan's Constitution and Osaka City Mayor Hashimoto's negative comment about the so-called “comfort women” issue, war is

no longer a thing in the past in Japanese minds. It is necessary that those who are building the future listen to the stories of the aging Hibakushas' experiences, and pass them down to the younger generation. This need is not limited to only the stories of the Atomic Bomb, but the same principle should be applied to all other things which must not be forgotten, such as the experiences of the air raids and the Fukushima nuclear explosion incident. (2nd year high school student)

■ “ Where there are one hundred Hibakusha, there will be one hundred stories to tell.”

I felt exactly the same way after hearing the stories of many Hibakushas' experiences.

I should never feel that's enough, I don't need to hear any more. I should listen to as many stories as possible. And in that way, form my own views about war. (3rd year high school student)

■ One of the survivor's strong hope that there will be “ no more wars” is genuine. I really feel that we in Japan, which is the only nation that has been a victim of Atomic Bombs, should know everything about what actually happened before we try to take action for peace to the world. (a high school student)

■ One of the Hibakusha said, “ This year, 2015, is very important because it marks the 70th year since the Atomic Bombings. I really feel that we have never again have such a significant moment in the future.” This surprised me and it made me think. What does the 70th Anniversary year mean for all of the surviving Hibakusha? We need to take this very seriously.

■ While one of the Hibakusha never told one of her children that they were both Hibakusha, she confided it to her daughter who was born after the war. I thought this reflected the mother's kindness. She did not want to make her Hibakusha child worry. I think we also need to listen to what the mother told her daughter born after the war. As a child and sister of Atomic Bomb victims, that daughter really cared about the mothers and the children who suffered from the Fukushima nuclear explosion. We should record as many testimonies of Hibakusha as possible in order to help all of the surviving Hibakusha.

■ A nine-year old boy walked around the city of Nagasaki after the blast of the Atomic Bomb and discovered that everyone in his family was dead. This is really hard to imagine. And what waited for him next was the harsh reality of ostracism and being sent from one relative's place to another. “How could all these things happen to me?” These words are now deep in my heart. I feel the cruelty brought by the Atomic Bomb. In spite of his sufferings, that boy was eager to look forward to the future and live his life fully. Not only did he graduate from high school while working at a part-time job, but he also tried to study at an open university.

A middle-aged member of the group who listened to the Hibakusha's stories said, “I was really moved by that young boy's positive attitude in the midst of his first reaction what had happened towards his own life. He was determined to always be cheerful no matter what happens, and to cherish his relationships with other people.” It really is an important message.

■ While my father was away fighting in the war, his wife and their children died in the Atomic Bombing. My father remarried after the war and I am a child of that marriage. I have a memory from my elementary school days of hearing stories about the Atomic Bombs when we all went to school on August 9th during the summer vacation. Later, when I visited my family graves, I realized that my half brothers at the time of the Atomic Bombing were so young, only three and five years old. This made me feel that I should live my life fully for them. And today, after hearing the Hibakushas' stories I, again, strongly feel how horrible are both war and the Atomic Bombs. I am determined to study with other people and take part in the “ No More Hibakusha” campaign.

■ When the Hibakusha tell us about that day, the day of the Atomic Bombs, they tell us about what they saw, what they smelled, and what their hellish experiences were like. I think that when they tell us their stories, filled with painful flashbacks and experiences they don't want to recall - stories they don't want to tell even to their own families - we must humbly listen. I realize how brave they are for telling their stories, which are not confined to a moment or a day, but rather they are stories of their 68-year history of living with discrimination.

■ The first time that I heard a Hibakusha's personal testimony and his reasoning for proactively talking about such a horrific experience, I felt especially how sincere he was. It could have been me. There were kind underclassmen in the girls' high school and I must speak out for their sake. I want to

discover ways to convey thoughts like these.

■ The fact that the whereabouts of the Hibakusha' elder sister and mother are unknown to this day moved my heart. The story of how he dug through the burnt remains of his house but found nothing had not been mentioned until a question was asked. I realized that much of what he felt on that day, August 9, heading home from Tachibanawan, where he had been mobilized, to Matsuyama, where he lived, was left unsaid. "It is not something good, it is quite a harsh bitter memory so I came to want to try to forget about it. I began to think of disappearing without talking with anyone. When seeing my carefree 5-year-old grandchild, who reminds me of my sister, I thought that these children will never know anything about it if I don't talk. I have to talk." But it wasn't just the contents of the narration. It was his expressions and the tone of his voice that made me feel the Hibakusha' s everlasting "pain" and "wishes for the future."

■ The fact that Hibakusha talk about their experiences because this issue, rather than being part of the past, is an issue that persists today and concerns even our future was most impressive. I was strongly convinced that we, the young generation who are carrying the future on our shoulders have to think about this more earnestly.

■ How can we convey to this generation, one that is only familiar with the contemporary lifestyle that war is not something of the past? I fully realized that this is something we must reflect on further and further.

■ I once again thought that our country's culture has not changed from that day to this day. The circumstances of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Fukushima are not being correctly reported on.

■ The words "youth these days" have been used negatively for a long time but I was able to feel hopeful that there is something only we can do about this issue. "Because we're alive." I want to keep on living while remembering this. (2nd year university student)

■ This was the first time I heard the stories of the Hibakusha first-hand, and I became embarrassed by my own ignorance. As a Japanese, and as a future mother, I want to study so that, from now on, I can pass on accurate information.

When, during teaching practice, I noticed a student selecting "The atomic bomb brought an end to the war, it was inevitable", option to a question I sensed impending danger. I realized that someone who had participated in this event and heard the Hibakusha testimonials first-hand would not have thought that way, so I learned how important these opportunities are. (4th year university student)

■ A Hibakusha's words "life's baton pass" were impressive. Indeed, I realized how necessary it is for us to take that baton and, turning towards the world, take action.

■ Upon hearing that we have to find a way to carry on the collaboration with people in foreign countries and promote action by youth on this issue, I decided to try new ways of successfully conducting activities from now on. I strongly thought that it's

necessary for us to study the history of war and the Atomic Bombings, and make sure that such mistakes are never made again. For that end, I believe it's important for us to have the courage to raise our voices and take a stand, never allowing what must not be allowed, while bearing the thoughts of those who have experienced war in mind.

■ Every student today is thinking of getting connected to the next generation. It would be nice if we could come up with a role for those students. (3rd year university student)

■ With the personal experiences of each Hibakusha being distinct, I not only wanted to know more, I fully realized we must know more. As much as we try to imagine the tragedy of that day, I'm sure that the reality was in fact even worse. (4th year university student)

■ In a debate held after a school trip to Hiroshima, I was shocked to find that those in favor of and against the war were evenly split. I felt that it is necessary for us to study ways of stirring up the imagination and better conveying the message of peace. On the other hand, I began to think that even those without personal experience could participate in narrations that include the attackers and the victims or that connect to current wars.

■ First of all I want to learn more about the Atomic Bombings, and having done that, I want to play an active part in anti-war activities. I would like to keep on working on events such as recitals, peace work, vigils for peace and concerts. (4th year university student)

■ I am now interested in hearing testimonies from many more people. I also want to look into issues mentioned during the talk, like the spread of nuclear weapons and war-victim compensation from now on. (3rd year university student)

■ You cannot convey the cruelty and inhumanity of the Atomic Bomb in a few words, so I would like to increase the opportunities for people to actually hear the stories from the Hibakusha themselves, as well as to join them in taking responsible action as citizens to make sure that the same tragic acts are not committed ever again.

■ Every story they tell feels new, and in the knowledge they impart you can feel the warmth of mankind accumulating. By the end of the talks I wanted to know more.

■ I wondered why the Japanese government repeats the same mistakes. Nothing but sadness remains when wars take place,

and starting nuclear plants will end up leading to a second Hiroshima or Nagasaki in my opinion. (High-school student)

■ Figuring out how to leave behind for future generations the voices of those who cannot speak is an issue that I felt needs to be addressed, and it is something that I will think about from now on. (2nd year university student)

■ The current government, on pretexts like aiding developing countries, stimulating the Japanese economy, or even preventing global warming is eagerly pushing for the sale of nuclear power plants. However, it seems that they are not interested in - or are even actively avoiding - learning about the suffering and sadness of the Atomic Bomb victims. They condescendingly tell us to endure the sacrifices and accept the risks because it is for the sake of the country's growth. For example, in the case of Fukushima, no one takes responsibility for it. It is the same whether it's war or

nuclear accidents. I would say that the Japanese politicians' culture of unaccountability has invited corruption to the political sphere by keeping politics away from the general public.

◎ Groups that heard the Testimonies of Atomic Bomb Survivors

- Tokyo High School Students in a Peace Seminar Network
- Co-op Mirai – Endomame – of the Saitama region
- Co-op Mirai – the Urawa Peace Club of the Saitama region
- Co-op Mirai – Pyonfa of the Saitama region
- Co-op Mirai – Reporters' Interview Club
- Co-op Mirai UNICEF Peace Committee of the Saitama Region
- JCCU Cooperative Private Preparatory School
- Co-op Aichi Interview Reporters of the Voices of the Hibakusha
- Chiba Prefecture Executive Committee of Interview Reporters of the Hibakusha's Experience
- Executive Committee of Interview Reporters of Hibakusha's Experience (Saitama region)
- Peace Activity Promotion Committee in the Association of Labor Unions of Consumers' Cooperatives
- Network to talk about and pass on the stories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- No More Hibakusha Project-Inheriting Memories of the A-and H-Bomb Sufferers

Representative of National Government of Nuclear Weapon State

April 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo) is the national organization of the Hibakusha, who directly experienced and somehow managed to survive the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the U.S. military 70 years ago on August 6 and 9, 1945.

What we witnessed on these days were horrific sights beyond all imagination. All living creatures were killed or maimed by the enormous and unprecedented destructive power of the bombs. They burned buildings and houses to the ground, turning Hiroshima and Nagasaki into cities of death. Spread out before us was a completely scorched land, full of dead bodies and injured people writhing in pain. Its misery can only be described as "hell." Invisible radiation from the bombs continues to afflict the survivors and undermine their health.

These A-bomb survivors witnessed firsthand the true nature of nuclear weapons and understand on a physical level that they are "weapons of extermination." Nuclear weapons are "weapons of the devil" that strip people of everything human. They cannot coexist with human beings. They must not be used for any reason whatsoever. We must not allow them to be used. The next use of atomic bombs will mean the extinction of the human race. As long as nuclear weapons exist in the world, human beings will always be haunted by the threat of nuclear war and will be in danger of extinction.

For the last 70 years since those two days, we have consistently and fervently appealed to the world, "Prevent nuclear war, abolish nuclear weapons," "No more Hibakusha," and "Hiroshima and Nagasaki should never be repeated anywhere on earth."

In April 2010, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross made an appeal to strengthen diplomacy toward the reduction and ultimate destruction of nuclear weapons through a focus on the inhumane nature of these weapons. The 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed in its final document "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons." The first Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference released the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Nature of Nuclear Disarmament, and urged that an international conference be held on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. We have seen five Joint Statements and three international conferences between then and now, as we stand here today for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We are encouraged by the fact that a majority of nations and regions are now doing their best to realize "a world without nuclear weapons."

We hereby make the following requests to the heads and representatives of all Nuclear Weapons States:

-- Urgently implement the "unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the elimination of nuclear arsenals," which you agreed upon at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and reaffirmed again in 2010.

-- Take a bold step forward toward the abolition of nuclear weapons by shifting to national security measures based on mutual trust and not on nuclear deterrence. We ask you to consider starting negotiations for a legal framework and take a brave and bold first step toward the swift abolition of nuclear weapons.

-- Please come and see the A-bomb exhibition "A Message to the World from Hiroshima and Nagasaki," to be held by Nihon Hidankyo at the Main Gallery in the Visitors' Lobby of the U.N. Building. And please listen to the accounts and appeals of the ailing Hibakusha, who have risked their lives to travel to New York. It is our hope for all to learn from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo)

NIHON HIDANKYO (Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations)

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