

2019 World Conference against A & H Bombs

Hiroshima Day Rally

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Japan

Hello, everyone. I am Tamiko Nishimoto from the Ishikawa Prefectural Association of A-bomb Survivors. I was born and brought up in Hiroshima. I came to live in the city of Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, when my husband was transferred to the city.

At the age of 4 years and 8 months, I was exposed to atomic bomb radiation at home, a few kilometres from the hypocenter.

On August 6, 1945, it was a sunny and hot day from the early morning hours. I was the youngest of seven children. My father left home for work and my brothers and sisters left to join the student mobilization or go to primary school. I was at home with my mother.

My mother was planning to take part in **labor service in building evacuation**, (building an evacuation center???) but she was lying at home because she felt ill. I was with my mother grumbling about the sweltering condition.

A boy suddenly shouted, "A B29 is coming!" The B29 was an American bomber. But there was no air raid warning. My mother rushed to the window. Looking up at the sky, we certainly saw a B29. When I stepped back, feeling our lives were in danger, we were struck by a tremendous flash. At that moment I wondered if it was a dream, as it had become dark all around me. Things began to fall on my head. They may have been roof tiles.

I was screaming in pain. Then my mother pulled me into the closet and protected me under her body. In a short while it calmed down. I fearfully got out of the closet to find our house completely collapsed. The roof and the walls had fallen and the rooms were covered with debris. Houses in the neighbourhood were destroyed as well.

My third grader sister came home crying with her back stained with blood. My mother heard that the roads were covered with rubble and the clinics crowded with dying people. She managed to locate the emergency bag from under the rubble, but found only mercurochrome in it. She pulled out a little piece of wood from my sister's neck and applied mercurochrome. This was all she could do to treat her wound. My

mother took her daughters to a vineyard (???? Vineyard means grapes???) in the suburbs of Hiroshima.

In the city of Hiroshima, buildings had caught fire from heat rays of 3000 to 4000 degree Celsius. The whole of the city was swept away by a blast at a height of 250 meters, immediately followed by a blazing inferno. The people who were outside escaped the fire and rushed toward the seven rivers, which were by now full of bodies. The people who were inside were crushed under collapsing buildings and houses AND OTHERS? were burned alive while desperately looking for help.

The city of Hiroshima turned into hell from a single atomic bomb.

Many notes left by people say that hell, if it existed,, would not have been as horrible as this. We reached the vineyard to find a crowd of people suffering from serious burns and injuries. I saw a female student lying down on the straw mat. She had burned hair and a swollen face like a dodge ball, and I could not even make out her facial features. She could not even groan. There was nothing to eat so we took unripe grapes. Because of this, I think, I was vomiting, had a fever, vomit, diarrhoea, and like dysentery-symptoms.

At that time, doctors were wondering why there were so many people with such systems but without the presence of shigella bacteria. Later we found out that it was an acute symptom caused by radiation. We were told that no plants would grow over the next 70 years in Hiroshima. A single atomic bomb annihilated the city of Hiroshima and took the lives of 140,000 people by the end of the year.

My brother's life was saved but he died at the age of 46. My father and my eldest sister came home after the bomb detonated, and they were not directly hit by the bomb. My father had not been ill for many years. But after retirement, he suffered from many kinds of disease and became bedridden for 10 years until his death. My eldest sister had thyroid disorders and had to take medicine until her death.

Even after 74 years, A-bomb survivors are still afflicted with various illnesses.

The nuclear bomb is an evil weapon that cannot coexist with humans.

In fact, there is not much time left for us, the hibakusha.

I have been seriously thinking about what we can leave to the future generation in our lifetime.

In Ishikawa Prefecture three years ago, we made a DVD featuring hibakusha telling their atomic bomb experiences. Hibakusha, who are aging, and often with disabilities, told about their painful stories on camera by identifying themselves. We did this because we have strong desire that others not have to weather the inferno of the atomic bomb.

We donated the DVD to all primary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, universities and community centers in Ishikawa prefecture.

21 years ago, we built a bronze atomic bomb monument titled: "Children of Peace" on the top of the hill in Kanazawa. This was very nicely designed with a boy raising a crane and a girl snuggling up (???? Not clear to whom) . Every year, we organize a peace day here with seven other groups. One year after the completion of this statue, a local folk music group dedicated a song to the statue. This is a beautiful song that touches hibakusha's heart. It is sung at the Peace Day event every year. This song is also performed in many primary schools. In May this year, a team of 15 members produced a CD of this song and donated it to all primary schools in this prefecture. Thanks to newspapers and TV reporting widely, we receive many orders from around the country, from Hokkaido to Okinawa. It is a great pleasure to know that the DVD and CD make it possible to continue to pass on our message for peace to young people even after our death.

In July 7, 2017, at the United Nations, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted. I was so pleased that I had tears in my eyes. This treaty will go into effect after it is ratified by more than 50 states. Today, 24 states have already ratified it. Regrettably, the Japanese government turns its back on this treaty despite the country being the only country to suffer the atomic bombings. It has refused to sign or ratify the treaty. This fact is not acceptable at all.

Friends, please speak out with your own words even after hibakusha are gone.

Let's heighten the levels of public opinion to press the Japanese government to sign and ratify the nuclear ban treaty. We are earnestly wishing for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Together let us fight.