

The 2020 World Conference against A and H Bombs

Letter from Nagasaki to All Governments

On the occasion of the 2020 World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, which met online on the day of the 75th year of the A-bombing of Nagasaki in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we appeal to all governments around the world to take action to achieve a “nuclear weapon-free, peaceful and just world” without delay.

Nuclear weapons are still threatening the whole of humanity. Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the testimonies of the Hibakusha are evidence of what inhumane consequences the use of nuclear weapons could generate. In the two cities, the lives of over 200,000 people were lost by the end of 1945; those who narrowly escaped death later suffered from the delayed effects of the atomic bombings, social discrimination and poverty; and subsequent generations are still haunted by anxieties about the genetic effects of the bombs on their health.

The use of nuclear weapons means the total denial of human lives and dignity. Their use should never be allowed for any reason whatsoever. It is a responsibility of all government leaders to look squarely at their inhumane nature and take steps to ban and eliminate them.

More than 700,000 people have already died across the world from the pandemic, and the destitute and other socially vulnerable strata of the people have suffered the most. A recent UN statement points out: “In the 75-year history of the United Nations, the folly of seeking security in vast destructive arsenals has never been clearer.” The wasting of as much as 2 trillion dollars for nuclear weapons development and other military pursuits must immediately end, and the resources should be redirected to improve people’s livelihoods, employment opportunities and public health services as well as to meet other human needs.

The negotiation for nuclear disarmament is an obligation which all parties to the NPT, including the nuclear weapon states, have accepted without exception. Denying or neglecting the pledges and agreements on the elimination of nuclear weapons on the grounds of protecting their own “security” is a grave betrayal of humanity as a whole which can never be justified.

As laid down by the first Resolution of the UN General Assembly, the elimination of nuclear weapons is the very starting point of the post WWII international relations. We call on all governments to take the following actions to save humanity from nuclear catastrophe, remembering the warnings from Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the Hibakusha:

- To listen to the Hibakusha; promote public education on the inhuman nature of nuclear weapons and support the Hibakusha and civil society movements engaged in this effort;

- To sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons promptly and further promote international cooperation to bring it into force;

- To make every effort for the obligation under Article 6 of the NPT to be fulfilled and nuclear disarmament negotiations conducted and completed at disarmament deliberations in the 75th Session of the UNGA as well as at the next NPT Review Conference; To reaffirm and implement all the agreements reached by the previous review conferences, including the “unequivocal undertaking” of the nuclear weapon states to “accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals”, the “special efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain” a world without nuclear weapons, and to take further steps to reach the goal;

-- That all nuclear powers stop the development and modernization of their nuclear arsenals and other actions that run counter to nuclear disarmament; they must renounce the “nuclear deterrence” doctrine and make sincere efforts to achieve the total abolition of nuclear weapons;

-- To drastically reduce military expenditures and change the policy direction to one of giving top priority to protecting the lives, safety, security and dignity of each citizen.

Cooperation between governments and their citizens is essential to resolve the global crises ranging from climate change, poverty, nuclear arms, to the pandemic. We will take action with you to achieve a peaceful, just, sustainable and gender-equal world free of nuclear weapons.

August 9, 2020

The Organizing Committee of the World Conference against A and H Bombs