

2021 World Conference against A & H Bombs

Nagasaki Day Rally

Organizer's report

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I am joining you at this rally from the ancient capital of Japan, Kyoto, which, until half a month before the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, was slated as the primary target of the atomic bomb. (Slide 1)

This footage shows the record of a meeting of the Target Committee held in the US on May 9, 1945, one day after the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, to consider where in Japan the US should drop atomic bombs. The record shows that Kyoto topped the list. (Slide 2)

The chosen target was a round warehouse at the railroad yard of Umekoji, about one kilometer west of Kyoto Station. It was in the middle of the Kyoto basin. The target can be seen today at the Kyoto Railway Museum near Kyoto Station. (Slide 3)

But, in fact, atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as shown in this slide show. We should not take these mushroom clouds as a symbol of ending the war. (Slide 4)

We must take a hard look at the inhumane damage that was caused below the mushroom clouds and deepen our awareness that nuclear weapons must never be used. We need to turn this awareness into the source of energy for the movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The picture on the left shows Taniguchi Sumiteru, a Hibakusha of Nagasaki, who passed away in August 2017, a month after the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear weapons was adopted at a UN conference. After resuming his place in society, he devoted his life to the relief of the Hibakusha and the movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons. (Slide 5)

The picture on the right shows a boy incinerated by the atomic bomb in Nagasaki. In November 1995, Nagasaki Mayor Iccho Ito testified in tears before the International Court of Justice, putting up this photo and appealing to the hearts of the justices.

The United States thought no other country would be able to develop atomic bombs for the next 15 years or so. But, in 1949, only four years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the former Soviet Union

successfully conducted a test explosion of a plutonium bomb in Semipalatinsk. (Slide 6)

In the 1950s through the 1960s, Britain, France and China succeeded in developing atomic bombs. US President John F. Kennedy expressed concerns that the number of nuclear weapon possessing countries might increase to 25 by the mid-1970s. The United States and the Soviet Union came to share the concern about possible nuclear proliferation. (Slide 7)

In 1970, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or NPT, was concluded, with the United States and the Soviet Union taking the initiative. (Slide 8)

The NPT classified as ‘nuclear weapon states’ the five countries that had developed and tested nuclear weapons by January 1, 1967—namely the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, France and China—distinguishing them from the rest and banning the non-nuclear NPT member nations from possessing such weapons. The treaty’s objective was ostensibly to prevent nuclear proliferation and promote nuclear disarmament. As of May 2021, the number of states parties to the NPT stands at 191 out of 194 UN member states. That’s 98.45 percent of all UN member states. This is why the NPT is sometimes referred to as a “constitution of nuclear disarmament.”

The NPT’s Article 6 requires the five nuclear powers—the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China—to “pursue negotiation in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament.” But the undertaking has not been met. (Slide 9)

What’s more, these five nuclear powers are permanent members of the UN Security Council. They have a veto power. Each country has a right to block action proposed by others at the UN Security Council. The Security Council cannot come to a conclusion on any agenda item if one of the P5 opposes. (Slide 10)

In addition, there have emerged countries that produce nuclear weapons outside the NPT framework without joining the NPT. They are India, Israel, Pakistan and North Korea. Laws made in the Japanese Diet bind all Japanese people. But an international treaty is valid only for states parties. (Slide 11)

Non-nuclear countries and the people of the world who want to get nuclear weapons eliminated thought they could not leave the matter to the nuclear weapon states. Recalling the starting point of the issue, they took a fresh look at how nuclear weapons were used against Hiroshima and Nagasaki in war, how the nuclear weapons were produced, and what damage the nuclear test explosions caused. They elucidated the inhumane consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and made these consequences known to people, appealing to the historic importance of the abolition of nuclear weapons. (Slide 12)

Experts from the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the International Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) took part in the drafting of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and brought it to UN discussions in cooperation with governments of non-nuclear countries. By bringing together voices of Japanese Hibakusha as well as people affected by nuclear weapons around the world, they launched a major international campaign calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons. (Slide 13)

On July 7, 2017, the draft Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted at a UN conference with 122 countries voting in favor, one country against, and one country abstaining. The Netherlands voted against to represent the NATO position, which does not mean Dutch people are against the treaty. (Slide 14)

Japan was absent from the conference at the historic adoption of the treaty. As shown in the footage, a message card was left at the Japanese delegation's seat. It said, "Wish you were here." (Slide 15)

On October 24, 2020, Honduras was the 50th country to ratify the treaty. It was United Nations Day. And 90 days after that, on January 22, 2021, the TPNW came into force. Unfortunately, all the nuclear weapon states and the countries which are slave to the so-called "extended nuclear deterrence" policy for their defence remain opposed to the treaty. (Slide 16)

Why are the nuclear weapon states and their allies opposed to the TPNW? It is because the TPNW is the first treaty to comprehensively prohibit signatories from developing, testing, producing, stockpiling, transferring, using and threatening to use nuclear weapons. (Slide 17)

The nuclear weapon countries' "nuclear deterrence" policy is structured on a security policy that allows nuclear weapons to be used in an emergency. If nuclear weapons are banned, there is no justification for nuclear deterrence policy. For this reason, they could not accept the treaty unless they gave up their nuclear deterrence policy. (Slide 18)

There are more than 13,000 nuclear warheads, stockpiled by nine nuclear-weapon countries, threatening the survival of humanity. We won the entry into force of the TPNW on January 22, 2021. The reality is that there still remain a huge number of nuclear weapons in the world even though the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is in force. We must work to resolve this contradiction. (Slide 19)

What can we do? First, we should reach out to the governments of nuclear-armed states and the people and eligible voters supporting their governments' policy to convince them more than ever of the inhumanity of the use of nuclear weapons, and urge them to change this policy. Secondly, we should urge the governments and people of countries that have voted for and signed the TPNW to take necessary measures to ratify it as soon as

possible. We should build a larger coalition to isolate the nuclear weapon countries while overwhelmingly increasing the TPNW's normative power. Thirdly, we, in the name of the sovereign people, should replace the government of Japan, which, at the beck and call of the US, is turning its back on the treaty, while pretending to represent the only country to have suffered nuclear attack in war. (Slide 20)

The theme of this World Conference is: "With the Hibakusha, Let Us Achieve a Nuclear Weapon-free, Peaceful and Just World – for the Future of Humankind and Our Planet." The tasks for us now are as follows. First, we should not just call for a ban on nuclear weapons but also show the prospect for the elimination of nuclear weapons for the nuclear weapon countries that are still to join the TPNW. Secondly, we should expose the risk of the use of nuclear weapons and continue to tell people about the necessity of abolishing nuclear weapons. Thirdly, we should further develop the movement and joint efforts to create a Japanese government that signs and ratifies the TPNW. (Slide 21)

I hope the participants will take the World Conference as an opportunity to study about the issues and situation relating to nuclear weapons, and to think and put into practice what you can do to overcome this disaster in human history. (Slide 22)

With this I conclude the Organizer's report. Thank you.