

2022 WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN BOMBS
**The International Meeting (2nd day) Session III on Prohibition and
Elimination of nuclear weapons and peace and security of Asia**

Hiroshima, 5th August 2022

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Distinguished guests, esteemed activists and friends,

At the outset, I would like to extend to all participants in the Conference the warmest greetings and sincerest sentiments of friendship from the Vietnam Peace Committee and the Vietnamese people. I also would like to thank the Organising Committee to invite me to attend and address this year's Conference.

For nearly 70 years, the World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs along with peace movements around the world, have spared no effort for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons. Many positive progress of nuclear disarmament has been attained, especially the adoption of important treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The TPNW is an important milestone in prevention and reverse of a potential danger of nuclear war. It comprehensively prohibits nuclear weapons as a necessary first step towards their elimination. The First Meeting of the TPNW's States Parties in June established a framework for its effective implementation, broader nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation architecture.

I hope that the Tenth NPT Review Conference which occurs in parallel with our Conference will be concluded with positive outcomes, thus contributing, along with other efforts including today's World Conference, to create a new impetus to building a world without nuclear weapons.

In Asia-Pacific, ASEAN countries held a meeting in June to review the five-year implementation of the Action Plan of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ) and prepare for its next five-year extension. ASEAN countries have reaffirmed their commitment to preserving Southeast Asia as a region free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Being a responsible member of the international community, Vietnam has consistently advocated and made active contributions to nuclear disarmament efforts. Vietnam is one of the first countries to sign, ratify and implement the TPNW. Vietnam also has actively called on all countries, especially those possessing nuclear weapons to support, sign and ratify the TPNW.

Friends,

The world is still facing the more trying time than ever. Major powers' strategic competition, rising great-power politics, militarization, unilateral actions in the use or threat of force are generating a lot of potential dangers, including a nuclear war. Major powers have shown their neglect of international law, especially the basic principles such as respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty and have intensified their hostility to international dispute resolution.

In addition, the Ukraine crisis deepens confrontation of nuclear powers, accelerates nuclear arms race, strengthens nuclear deterrence and military build-up in Asia and Pacific region.

On top of that, non-traditional security challenges, such as climate change, energy, water, food, etc. are still developing in complex ways and affecting global peace and security. Meanwhile, the existence, use and test of nuclear weapons have caused and aggravated environmental and ecological disasters as well as a legacy of serious health and catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

As you know, Asia is surrounded by nuclear weapon states. The region is witnessing geopolitical developments which have further deepened the nuclear danger in the region, including US-China hegemonic rivalries, deadlock of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, potential conflicts in the East Sea (internationally known as the South China Sea) and East China Sea and the risks of escalation among nuclear-armed states in Southern Asia.

Against this backdrop, many treaties and agreements on reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons risk to be dismantled. Accordingly, all efforts that the international community has put into in the past decades risk to go down the drain.

Friends,

It is high time that we strengthened our effort to abolish nuclear weapons and promote a new era of dialogue, trust and peace for all. There is still a lot of

work ahead, however, hope is offered to us with the TPNW's entry into force last year and the outcomes of the First Meeting of the TPNW's States Parties.

Along with this, we will continue to make our voice heard and make our actions realize a peaceful Asia and a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.

To that end, it is essential to uphold and demand for respect and adherence to international law, including the United Nations Charter, in particular the respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of states, non-interference in internal affairs of states, no use or threat of force and settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

It is very important for all state parties to respect and implement all past nuclear agreements, especially the NPT and the TPNW. It also requires stronger efforts and unity of all peace and progressive forces around the world.

Besides those demands, the imperative things to do ahead, in my opinion, are the followings:

(i) Continue to demand non-participating countries, especially the nuclear powers and non-nuclear allied countries support, sign and ratify the TPNW as a matter of course;

(ii) Call for peaceful measures to settle all disputes/conflicts in the region and across the world, stop the use or threat of force and fully respect the United Nations Charter and international law;

(iii) Uphold the NPT, the TPNW, other commitments and their contributions to the global nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation and elimination as well as promote these treaties and commitments in UN fora;

(iv) Strengthen international and regional cooperation in nuclear disarmaments and environmental remediation and support ASEAN's central role in the regional cooperation for peace, stability and prosperity;

(v) Strengthen support to victims/survivors of the Atomic and Hydrogen bombs and Agent Orange/Dioxin. Besides educational activities, inspiring testimonies of Hibakusha and Agent Orange/Dioxin victims should be spread worldwide and passed on generations for deeper understanding of the harm of nuclear and mass destruction weapons.

Persisting in our common endeavor, we will move forward step by step to a world without nuclear weapons. The Vietnam Peace Committee and the Vietnamese people is committed to work with all peace-loving forces in the world in this path.

It is my conviction that this year's World Conference will disseminate a powerful message that prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons will reverse a potential danger of nuclear war.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Vietnam Peace Committee, I would like to express our sincere and profound gratitude to Gensuikyo, Japanese friends, all international activists and friends for the support you reserved to Vietnam's past struggles for national independence as well as present efforts in national construction and defense.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Organising Committee for making this Conference a great opportunity for engagement between participants not only in virtual and in-person meetings but also in other side and associated activities.

I wish all participants and friends good health, peacefulness, happiness and success.

Thank you very much./.