

Nagasaki Day Rally, August 9

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Friends

I am sorry that I cannot be with you with an apology. Having recently had covid, I am grounded in the United States, but I am with you fully in spirit.

77 years ago today, Nagasaki and its people were devastated by the first plutonium nuclear weapon. This followed the Hiroshima crime against humanity and came when President Truman had been advised that without the A-bombs Japan's surrender could be arranged on acceptable terms. The U.S. has yet to apologize for these massive crimes against humanity – not that an apology can bring people back to life or heal torments inflicted on so many thousands of innocent people.

Adding insult to injury, the NPT Review Conference is taking place with the nuclear powers again resisting their Treaty obligation to engage in good faith negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the only way that we can prevent future Nagasakis and Hiroshimas.

Vladimir Putin's brutal and illegal invasion of Ukraine triggered the most dangerous transformation of the geopolitical disorder since the imposition of the Cold War. Even earlier, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* warned that humanity is 100 seconds from midnight- apocalypse. Before Putin's invasion of Ukraine, with the collapse of the ABM, INF, CFE, and Open Skies Treaties, the nuclear powers had plunged into unrestrained nuclear and high-tech arms races. Remember too that even as we condemn Putin's nuclear threats, The U.S. has done so least thirty times since the

Nagasaki A-bombing. And each of the other nuclear powers has also done so at least once.

While we celebrate the First Meeting of the States Parties of the TPNW's successes, the danger remains that Ukraine War will trigger nuclear holocausts. President Zelensky speaks of ousting Russia from the Donbass, and there are growing pressures in the U.S. to send still more offensive weapons to Kyiv to regain the Black Sea coast. President Biden and General Austin speak in terms of defeating and weakening Russia, while Russia moves to integrate its 2014 and 2022 Ukrainian conquests and senior figures in the U.S. Congress say they are willing to risk nuclear war.

Russian doctrine calls for the use of nuclear weapons if the Russian state is in jeopardy. Were this to become an extended war that bleeds Russian resources and power, or were Russian forces to face possible military defeat, Putin could launch tactical nuclear weapons to terrorize Kyiv into suing for peace. U.S. doctrine mandates use of nuclear weapons when its vital interests and those of its allies **and partners** are threatened. We thus face the danger of a possible cataclysmic nuclear exchange.

The imperative is to win a ceasefire and negotiated settlement.

In Asia, Washington warns that China is challenging its "rules based order," the global arrangements imposed at the dawn of the Cold War when China was a marginalized nation. In the tradition of rising powers, Beijing is pursuing what its elite believes to be their national interests, often, as in the East and South China/West Philippine Seas, with little regard for the rights and interests of other nations.

Washington is committed to defend its Indo-Pacific hegemony by ensuring it retains the military capabilities to defeat China. It intends to do so, in part, by shaping

the “strategic environment.” This includes deploying new nuclear weapons and their delivery systems, massive investments in cutting edge technologies, the QUAD and nuclear AUKUS alliances. It also explains why the militaries of 26 nations, led by the U.S., are engaged in the massive RIMPAC “exercises” to prepare for possible war against China.

China is no innocent. Witness Hong Kong, Xinjiang, the East and South China/West Philippine Seas and its live fire “exercises” surrounding Taiwan. But these do not justify Washington’s provocative “freedom of navigation” operations or its assault on the One China policy which could result in incidents, accidents or miscalculations leading to nuclear war. As with Pelosi’s trip, the Washington establishment is determined to bring Taiwan fully into the U.S. sphere to reinforce China’s containment. In addition to the U.S. warships and warplanes repeatedly deployed to the Taiwan Strait, Biden has reiterated the commitment to defend Taiwan. and the State Department removed statements from its webpage stating that the U.S. “does not support independence” for Taiwan and that “Taiwan is part of China”.

This is extremely dangerous. Taiwan cannot be militarily defended. Thus, Biden reaffirmed the U.S. first-strike nuclear war fighting doctrine. Only by threatening nuclear cataclysm, they believe, can they ensure that Beijing refrains from military action to reunify its so-called “renegade” province. Japan’s LDP leaders have also signaled that the SDF would join a fight for Taiwan. Why is Taiwan so central? Because it is the geostrategic hinge of the U.S. imperial system. Were it to fail to defend Taiwan, Washington’s Asian, Pacific, and European alliances would be called into question, and thus its global primacy.

Today all this takes place amidst increasingly unrestrained nuclear arms races in flagrant violation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. That is why the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was negotiated. Focusing on nuclear weapons humanitarian consequences the First Meeting of States Parties further stigmatized the use of nuclear weapons. And it deepened the Treaty's institutionalization. But this is not enough to prevent nuclear war or to move us toward a nuclear weapons free world. That will only come when our movements make it impossible for nuclear umbrella states like Japan to oppose the TPNW and remain complicit in preparations for nuclear annihilation. And those of us in the nuclear weapons states have yet to fulfill our moral and historic responsibilities to move our nations to embrace common security diplomacy, to eliminate our nations' reliance on nuclear weapons, and to begin the process of disarmament.

We have much to do together in the months and years ahead.

No more Hiroshimas! No more Nagasakis! No more Hibakusha! And No More War!