

Bikini Commemoration Conference – February 28, 2021
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I want to thank Gensuikyo for again inviting me to participate in this year's Bikini commemoration. I hope that everyone who is participating, and your families have been well and remain so. I have so missed many of you and look forward to the time that we can gather together.

I've been asked to speak about the new U.S.-China Cold War and about the promise of and need to universalize the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Let me begin with my conclusion: Even as we in the U.S. promote the TPNW, the most critical struggles now to fulfill the TPNW's promise are in the nuclear umbrella states, beginning with Japan. Your campaign for the Treaty is vital. If Japan or other umbrella states declare their independence and join the Treaty, that will begin to unravel the fabric of the nuclear disorder. In the shadows of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Bikini, and the continuing preparations for nuclear omnicide we can do no less.

After nearly a century of U.S. Asia-Pacific hegemony and the imposition of the U.S.-dominated post WWII Bretton Woods order, China has created an economy that is expected to soon overshadow that of the United States. As the world's new center of capital accumulation, it has created the foundation to build an increasingly advanced and powerful military. China's area denial air, naval and missile forces, largely defensive though they may be, increasingly challenge Washington's long-term ability to dominate the South China/West Philippine and East China Seas, in what since 1945 was the "American Lake". It is also apparent that Taiwan cannot be defended militarily.

Our era is largely defined by the inevitable tensions between rising and declining powers that have frequently resulted in catastrophic wars. When the post-WWII international order was imposed by the U.S., China was an impoverished and war torn, nation. Its needs and interests were not considered. It is now understandably pressing to revise, but not completely overturn, the rules of the global economic and strategic disorder.

While not wanting to understate the dangers related to the struggle to control the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, the two most urgent flashpoints are the South China/West Philippine Sea and Taiwan. China's claims to more than 80% of the South China/West Philippine Sea conflict with those of five other nations and the ruling of the International Court of Arbitration. And, with its seizure and construction of military bases on islets and reefs in disputed waters, Chinese policy makers are hardly innocents.

We do need to acknowledge the defensive dimensions of China's military buildup. In the past, China was invaded from the sea by the colonial powers and Japan. Were the South China Sea blockaded, it would sever Chinese access to Middle East oil and crush China's economy. And China's coastal concentration of industrial and financial resources are vulnerable to Washington's Air-Sea Battle preparations. Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry conceded that the spark that ignited China's military modernization was his ordering of two nuclear-capable aircraft carrier fleets to sail through the Taiwan Strait in 1996 terrifying China's leaders.

Faced with China's increasing economic, military, and diplomatic power, the Obama Administration responded with its "pivot to Asia and the Pacific" to reinforce U.S. hegemony. The commitment since then has been to deploy 60% of U.S. naval and air power to the Pacific Theater, to increase U.S. reliance on its regional allies, and to develop its Air-Sea Battle doctrine.

The Trump Administration doubled down on this containment policy with its 2018 *National Defense Strategy*. The *Strategy*, which will not be significantly changed by the Biden Administration, defined China as a "strategic competitor" and prioritized great power competition with China and Russia. It mandated "modernization of nuclear deterrence forces...[and] investment" in weaponizing advanced autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, and hypersonics"

This has fueled massive increases in military spending and the deepening expansion of U.S. military alliances – especially the U.S.-Japanese-Australian-Indian Quad. It has also included reaffirmation of U.S. "ironclad" commitment to its alliance with South Korea, its military backing to Japan's Senkaku/Diaoyu Island claims, and defense of the Philippines interests in the South China Sea. NATO also fell in line by adopting its NATO 2030 Doctrine, which makes containment of China a major priority.

Even with its announced Pentagon review of U.S. military strategy toward China, the Biden Administration will adhere to the broad outlines of Trump's *Defense Strategy*. Biden has repeatedly insisted that the U.S. must "get tough" with China. Thus Taiwan's de facto ambassador was invited to participate in the presidential inauguration. Biden appointed Kurt Campbell – the primary author of the Obama Administration's Asia-Pacific "pivot" – as the lead National Security Council Asia policy maker. And in their confirmation testimonies, Biden's senior national security officials each affirmed their commitments to get tough with China. To reinforce these commitments, earlier this month the Pentagon sent a destroyer through the Taiwan Strait and dispatched two aircraft carrier fleets for a massive so-called freedom of navigation show of force to the South China Sea.

China's leaders greeted the Biden administration with statements about the need for "cooperation instead of confrontation" between China and the United States, but these have accompanied provocative and dangerous military assertions of China's ambitions: dispatching bombers into Taiwan's airspace and a new law that "allows its coast guard to fire on foreign vessels".

Facing this situation, in which an accident or miscalculation could escalate into a catastrophic great power war, we need to remember that security cannot be achieved in unrestrained competition with a nation's rival, but only by creating guardrails to inevitably competition via mutually beneficial diplomacy.

In recent Track II exchanges, we are hearing that were President Biden to codify his past opposition to U.S. first strike nuclear warfighting with a No First Use declaration, matching China's, it could provide the foundation for future strategic stability and disarmament diplomacy. The U.S. can also reduce tensions by halting the misnamed freedom of navigation provocations, encouraging ASEAN-Chinese negotiations for an enforceable code of conduct, and encourage Taiwanese-Chinese negotiations.

In the U.S., there are newly emerging peace and real security formations committed to preventing and reverse the Cold War with China. While pressing for demilitarization of the tensions, organizations that I am associated with – The Committee for a SANE U.S.-China Policy and the Asia Pacific Working Group are also highlighting the need for U.S.-Chinese collaborations to stanch this and future pandemics, to address the existential threat of the climate emergency, and to fulfill their Article VI NPT commitments.

Turning to the TPNW, on January 22, people in communities across in the U.S. celebrated the TPNW's entry into force. Church bells were rung. People joined socially distanced standouts in public squares and outside companies involved in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Letters and articles were published in newspapers to focus attention on the continuing dangers of nuclear weapons and the Treaty's promise.

Those gatherings stood in sharp contrast to the electric sense of fear felt during the previous two weeks after Trump's failed coup d'état. With President Trump facing possible jail time and possible financial ruin and having the ability to press the nuclear button and take us all out along with our unhinged president, leading figures took action to prevent a nuclear holocaust. Fortunately, the essentials of U.S. constitutional democracy and humanity precariously survived those crises.

It was failure of the nuclear powers to fulfill their 50-year obligation to engage the "good faith" negotiations to eliminate their nuclear arsenals required by the NPT, and the quantitative and qualitative nuclear arms races that have continued unabated, that fueled negotiation of TPNW. Pressed by Hibakusha and activists, conscientious diplomats and civil society recognized their agency and rejected the nuclear powers' pathetic rationale that national security requires continued preparations for nuclear annihilation. With the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons conferences, they paved the way promulgation for the TPNW at the United Nations.

The Biden Administration is expected to lighten the tone of U.S. opposition to the TPNW, but that opposition will continue, as will the opposition of other nuclear powers. But, as the TPNW's authors understand, the Treaty's entry into force is the beginning of a longer effort. The Treaty further undermines the legitimacy of nuclear weapons and reinforces the NPT. In addition to the Treaty's prohibitions, are its mandates to assist nuclear weapons victims, and for parties to the Treaty to "encourage States not party to this Treaty to sign, ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Treaty." "Encouragement" can take many forms: lobbying government officials, funding nuclear disarmament advocates, discouraging investments from corporations and financial institutions involved in producing nuclear weapons, and ultimately, imposing sanctions!

U.S. activists take inspiration and encouragement from the TPNW. But, as I said when I began, the most critically important campaigning is now in the nuclear "umbrella states", including Japan. Should one or more of these protectorates break

from their masters and sign and ratify the Treaty, it can add massive momentum to unravelling the political fabric of the world's nuclear disorder.

This is a real possibility. Most Japanese want your government to join the TPNW. Australia's Labor Party, committed to joining the Treaty, almost won the 2019 election. And in the Netherlands a parliamentary majority voted in favor on the Treaty.

In the U.S. we have our work cut out for us: preserving constitutional democracy, stanching the pandemic that has claimed half a million lives, and revitalizing our economy. We must hold President Biden accountable to his campaign statements. As we educate about the TPNW and prepare for the NPT Review conference, our immediate priorities are salvaging the JCPOA nuclear deal with Iran, reducing funding for the massive upgrade of U.S. nuclear forces, and codifying Biden's stated opposition to the U.S. "first use" nuclear warfighting in the promised Nuclear Posture Review. Colleagues in Washington, D.C. have urged me to appeal to you. In addition to your essential campaigning to win Japan joining the TPNW, please pressure your government not to oppose possible U.S. no first use doctrine as it has in the past.

Friends, I want to close with a personal appeal to you to support Gensuikyo's essential role in winning Japanese participation in the TPNW. Last year the Bikini commemoration and the World Conference were cancelled due to the pandemic. And this year we're again online. Among the opportunities lost have been the fundraising dimensions of these critical events. That's money needed to help Gensuikyo do all that it can for the TPNW and a nuclear weapons free world. I hope that in addition to other actions you take in support of the TPNW that you will also send a financial contribution to Gensuikyo.

Together we can create the peaceful and nuclear weapons-free world that is essential for human survival.