

2018 World Conference against A & H Bombs – Hiroshima
August 6, 2018

Appeal from Hiroshima

Our light now is the ban treaty. To all in this hall and all listening around the world, I repeat those words that I heard called to me in the ruins of Hiroshima: "Don't give up! Keep pushing! See the light? Crawl towards it." – *From speech delivered by Setsuko Thurlow, Hibakusha of Hiroshima, at the Nobel Peace Prize awards ceremony, December 10, 2017*

Seventy-three years have passed since an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. A very serious situation persists in the rain disaster-hit areas. We express our deepest condolences for those who were killed in the disaster and our sympathy to the people in the affected areas. We also express our deep gratitude to all who have worked hard to make the holding of the World Conference against A & H Bombs possible while devoting their energies to helping the disaster-affected people rebuild their communities and living conditions in the scorching heat in Hiroshima and other areas.

Today, exactly 73 years ago, the city of Hiroshima was turned into an inferno by a US nuclear attack. We are observing this day at a time when the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is being signed and ratified by countries worldwide. In June, the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea held a summit, leading to a historic first step towards denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and establishing a peace system in Northeast Asia.

But the Japanese government of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, which heavily relies on the US "nuclear umbrella", not only turns its back on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons but is also obsessed with turning Japan into a country that wages war.

The current international developments are taking place thanks to a rise in global public awareness and movements working against nuclear weapons and for peace. We believe that the power to achieve the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula lies in rising public awareness and-global movements. If we defeat the "nuclear deterrence" theory that insists that nuclear weapons are necessary for security and if the cooperation between civil society movements and national governments further develops to work for a "world without nuclear weapons", a bright future will be possible.

Let us develop a grand movement to achieve the earliest possible entry into force of the Ban Treaty and open the way toward a "world without nuclear weapons" as we prepare to observe the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings in 2020. Let us transform the Northeast Asian region, where the Olympic Games are held in Tokyo and Beijing in succession, into a region from where we can launch messages for peace-to the rest of the world.

We will promote the drive to collect hundreds of millions of signatures by 2020 in support of the Hibakusha Appeal in cooperation with local government heads and local assembly members, involving municipalities and local communities. Let us strongly urge the Japanese government to pull out from under the US "nuclear umbrella" and participate in the Ban Treaty. Let us drastically strengthen the effort to have local assemblies adopt declarations calling on the government to sign and ratify the Ban Treaty. Let us press the government to abrogate the secret nuclear arrangements with the United States, strictly observe the Three Non-nuclear Principles (not to possess,

manufacture or allow nuclear weapons to be brought into Japan), and establish them as law.

Let us make the damage and aftereffects of the atomic bombings known widely and expose the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. Let us organize “A-bomb exhibitions” and assemblies for hibakusha to talk about their horrifying experience during and after the A-bombings in all municipalities and local communities. Let us demand a far-reaching improvement of the A-bomb disease recognition system and the establishment of state compensation for Hibakusha, and further strengthen activities for the relief of and solidarity with Hibakusha.

Let us further develop the drive to collect 30 million signatures and other activities to prevent Article 9 of the Constitution from being adversely amended and get the War Laws repealed. In Okinawa, there will be crucial political battles, including the gubernatorial election in autumn. Let us fight in firm solidarity with “All Okinawa” in defense of the dignity of Okinawans to stop the construction of a new US base in the Henoko district of Nago City and dismantle the US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. Let us oppose the strengthening of the Japan-US military alliance.

Let us oppose putting nuclear power plants back online and demand a shift in energy policy away from nuclear power to one that increases reliance on renewable energy sources. Let us oppose the destruction of stable jobs and people’s livelihoods, the increase in poverty and widening income gaps, and increase the movement demanding cuts in military expenditure to protect welfare services and education. Let us oppose all forms of discrimination and realize gender equality.

Let us link together all these movements and use the power of cooperation between the citizens’ movements and opposition parties to force the Abe government to step down and create a government that truly represents the atom-bombed country.

New cooperation is growing with the Peace March, which has marked its 60th anniversary. Now is the time to raise the level of nationwide cooperation to a new stage. Let us advance hand in hand with the hibakusha and with young people to open a bright future.

No More Hiroshimas, No More Nagasakis, No More Hibakusha, No More War.