

2020 World Conference against A & H Bombs - Hiroshima Day
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Dear friends, we are New Japan Women's Association, Shinfujin. Facing the unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Shinfujin members have urged the national and local governments to take specific measures to defend people's lives and livelihood, and had many positive results.

In this year to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the pandemic made it impossible for us to get together, to organize street actions, or to take part in the annual Peace March... Yet we wanted to find a way to bring together strong aspirations of our members all over Japan for a nuclear-free, peaceful, just and sustainable world and to send out our voices. So, Shinfujin chapters in all the 47 prefectures made tapestries of their own to take part in this World Conference!

In each chapter, they discussed what kind of tapestry they wanted to make. Some had all groups and branches to make parts, others collected paper cranes, illustrated postcards, written messages from local members, or handprints of children. They put all these pieces together into one tapestry. The colorful tapestries carry a variety of messages such as the elimination of nuclear weapons, "No" to military bases, "No" to nuclear power plants and restart of nuclear reactors, as well as to live in harmony with nature and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

For the Peace March, our local members devised creative ways instead of walking a long distance, such as "marching at home," "marching around the neighborhood" or standing on the street holding signs. They relayed one action to another, and shared their experiences through photos and videos. Many chapters also encouraged their members to write messages on Peace March pennants, such as "Preserve the Blue Earth where All Lives Shine", and send them to Hiroshima.

In order to achieve the goal of collecting 2 million signatures in support of the Hibakusha Appeal, Shinfujin members have tried all means possible despite the difficult situation, taking to the streets with tapestries to appeal to the public, keeping a safe distance. They also organized a special signature drive in commemoration of the 3rd anniversary of the adoption of TPNW. We have collected 1.32 million signatures so far. Shinfujin members are gearing up their effort to achieve the goal reminding each other of how many more to go.

To hand over the A-bomb experiences to next generations, members are organizing in their communities exhibitions of paintings drawn by high school students based on the Hibakusha's stories, as well as A-bomb photo panels. Also, they are holding small gatherings where they can bring children to hear the A-bomb experiences at a safe distance.

Today, 2020 Peace Wave kicked off. Shinfujin members visited local churches and temples throughout the country asking them to ring a "peace bell". They received positive responses and one temple even gave the special invitation to four of our members to be at the temple when the bell is tolled. Our Peace Wave plans include "No Nukes Actions" involving children, and women's joint actions.

Covid-19 pandemic and a series of torrential rains are caused by global warming and we cannot lose any more time to strengthen the measures to deal with the climate crisis. We have no money to waste on nuclear weapons. Let us change the way of our tax money is being used to redirect it to create a future without nuclear weapons and war, a gender-equal future where everyone can enjoy their human rights. Let us strengthen the movement here in Japan, so that our country signs and ratifies the TPNW as soon as possible.