

Video Message from Nakano Koichi

Civil Alliance for Peace and Constitutionalism

Hello everyone. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak in the 2020 World Conference against A and H Bombs in this milestone 75th year of the atomic bombing.

I am Nakano Koichi of the Civil Alliance for Peace and Constitutionalism and I teach political science at Sophia University in Tokyo. Our organization was formed by citizens' organizations united to protest against the legislation in September 2015 of the government's arbitrary decision to allow exercising the right to collective defense in the name of the Security Legislation. We encourage opposition parties beyond party politics to be united to change politics by forming a framework for a new government with the support of citizens. Aiming to create a peaceful society by preventing remilitarization of Japan and restoring the violated constitutionalism, we have worked together to build our cooperation on many occasions. Although we still have a long way to go, we are profoundly inspired by the enthusiasm and historic achievement of your movement for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Now that the whole world is affected by the coronavirus pandemic, we are obliged to ponder deeply about many things. One question is how we can make use of new technologies to create new forms of movement and overcome various difficulties, when all of us are forced to stay home and have no alternative but to hold meetings online through the Internet.

On the other hand, in trying to prevent the spread of the virus, we must face and overcome the major problems of discrimination, egoism and divisions among us. In other countries and societies, too, many people are discussing the problems of discrimination and structural violence, and are trying to find ways or start movements to overcome the divisions among people. On a larger scale, we also need to discuss how different countries should get together to create a joint movement to tackle the pandemic beyond difference of opinions or narrow self-interests. Often we see some macho politicians out of bravado spewing nonsense and jeopardizing the life of many people. I find commonalities in this situation with the struggle to abolish nuclear weapons. We have come to realize the fact that the countries possessing very cruel nuclear weapons and endangering the people of other countries as well as their own, have health systems that are much too weak to protect the lives of their own citizens. In this situation, the question before us is how we should get over the divisions, discriminations and differences among us and create a larger and broader movement to change the current society by accommodating otherness.

Unfortunately, citizens' movements in Japan have long been described as weak or backward. But I myself do not believe this is necessarily true. For in Japan, especially the movement for

banning A and H bombs, started immediately after the war and has a long history of accumulating strong and tenacious efforts. Through this movement people overcame the discrimination against Hibakusha and worked together to demand the abolition of nuclear weapons. This work has continued and developed to this day.

The current situation often makes us feel pessimistic, but I believe we should aim to grow the movement bigger and broader beyond the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing, building on the achievements of our forerunners. More precisely, we must achieve the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Unfortunately, the Japanese government has not signed or ratified the treaty, but we have been greatly encouraged by the news on the steadily growing number of countries that have signed or ratified it. Now is the time for us to change the government and politics with the power of citizens solidarity, overcoming divisions and discriminations.

Let us learn a lot from the movement carried out by all of you gathered here today, and let us change the politics so that the citizens' movement can lead us to the abolition of nuclear weapons. We want to share this awareness and work together, for the sake of ourselves and our children, to secure the future of the planet and the human race by preventing the past errors and follies from being repeated. Rest assured that we will exert our best efforts, no matter how little our power, and work together with you in Japan. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today. With our solidarity, we will change the world.

Let us eliminate nuclear weapons. Thank you.