

April 2004

Appeals from the Atomic bomb survivors (Hibakusha):

The immediate abolition of nuclear weapons fulfills the promise of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

1. Introduction

In August, 1945, we, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, were in hell on earth and witnessed what the end of the world by the nuclear weapons was like. It was such horrible far beyond all imagination that it was entirely impossible to believe that it had actually happened in this world. Nuclear weapons dehumanize all humans dead or alive. We have experienced that the nuclear weapons mercilessly killed people without any dignity of humans as if they were less than worms, while it has forced the survivors to remain in a great pain physically and emotionally due to deep and persistent trauma. Nuclear weapons are tools of evil. We just cannot coexist with any kind of nuclear weapons.

It is not to be allowed to use, manufacture, bear, and even intend having nuclear weapons. No time is to be lost in abolishing nuclear weapons. This is our conviction as the survivors based on our own experience, and can be shared by all people in the world.

2. Increasing threat by nuclear weapons

Despite the historic agreement reached at the NPT Review Conference in 2000, the threat posed by nuclear weapons has increased. We are terrified keenly that the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons seems imminent.

This is like a slap in the face to the Hibakusha. We are faced with a critical choice: the extinction of human beings or continued survival. This is the most crucial time in the course of human history.

3. How did this come to be?

There are two main causes:

First: there has never been a tribunal to judge the atomic bombings of the United States guilty for a war crime against humanity, which was as worse and atrocious as ever happened in the human history and never to be repeated. Therefore, in the United States, the atomic bombings have been glorified as heroic incidents instead, and its criminality has never been clarified and justice has never been brought about.

Second: the nuclear weapons states, especially the superpowers, did not learn from the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Much of the responsibility lies with the United States government, though the Japanese government is also partly to be blamed. These two countries are the most knowledgeable about the consequences of nuclear weapons use, yet refused to

acknowledge the fact that that if nuclear weapons are ever used again, all living creatures would be all destroyed.

Despite the UN resolution 1 in 1946, the United States government has been reluctant to make efforts to halt nuclear weapon development; instead, they continued developing more destructive nuclear weapons. Even as the terrible consequences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were concealed by the United States government, the Japanese government made no effort to inform the world, but instead chose to support U.S. policy. The Japanese Government therefore cannot evade its responsibility for partially causing today's nuclear crisis.

4. Learn from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Atomic bombings were the most devastating and cruel war crime in human history. In an instant it created several hundred thousand victims. The terrible wounds extend over generations. However, we never sought retaliation. We have had one strong desire for the past half century: that we be the last victims of nuclear weapons, and that all nuclear weapons are abolished as soon as possible. To achieve this end, we have told our stories of terror and suffering. We believe this is the only way to save human beings from the crisis of extinction. We know that we could not hold a grudge against the United States because our experience was too horrible to be repeated again, never, ever, never.

Most political leaders, as well as ordinary people all over the world, have learned from this lesson, and have made the decision to abandon nuclear weapon ambitions. A few leaders have not. Our wish is merely this: all nations, especially the nuclear weapon possessing states and those seeking nuclear weapons, listen to our experiences. We want these nations to show their wisdom by learning from the experience of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki and embracing continued human survival.

We want them to start now. Fulfill the "unequivocal undertaking" to "accomplish the total elimination of their own nuclear arsenals" immediately.

5. Urge the implementation of the resolutions by the New Agenda Coalition and the Mayors for Peace.

We acknowledge with a deep respect that the New Agenda Coalition states, the nonaligned nations, and the Middle Powers Initiative groups have taken great efforts to abolish nuclear weapons up to the present. We appreciate and endorse that the 58th United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world" proposed by the New Agenda Coalition states and a new proposal "2020 Vision" by the Mayors for Peace in terms of its positive approach. However, we are in crisis. We have no time to lose. We therefore urge that every step forward the elimination of nuclear weapons should be taken without delay.

6. We seek the early fulfillment of an international treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We ask that all nations, particularly the nuclear weapons states.

1) Start multilateral talks in order to conclude an international treaty for the elimination of nuclear weapons. As a first step, meet and begin the UN fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD IV), and set up the date for it.

2) Establish a concrete plan with a specific schedule and due date for concluding the treaty. Discuss this plan at the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

7. Request for the U.S. government

1) Admit that atomic bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was a crime which was against the international law and humanitarianism. Apologize sincerely to the Hibakusha. Prove yourself by abolishing nuclear weapons.

2) Give up ambitions for the further development of nuclear weapons. Encourage the abolition of nuclear weapons, and set an example for other nations who wish to abolish their nuclear weapons. Make measurable progress at the 2004 NPT Preparatory Committee.

Statement distributed by Satoru Konishi of Nihon Hidankyo at the United for Peace and Justice National Assembly, St. Louis, Mo., February 19-21, 2005.