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Today, I would first like to relate to you my own personal experience of the atomic bomb, and then briefly tell you of my views as a Hiroshima survivor.

The day was August 6th, 1945. I was in a school auditorium about two kilometers west of the epicenter. At 8:15 that morning, a vast, terrible, blinding flash filled the sky and saturated the interior of the auditorium. This was followed by a thunderous roar that seemed to rise from the earth to spread through my body. At the same moment, I was overwhelmed by an unearthly din -- the air became charged with violence and the building came shattering down over me.

When I regained consciousness, I found myself hidden under a guss. The left half of my body was covered with blood. The person directly next to me had been directly hit by radiation through a window, and his exposed elbow seemed to have suffered a slight burn. This injury, which seemed at the time to have no more than mild significance, was in fact to have terrible consequences for him later: symptoms of fever, bleeding gums, bloody stool, and a loss of hair continued for a week, after which he died. This was how I first learned of the horrors of radiation.

Out on the streets trudged lines of people who had been outside at the time of the explosion and had been hit directly by the radiation. They were naked, or half-naked, their clothing having been burnt away. Their faces and the skin over their entire bodies had been burnt by the radiation, and they were dreadful to see. Their hair had been burnt off and their burnt eyelids were so swollen they could barely open their eyes. They seemed to be moving in search of any amount of shade or water, only to fall, half-dead, along the road. Seeking any water that might still be left among the tanks kept in homes for dousing fires, these people pushed forward, vying with one another for one, final mouthful, only to fall upon one another in a heap where they would await their deaths. Across the entire city of Hiroshima, all that met the eye was horror in the extreme - Hiroshima had indeed become the City of Death.

I was overwhelmed from witnessing the actual destructive power, the actual killing power, of this weapon, which was on a wholly different scale from any bomb I had ever seen or heard of before. I only later learned that this was an 'atomic bomb' and felt that the world would surely face extinction should such things continue to appear.

Fifty-four years have passed since then, and how many people today either have forgotten the terror of the bomb, or simply do not know of it? And what has resulted from all the many advances in nuclear weapons technology?

- installations to fire missiles thousands of kilometers
- guidance systems which boast pinpoint accuracy
- the possibility of production and possession of nuclear weapons by virtually any nation on earth
- and nuclear proliferation advanced to the degree that roughly twenty thousand warheads are now poised for delivery across the globe at any time.

It is horrifying to contemplate. And it is all of us - humanity as a whole - who are responsible for things having come to this state. It is all the inhabitants of our earth who must decide whether this situation should be allowed to continue. And, if not, what we must do about it. All of us, the people of the earth, must accept. As humans, our responsibility to use our intelligence to the fullest to arrive at the best choice for us - what other hope do we have?

Thus we make our appeal to the world for the immediate abolition of nuclear weapons.

This appeal emerges from the vital wisdom that we of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have gained through our countless sufferings, as victims of the world's first atomic bombs. In telling the world what actually happened in these places, we feel a profound duty and responsibility to make this appeal, especially to the citizens of those nations which possess nuclear weapons and of those nations who attempt to gain their possessions.

LET US ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS NOW! NEVER AGAIN THE ATOMIC BOMB!

Please let me conclude by introducing you to a Japanese song. The English translation is by the British poet, Ewan MacColl.

Never Again the A-Bomb

In the place where our city was destroyed
Where we buried the ashes of the ones that we loved
There the green grass grows and the white waving weeds
Deadly harvest of two atom bombs
Then brothers and sisters you must watch and take care
That the third atom bomb never comes.

All that people have created with their hands
And their minds for the glory of the world in which we live
Now it can be smashed in a moment destroyed
Deadly harvest of two atom bombs
People of the world watch and take care
That the Third Atom Bomb never comes.