

Session III, International Meeting

2025 World Conference against A and H Bombs

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In Swedish: Svenska Freds- och Skiljedomsföreningen

It is a great honor to be present here today, at the memorial ceremonies for Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Eighty years have passed since the unimaginable happened – when two cities were obliterated and tens of thousands of lives were erased in an instant.

Eighty years since nuclear weapons were used in war – against civilians.

And we must not forget what followed.

More than 2,000 nuclear tests were carried out across the globe during and after the Second World War – tests that caused long-term health damage, forced communities from their homes, and left scars on both people and the environment. Many of these consequences are still being felt today.

We are here today to honor the victims. To remember, listen and learn. Listen to the testimonies of survivors, to the voices of history and let them guide us today and in the future. Learn, learn from the struggle, the strategies, from the many of you, from the hibakusha and Hibaku Nisei. And let that inspire us all to Actively prevent, actively work for: Never again.

My name is Kerstin Bergeå, and I am the President of the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society – one of the oldest civil society peace organizations in the world still active today. Our commitment to peace and disarmament runs deep. For over a century, we have worked for global sustainable peace, for more than 140 years we have been standing firm. In the latest 80 of these years, each year in August we and the members of our organisation have marked this day with sorrow, reflection, and unwavering determination.

Today our movement in Sweden is growing.

In three years, our membership has tripled. And our active local groups have grown from 8 to 34. Because people are worried! Because people are committed! Because people refuse to accept the current state of the world. They reject war. **They reject the rhetoric and policies that claim nuclear weapons bring security.**

Today, I want to remind us that people are gathering not only here in Japan, but across the world. In Stockholm. In Gothenburg. In Umeå, Örebro, Luleå, Landskrona – and in many more cities throughout Sweden and beyond. In these moments of silence, in the soft light of lanterns, we remember the darkness of that day. The silence after the blast. The grief that still echoes.

But that silence calls us to action.

“We, nuclear survivors are chained to the nuclear” as Kazuhiro Ihara, second generation a-bomb survivor in Nagasaki said. Its both a biomedical and a socio-cultural experience that chain generations of victims to nuclear weapons.

We, all of us, carry a responsibility – to listen to the voices of the hibakusha, to ensure their stories are never forgotten, and to fight together with the next generation Hibaku Nisei for a future where no one, nowhere, ever suffers what Hiroshima and Nagasaki endured.

As a child, I learned about Sadako Sasaki. With trembling hands, I folded paper cranes, not fully understanding – only sensing that each fold carried something heavy: a hope and plea for peace.

Years later, I sat in a television studio to comment on the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. It was awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, the survivors' organization. I cried. I was so deeply moved.

Because for a moment, the world was listening.

The Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society is proud to be part of a global movement against nuclear weapons. Proud to stand beside hibakusha, Japanese peace groups, and countless others across the world as part of ICAN demanding the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Our goal is clear: that more countries – including Sweden – join the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the TPNW. It is a real and vital step toward a world without nuclear arms.

We have collected thousands of signatures calling on our government to act. To

stand not behind the nuclear-armed powers, but alongside those who dare to imagine and strive for another future – one grounded in peace, not deterrence. One built on cooperation, not threats.

Because even now – 80 years later – nuclear weapons still exist. They are being modernized. They are ready to be used. The threat remains – and it grows.

Yes, authoritarianism is rising. Militarism is gaining ground. But so is the resistance.

And we are part of that resistance.

Not long ago, a representative of Nihon Hidankyo Terumi Tanaka met with Sweden's Prime Minister, Ulf Kristersson. In that meeting, Terumi Tanaka expressed clear concern and deep disappointment over Sweden's decision to join NATO – a nuclear alliance.

And rightly so.

Countries aligning themselves with nuclear weapons alliances do not build a peaceful world. I now that this is not only relevant for my country.

On behalf of the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society, I want to say: Thank you for acknowledging and strengthening our work in opposing Sweden's NATO membership.

We continue that fight, too – because true security is not found in nuclear threats, but in disarmament, diplomacy, and solidarity.

And I am not alone in carrying this responsibility.

Today I'm proud to stand here together with Tomas Magnusson, a former president of Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society. He has attended these ceremonies many times before and has been a tireless voice for peace and disarmament over decades. Through his extensive international network, he has helped build bridges between peace movements across continents – always grounded in solidarity and justice.

Tomas – thank you for everything you have done.

And following in Tomas's footsteps is Farshid Ardabili-Farshi, born in Iran, – is also here with us today – he continues this vital work for peace with great

dedication and clarity of purpose. His commitment to a demilitarized and cooperative world inspires many, both in Sweden and abroad.

And I am equally proud to be here with a new generation of peacebuilders – Lisa Lundmark, Karin Hansson Olivia Johansson Kullander, a delegation of young activists and educators working to spread knowledge about peace, disarmament, and nonviolence in our Peace Academy. They represent hope, courage, and commitment. Their work – in schools, communities, and international networks – is vital and they have as well as Tomas and Farshid connected with Yuna Okajima, a Hibaku nisei, a student and third-generation atomic bomb survivor from Hiroshima, who has traveled around Sweden lately telling her story. The struggle for peace does clearly not end with one generation. It must be passed on, nurtured, and renewed. And they are already leading the way. Thank you Yuna.

I speak and represent more than 20,000 swedes, members of our organization.

For thousands of voices who say: this is not the world we want to leave behind.

We are not giving up. We will never give up.

We continue the fight –

for truth,

for memory,

for justice,

and for a future free from the threat of nuclear weapons.

But we also know that we cannot do this alone. Real change demands global cooperation. As we approach next year's Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty – the NPT – We must activate ourself, and coordinate internationally, we must demand meetings with every government before the 2026 NPT Review conference and the TPNW Review Conference.

We must raise our voices together. We must increase the pressure on governments, on decision-makers, on the international community. Civil society, peace movements, survivors, scientists, youth and elders – we all have a role to play. Only together can we hold the policymakers to account. Only together can we show that a world without nuclear weapons is not only possible – it is essential.

So to the survivors, to those who lost loved ones, to all those who have carried this pain for eight decades:

We see you.

We hear you.

We honor you.

I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations on your incredibly well-deserved Nobel Peace Prize. Your tireless and courageous efforts to make the use of nuclear weapons a global taboo have truly changed the world. This recognition is a testament to the power of persistence, hope, and the unwavering belief in a future free from nuclear threat.

And we will keep going.

Your struggle is our struggle now.

No more Hiroshima.

No more Nagasaki.

No more nuclear weapons.

The fight continues. And we are many.

Thank you.

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