

International Meeting Session II
2025 World Conference against A and H Bombs

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Friends,

Over many years, I have had the extraordinary privilege of working with Japanese and other atomic and hydrogen bomb survivors. These are people who have endured and transformed the worst imaginable physical and emotional traumas into the most influential force for nuclear weapons abolition. Their fundamental call is that “human beings and nuclear weapons cannot coexist.” Their courage, their call, and their steadfast advocacy of nuclear weapons abolition earned them the Nobel Peace Prize last December. In awarding the Hibakusha the Nobel Prize, the Nobel Committee sent the world a powerful message: With the possible exception of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the world is closer to catastrophic nuclear war than it has ever been, and we must act for nuclear weapons abolition.

Being invited to join Nihon Hidankyo’s Nobel Peace Prize delegation in Oslo was a privilege and honor beyond words. It was thrilling to see these men and women being recognized and honored. I will also confess to some feelings of sadness as I thought about Yamaguchi Senji, Taniguchi Sumiteru, Watanabe Chieko and other courageous founders and leaders of Hidankyo who did not live to enjoy the recognition and international platform they so rightly deserved. They do live on and inspire us as we remember them.

Before delving into some history and analysis of current nuclear dangers, let me share some terrible, perhaps not surprising, news from the United States

Even as we celebrate the Hibakusha’s courage and achievements, we face an increasingly dangerous world. As Antonio Gramsci wrote, “The old world is dying, and the new world struggles to be born: now is the time of monsters.”: among them Trump, Putin, and Netanyahu. The dangers of the disorienting tectonic geopolitical changes marked by the rise of China and the Global South and the decline of the West are compounded by the need to warn that humanity is 89 seconds to midnight with the

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists Doomsday Clock, the closest we have ever been to annihilation.

In the U.S., Trump's counterrevolutionary Big Brutal Bill not only imposes a record setting transfer of wealth from the poor and working classes to the super rich, it also includes an additional \$150 billion for the military. The now trillion-dollar military budget includes roughly \$30 billion for new nuclear warheads and the delivery systems to end all life as we know it.

With Trump and Secretary of State Rubio focused on tariffs and deportations, Elbridge Colby, the grandson for the former CIA Director and number 3 official at the Pentagon, is driving U.S. foreign and military policies. You will have seen that NATO nations have been forced to increase – in some cases double – their military spending. As the NATO Secretary General stated, this is being done so that the U.S. can reduce its European commitments in order to continue building up its forces in Japan and across the Indo-Pacific in its continuing and self-defeating campaign to contain and limit China's power. While the Indo-Pacific alliances are reminiscent of those that preceded World War I, and incidents, accidents, and miscalculations in the South and East China Seas could trigger escalation – even to nuclear war, Taiwan remains the hinge of U.S. Indo-Pacific imperial power and lies at the vortex of U.S./Japan vs. China ambitions and confrontations. The truth is that Taiwan cannot be militarily defended, and a military conflict there is the most likely trigger for an omnicidal nuclear war.

Putin and Trump have flagrantly undermined the U.N. Charter system with their wars in Ukraine and Iran as well as U.S. complicity in Israel's Gaza genocide. As Malaysia's foreign minister warned, Trump's bombing of Iran's nuclear infrastructure dangerously crossed an essential red line, and it is more likely to spur nuclear weapons proliferation than prevent it.

At home, Trump's white supremacist rule aims to end constitutional democracy. In communities across the U.S., masked Gestapo-like Trump/MAGA ICE (Immigration, Customs Enforcement) police kidnap our immigrant neighbors and ship them to Guantanamo and brutal prisons in El Salvador, even some to South Sudan. In the tradition of other dictators, our universities, press and science are under attack. Our ignorant president is illegally inflicting punishing tariffs reminiscent of those of the 1930's Great Depression. And between Trump's re-embrace of fossil fuels, his attack on renewable energy technologies, and the new Cold War confrontation with China, the urgent need to address the existential dangers of climate change is being abandoned.

The era of Pax Americana is truly over, and for better and worse it opens the way for greater Chinese and Global South influence

But the situation in the U.S. is not entirely bleak. People have not rolled over and played dead. Instead, democratic values, culture and commitments to human rights have asserted themselves as millions of people have come out into the streets to say No Kings, stop ICE's terrorism, and fund healthcare and education, not warfare. On June 14, while Trump celebrated his birthday with an expensive and poorly attended military parade, a million people turned out in Boston to march against the Trump agenda. Vigils outside ICE detention centers are growing. Trump is being challenged in the courts. Mobilization is under way to oust the dictatorial MAGA forces in the 2026 congressional elections. And across the country – especially in my hometown of Boston – people are re-dedicating themselves to the struggle for a nuclear weapons-free world as they commemorate this 80th Hiroshima-Nagasaki anniversary.

But the immediate threat of nuclear disaster remains, which is why the Nobel Peace Prize Committee chose to honor Nihon Hidankyo with their award. It was a powerful warning to the world.

Just over 12,000 nuclear weapons remain in the nine nuclear weapons states' arsenals, 93% in the U.S. and Russian arsenals. The average strategic, or hydrogen, bomb is 20 times more powerful than the Hiroshima A-bomb. Those first A-Bombs killed 210,000 people almost immediately. Hundreds of thousands more died from radiation diseases in the years and decades that followed. We now know that even a relatively small nuclear exchange of 50-100 nuclear weapons would almost immediately kill millions of people, but their smoke and fires would create global cooling in the northern hemisphere, leading to crop failures and the deaths of an estimated two billion people.

As we learned from Japanese and Marshall Islands Hibakusha, the A- Bomb Casualty Commission and the 4.0 program used and abused survivors as guinea pigs. I initially found it difficult to believe that the U.S. government had reached that level of evil. But just over 20 years ago I arranged a meeting between hibakusha and the U.S. Assistant Secretary of the Department of Energy, the man responsible for all the human impacts of radiation studies. When I asked if he could deny the guinea pigs charge, he answered "Oh no, we've used those studies for everything including the design of new nuclear weapons." This is evil on a par with Dr. Mengele's murderous Nazi "medical" experiments on European Jews and Japan's wartime Unit 731 murderous experimentation in China.

In order to make the most of this 80th anniversary, we need to understand, address, expose, and disarm the imperial and deterrence logics that drive today's multi trillion-dollar nuclear arms races.

Daniel Ellsberg, the principal author of Presidents Kennedy's and Johnson's nuclear warfighting doctrines, testified that the U.S. repeatedly threatened to initiate nuclear war during wars and international crises. Presidents, he said, used them in the same way that an armed robber uses a gun when pointing it at its victim's head. Whether or not the trigger is pulled, the gun has been used. U.S. presidents have done this at least 30 times, most frequently to reinforce its Middle East and Asia-Pacific hegemony.

Each of the other eight nuclear weapons states has also prepared and threatened to initiate nuclear war at least once.

The ideological foundation for nuclear annihilation preparations is deterrence theory, which works until it doesn't. Numerous U.S. military officials have stated that deterrence has never been U.S. policy. Years ago, when the Bush-Cheney administration was developing its Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations, its initial draft let the cat out of the bag. It stated that "The focus of US deterrence efforts is...to influence adversaries to withhold actions intended to harm US' national interests." That is not limited to preventing nuclear attacks against the U.S. but also includes control of our oil under their sand or to prevent powers from intervening to protect those Washington is determined to attack. This is precisely what Putin has done in Ukraine.

Now to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, one of the seminal treaties of the 20th century, for which there will be a major Review Conference next year. In the 1960s, Washington and Moscow recognized that the science creating nuclear weapons was no longer beyond the reach of many countries. They feared that as many as forty countries could develop nuclear weapons by the end of that century; The Treaty they negotiated with the vast majority of the world's nations rests on its three pillars: Nonnuclear weapons states forswore becoming nuclear powers, but they have the right to develop and use nuclear power for peaceful purposes – a flaw in the Treaty. And Article VI obligates the initial five nuclear powers to engage in good faith negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the obligation they have resisted for more than 50 years.

Counter productively, Trump's and Netanyahu's war on Iran undermines the NPT and may hasten Teheran deciding to become a nuclear weapons state. This would trigger nuclear weapons proliferation across the Middle East. True, the Iranian fatwa

states that nuclear weapons possession is contrary to Islam. But Shiism allows for continuing revelation, something like God changing its mind. Enriching uranium to 60%, almost to weapons grade, was not necessary for nuclear power generation.

But diplomacy, not war, was and remains the way to respond.

Iran did sign the NPT, but following Trump's attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure its parliament voted to cease cooperation with the IAEA, a step short of withdrawing from the Treaty. That said, we also need to acknowledge that Israel, as well as three other nuclear powers, still refuse to sign the Treaty and live outside its obligations.

As many of us feared, the Iranian government moved fissile materials from Natanz and Fordow facilities before the attacks. Contrary to President Trump's claim that he obliterated Iran's nuclear project, and his disgusting assertion that the bombing was equivalent to the Hiroshima A-bombing, the Pentagon reports that they do not know how much or where enriched uranium is now stored. Rafael Grossi of the IAEA confirmed that Iran can resume enrichment within months. And Iran's foreign minister recently traveled to Moscow, indicating that the bombings reinforced the Iranian Russian Chinese-North Korean alignment. It might also lead to future Russian Iranian nuclear collaboration.

Even as Trump and Netanyahu threaten possible future attacks if Iran resuscitates its nuclear program, their attacks are already spurring nuclear weapons proliferation. Knowledge about how to build a nuclear weapon was not eliminated. Building from the lessons of Ukraine and Libya which were invaded after they surrendered their nuclear weapons programs there is now greater incentive for Iran and other nations to adopt the lesson that their sovereignty and independence require retaliatory nuclear arsenals, as was the case in North Korea. Such are the consequences of brutal and ignorant fools leading powerful governments. Add to that the majority of South Koreans who favor their government possessing nuclear weapons growing from fears of being left to confront North Korea on their own, and here in Japan where the SDF has long asserted that the constitution gives them the right to possess nuclear weapons. As one senior SDF official told me years ago, that is simply a right they have not yet opted to exercise. It is the Japanese peace movement that has held the SDF in check.

Let me close with reference to having learned from several Nobel Peace Prize recipients in addition to Nihon Hidankyo. Joseph Rotblat, the only senior scientist who resigned from the Manhattan Project due to his moral considerations, founded the Pugwash Conference, but he also issued a profound warning:

Because no nation will long tolerate what it experiences as an unjust imbalance of power [in this case terror,] if nuclear weapons are not abolished, proliferation and nuclear war will inevitably follow. Mohamed ElBaradei, who led the International Atomic Energy Agency, put it differently when he decried the nuclear double standard as nuclear apartheid. Like Rotblat, he insisted that the only way forward was nuclear weapons abolition.

As a college student, I volunteered with Martin Luther King Jr's last campaign, the Poor People's Campaign. That was a hard time for the U.S. Civil Rights movement and for the country as a whole. When I questioned a senior King strategist about the perilous situation, he answered with a baseball analogy: When your team is behind, and it is the ninth inning with two outs, you do everything you can to overcome. In this situation, in addition to our struggle in the U.S. to preserve constitutional democracy and to defend our neighbors, peace and justice activists and organizations, and some members of Congress are pressing the Back from the Brink Campaign. It calls for nuclear weapons abolition, halting the two trillion spending for the new nuclear arsenal, a no first strike policy and more. State legislation is pending in support of the TPNW.

There is, of course, the Trump wild card. As we saw with his bombing of Iran's nuclear sites, anything is possible from this tyrant. It is also true that he lusts after the Nobel Peace Prize; His actually receiving it is inconceivable to me. But as we saw with President Reagan temporarily joining with General Secretary Gorbachev in seeking a nuclear weapons-free world. the unimaginable sometimes does happen.

As we mark the 80th anniversary of the A-bombings here in Hiroshima, people are organizing commemorations across the U.S. Perhaps the biggest will be in my hometown of Boston. It will include speeches from members of Congress and abolitionists from around the world, publication of a signature advertisement in the state's major newspaper, and a 12-foot Sadako Sasaki puppet. NS The Manhattan Project for Nuclear-Free World, Veterans For Peace NYC Chapter 34, and Peace Action New York State, with support from CPDCS initiated a sign-on statement in which we join expressing our profound regrets and apologies for our nation's atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

No more Hiroshimas. No more Nagasakis. No more Hibakusha. No more War and injustice!

コメントの追加 [1]: then proliferation and nuclear war will inevitably follow?