

NAGASAKI RALLY, August 9

Remarks by Nino Burjanadze, Student Organizer, Peace Action New York State USA

Good afternoon everyone,

My name is Nino Burjanadze, and I am a student organizer for the Peace Action Fund of New York State, an affiliate of Peace Action, the largest grassroots peace organization in the United States. I am truly humbled and honored to stand before you as we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the devastating atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I would like to thank everyone working behind the scenes to make this conference possible and a very special thank-you to the translators for their invaluable work.

I represent an organization with a long and rich legacy in the U.S. peace movement. Peace Action continues to be a champion in supporting a new generation of peace activists and changemakers. I am proud to share that, through our student organizing program, we established 15 university chapters across New York State with a diverse student body. We come from different countries and backgrounds, but **we are united by the same belief that young people have both the power and the responsibility - to create a more peaceful and just world.**

These past few months have been particularly difficult for us to navigate in the United States. From attempts to revoke the visas of international students involved in pro-Palestinian protests, arresting peaceful activists, to the increased targeting of immigrant communities and growing censorship on university campuses, the climate for activism and organizing have become increasingly hostile. Despite this, we continue to find creative and courageous ways to push back by - **hosting “Know Your Rights” events, building coalitions across campuses, and using art, education, and protest to reclaim our power. We are learning to navigate this landscape together, supporting each other to resist fear and fight for justice.**

Listening to the testimonies of the Hibakusha has deeply impacted me. Their stories will continue to live on in my heart, as I share in their pain. The Hibakusha stand as a testament to the indomitable human spirit — though they witnessed unimaginable suffering and pain, they continue to fight with **love, grace, and strength**. We are all united here today by the noble vision of a peaceful, nuclear-free world, but that vision will only become reality if we grow this movement beyond this room. Many of you are already doing the groundwork in your communities, cities, and countries and we need to see more of this mobilization with a greater participation from young participants and activists. As a young student organizer, I have seen firsthand the real impact and power

of youth organizing. My generation has something unique that no generation before us has ever had: access to social media, global platforms, and to each other. That connection allows us to act faster, organize smarter, and amplify the voices that most need to be heard. Therefore, we must use every tool at our disposal to share the stories of the Hibakusha and **bring the urgency of nuclear abolition into the mainstream political agenda - worldwide**. Real and lasting change will not come from above — it will come from the passion, resistance, and intergenerational collaboration, across countries, continents, and time zones, taking action at the local, national, and international levels.

As we mark the 80th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we also remember the 17th anniversary of the Russia–Georgia war that I witnessed at 5 years old. To this day more than 20% of my home country - Georgia - is under Russian Occupation. As long as there are countries suffering from war and terror, our work is not over — and today is not the time to lose hope or give up. Because in the end, **people have more power than the people in power**.

Thank you.