

Address of the Organizer:

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Dear delegates from Japan and overseas, on behalf of the Organizing Committee, I welcome you to the 2019 World Conference against A and H Bombs and extend my warm greetings of solidarity.

This year's World Conference focuses on the main theme: "For a nuclear weapon-free, peaceful and just world" and is attended by government representatives from Austria, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela. These countries greatly contributed in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) by the United Nations and are currently taking the lead in the effort to get the treaty ratified. We also have representatives of anti-nuclear and peace movements from Asian and Pacific countries, including representatives from the Republic of Korea who are doing their utmost to make the Korean Peninsula nuclear-free and to establish a peace system in Northeast Asia. We are also joined by friends in the anti-nuclear and peace movements of Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas, along with dedicated grassroots activists and nuclear victims who are playing an active role. Participants from Japan include, beside hibakusha from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, heads of local governments, people actively involved in the campaign to collect "30 Million Signatures" in support of the "Petition for the protection of Article 9 and the Constitution of Japan," people who are opposing the "Work style reform" legislation that promotes "*karoshi*" (death from overwork), people who are leading the campaign for ending nuclear power generation, people from the movement for dismantling US military bases, and people who were affected by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Northeastern Japan and the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Fundamental Principles of the Movement against A & H Bombs

The Movement against A & H Bombs developed considerably in the aftermath of the hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in March 1954. The movement collected more than 32 million grassroots signatures, representing nearly half of Japan's voters, in support of the prohibition of nuclear weapons. Against this background, the First World Conference against A & H Bombs was held in Hiroshima in August 1955, with the participation of more than 5,000 delegates from Asia, Europe, and the Americas. In September that year, the organizing committee of the World Conference merged with the National Council for the Promotion of the Signature Collection to give birth to the Japan Council against Atomic & Hydrogen Bomb (Gensuikyo). The 2nd World Conference was held in Nagasaki, the second target for nuclear attack after Hiroshima. The Japan Confederation of Atomic and Hydrogen Bomb Sufferers' Organizations (Hidankyo) came into being during the 2nd World Conference.

Today, everybody knows the fundamental principles of the Movement against A & H Bombs confirmed by the first World Conference, namely the prevention of nuclear war, a total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, and relief for and solidarity with the hibakusha. It is regrettable that today, 64 years later, there still exist 14,500 nuclear warheads in the world.

However, the movement for the abolition of nuclear weapons has been passed on from generation to generation and has produced solid results. In July 2017, the TPNW was adopted at the United Nations with the support of 122 countries, or more than 60 percent of the UN membership. Nuclear weapon possessing countries and countries under the nuclear umbrella are refusing to sign or ratify the treaty, but

they cannot elude their political and moral responsibility. In the U.S., a nuclear superpower, as well as within military alliances, people are mobilizing themselves to support the ban treaty and urging their governments to sign and ratify. During the past two years, steady progress has been made towards a nuclear-free, peaceful and just world.” We must be confident in this.

For an early entry into force of the TPNW

Article 1, which constitutes the core of the TPNW, prohibits any activity related to nuclear weapons. The treaty denies the logic of nuclear deterrence and outlaws any security policy that depends on the nuclear umbrella provided by a nuclear weapon country. Article 4 describes the means by which nuclear weapon-countries may join the treaty and Article 6 requires the state parties to the treaty to provide assistance in various ways to people affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons. Article 7 requires countries that have used nuclear weapons or tested such weapons to provide appropriate assistance to the victims and to help restore the environment.

As of July 28, 70 states have signed the TPNW and 23 have ratified it. The treaty is making steady progress toward coming into force. We urge all governments that are yet to sign or ratify the treaty to do so without fail.

For denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and building peace in Northeast Asia

For more than half a century, the Korean people have been divided into North and South. We heartily welcome the steps towards denuclearization and peace in Northeast Asia made on the Korean Peninsula despite the continuous confrontation and tension. In April last year, a North-South Korean summit meeting was held at Panmunjom where the two leaders signed the “Panmunjom Declaration.” In June, the U.S. and North Korean leaders met in Singapore and signed a joint declaration. These two summit meetings were epoch-making in that the two leaders agreed to strive to make the Korean Peninsula nuclear-free and to build a lasting and stable peace system. In September of the same year, North and South Korean leaders met in Pyongyang and reconfirmed the Panmunjom Declaration. The US-North Korean summit that took place in February in Hanoi ended without agreement. But officials of the two countries are continuing discussions behind the scenes.

Due to the long standing hostile relationship between the two countries, the efforts to build confidence between the United States and North Korea have been quite inadequate. There still will be ups and downs ahead, including interruptions in negotiations, but it is important to know that denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and achieving peace are North and South Korean people’s common demand and that no one can stop this. Cooperation of concerned countries and the international community is crucial if the “peace process”, consisting of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula and building a peace system in Northeast Asia, is to be successful. Above all, we need to increase public opinion and the movement in Northeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Let us capitalize on the TPNW to further advance people’s opinion and the movement against nuclear weapons and for peace

While inter-Korea and US-North Korea dialogues have started, averting the explosive situation that prevailed until two years ago, the nuclear weapon countries have grown increasingly resistant so as to maintain their privileges. The US Trump administration in February last year announced it would modernize and miniaturize nuclear weapons. In May, it unilaterally announced the withdrawal from the

Iranian nuclear deal. Last February it notified Russia that it will withdraw from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). These reckless moves undermine all the previous efforts and gains and run counter to the implementation of its duties under Article 6 of the NPT. The Russian administration of Vladimir Putin has openly defied the U.S. by indicating the possibility of developing a new type of nuclear weapons and deploying missiles targeting Europe.

The Japanese government of Abe Shinzo is clinging to the “nuclear umbrella”. It continues to turn its back on the TPNW, even though Japan is the only country against which nuclear weapons were used in war, and has openly declared that it will not sign it.

The attitude of the Abe Government runs counter to the world tide headed toward the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. It is shameful that it relies for its security policy on the outlawed “nuclear umbrella”.

The anti-nuclear peace movement of Japan has its roots in the experience of the atomic bombings that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Our task now is to press the Abe government to review its policy of depending on the “nuclear umbrella” arrangement and press it to sign and ratify the TPNW. The overwhelming majority of Japanese people oppose the Abe government’s policy of rushing the country into war by destroying the Constitution’s Article 9. They denounce its cover-ups and manipulations, as well as appropriation of national politics. In the House of Councilors election on July 21, the forces that want an adverse revision of the Constitution sought to secure a two-thirds majority in the upper house. But their attempt was foiled and the ruling Liberal Democratic Party failed to win a majority in the House. This was made possible by the citizens’ movement and opposition parties joining forces. Such cooperation has increased at the national level on various issues, including the opposition to the planned construction of a new US military base in Okinawa, and the demand for ending the dependence on nuclear power generation and decommissioning of Fukushima Daini nuclear power plant.

The driving force for international politics is not a handful of great powers but national governments and civil society of a majority of countries. It was civil society and national governments joining forces that led to the adoption of the TPNW. Raising people’s awareness and developing the movement in each country is of primary importance. We should capitalize on the Ban Treaty to promote efforts to spread the knowledge about the actual damage of the atomic bombings and to hand that knowledge on to younger people. Let us also actively participate in the international signature campaign initiated by the hibakusha of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Next year will mark the 75th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is the 50th year since the adoption of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the 25th year since the NPT indefinite extension. As we approach these important milestone anniversaries, public attention is focused on the campaign that this year’s World Conference will propose to the world. It is my hope that the World Conference that starts today will accelerate the current towards the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and the bringing to fruition of the “peace process” through denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and building of a peace regime in Northeast Asia. I want to conclude this talk on behalf of the organizer by wishing that this Conference will be a historic forum to set out large-scale joint actions and concrete strategies by bringing together the strengths of the Japanese antinuclear and peace movement.