

International Meeting

2019 World Conference against A & H Bombs

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ROK

First, allow me to read a message from Lee Gyu-yol, president of the Korean Atomic Bomb Casualty Association.

Memorial Address

Allow me to express my deepest thanks to all participants for braving the summer heat to participate in this International Meeting.

Seventy-four years have passed since an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

We have gathered here with solemnness to pay respects for Korean A-bomb victims.

In retrospect, Korean young people were forced or deceived into going across the sea to Japan. When the atomic bomb was dropped, they lost their families and assets. Many of them were forced to die miserably in the explosion, the blast, the gusty wind, and black smokes.

Almost all those victims were civilians.

We were in despair at the miserable scenes left behind by the atomic bombing. After 74 years, the survivors are still to heal their wounds amid apathy that persists throughout the world.

We have decided to promote the building of a "World Peace Park" serving as a place for people to remember the crime against humanity and the atrocity of the atomic bombing so that never again will human dignity be trampled down.

We will contribute to the development of the peace movement by letting a wide range of people know that banning the use of nuclear weapons or their proliferation and breaking with such weapons will begin with Korean A-bomb survivors who are aspiring to world peace.

I cordially bow in prayer for the A-bomb victims.

Please rest in peace.

I would like to offer my gratitude to all those who have been involved in the preparation for the World Conference despite the various difficult conditions.

May peace be with you. Thank you very much.

August 3, 2019

Lee Gyu-yol

President of the Korean Atomic Bomb Casualty Association

I'm now going to tell you a story about the atomic bomb experience of Mr. Heo Jong-sup, who was supposed to take part in this conference,.

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I was born on March 20, 1933 in Hirose-cho, Hiroshima City. I was six years old when I entered Hirose Elementary School.

My family moved to Kamitenmacho when I was a second grader. I continued attending Hirose Elementary School until I graduated in March 1945. My family could not afford to continue to send me to a higher school, so I stayed home.

In retrospect I was in appallingly difficult conditions. Those boys who had just finished elementary school had to obey the wartime mobilization order to work for labor services. I was 12 years old. I worked for a while at a factory to make shoes for the military. On August 6, 1945, the day when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, I was at home because I felt tired of doing work at the factory. If I had gone to the factory on that day, I would not have survived.

I had never heard even the name "atomic bomb". The moment the flash divided people into life and death, the city of Hiroshima was reduced to ashes. I barely escaped death.

As I fled the devastated area, I saw a hell on earth, in which people were desperately crying for help. Even today I cannot forget the miserable scene.

I saw people with heavy burns on the riverbank crying for help or for water. Their voices still linger in my ears.

It would be difficult to find any realistic words to describe the horrible scene. It was too horrible a scene to forget.

Shortly after the atomic bombing, there was a person who was feeling happy to have managed to evacuate unharmed to a safe area. But I heard that the person died soon after. The fate of people was uncertain even if they were fortunate enough to survive the moment of explosion.

I later found out the cause of death of that person. It was the effect of A-bomb radiation. After I learned about the horrible consequences of exposure to radiation, I began to experience in my own life the anguish of being unable to tell others.

I was told that there are numerous types of adverse aftereffects on humans. I began to constantly feel mental uncertainty.

Hiroshima is where I grew up. It is also a place where I nearly died due to the atomic bombing. I am happy to be invited to take part in the 2019 World Conference against A & H

Bombs.

No nuclear weapons must be dropped on any place in the world. No nuclear weapons must be produced by any country. I am sure that nuclear weapons can be eliminated if people around the world join hands to create a nuclear weapon-free world of peaceful coexistence.

Finally, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to speak before you and ask you a favor.

Although I am all right, it is known that there are some cases in which the morbidity rate is 100 times higher among second or third generation Hibakusha. They are said to suffer cerebral palsy and impaired eyesight.

But the Japanese government insists that everything was settled with the conclusion in 1965 of the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. We hope that you will help us in urging the Japanese government to conduct a survey on second- and third-generation Hibakusha so that they can receive medical treatment and compensation.

Thank you for your attention.