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There is a war going on in Ukraine where two major military powers, namely the U.S. and Russia, are confronting each other, exchanging threats of planned use of nuclear weapons. We must stop such stupidity at any cost. It could be quite simply done by discouraging President Putin and President Biden from continuing the war, but it is not that simple to actually meet these two Presidents in person. However, there still is a way to stop the war. In fact, though Russia and the U.S. have different political regimes, in both countries, their Presidents must give up their status when they lose the confidence of the people they govern. This is why we must try to make the U.S. and Russian public understand the terrible humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons by providing them with precise information so that they will feel legitimate "fear" for these weapons. If we can do this, the popular will in both countries will drive the Presidents into a corner and out of their offices.

In this connection, Hiroshima and Nagasaki in summer remain as actual examples to remind us of what was the only use of nuclear weapons in war and its consequences on humans. It is therefore our responsibility to disseminate the reality of the atomic bombings throughout the world by any means possible.

I believe that no one contests the extraordinary "inhumane nature" of nuclear weapons. However, I wish to look at it briefly with you again. In August 1945, nuclear weapons were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These weapons instantly transformed these cities into hell and almost all people, combatants and non-combatants alike, were killed or heavily injured and died later. Most of those few who exceptionally survived, lived in anxiety and died premature deaths due to diseases. Children of the survivors had their DNA modified by radiation exposure and have had to live many decades long, tormented by fear for future and ill health. Humans created such inhumane weapons as a result of arms race, but these weapons must never be used. The reason why they must never be used is that humans have "morality". It is this morality that makes humanity special among all living creatures on earth.

Now that the risk of nuclear weapons being used again on humans is growing, because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, we have the responsibility to clearly and loudly present to the world the inhumanity of nuclear weapons.

For the Japanese people, as the sovereign of Japan, there is a thing they can and should do right now.

It is to have the Japanese government ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW, adopted in 2017 and took effect in 2021). Japan is the only nation in the world to have experienced the atomic bombing in war. Despite this, it has been included in the group of countries under the U.S. “nuclear umbrella” in the Cold War regime that divided the world into confronting blocks. In addition, because of the reality of the Cold War, it cannot take side for autocratic regimes such as Russia or China. The only possible choice for Japan in that context is to align itself with free and democratic regimes, such as the U.S., U.K. or France. However, there is no reason why Japan, a sovereign independent country, cannot ratify the TPNW. The elimination of nuclear weapons stands as an “ideal” that embodies uncontested human morality. It is a moral objective that humanity must pursue. Even in a particular context that does not allow such a pursuit, to be conscious of that ideal and work to achieve it is a privilege and specific feature accorded to humanity which is a moral species. Especially, as the only nation to experience nuclear weapon use in war, and today, as a country to provide largest non-military aid to Ukraine in the current war, Japan is entitled to uphold the elimination of nuclear weapons as its state goal.

Nevertheless, at the G7 Summit held in Hiroshima in May this year with Japan as a chair country, Prime Minister Kishida helped the meeting produce a declaration that endorsed the potential use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent. This declaration prepared as a conclusion of the meeting held in Hiroshima, chaired by a prime minister of Japan from the A-bombed Hiroshima, is a blasphemy to the longing souls of A-bomb survivors for peace. It was also a gross outrage that hampers the progress of human civilization. He missed the greatest opportunity to issue a declaration from none other than Hiroshima, envisaging definitive renouncement to nuclear weapons.

Now that Prime Minister has made such a stupid mistake, it is the people of Japan, the sovereign of the country and nobody else that can hold Prime Minister accountable. As general elections could be held before the year end, I would like to propose that we launch from here and now a campaign to call for the “TPNW ratification” as one of the major issues of the election.

To close my talk, I wish to present my appreciation and gratitude to all of you who have come to Nagasaki to unite ourselves for achieving the elimination of nuclear weapons.