

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT FOR NUCLEAR ABOLITION OUTCOME REPORT

Hiroshima, Japan
28-30 August 2015



A GENERATION OF CHANGE

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT FOR NUCLEAR
ABOLITION
OUTCOME REPORT
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Steering Committee Member Organizations:

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Mines Action Canada
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation
PAX
Soka Gakkai International
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Co-Sponsors:

City of Hiroshima, City of Nagasaki, Hiroshima Peace Culture
Foundation, PCU Nagasaki Council for Nuclear Weapons
Abolition, The Nagasaki Global Citizens' Assembly for the
Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, Mayors for Peace,
International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN),
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Women's International
League for Peace and Freedom, International Physicians
for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), PAX, Basel
Peace Office, Ban All Nukes generation (BANg), Global Zero,
Soka Gakkai International.

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INTRODUCTION

For seven decades, speeches and promises have been made but the realities of nuclear weapons still continue to threaten the security of the global community. There is a sense of urgency to act collectively to end this threat. We are living in an opportune time when 1.8 billion of the world's total population is composed of youth — youth who have the power to change the world and its future.

Therefore, as the world marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is time for young people around the world to come together, to seize this potential and to make a breakthrough toward a world without nuclear weapons. Towards this end, an “International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition” was held in Hiroshima, Japan, from 28-30 August 2015.

Thirty youth leaders from twenty-three different countries came together for the International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition, organized by a steering committee composed of youth representatives from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Mines Action Canada, Nuclear Age Peace

Foundation, PAX, Soka Gakkai International and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, carrying the objective of bringing strong voices of youth activists together.

The Summit's goal was to build and enhance the network of the younger generation of leaders in the field of nuclear abolition and to create opportunities for future collaborations transcending strategic differences. Participants engaged in a two-day working session, consisting of activities such as the tour of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Park, dialogue with hibakusha, and strategic discussions on themes related to the present and future of the nuclear abolition movement. The youth leaders also developed a Youth Pledge for Nuclear Abolition (see page 7) and a one-year action plan, with the awareness that the Summit is just a starting point for their future action. The final day of the Summit was a public forum, where over 250 participants deepened their understanding of the issue and discussed what actions they can take in their own capacities.

LEARNING TOGETHER

On the first day, the participants were given the opportunity to visit Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Park to get a glimpse of the horrific impact and see firsthand the detrimental effects left behind by the atomic bomb that exploded over Hiroshima 70 years ago.

Each participant could visit the museum at their own pace and let the exhibition sink in. The visit to the museum left many speechless, trying to grasp details seen and heard to express articulately the feelings, emotions and realizations. Afterwards, the group paused at the memorial cenotaph to remember, reflect and offer flowers to those lives that were taken too soon.

The visit to the museum and park was followed by a dialogue with one of the 1945 survivors of the

Hiroshima bombing, Toshiko Tanaka. Ms. Tanaka shared that it was never easy for her to go back to that day 70 years ago and it took many years before she could even begin to talk about what happened. “To re-live the pain and horror is too much for anyone to bear... the scars may have faded away but the bad memories still remain”, she stated. Ms. Tanaka in her speech emphasized the importance of peace education as a preventive measure to combat violence and the threats of war, and the importance of dialogue and friendship to build bridges towards a holistic culture of peace that future generations deserve. She urged the group to be united and work tirelessly until the last nuclear weapon is destroyed. After the dialogue with Ms. Tanaka, the youth leaders were given time to meet with Mayor Kazumi Matsui of Hiroshima. Here, Mayor Matsui shared his utmost gratitude to those present and gave emphasis on the importance of partnerships in the work towards nuclear abolition. Both dialogues received positive responses from the youth leaders and the experience served as inspiration to think creatively and strategically towards intelligent activism.

In a brief working session in the afternoon, participants finalized the language for the Youth Pledge for Nuclear Abolition that would later be presented at the public Summit. A group of participants had started drafting the document about a month earlier.



Photo by Soka Gakkai International



"It is very hard to describe my impression of the museum in words. As soon as I stepped into the museum, my body shivered and got goose-bumps. I saw the exhibition of the two/three people with hanging skin, ripped clothes, and on fire in the rubbles. The former experience and the shadow of the man left on the stairs have troubled

me deeply. Because of my background as an Afghan I connect to and feel the extent of damage and sufferings of the civilians more. Afghan people have also been suffering from decades of war and use of indiscriminate weapons.

While walking in the memorial park and admiring its symbolism of peace and cooperation of the Japanese people and other global citizens. This has made me hopeful once more to believe that one day Afghanistan will be a safe haven. It is possible to end the war, sufferings and use of nuclear weapon if WE as the global citizens work toward building friendships instead of focusing on "the otherness". And Hiroshima is a symbol of this friendship." Malahat Mazaher, Afghanistan

"The aisle to the exhibition room led me to the day when the nuclear bomb hit the city. Mushroom clouds, destroyed buildings and painfully dying persons with melting skin made me aware of the fact that there were people beyond the number of casualties and their memories and sufferings are the main stories that I

have to focus on. I've heard and read about the nuclear bombing and its impact before. However, detailed situations with names and their respective stories that were described and introduced in each section captured the moments and delivered vivid memories to me in the present. What I witnessed at the museum was far above all I knew before. As a person who lives under the current nuclear threat on the Korean peninsula, it was valuable opportunity to fully understand about humanitarian impact of nuclear bombing and draw a real picture that we might face one day unless we stop our government's strong belief in nuclear deterrence.

I really enjoyed walking around the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park because it has many precious sites that mourn the people who lost their lives because of nuclear bombing and pray for the peace in Asia and the World. A child's statue surrounded by thousands of paper crane with wishes for nuclear free world was one of the most impressive sites in the park. Peace will be preserved by those individuals who remember the day and act for the future. As a Korean, visiting memorial stone in the park, which was dedicated to Koreans who lost their lives in the disaster, was also a precious experience. Most of Koreans do not recognize their existence and show their interest in anti-nuclear campaign. I wish the park could convey its peace message to people in both Koreas as it did in Hiroshima and the World." Mihyeon Lee, Republic of Korea



Photo by Mia Gandenberger

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

The second day focused on peer-to-peer training sessions, to review the previous day, and agree on actions for the future. Workshops were held on how to best reach out to younger people, how to unite the movement and how gender matters for nuclear disarmament. Here, the youth leaders were invited to look into their own local campaigns and strategies, giving them the opportunity to evaluate the quality of work that was being done in their own respective countries. Questions were raised with regards to effectiveness of their work, looking at specific examples of quantity over quality and problems with sustaining the interest of our followers and the general public while remaining relevant and not losing sight on the main objective of nuclear abolition.

The first session on “Expanding the Movement and Engaging More Youth” focused on identifying ways in which participants could increase the support for their movement as well as sharing experiences and different perspectives from around the world on how to best achieve that. In a brief theoretical discussion, it became clear that apart from the initiator, identifying and encouraging “first followers” to share ownership of the movement is crucial in order to initiate growth. Once follower numbers have grown, it is vital to keep the engagement level high. Therefore, to identify and evaluate youthful allies who are credible and reliable to help enhance the movement is critical.

During this search, agreeing on goals amongst partners, maintaining flexibility, whilst effectively communicating and building trust among partners is key. Youth can offer a lot to movements: they energize others, contribute innovative ways to campaign and are committed supporters once fully engaged in the movement. Youth need to be engaged in participatory learning methods, rights-based approaches and meaningful activities with emotive tags in order to have a productive discourse with them. Once the process of involving young people into the movement is underway then action plans need to be designed in ways that are culturally agreeable, empathetic to the different organizational and, to a certain extent, individual goals as well as

appealing to local and global communities to help with sharing and furthering the movement. Then, ACT!

In the afternoon the group broke up into two workshops, one reflecting on ways of “Working together towards a nuclear weapons free world” and the other on “Gender and nuclear weapons.” The discussion on working together first mapped out the global, regional and national campaigns, networks, and organizations, which resulted in an overwhelmingly big web of organizations and campaigns working on the issue of nuclear disarmament. While participants thought collaboration would be beneficial, working together for the sake of collaboration only would not be conducive to progress. Therein also lies the greatest challenge to the movement as each of the organizations had a unique contribution to make and it is key to find a balance between diversity, collaboration and unity, as well as the international, national, and regional level. In order to achieve that, participants concluded it was vital to improve communication between organizations, increase the understanding of the different strategies to achieve nuclear abolition as in most cases they are complementary, and focus on the common goals while professionally working towards them.

The second group looking at gender and nuclear weapons first discussed the differences between sex (biology) and gender (societal expectations about behaviour) as well as the power relations that shape the structures that we live in. Later, they examined how gender is relevant for discussions about international security, disarmament, and nuclear weapons as well as its effects on the diversity of participation and the views expressed presented. Many of the participants shared examples from their own work in nuclear disarmament, where they had encountered discrimination stemming from the gendered structures of nuclear disarmament diplomacy. While not all participants drew the same conclusions from the debate for their own work, there was a realization that further discussions should be undertaken both at the local and international level to further deepen our knowledge and open new lenses on how we view realities related to nuclear disarmament

To wrap up a long day of working, participants discussed in a joint brainstorming session on what each of them could commit to concretely for the coming year and how the Youth Pledge could be included in their work. Activities on organizing, communications public education/outreach, advocacy, and follow up ranged from translating the Pledge into other languages, and writing articles about the Summit or youth engagement, to joint events like movie screenings, trainings, and talks.



Photo by Soka Gakkai International

EXPANDING THE CIRCLE

On the 30 August, the international youth leaders were given the opportunity to meet over 250 fellow young people and individuals from all over Japan in the public Summit. After words of welcome by the hosts, the opening remarks by Mr. Taro Hashimoto of Soka Gakkai International, Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, Chair of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, and the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi emphasized the important role of youth for nuclear disarmament in particular and human development in general. In addition, distinguished leaders of NGOs around the world sent [letters of support](#) to the participants in the Summit.

Following the opening session, local student and third generation hibakusha, Naomi Tagawa, performed on a Hibaku Piano (a piano that survived the nuclear attack) and "Hiroshima Lost – A Labor of Love",



Photo by Soka Gakkai International

a documentary by filmmaker and Hibakusha, Mr. Masaaki Tanabe, premiered. The film demonstrated the daily life in Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, before and after the bomb was dropped.

During the question and answer session afterwards, Mr. Tanabe shared his own experience and urged participants of the Summit to understand the reality of Hiroshima, to empathize, and to share the knowledge with those around them to carry the message for nuclear abolition forward.

To provide some inspiration youth leaders from Japan, Kenya, Romania, Thailand, and the United States shared their own experience and work in their respective countries. This session was then followed by small group discussions on how to push the movement forward. Soon, lively discussions filled the room and served as encouragement for all of the participants.



Photo by Soka Gakkai International

To formally commit youth around the world, Co-Chairs of the Summit Rick Wayman and Anna Ikeda, presented the Youth Pledge entitled "A Generation of Change: A Youth Pledge for Nuclear Disarmament" to the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth. The Pledge can serve as a guide or framework to be used to encourage young people to take action towards greater cooperation and partnership towards nuclear abolition.

The Summit gave the next generation of leaders the opportunity to experience first-hand about the atrocities that took place 70 years ago and to commit to abolishing these horrific weapons. Additionally the event helped preserve the living memories of Hibakusha, and further inspired youth to ensure that the future is free from nuclear weapons.



Photo by Soka Gakkai International

After the public Summit, the international youth leaders met with Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi for an interactive discussion about youth engagement, youth's role in addressing the world's challenges of today, and how to build lasting peace.

GENERATION OF CHANGE: A YOUTH PLEDGE FOR NUCLEAR ABOLITION

Nuclear weapons are a symbol of a bygone age; a symbol that poses eminent threat to our present reality and has no place in the future we are creating.

Seventy years have passed since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and yet the existence of nuclear weapons continues to threaten every single person with the prospect of a cruel and inhumane death. For 70 years speeches have been made, statements issued and endorsed saying “never again,” and yet we are still held hostage by nuclear weapons. We, youth around the world, are mustering the courage to stand up and fulfill these decades-old promises of abolition. We need to eliminate this threat to our shared future and we urge you to join us, the Generation of Change.

It is time to take action.

We, youth seek human security and sustainability, which are impossible to achieve fully in the presence of nuclear weapons. Youth see the potential for a world without nuclear weapons – we see the potential for security not to be based on fear and more militarism, but on diplomacy, cooperation and trust. Abolishing nuclear weapons is our responsibility; it is our right and we will no longer sit by while the opportunity of nuclear abolition is squandered. We, youth in all our diversity and in deep solidarity pledge to realize this goal. We are the Generation of Change.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons is unacceptable and action must be taken to protect our shared future. Therefore, as the Generation of Change, we pledge to:

- Continue to educate and empower ourselves in order to better spread this awareness amongst our peers;
- Recognize that diversity in this work is important and work to educate ourselves on how gender impacts disarmament;
- Take action, raise our voices and pursue nuclear abolition in our communities and our countries;
- Share our knowledge about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the experiences of hibakushas and survivors of nuclear weapons tests;
- Encourage others to join the nuclear abolition movement and establish a strong unity among all nuclear abolition campaigners;
- Call upon every State to start negotiations on an international treaty for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons;
- Call on our elected representatives to adopt national legislation prohibiting and criminalizing the manufacture, investment in, testing, deployment, threat or use of nuclear weapons.

We, the Generation of Change, invite you to join us as we raise our collective voice to call for action; we refuse to stand by while nuclear weapons continue to threaten our lives and future generations. Join us, take action and create change!

WANT TO JOIN THE GENERATION OF CHANGE?

We are inviting you to sign the Youth Pledge and join the Generation of Change! Please tell us about your activities and how the Pledge fits in with your work for the goal of nuclear abolition.

You can sign the Youth Pledge at <http://internationalyouthsummit.org/pledge/>

You can contact us at: www.internationalyouthsummit.org | hiroshimayouthsummit@gmail.com



International Youth Summit for
Nuclear Abolition

核兵器廃絶のための
世界青年サミット

30 Aug 2015

Generation of Change



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