

November 26, 2024

Statement on the Award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Nihon Hidankyo  
by Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (HANWA)

**Let's make "Nuclear and humanity cannot coexist"  
a common principle around the world!**

The 2024 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo). I would like to express my sincere respect for the courageous decision to acknowledge the efforts of hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors).

Chairman Jørgen Watne Frydnes of the Norwegian Nobel Committee expressed the following reasons for the award in his speeches and interviews:

Next year will mark 80 years since two American atomic bombs killed an estimated 120,000 inhabitants of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A comparable number died of burn and radiation injuries in the months and years that followed.

The fates of those who survived the infernos of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were long concealed and neglected.

In 1956, local Hibakusha associations along with victims of nuclear weapons tests in the Pacific formed the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisations.

The Hibakusha help us to describe the indescribable, to think the unthinkable, and to somehow grasp the incomprehensible pain and suffering caused by nuclear weapons.

No nuclear weapon has been used in war in nearly 80 years. The extraordinary efforts of Nihon Hidankyo and other representatives of the Hibakusha have contributed greatly to the establishment of the nuclear taboo. It is therefore alarming that today this taboo against the use of nuclear weapons is under pressure.

It is inspiring to see how they continued their work and also how they are transferring it to new generation in Japan. ...humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist. We should make sure that these weapons are never used ever again.

We must learn lessons from the will of our predecessors, who were determined to save themselves and at the same time save humanity, and who continued their fight until they passed away despite their unimaginable grueling suffering. We must renew our courage in the fight against the colossal power of nuclear-armed states, as the announcement of Nobel Peace Prize has demonstrated.

Atomic bomb survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki formed various groups of hibakusha, even though they were under strict censorship by the postwar occupation forces until 1952. While

supporting each other, hibakusha rallied and demanded that the government support the survivors, because of their illnesses and the grief of losing their immediate family members.

The Castle Bravo hydrogen bomb test at Bikini Atoll in 1954 caused radioactive fallout and devastated the *Daigo Fukuryu-maru* (Lucky Dragon No. 5) and many other fishing boats. The people of Japan and the world, who witnessed the devastation caused by the nuclear tests, rose up in the international movement to ban atomic and hydrogen bombs, assembled great strength, and held the First World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs in 1955, where hibakusha appealed to the world for the first time about their pain and suffering from the atomic bombings.

In March 1956, hibakusha formed Hiroshima Prefectural Hidankyo. By August of the same year, they conducted a nationwide survey of A-bomb survivors, and established A-bomb survivors' organizations in 15 prefectures, and finally formed Nihon Hidankyo at the Second World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs. After that, they built a powerful organization by creating a network of hibakusha all across the country. In "Greetings to the World," the founding declaration of Nihon Hidankyo, they said, "thus we pledge our determination to save ourselves and to save humanity from the crisis through our experiences."

This is the principle of the movement that Nihon Hidankyo has advocated since its establishment: that "the movement to demand an Atomic Bomb Survivors Assistance Law based on the principle of national reparation, and the movement to ban atomic and hydrogen bombs, are two sides of the same coin." This principle has become a legacy from our predecessors that has been passed on to the ongoing movement of nuclear victims around the world.

However, the Atomic Bomb Medical Care Act of 1957, the Hibakusha Special Measures Law of 1968, and even the Hibakusha Assistance Law of 1994, which subsequently consolidated the previous laws, were relief measures based not on the spirit of "national reparation" that recognized Japan's accountability for World War II, which was pursued by Hidankyo. We can only imagine how furious the A-bomb survivors were at the government's refusal to acknowledge their accountability for the war, and we express our sympathy to the survivors.

In most parts of the world, nuclear victims and victims of war have been indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people who are subjected to colonialism and oppression from those in power. Japan's invasion of Asia caused many people in the Korean Peninsula (both the present-day Republic of Korea and the present-day Democratic People's Republic of Korea) to become victims of the atomic bombings. Even in the struggles of the predecessors of the A-bomb survivors' movement, there was the lawsuit led by Son Jin-doo, a Korean hibakusha (the lawsuit that paved the way for the expansion of benefits to hibakusha living abroad).

It is unfortunate that the reason for awarding the Nobel Peace Prize, while appreciating the efforts of the hibakusha movement to testify to making nuclear weapons taboo, does not mention the other pillar of the A-bomb survivors' movement, which is national reparation. However, this is an assignment that we, or those in Japan led by hibakusha, should take over. This is a principle of the struggle to prevent the creation of more nuclear victims.

With the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, we in Hiroshima will continue to move forward.

We have learned from our predecessors - who were nuclear victims and who have recognized and confronted all nuclear impacts while establishing the earth-crawling movement without much support - that nuclear impacts are not limited to the damage caused by nuclear weapons in a nuclear war. We have learned that nuclear impacts are also increasing and ongoing, from uranium mining, processing and enrichment of uranium for nuclear weapons and nuclear reactors, more than 2,000 nuclear tests, nuclear disasters, and the radioactive contamination against human beings and the environment caused at every stage of nuclear development and use. Therefore, we promote an anti-nuclear movement that denies all nuclear cycle. We reaffirm that there is no future for humanity unless we denounce the entire nuclear cycle.

In addition, the so-called "theory of accepting and enduring the war damage," the "necessity of scientific evidence in terms of radiation doses," and as stated in a 1980 report by the Advisory Council on Basic Issues for Atomic Bomb Survivors, the idea that "the damage caused by war must be equally borne by the people," are important issues that we must overcome, as they trivialize and conceal the impact of nuclear damage.

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings in 2025, HANWA renews its determination to play a role in the struggle for the abolition of nuclear weapons as well as the abolition of all nuclear cycle. On January 22, 2025, on the fourth anniversary of the entry into force of the TPNW, 1500 candles will be lit in front of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) with the spirits of the deceased nuclear victims to send messages to the world such as "Nuclear and humanity cannot coexist" and "Humanity must live!". In October, the World Nuclear Victims Forum will be held in Hiroshima, bringing together nuclear victims from all over the world. We humbly express our respect and solidarity to the award of the Nobel Peace Prize, and we look forward to hearing a strong message from the Chairman of the Nobel Committee.

To learn from the wisdom of our predecessors in Hiroshima, that "Chain reactions of spiritual atoms must overcome chain reactions of material atoms," we call upon the world to overcome the enormous power created by nuclear chain reactions with the power of chain reactions of solidarity among the people of the world.

Let us share and stand in solidarity with the idea that "nuclear and humanity cannot coexist," a principle from Hiroshima that has been universalized throughout the world.

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