

**Dialogue between Ms. Beatrice Fihn
and young leaders in Hiroshima**
(Transcript)

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Session 1

I would like to invite Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director for ICAN. Title is "We shall not repeat the evil: How Japan can lead us towards a nuclear free world". So please welcome Ms. Fihn. (Applause)

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Thank you so much for this introduction and thank you to Mayor Matsui, Mr. Komizo and the people of Hiroshima for welcoming me here today. This is the place that is really important for me to visit to see with my own eyes and put real markers on the story I have heard. It is incredibly powerful for me to see the roads and the buildings, the remnants of a city that once was and the buildings, roads and more importantly the people that have given it new life. It is in this city that we witnessed the worst of what humanity can unleash. It is here that we first learned the indiscriminate nature of these weapons. That their type of terror cannot be targeted or contained. It is here that the medical profession saw a new type of mass suffering brought on by radiation and it is here that we witnessed and realized the blast of an Atomic bomb is not the end of carnage but the sad beginning of years, decades of pain and death.

But these facts are not the only exceptional truth held by Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Two cities united by a painful but powerful bond. It is also here where the best of humanity faced the worst and ultimately overcame. At a time when the world desperately wanted to close a chapter of history, the *Hibakusha* refused to go quietly. They refused to disappear and let the world forget the horror that has occurred here. They knew while the story of one world war was ending a new and possibly darker story was beginning and this city was the home of that first chapter. The people of Hiroshima rebuilt with their hands and they spoke out with their voices. They bore witness to what happened here for more than seven decades and wouldn't let the world ignore it. I have had the honor to meet many *Hibakusha*. I have listened to their remembrances everywhere from small community meetings, schools, houses of worship to meetings with heads of states and ringing through the halls of the United Nations. They say here are our stories, do not look away. Do not repeat one of the greatest errors of human history. They relive their painful past, retell very painful memories so that we all can create a better future. I can say as somebody who leads ICAN and has been involved in these negotiations towards nuclear disarmament, the nuclear ban treaty would not exist without *Hibakusha*. They stood as defiant witnesses to the horror of history not as passive victims but active advocates. They refused to stay silent and to forget. They bore their scars both mental and physical as

cautionary warnings to us who have been lucky enough not to live through what they have been through. I would like to take this moment to recognize the *Hibakusha* with us here and wherever they might be as well as their families who have also carried their stories. The people of Hiroshima who came after them and carried with them stories of survival. Please join me in honoring, celebrating and thanking them for being tireless voices of truth. But it's not just the *Hibakusha* that know the truth. Not just the people who lived through this city and rebuilt this city from the ashes that know this. The young people that I've met here also carry the stories with them and carry the passion to make sure that this is never done again. That makes me really happy because in many ways. ICAN is a youth led movement and traditionally that wasn't the case on nuclear disarmament. The first people to speak out against nuclear weapons were an older generation, scientists, intellectuals, academics. Many of those who have worked on creating the nuclear bomb have regretted it as soon as they realize the destructive power of the thing they had created. The first ever petition against nuclear weapons was from 70 scientists who had worked on the Manhattan Project to build the first nuclear bomb. But over 70 years later the problem has not been solved. We are not free from the threat of just one person, for example, holding the power to end their world in their hands. So, it falls to a new generation to solve the problem that the previous generation did not. You, the youth here today are that generation and having met so many young people here it gives me really great hope and optimism that we will succeed. These cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki are cities of hope. They have emerged from the ashes of nuclear darkness to become beacons of light for the rest of the world. It inspires me that we can do the same with this campaign to ban nuclear weapons and make every state sign it.

A global problem needs a global solution. The responsibility falls in particular on the youth to drive this solution. The reason why I am so optimistic that we will succeed is that young people have three incredibly powerful weapons that are nearly impossible to stop once they are combined. Those secret weapons are hope, energy and social media. Hope is what drives us to do this work. Fear has guided global relations for 70 years and the powerful created nuclear weapons to control the world. However, it is clear that these nuclear weapons have controlled us. The antidote of fear is hope. The young people must harness this hope if we are going to succeed. We will do that using our second secret weapon energy. I am really inspired to see the energy that young people bring to this movement. It can be hard when you see people have been working on this issue for decades. When people tell you day after day that you are being naive, what you are trying to achieve is impossible. The young people have overcome this pessimism with their

energy. They are bringing new hope and breathing new life into the issue as well as new ideas and innovation. The third secret weapon is what could be the difference, social media. Young people don't just have the hope and energy to come up with great ideas. They have the technology to connect those ideas to other people around the world to join forces. Together we are more powerful and social media allows us to connect. An ICAN campaigner here in Hiroshima who can share his or her ideas with the ICAN campaigner in Mexico even though they have never met. They can connect with another ICAN campaigner in, say, Indonesia. All three of them can reach and inspire a young person in, for example, my home country of Sweden who has never heard of ICAN but cares about this issue. This group can then get in direct contact with politicians and tell them to sign this treaty. Hope, energy and connecting over social media is a powerful combination. We all deserve a say in the continued existence of nuclear weapons. Just look at the unfortunate people in Hawaii this weekend who for thirty minutes thought they were going to die after a false alert saying a nuclear missile was about to hit. They said goodbyes to their loved ones, raced home to their children, waited in terror. Those people deserve a say in the system that makes them live in fear. We all have the right to speak up against this. That has been a large part of ICAN's mission, to bring democracy to disarmament. Nuclear weapons are by their very nature and the structures we have put in place - authoritarian. Their use betrays humanity. The continued development betrays reason and their stockpiling betrays democracy. Any democratic county that supports the continued use is betraying democracy too. Nuclear weapons are the great contradiction of our time. They are the paradox that promises peace by proposing destruction. It is a dangerous balance that cannot hold forever. We must confront this if we are the ones to write the end of the story that began with this city, the end of nuclear weapons. If we shy away, if live in denial, if we leave the outcome to others the weapons will write the end of the story and it could be the end of us all.

This city is a very appropriate place to discuss the contradictions of the nuclear age. They were in many ways born here and embodied in the inhabitants of this city, past and present. As I mentioned before it is here that we saw the very worst of humanity where the bomb with the dreadfully comic code name "little boy" was dropped on unsuspecting citizens. A new type of destruction was brought to bear which ushered in a new age of terror and ironically robbed the world of potential peace. Rather than ending World War II and forging an era of stability and rebuilding, the bombings guaranteed decades of proxy conflict and confrontations with total disaster. We were set on a path, an arms race to total destruction. But this is not a city that just serves as a warning. Hiroshima did not recede

into dust like Pompeii after the volcano. No, Hiroshima rose and Hiroshima is alive today and the memory of what was before and what came after the bomb was held and guarded by the survivors and you and your ancestors rebuilt. The people of Hiroshima countered the worst of humanity with the best and in doing so we can definitely say that Hiroshima became a city of hope. I believe in the power of collective humanity to stand together and face down any threat. I believe we will overcome the destructive force and threat of nuclear weapons once and for all. Otherwise I would not be doing this work. Some people may say that makes me an idealist and I am ok with that. We are idealists but we are not naive. We know that the vast majority of the world wants to solve the nuclear problem, not to develop more nuclear weapons and expand the nuclear threat. We are the idealists that believed against all odds that the Nuclear Ban Treaty would become a reality. We are idealists to know that our role as campaigners is to make that which seems impossible inevitable. Idealism is not fool hardy. It is necessary and desperately called for at this moment in the story of humankind and nuclear weapons.

The truth that the critics of our movement simply cannot face is that their belief in the ability of nuclear weapons to prevent conflict simply defies reason. That nuclear weapons have not been used in conflict in this city and on Nagasaki does not have to do with prudent leadership but good fortune. We cannot simply wait for our luck to run out. If you ask a mathematician they will tell you that the likelihood of nuclear weapons being used at any given time is greater than zero. That means that given enough time it is certain that nuclear weapons will be used again. Then let me ask this question to those who accuse us of being naive or irrational. If you know that this story will end either with the use of nuclear weapons or their elimination. Who is the irrational one? We are not naive, we are not irrational, we are on the side of humanity and the survival of the human race. We simply cannot bear to do nothing because doing nothing is accepting the eventual use of nuclear weapons. The fact remains that as long as nuclear weapons exist in any form, the clock is now counting down to the moment of their use.

The need to act is urgent. You that are here in Hiroshima, the people in this room, your friends, families, neighbors you all have a unique role to play in leading the rest of the world towards a nuclear free future. You are essential characters in this story. Your voices, your unique moral authority is needed. I think most of you all understand. And that's why you have erected monuments like where we are today, such as the powerful Memorial Park. This is a warning to others to not forget the lessons of history. That is why this community shares the story of that fateful day in 1945. That's why you tell your children

the truth of what happened here. That's why you have inscriptions such as the one just outside that states "we shall not repeat this evil". You all know that. There is one particular audience that needs to hear that message. One group of people that must be encouraged to share the values of the people from Hiroshima. That is your government in Tokyo. The Japanese government should know better than any nation the consequences of nuclear weapons. Yet Tokyo is happy to live under the threat to use nuclear weapons under the US nuclear protection and has not yet joined the treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. Is your government ok with repeating the evil that was done to Hiroshima to Nagasaki and to other cities? As long as your government believes in the effect of deterrents, they are encouraging nuclear proliferation and along with other nations living under the protection of nuclear alliances are moving the world closer to the use of nuclear weapons.

There is a large gap between the values represented in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the policy coming out of Tokyo. We must close that gap. We must harness your voices to show your national government in Tokyo that it is unacceptable to be a willing participant in this nuclear use. Japan must be a leader in the global movement for nuclear disarmament, Japan must join the treaty. Japan, as a democracy, is answerable to the wishes of its people. If you can unite your fellow citizens in one clear voice it will be impossible for your government to ignore. The people of Hiroshima are a moral authority on this issue and Japan can be a moral authority as a nation to know first-hand the consequences of nuclear war. So encourage your politicians to take up this cause. If they don't listen, grow louder. Know that you have millions of people around the world who share your values and know your cause. Join with them to create an unstoppable force of democratic disarmament. Its grass roots power that led to the Treaty of the prohibition of nuclear weapons, even when those in power said it was impossible. With this treaty, we have the framework to create a new international norm that causes weapons not as a symbol of power but as a symbol of shame. They said banning chemical weapons was impossible, biological weapons, land mines and cluster ammunitions. But we banned them. For far too long your government has lived in its own contradiction. Multiple Prime Ministers have spoken of the values of Hiroshima. They have claimed that nuclear abolition is a government priority, claimed the mantle of moral leadership unique to the only country to be attacked by nuclear weapons. They speak of the unspeakable horrors of nuclear war but now that we have a treaty to stop that from becoming a reality, they will not join it. They always say something hard is impossible. But ICAN campaigners show that it can be made a reality if there are enough of us calling for change loud enough. Government answer to people. People know that nuclear weapons do not make sense and

they are demanding change. With the Nuclear Ban Treaty, a reality that was endorsed by the majority of nation states in the world, Japan, a country that should be a leader on this issue is out of step with the modern and rational world. The time for words without deeds is past. We need action and leadership from Japan and the world needs you, the citizens of this city, of this country to demand it. That is how the people of Hiroshima can ask for more from the government in Tokyo. That is how Tokyo should be standing up for nuclear disarmament among the communities of nations. Japan is also unique in the debate for another reason. Just across the border, North Korea is threatening destruction and devastation with its nuclear weapons program. Once more, Japan could be in the crosshairs of a nuclear attack. Rather than provoking fear and having us rush to the conclusion that we need more nuclear weapons, better nuclear weapons, bigger nuclear weapons, it should give us pause to think "Will we ever be free from this threat as long as there are nuclear weapons anywhere"? These weapons lead us closer to war. 15,000 nuclear weapons did nothing to deter North Korea from developing their own nuclear weapons. We should not be relying on cool heads only being the one thing that stops them from using it. If you are uncomfortable with Kim Jong Un or Donald Trump having the power to destroy us all then you are uncomfortable with nuclear weapons. Without nuclear weapons would the US be defenseless against North Korea? Of course, they would not. The United States having nuclear weapons and Japan relying on nuclear weapons to protect them has done nothing to stop North Korea's nuclear ambitions. It has only fueled it. So, we have a solution to the North Korean situation and luckily it solves all of the other problems too. We all join the Treaty to Prohibit nuclear weapons and we eliminate nuclear weapons. History shows that the prohibition against certain types of weapons facilitates progress towards elimination. Weapons that have been outlawed by international treaties are increasingly seen as illegitimate, lose their political status. Arms companies find it more difficult to acquire funds to work on illegal weapons. Such work then carries a significant reputational risk. Banks, pension funds, other financial institutions can divest from these producers. Changing the rules regarding nuclear weapons will have a major impact, even beyond those nations that formally adopt the treaty at the outset. We are an international campaign but every action is now local. We have hundreds of groups active around the world and we will be helping them to resource efforts to convince their national governments to ratify this treaty and create a pathway to complete nuclear disarmament.

The need has never been so urgent as now. Especially with news this week from the Trump administration in the United States. We have just seen a leaked copy of the new

US policy on nuclear weapons. What it contains in that review should deeply worry us all. It has revealed that the United States instead of making progress towards disarmament, instead of admitting the failure of deterrents and forging a new safer reality, they are wanting to increase their nuclear weapons stock pile and create new low yield weapons that they say will make them more likely to use. Their concern is that the existing nuclear weapons are too big, too deadly to use. Here's the problem with that thinking. By today's terms, nuclear bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki were very low yield. Just one trident submarine carries 70 times the destructive power of what was dropped here in 1945. Seventy times. So, what the US officials are saying is that what happened here, in Hiroshima, to be minor. They are worried that their potential enemies will think that they are too concerned to drop a bigger bomb but wouldn't think twice about dropping more bombs like that which destroyed this city. That they wouldn't think twice about causing another Hiroshima. It is up to the people of Hiroshima, especially the young people reaching out to the other young people around the world to tell the story of what happened here or else people around the world will think that what happened here was minor and is likely to happen again. It is up to people around the world to share your stories with their own people so that their own governments do not buy into this dangerous thinking that insults the memory of *Hibakusha* and all the victims of nuclear attacks. It can sometimes be a sobering and depressing topic to talk so much about the end of the world through nuclear Armageddon.

It can be scary to think about the threat that we constantly live under where at a moment without any notice life as we know it could end. That the sky could rain down destruction one morning just as it did here 73 years ago. But we have hope and I want to finish here today by talking to you about my hope, about ICAN's hope that we will see the end of nuclear weapons. We should be afraid of these weapons. Fear is rational. The threat is real. We are closer than any time in recent history to the use of nuclear weapons and we are shockingly seeing the near daily threats between countries to wipe each other off the map. We are so close to the war of words becoming a war of weapons. We are also closer than ever to their elimination. We have much cause to be hopeful, to defeat fear with hope. Because 122 countries adopted the treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, last year, at the United Nations. That is the vast majority of States in the world. While we are closer than ever to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons totally there is still much work to do. We live in democracies so there is always a choice. If our political leaders refuse to join us on the side of hope, on the side of rationality on the side of a future then we must elect different leaders who will. If our countries refuse this treaty then we must grow louder

until we are impossible to ignore. We must make those countries that live under the protection of nuclear weapons isolated on the world stage and the countries that possess these weapons surrounded by shame and stigma. What happened in Hiroshima must not be forgotten. You have such an important part to play. Nagasaki and Hiroshima have a unique place in history. Our challenge is to make sure that they remain unique. That there are no more cities that join Hiroshima in the list of nuclear bomb sites. That there are no more *Hibakusha*. Your values must become Tokyo's values and that must become the world's values. Your voices must ring out of this hall to be heard around the world to join with other voices calling for common sense and hope. It is up to young people, like yourself, to defeat these nuclear weapons with your own weapons: your hope, your energy and the connections with others who share your passion on social media. ICAN wants to harness your energy and your passion and your hope and if you want to join us you can go and find us on Nuclearban.org, on social media like Facebook and twitter or whatever the cool kids are using these days. Connect with us, connect with other young people around the world. That is the hope for a better future. That is what we deserve and that is what we should expect of our political leaders. Let them know that is what you expect. Use your voice to abolish nuclear weapons. I look forward to working with the city of Hiroshima and the people of Hiroshima and particularly the young people of Hiroshima to achieve that. Thank you.

Question and Answer Session

Moderator: Thank you very much, Executive Director Fihn. You talked with passion. A little bit ahead of the time and we'd like to start the question and answer session now. Although we have limited time, I hope this discussion or question and answer session will be of significance. Is there anyone who wants to ask a question to Executive Director Fihn?

A woman, a high school student. Would you tell us your school and your name before you ask a question?

Akira Hase, student of Funairi High School: I am Akira Hase from Funairi High School. We have learned about peace and war since we were children because we live in Hiroshima, when and how did you become interested in peace?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: I grew up in an area in Sweden with lots

of immigrants. A very diverse community. When I started school, I think we were only two or three people in my class who had two parents that were born in Sweden. The rest came from all over the world. They came from different crisis areas and conflict areas. Their parents or themselves had fled war or oppression, starvation from so many different situations. So, I think I have always since a very young age even though I didn't understand the conflicts always understood that things that happen around the world affects me too. That, we are all connected. I think it was just a very early feeling that the world is much smaller than we think. It feels big sometimes but it is quite small. What happens on another side has a huge impact and we need to learn about what's going on in the rest of the world and different situations in order to fully understand each other. At the end of the day, we might look different but humans are very similar all over the world. We have the same hopes and fears. We want our friends and family and ourselves to have a safe life. We want a better life for our children. We share that in common. So, I think it comes from seeing that early.

Akira Hase, student of Funairi High School: Thank you so much.

Moderator: Ok, thank you very much. Let's move on to the next question. Somebody from a different high school, maybe. I want to gather questions from different high schools. The boy over there. Please wait for the microphone.

Hara, student of Eishin High School: Good afternoon Ms. Beatrice. My name is Hara, I am a second grader at Eishin High School. Today was a huge honor to listen to your wonderful speech. Is this your first time in Hiroshima, if I am right? How did your image to Hiroshima change before you came here and then after you came here?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Thank you so much. Yes, this is my first visit to Hiroshima and my first visit to Japan. Obviously working with nuclear weapons, I have read so much about Hiroshima. I've seen the images. I've heard testimony from people from Hiroshima. But it's very different to see it myself and to walk around the Peace Park today and walk around the museum. To see the artifacts, to see the images, to hear survivor's stories again. Being here is really deeply moving and very emotional. I think it's impossible to be here and not feel that we can't let this happen again. I think that's the really powerful feeling. I can't imagine anyone walking around here and thinking that was okay, this is fine, we should do it again. It's impossible. So, I think I really wish all world leaders and politicians had to travel here, especially those with nuclear weapons

or that rely on nuclear weapons through alliances. It should be mandatory to sit in front of a survivor and hear their stories. To watch the place where so many people suffered such painful death and destruction. I really think it's necessary to experience. I am very happy to have been here.

Hara, student of Eishin High School: Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much, next, a gentleman over there.

Tatsue Hino: I am Tatsue Hino. I think such a meeting for nuclear abolition can mean that you deny any and all countries the right to make or maintain nuclear weapons. So, has any country or organization ever obstructed your work?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Yes, the Treaty prohibits the use, possession and development of nuclear weapons. Also, to threaten to use nuclear weapons. So, that means you cannot have, use or make nuclear weapons and cannot participate in planning to use nuclear weapons together with your other countries. Over 122 countries adopted this treaty and so far, 56 states have signed it, three have ratified it. It is trickling in more ratifications now. It has started really important conversations in many states such as, Japan, nuclear weapon states and other nuclear alliance states about the role of nuclear weapons. It is raising awareness that there are still many states that are actively threatening to use nuclear weapons. I think this treaty will grow in membership over the years. We are working hard to make sure that states like Japan and also nuclear armed states sign. It may take time but we are committed to making that happen.

Tatsue Hino: Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Ok, next question. Any body? The woman in the front.

Natsumi Hiyama, student of Hiroshimajogakuin High School: Good afternoon, Thank you very much for your talk. Allow me to speak in Japanese. I am from Hiroshimajogakuin. My name is Natsumi Hiyama. In your talk you shared your hope with us. Keeping hope is very difficult sometimes. If you look at the reality for nuclear weapons you must be disappointed sometimes. You may face some obstacles. How do you keep your hope?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Yes, it's a tough issue to work on. It's a slow progress and very heavy topic, the end of the world. It's not easy. I think what you have to do personally is first we can't solve this alone. This is not something that one person is going to fix. So, we have work together and we have to surround ourselves with people who think the same. We cannot start with, say a country like North Korea. We can't start with the worst violators of human law or rights before we move towards the countries that should share our values. We have to start with ourselves and the people around us. When you work like that, when you gather people that are like minded and think in the same way. It has a huge positive momentum and energizing impact. I've actually heard from some representatives from the nuclear weapons states that are very critical of our work. Why are you so positive all the time? You should be more like we are going in the opposite direction. Why aren't you more upset. I think that being energetic and being positive is almost infectious. It spreads. Big change always faces resistance. In particular when we talk about change that changes for equality. Those that have the power don't like to give up their power. It wasn't men who led woman's rights to vote. It wasn't white people in South Africa that led the fight against Apartheid. Changing power was always going to be very hard. Those in power are always going to resist until it happens and then it all changes. I think we have to remember that we are on the right side of history. No one will be remembered in a good way for defending nuclear weapons. I think we just have to remember that not only in our communities but on a personal level. Even when it is tough it is better to be on the right side. Let's not fall into the cynical part of human nature but keep our optimism and our hope because that is the only thing that has changed things. I'd like to think about the big progress that we've made in the world. It's better now than it was 100 years ago. We have more human rights, more justice, more equality than we had 100 years ago. There is less torture, there is less violation of people's bodies. It's not perfect now, of course but we are making progress as humanity for the better. Sometimes when you look at the news it doesn't look like it. Think about 100 years ago to now. How much has changed and how much better off humanity is in a way. How much better off woman are today, for example or how much better people of color are today. It is changing for the better but you have to zoom out a little bit to remember that. I have great hopes that we will do the right thing on nuclear weapons, as well.

Natsumi Hiyama, student of Hiroshimajogakuin High School: Thank you very much for your answer. I am so happy to have asked you a question. Thank you.

Moderator: Next question. A woman in white sweater.

Unidentified speaker (An exchange student): I am an exchange student in Japan. I am from Bosnia Herzegovina. Bosnia Herzegovina had a war before 25 years ago. My mother and father lived during the war without clothes, food or water. They never taught me to hate, you know. I wanted to ask you what's making people to start wars and what's making people to use nuclear weapons. I just wanted to say that I think that every human has its own potential to change the world. Everyone has that power but medias are really focusing on the bad things only. They are not spreading the voice of the ordinary people to rise and to tell what they want to say. What do you think about that?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Thank you very much for your questions. Yes, when I talked earlier about my school, suddenly over one summer there were a lot of new students from Bosnia, from Croatia, from Serbia with memories and experiences from the war, that awful war. I think it's hard to say what war comes from but I think it comes from fear and a lack of understanding that we are the same. Somehow portraying people from other countries or other cultures or other religions as "the other" someone that is different from us. It's surprising today when we can connect so easily across borders and time zones, and languages even. We have Google translator we can even speak to people that don't speak the same language. Somehow, we still aren't connecting because no matter who the person is, if you sit down with a person for twenty minutes face to face and talk, it's very difficult to hate that person. I can have extremely frustrating conversations with people that disagree with me on policy issues on nuclear weapons. They defend their right to have nuclear weapons. Afterwards, you might grab a coffee and talk about something else and you realize that they are just the same as well. I think the solution is that we have to stand up for justice and equality, humanitarian values, protection of civilians. Civilians are never targets. Warfare cannot include a weapon that is meant to kill as many civilians as possible. That's what nuclear weapons are meant to do. They don't follow the Geneva Convention. They just level an entire city. That is unacceptable. So, I think we have to stand up for that but still keep talking to people and meeting them as human beings. That is why the stories from the survivors are so important. When I hear them talk about not finding water and not having any bandages for their wounds, the practical things that if we were bombed we would do exactly the same thing. They are human beings. You see pictures of mothers that are carrying their babies or trying to carry wounded people. Humans are exactly the same in those situations. There is no difference. That is why I think the human stories are the solution to this problem. Focusing on the humans, not on the states. This is not a state security issue. This is an

issue for humans.

Moderator: Thank you. Okay, so anybody else? We will take the next question from the high school student.

Unidentified speaker (A high school student): Thank you very much. So, in your effort for Japan to join, actively, in ICAN activities and result in any defense if Japan were to be confronted with a nuclear power state. How will the nuclear power state see Japan or react if Japan actively joined ICAN in the abolition of nuclear weapons?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: That's a very good question. All of the nuclear arms states have said they want a world without nuclear weapons. They all have committed to nuclear disarmament. They just don't want to do it now. They want to do it later. They have also committed to stop any new countries from developing nuclear weapons. So, it puzzles me sometimes when states like Japan who doesn't have its own nuclear weapons. Wouldn't it be good for Japan, wouldn't it be in their interests that all of the non-nuclear weapons states committed to never having them, and never using them and never being a part of that? I think that should be in their interest even if they are not ready themselves. Of course, that's not the way it is. They know the nuclear arm states are so critical of this treaty because they understand the power of norms. Nuclear weapons are not that useful. They are clumsy, bug, old fashioned weapons. They are not modern-day warfare technology. Their power is in their political value and their symbolic value. We see that with North Korea. I don't think anyone would have cared about North Korea if they didn't have nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons makes them a power. Makes them someone you have to think about and react to. It gives states an incentive to develop nuclear weapons. If you want to be around the big table with the most important ones you develop nuclear weapons. The more that happens the more likely it is, the faster that we get to the point where nuclear weapons will be used. So, they understand that this treaty, even without their participation is going to make nuclear weapons shameful and that's why they are against it. They want to keep their power. But at the same time, joining the treaty for Japan does not mean breaking with the United States and its military alliance with the United States. There are many other treaties that have strong relations with the United States and are still a part of this treaty. It means that Japan would not be participating in any use of nuclear weapons on other cities. It does not mean that Japan would not be able to collaborate on other military conventional weapons and would be able to enjoy the protection of the United States under the conventional weapons. I think

it's important to separate those two things. This treaty is not about giving up all defense. It is just about saying we do not want to participate in using weapons of mass destruction. Conventional weapons are a whole other issue. This is a treaty that would be able to include very strong military alliance with the United States as long as it doesn't involve using nuclear weapons.

Moderator: Thank you very much.

Unidentified speaker (A high school student): Thank you very much.

Moderator: Next question. A lady wearing mask.

Mone Ohara, student of AIC Junior and Senior High School: Thank you for a wonderful lecture. I'm from AIC Junior and Senior High School. I am Mone Ohara and I'm thinking I want to be one of the leaders to create a world without nuclear weapons but I think we have to face a lot of problems in order to achieve this. So, what do you think the biggest difficulty we all face in order to achieve this is?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Well, I am very excited you want to be a leader. I think you should go and do it! The biggest difficulty that I think we face is that we don't dare to believe that we can change. I think the biggest obstacle is in ourselves because people have power and governments work for us. You are the boss of Prime Minister Abe not the other way around. You pay his salary or your parents do. I think that's when people realize that they have the power to decide but it takes a lot of work to get there and first you have to believe that you can do it. Then you have to organize yourself to do it and find other people that also believe and convince those that aren't believers yet. So, there is a lot of work to get there. But once you gather enough people the change is unstoppable. I really think the biggest obstacle is to dare to believe and not fall into the trap to think that its cooler to be a bit cynical or that it's hopeless so I'm going to focus on other things. It doesn't means that you have to devote your entire life to the cause. You don't have to give up a job or do this for every awake minute. You can live your life and do other things and then just keep supporting. Do a few activities here and there. Find an organization to become a member of, at least. Go to a meeting here or there, sign a petition once in a while. If everyone would do a little bit we would make so much progress. So, I think the biggest difficulty is really to have the conviction that this is going to work. We can achieve change. I'm going to stick to doing something about it big or

small.

Mone Ohara, student of AIC Junior and Senior High School: Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Next question, maybe from a college student? Any questions from a college student? The person in the red sweater, please.

Ryohei Katatsugu, student of Kyushu University: Thank you very much for your talk. This is Ryohei Katatsugu from Kyushu University. My question is this. This is actually a question to myself, as well. Why ICAN, a new generation organization which was born out of Europe not in Japan? This is actually a question to myself. I am a young person but I was not heavily involved this kind of activity. Why was ICAN born in Europe and not in Japan? The next question, you came to Japan, you are speaking with young people in this room and you mentioned hope for youth in young Japanese people but did you feel really hope? Did you see a real hope, or optimism in Japanese young people? Because I don't see many college students in this room. There are many junior high schools and senior high schools. However, college students who have a lot of time, why did they not come? Do you have any idea?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: I don't know why they are not here. I think it's pretty full though. I think it's the peace movement that is strong here in Japan and we have lots of Japanese partner organizations in ICAN. Of course, also, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been very instrumental in shaping the campaign and shaping how we work and why we doing the work. So, I feel that while our offices are in Geneva, Switzerland because the UN is located there, it's very much of a global campaign. We have a strong influence from the Japanese society, particularly the survivors. We of course want more. Perhaps it can also be language issue or a communication which are mostly in English. Thanks to our Japanese colleagues we now have a Twitter account in Japanese, ICAN Japanese, something like that. So, do follow that for updates in Japanese and get involved, really. I think that's the solution to this. We are eager to have more partner organizations, more supporters and activists so either go to nuclearban.org or contact our Japanese partner organizations that do national work here in Japan. Find out what you can do. I do feel hope talking to young people here in Japan. But I did hear a very concerning statistic yesterday that young people don't vote here in Japan. The voting age is 18 but very few young people actually show up and vote. That has to change because these people are making decisions about your life. You have a right to make those

decisions. If you don't vote, if people don't vote you are letting an older generation decide your future. I would really encourage people to become more politically active. I also think this issue is perhaps a bit intimidating to young people. That's also a problem, sometimes, of the so-called experts on nuclear weapons. They have PhD's in nuclear physics, they are very much older. They sit in Washington or Tokyo, maybe and they use very complicated words talk about verification of this and verification of that. What we are trying to do at ICAN is to show people that you don't have to be like that, you don't need to know everything about every nuclear weapon or every treaty or every details. It is basically a question of right and wrong. Do we bomb the whole city and kill, slaughter hundreds of thousands of civilians or not? All of those details and complicated contexts and security policy and this there and the military there. It's just smoke and mirrors to keep people from not engaging because if people did engage, they would be gone a long time ago. So, we are really eager to make it simple for people. To make it that you have a voice just as much as the experts, just as much as the Prime Minister. When they go to vote he gets one vote and you get one vote, if you are over 18. You are equal. Don't ever let anyone think that you don't have a say in these things. So, I think it's also about encouraging young people and that's what I hope you can do to encourage people to feel that this is also your issue. That you have a right, just as much as the older generation, to make decisions because they left you with this mess. They didn't do anything and now you or maybe your kids will have to deal with the consequences of when they are next used. It is up to you to fix this problem.

Ryohei Katatsugu, student of Kyushu University: Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Thanks for coming all the way from Kyushu. Next questions maybe from a student from Hiroshima? The woman in black.

Yui Mukoji, student of Hiroshima City University: Thank you. Thank you for your powerful presentation. I am Yui Mukoji. I am a fourth-grade student in Hiroshima City University. I am a local student here in Hiroshima. I was very inspired by your presentation and as you mentioned in the presentation I strongly agree that the Japanese government or Japan must be a leader for a nuclear free world but I also heard that the Swedish do not participate or joined this treaty. So, I would like to know the example of the Swedish government and how did you negotiate with the government or do you want to continue this negotiation with your government, Thank you.

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: Thank you very much. That's a really good question. The Swedish government opposed to the Japanese did participate in the negotiations. They voted in favor of setting up the negotiations and voted yes to adopting the Treaty. So, they were participating and approved the adoption but they haven't signed it yet. The foreign minister declared her intention to sign it but because they have a very close military relationship with the United States and NATO. Extreme pressure from the United States took place with threats, that there won't be any military engagement, you can't cooperate with us at all if you sign this treaty. So, what Sweden decided to do in order to withstand the pressure was to do a national investigation. So, they have appointed a person to do research, internally in the Foreign Ministry, together with the Minister of Defense, the Humanitarian section, the Emergency Relief Preparedness Agency to do an investigation in what concrete impact would it have on Sweden if we signed this Treaty. What activities are we doing now that would we have to change if we joined this treaty and what would that impact would that have. We hope that's a very good way to get around this. By looking at the facts and not just this scare mongering from the United States, but looking at the facts that we are not involved in using nuclear weapons right now. We are not involved in the production of nuclear weapons. We are not involved in possession of nuclear weapons so we should be able to sign this treaty. I think that is something that the Japanese government should do, as well, because whether or not the current government wants to sign this treaty, it might soon in the future. I think Japan will sign this treaty in the end. It might take some time but in the end, we see treaties grow over time with more and more members. I think that Japanese government should sign the treaty even if they are not ready right now. If that is going to happen in the future it's probably time now to look at how that would happen and what impact it would have. I will be traveling to Tokyo after being here in Hiroshima. We will be meeting with Parliamentarians and we will encourage them to appoint a national investigation to look at what activities that Japan is doing right now that may be prohibited under this treaty. What would we have to stop with if we would join. Whether or not you would, Japan will join it. It is good for democracy and the people to also know what Japan is doing now. What involvement do you actually have in using nuclear weapons, in possessing nuclear weapons, and in developing nuclear weapons. Is the Japanese government involved in that? Maybe the people should know in this case. I think it would be really good for the domestic discussion on this issue to have such a national investigation without prejudging if signing or not signing. Just to have the facts on the table. We are working very closely with the Swedish government, of course, to make sure that one the investigation is done so that they will take the right position. That is also what we will do with the Japanese

government.

Moderator: Thank you very much. We are running out of time so we have limited it only to students. We can take one question from one non-student. I see a hand from the gentleman in the grey sweater.

Audience Member, a gentleman in the grey sweater: Good afternoon. I live in Hiroshima. I am involved in a lawsuit regarding the security policy in Japan. So, I am one of the Plaintiffs for a security lawsuit in Japan. The other day I joined Hiroshima City University's session and I met of course Mr. Akira Kawasaki who is the ICAN international committee member and I saw we are now in contradiction. I raised a question that if the treaty be interpreted in a different way in the future, what's gonna happen? Then Mr. Kawasaki said basically the bank and financial institutions will divest from the companies who are making nuclear weapons. However, with the changing interpretation I am not sure if the result of that will change the interpretation of the treaty. Now we have a very good treaty but if people start interpreting this treaty in different ways how do you think you can safeguard against that from happening?

Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of ICAN: I think the treaty is clear on prohibiting, using, making and having nuclear weapons. That's not really up for interpretation. That is straightforward. If you sign this treaty you can't use nuclear weapons, you can't have nuclear weapons and you can't make new nuclear weapons. It does leave that if you are a nuclear weapon state and you join this treaty it does have a scope for flexibility on how fast you get rid of your nuclear weapons but you are still committed to never using them and not developing them. I think it is something for negotiations for the future. We weren't able without the participation of the nuclear weapon states to outline exactly how fast the elimination will go. That would look very different for North Korea with say ten nuclear weapons to the United States with 7000. It's different timelines and requirements. But it is very clear that if you sign this treaty you cannot use them, and you cannot have them and you cannot develop new ones. I think it is really clear in that way. There are of course, as with all treaties issues like divestment, removing divestments from financial institutions those kinds of areas where there is a little bit of room. Some might want to interpret it harder or stricter and some might want to interpret it more-weakly. I think that is again up to the public to demand of their countries. So that when Japan signs this treaty, I say when because they will. Then it's time to start campaigning on making sure that all of the Japanese banks divest from nuclear weapons. You can already do that now. That's

something that we can ask for our pension funds and banks already now based that there exists a treaty in the world no matter whether Japan signs it or not. I think the work will always go on and its oath and it is kind of depressing to think that the work will always go on. It is also hopeful because we always strive for better. So, first step is to get them to join and then we will make sure that they implement it as strict as possible. If they don't we will go to court and push harder and we'll fight for every single action that we think should be improved.

Moderator: Thank you very much. Since we have limited time we would like to conclude the question and answer session now.