

Vienna Speech by Tomihisa Taue
Vice President of the Mayors for Peace and Mayor of Nagasaki

Mr. Chairman, government representatives, NGO and citizen's group leaders from around the world, my name is Tomihisa Taue, the Mayor of Nagasaki. I would first like to express my heartfelt gratitude to be given the opportunity to speak here today.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the people all over the world who gave their support in the wake of the March 11th East Japan Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Disaster.

Sixty-seven years ago in August 1945 atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killing more than 200,000 citizens. With no regard for non-combatants like women, children, and the elderly, lives were cut short without ever knowing what had occurred. Those who survived suffer even now from the aftereffects of radiation.

In 1982, the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima began the process of uniting in peace with cities around the world to prevent another tragedy caused by the atomic bomb. Today, over 5,000 cities, home to nearly a billion people, have answered the call and pledged their support. So, I stand before you today both as a representative of Mayors for Peace, an organization consisting of leaders committed to protecting their citizens from nuclear weapons, and as a representative of the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The world is paying careful attention to this 1st Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. This meeting is an important first step towards taking a leap forward at the next NPT Review Conference. Today there will be serious discussions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well as the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and I would like to raise three points for consideration by the government representatives in this committee.

First, I urge you all, as human beings, to consider again the inhumanity of atomic weapons. With unanimous agreement, the Final Document from the 2010 NPT Review Conference expresses deep concern for the catastrophic humanitarian consequences from any use of atomic weapons, and all States Parties reaffirmed the need to observe international law.

Because debate on nuclear weapons usually starts and ends with national interests, the balance of military force, and the effectiveness of military technology, I wonder if representatives from the nuclear powers understand the true horror of nuclear weapons.

It is the atomic bomb survivors whose voices bring us back to seeing and discussing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and it is imperative that all parties listen to those voices and come to understand why they appeal so desperately for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Several atomic bomb survivors from Japan are here with us in Vienna now. I urge you to take this chance to listen to their stories and take to heart the cruel inhumanity of these weapons.

My second point is that we must fulfill our responsibility to pass on to future

generations a world without nuclear weapons. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the first chairman's draft from Committee One included ground-breaking measures to obligate nuclear powers to make concrete efforts to establish a world free of nuclear weapons and to empower the Secretary General of the UN to convene a meeting as early as 2014 for the creation of a roadmap to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. This was inspired by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's 2008 five-point proposal that included a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and when this proposal was made, we felt we were finally getting closer to our goal.

However, while there were references to the NWC in the Final Document, the part regarding the convening of a meeting for a roadmap was removed. Despite the clear indication of the unanimous desire for a world without nuclear weapons, no concrete timeframes or methods to this end were stated.

Mayors for Peace is calling for immediate preliminary arrangements and the speedy convening of this roadmap meeting. Recently 33 heads of state from Latin America and the Caribbean expressed their strong commitment to work on convening an international high-level conference to set forth a program in stages for the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time.

Leaders of nuclear powers, listen to the voices from civil and international society. We urge you to make efforts at this preliminary conference to ensure that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will become the starting point for the realization of this roadmap meeting and the place to gain the consensus to conclude a Nuclear Weapons Convention. We trust that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will clearly show how and in what timeframe a world without nuclear weapons will be realized.

In addition, treaties concluded among nations have created nuclear-weapon-free zones where the stationing, production, acquisition, possession, and control of nuclear weapons are prohibited. These nuclear-weapon-free zones are one concrete method towards the abolition of nuclear weapons. We have an agreement to hold a meeting for the establishment of such a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East this year. In Northeast Asia, we are faced with the North Korean nuclear issue and are keenly aware of the importance of establishing this nuclear-weapon-free zone. Leaders of the world, let's work together to create more of these zones to bring us closer to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

My third and last point is that cooperation among the UN, nuclear and non-nuclear powers, NGOs, and civil society is indispensable for realizing a world without nuclear weapons.

At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, 42 governments including Japan stressed the importance of arms reduction and non-proliferation education. As such, the Japanese government will be holding a "Global Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education" in Nagasaki this August. Here we can expect lively debate and attendance from many NGOs, government representatives, and specialists from around the world.

Mayors for Peace is currently making arrangements to hold Atomic Bomb Exhibitions around the world during a specified period of time in member cities to commemorate the

achievement of exceeding 5,000 members. Participation is possible simply by downloading the materials from our homepage. Speaking now to the many countries that support a world free of nuclear weapons, I urge you to show your support by helping to promote our atomic bomb exhibition initiative. Through these exhibitions, you and your citizens will further understand why we continue to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

During this Preparatory Committee meeting, an atomic bomb exhibition will be on display at the Vienna International Centre and it will also be held at Vienna City Hall starting tomorrow. I ask that you take the time to visit one of them.

Kazumi Matsui, mayor of Hiroshima, has been exploring the possibility of holding the NPT Review Conference in Hiroshima City. This would bring the leaders of the nuclear powers to the first city where an atomic bomb was dropped to discuss the abolition of nuclear weapons. I ask you, is there any location more appropriate than Hiroshima to discuss completely eliminating the threat of nuclear weapons and creating a world without them?

Nagasaki will be coordinating with Hiroshima to make this a reality. I ask for your support and cooperation in the realization of this vision.

The actions taken globally in these next few years leading up to the NPT Review Conference in 2015 will go down in history as the steps taken by humankind to overcome the nuclear threat. To those who bear the heavy responsibility of advising your leaders, I call for brave and concrete action towards the Nuclear Weapons Convention.

Thank you for your kind attention.