

## 2019 Mayors for Peace Youth Exchange for Peace: Support Program for "HIROSHIMA and PEACE"

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Deafening boom, blinding light, and a scorching blast of hellfire. Many years will pass, but scars and burns will not merely clear up away from people's skins and minds. Those two days will remain in the history as a shame forevermore. This is what I learned about Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the two cities annihilated by an inhumane destructive force and build up anew to symbolize one of the greatest mistakes made throughout the human history – the use of nuclear weapon.

This is quite a literary notion I have obtained while participating in the Mayors for Peace summer course; however, my newly accumulated knowledge is not limited to these laments only – it goes further, to the scopes of politics, somewhat biology and medicine, and my own sphere of interest – Japan's inner matters. Besides this, I deeply appreciated the Hiroshima City University course as it was indeed informative and at times startling to learn about the history of atomic weapon and its ominous prospects, to hear the stories of hibakusha told by themselves, to realize the whole life-circle of a radioactive atom inside the ecosystem, etc.

In the overall course I was greatly impressed by the lecture on the anthroposphere and all the impact radioactive particles have on the environment: it is important to know that there happens uncontrolled wide distribution of the particles to every corner of the planet. The suspected number of radioactive particles swirling around the globe made me reflect upon the contemporary state of the planet Earth and the future of both: the world and the humanity that inhabits it. Radiation emanated by any kind of nuclear weapon or power plant poses extreme danger to the wellbeing of all of us – earthlings – and it must be managed.

The total number of nuclear weapons all around the world, which is quite impressive, and its depletion of material are other threats that put citizens of many countries (primarily ones of two main stockpile holders – the USA and Russia) in a vulnerable position. It does so due to the fact that most of this amount was gained during the Cold War which is quite far away back on the historical timeline, and also due to the fact that nothing is everlasting; so, one day some bombs may go off exposing wide areas to exterminating radioactive rays and throwing into the atmosphere billions of radioactive particles, which decompose for thousands and millions of years.

One more thing I learned in Hiroshima is the Japanese spirit of peace, the sense of harmony and order everywhere. May it be a consequence of the wartimes, or a manifestation of cultural traits, or maybe both – I do not clearly understand yet, but its presence is an absolute fact. And it is a pleasant sign of Japanese being the nation that can review its own past and overall history to make a path to a better present and future.

Honestly, having learned about the current state of affairs through the lectures, I do not expect the Mayors for Peace's mission to be successful in the near future, even in Japan, as it is surrounded by immeasurable amount of political and economic matters. Here also comes shallow perception of the dangers posed by the nuclear energy that an average human being has (so had I before the course); and, in addition, the paucity of those who at least at some extent care for this quite a scope of issues and is really eager to learn and help (can we ponder a bit over the number of participants of the University course, namely – 34; doesn't it seem to be too small?).

My suggestions for Mayors for Peace would be: first of all, promoting expansion of Mayors for Peace to as many countries and cities as ever possible (primarily to those having a war/poor welfare/violation

of human rights) to build a sturdy basis of youths all around the world who are willing to support the ban treaty and pro-peace activities. Secondly, co-working with the Hiroshima City University on lecture/seminar topics is also vital to advance comprehensiveness and captivation of the topics even more which will stimulate the students to give feedback later. As one of the main obstacles to peacebuilding for me is a low cultural accessibility and poor quality of cultural education, I suppose that it would be quite a good decision to intensively develop relationships with cultural-educational organizations all around the globe in order to promote each other's activities mutually and not only this: I believe that cultural development and immersing a child into a highly-cultured environment will lay a good foundation for a humanitarian-oriented person.

What can I do to help Mayors for Peace build a less militarized and nuclearized environment? My thoughts on my plans include, first of all, keeping in contact with the local government and co-working on the development of the activities aimed at promoting peace and deep concern about the non-proliferation treaty and peacebuilding. During the university course I had a good chance to learn about a campaign titled the Green Legacy Hiroshima and found it to be the most fascinating project to be brought into action in my hometown as it will be a poignant reminder of an atrocity that happened 74 years ago. This is the thing I would love to put my efforts to carry out at once. Besides, I have become interested in the matter of peacebuilding in Japan and I think I am to write my annual thesis on a topic related to it so as to heighten my interest and deepen my knowledge, and make access to Hiroshima-Nagasaki-related data a bit easier for Russian-speaking people.

Being not able to end the report by this simply, I would be happy to say again that, all in all, I loved the Mayors for Peace program and the University course, I took my pleasure in being part of all of you and I still adore all the people I met. Your mission is great, but lacks certain success, which is absolutely disappointing, taking into consideration all I have learned. However, no matter how it is hard, I will love to help you as much as I can.