

Statements for the panel discussion

Japan Congress Against A-and H-Bombs(GENSUIKIN)
Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Messengers
Yuichiro Muta, Minori Yasuno, Ozaki Kokoro

Ozaki Kokoro

Thank you so much for giving us the floor to speak. We would like to present our statement as high school students from Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

We are Peace Messengers and Gensuikin. We have been conducting a petition campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons for 26 years. Those signatures were delivered to the United Nations headquarters, where many of us delivered our speeches and advocated for the survivors. We continue to spread awareness about peacebuilding for international audiences by acknowledging the history of the war, and promoting Peace Education for youth around the world.

There are people all over the world, including in Hiroshima, who still suffer from physical and psychological trauma to this day, due to the legacy of radiation exposure. The two atomic bombs did not allow survivors to live or pass away humanely, just like Sadako Sasaki, who passed away due to leukimia, 9 years later the bombing.

Minori Yasuno

Imagine the situation beneath the mushroom clouds. This is a photograph of Shoji Tanizaki, a 13-year-old boy, who remained unidentified for over 71 years. He was exposed to radiation in Nagasaki and became charred. On the morning of August 9th, he left home for school, and never came back. He was deprived of his future, and couldn't retain his humanity, even in death. The bones of the many people who died, with their anger and hatred, have been buried in the grounds of Nagasaki. The atomic bomb survivors continue to demonstrate the inhumane consequences in their testimonies for us, young people, with tears in their eyes.

They say, and I quote, "**Humans cannot coexist with nuclear weapons.** Do not make the same mistake again"

Now, we rely on weapons to hurt each other. It is our responsibility to take action for the abolition of nuclear weapons and to achieve a sustainable peace without weapons.

Yuichiro Muta

I am the third generation Hibakusha. My grandfather is a survivor of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima. He experienced the bomb at only 3 years old and had to remove maggots from burns every day, covering over half of his father's body. Even now, 78 years after the atomic bombing, many survivors and their families, including my grandfather, continue to suffer from the lasting effects, the genetic impact of radiation across generations, and the fear associated with it.

The testimonies of survivors who have spoken about the reality of the atomic bombings for next generations have served as a deterrent to the use of nuclear weapons and are a driving force towards its abolition. However, the average age of the survivors in Japan has now exceeded 85 years, and we, young people, are referred to as the "last generation that can listen to the voices of the survivors." We cannot simply dismiss the images of children and civilians being taken for their lives in wars that are still ongoing. What we need now is to cease warfare immediately, and to take action.

It is our duty as the next generation, to stand against violence and work towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Once nuclear weapons are used, the lives of many innocent people are taken in an instant, and those who survive suffer from discrimination and lasting effects for generations.

To prevent such tragedies from happening again, I hope to work together with all of you, towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Thank you very much.