



Title	Vol.2 No.1
Author(s)	Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA)
Citation	RECNA Newsletter, 2(1), pp.1-5; 2013
Issue Date	2013-08-01
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10069/33297
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How the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition was Formed: Events Leading to Establishment of RECNA

Susumu Shirabe (Trustee, Nagasaki University)



(Trustee Shirabe, Mar. 2012)

The Prague speech made by US President Barack Obama on April 5, 2009, declaring the resolve to pursue the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, and setting specific objectives toward the abolition of nuclear weapons ran all around the world. In Nagasaki, of course, it was greeted with joy by citizens and atomic bomb survivors who hope for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, at Nagasaki University, the last faculty members who had experienced the atomic bombing retired from their positions in March 2009. There were no longer any faculty members to pass on their witness for the abolition of nuclear weapons. With the aging of surviving family members, the number of people attending the atomic bomb memorial service held annually by the School of Medicine has gradually been diminishing year by year. I wonder if I was the only one who felt that Nagasaki University's will to seek peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons was heading toward a dead end.

In this context, the private Nagasaki Peace Institute closed its doors. This institute had been founded in 1997 by former Professor Sadao Kamata of the Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, and it had continued even after his death, but it finally shut down in March 2010. Former President Tsuchiyama of Nagasaki University said at that time, "The closure is unfortunate. I hope that this research will be carried on by the government, as it is in Hiroshima." (*Yomiuri Shimbun*, November 4, 2009)

Mayor Tomihisa Taue and former University President Hideo Tsuchiyama responded to the situation with a request to University President Shigeru Katamine that a research facility for peace be formed at Nagasaki University.

At an informal meeting on June 1, 2010, members of the university administration discussed the establishment of a working group to study the possibility of forming such a research facility with peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons in its name.

The Committee to Study the Establishment of Nagasaki University Research Center for the Creation of Peace (Provisional Name) was convened. Members from within the university were to include President Katamine, first of all, as well as Tateshi Hashimoto, Trustee for Educational Affairs, Director Koichi Funakoshi of the Center for the Study of Peace and Multicultural Coexistence of the Faculty of Education, Dean Shun'ichi Yamashita of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Associate Professor Mariko Mine of the Atomic Bomb Dis-

ease Institute Division of Scientific Data Registry, Director Shigetake Kai of the Academic Information Management Division, and myself as Trustee for Research Social Contribution. Members from outside the university were to include former President Hideo Tsuchiyama, Director Masao Tomonaga of the Nagasaki Genbaku Hospital, and Professor Kenji Isezaki, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (Peace and Conflict Studies). Participants from Nagasaki City were to include Mayor Tomihisa Taue, Director Tomo'o Kurokawa of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, and Director Akitoshi Nakamura of the Peace Promotion Section. There were also to be participants from the prefectural government, Director Yoshinori Yamaguchi (until 31 March 2011) and Director Seiji Ikematu (from 9 July 2011) of the General Affairs Department when deliberations began. The matters discussed at this point included (1) whether forming the facility was possible, and if so, to aim for an opening in the 2011 school year, (2) possibilities for inheritance of research materials from the Kamata Peace Institute (the private Nagasaki Peace Institute), and (3) collaboration with Nagasaki City and Nagasaki Prefecture.

The first meeting of the Committee to Study Establishment was then held on July 9, 2010. Subsequent meetings were held in September, December, and July of the following year. The committee's combined findings were compiled in July.

In the course of this examination, progress reports were presented in July 2010 to the 68th Conference of the University President and Vice President, then in August to an informal meeting of the administration and to the Education and Research Council. A progress report was also presented to the Education and Research Council in October. Special consideration was thus given to the formation of a consensus within the university regarding the establishment of this facility.

During this period, the Preparatory Committee to Study Establishment debated the form that should be taken by the institute so that it could sublimate the sentiments arising from Nagasaki as a place that had been subjected to nuclear attack. Should it be specialized in the abolition of nuclear weapons, or should it be a center for research in the abolition of nuclear weapons and peace, and would the abolition of nuclear weapons alone suffice as an area of research? The results from discussion of these and other questions took form in the report of findings by the Committee to Study the Establishment of Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (Provisional Name) on July 27, 2011.

From within the university, Director Yuji Nagayama of the Atomic Bomb Disease Institute of the Nagasaki University Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Masayuki Susai, Trustee for General Affairs, and Director Kan'ichiro Kanai of the Academic Information Management Division took part in the course of the discussion. Members from outside the university included Professor Tsutomu Ishiguri, Faculty of Foreign Studies of Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Professor Mitsuru Kurosawa, Osaka Jogakuin College (Chairman, Japan Association of Disarmament Studies), Secretary-General Keiko Nakamura of Peace Depot, and Professor Satoshi Hirose, Faculty of Humanities, Miyazaki Municipal University and Director Takashi Morita of the Nagasaki National Peace Memorial Hall for the Atomic Bomb Victims.

As the circle of participating committee members grew broader, the discussion became more deeply penetrating.

The founding principles of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition are stated as follows in the findings of the Committee to Study Establishment:

"The realization of peace and abolition of nuclear weapons still remains the compassionate desire of humankind now, 66 years after the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Nagasaki University, as the only university in the world to have been built on the foundation of a school of medicine that experienced that bombing, recognizes that the realization of a nuclear-free world is the source for the meaning of the university's existence.

"Given the impact on the entire world from President Obama's Prague speech, the longing felt by the citizens and atomic bomb survivors of Nagasaki for the abolition of nuclear weapons has now definitely become a common objective that transcends national borders. There are serious divisions, however, between countries that are nuclear-armed and those that are not nuclear-armed with regard to the choice of ways to achieve that objective, and the shining light from the definite abolition of nuclear weapons has not yet become visible. Meanwhile, the atomic bomb survivors who have led in affirming the abolition of nuclear weapons with unparalleled presence and persuasiveness are growing older. It is precisely now, when they still remain in this place that experienced nuclear bombing, that Nagasaki University as an academic institution that actually experienced the bombing must reiterate the positions of Nagasaki and Hiroshima within the stream of contemporary history and, through scholarly study and analysis, must transmit its policy proposals leading to the abolition of nuclear weapons to the world. The Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (hereafter the Center) is founded as a facility for joint education and research within Nagasaki University to serve as a center for this kind of research activity. Nagasaki University is founding and operating the Center on a firm foundation of collaboration with Nagasaki City and Nagasaki Prefecture, as a municipality and a prefecture that experienced the nuclear bombing, and is positioning the Center as a think tank for the ordinary citizens of Nagasaki, who hope for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

"It is to be hoped that the Center will develop as a symbol of this university in openness to its community, where the people will gather with university faculty members and students, beyond the constraints of political positions, to learn, debate, and communicate."

After the findings were reported, the committee made the transition to the Preparatory Committee for the Establishment of Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (Provisional Name) on the instructions of President Shigeru Katamine, who received its report. Consideration of specific matters such as the substance of the Center's research activity and the selection of faculty members was begun.

The personnel to operate this center were selected for their "international activity, their theoretical construction of measures for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and their ability to build networks," their ability "to originate information to transmit internationally from Nagasaki as well as to propose policies," their ability to make a contribution to "facilitating progress toward the actual abolition of nuclear weapons," and, if possible, for being "researchers who have thoroughly earned the trust of Nagasaki's citizens and atomic bomb survivors." The ability to use English to hold classes, originate and transmit information, and create networks was also considered a natural prerequisite.

Although the selection standards were set to extremely high levels, Dr. Hiromichi Umabayashi was welcomed as Center Director with the rank of professor, Professor Satoshi Hirose of Miyazaki Municipal University as Vice Director and Professor, and Keiko Nakamura as Associate Professor. Selected as appointments from within the university were Associate Professor Mariko Mine of the Atomic Bomb Disease Institute of the School of Medicine as a full-time Professor, and as joint faculty appointments, Professor Jun'ichi Himeno of the Faculty of

Environmental Studies (Director of the Library and member of the Faculty of Environmental Studies), and Professor Byungdug Jun (Faculty of Education). Mr. Hideo Tsuchiyama (former President of Nagasaki University) and Professor Mitsuru Kurosawa, Osaka Jogakuin College (Chairman, Japan Association of Disarmament Studies) had made major contributions to the starting of RECNA, and were appointed as Advisors. Professor Emeritus Masao Tomonaga of Nagasaki University (Director of the Nagasaki Genbaku Hospital) was appointed Visiting Professor and Michiru Nishida from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was appointed Visiting Associate Professor (a Special Assistant for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was Head of the Disarmament Unit in the Arms Control and Disarmament Division of the Foreign Policy Bureau). The Center had its start with these 10 appointments.

Dr. Hiromichi Umabayashi was founder and former Representative of Peace Depot, an internationally renowned nuclear disarmament NGO. Ms. Keiko Nakamura was also Secretary-General of the same NGO. Ms. Keiko Nakamura is a leading researcher of the new generation. She studied at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, well-known for its nonproliferation studies, and has wide-ranging connections with arms reduction researchers through her activities with Peace Depot. Prof. Satoshi Hirose is a specialist in international law who has experience at United Nations offices in the Philippines as well as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. He is therefore a researcher with practical experience. These people constitute an appropriate addition to Nagasaki University, the institution that proclaims its strength in the field, its fortitude in the face of crisis, and its action orientation.

Although the staff selection was complete, shifting the new organization into operation proved to be a considerable task when the full-time faculty members would not be present until April 2012.

As the inauguration on April 1 approached, the anticipation shown in local newspapers and other mass media was greater than expected. We obtained coverage every time the occasion for it arose, and by starting time on April 1, it seemed there was anticipation not only of the immediate start of Center activities, but also of some measures that would not betray the expectations of the local community. It was decided to launch the Center website on April 1. Work to be done by that time included website design, creation of site content, decisions on the Center logo mark, and so on, all of it for a single website. These preparations proceeded while coordinating with the faculty members, who were leaving their previous employment to take up their positions at the Center. The hard work done by the administrative organization of this university in support of the Center, as they willingly took on the intractably thorny problems I set them, was something splendid to see. I note in particular the individual who was designated to be in charge of Center administration. Up to now, the Academic Information Management Division of the Academic Information Department had been responsible for library operation and the origination and transmission of information from the library, so starting up an organization within the university and taking charge of a wide range of duties, from personnel to budgets and more, must have been a dizzying step into unfamiliar territory.

A designer who was an old acquaintance of Dr. Hiromichi Umabayashi was commissioned to create the RECNA logo. The work was generously done at an extraordinarily reasonable price. Since the logo took its motif from the Peace Memorial statue, it was necessary to obtain permission to use the design of the Peace Memorial sculpture by the late plastic artist Seibo Kitamura as the kernel of this new design. Director Norio Fukao of the Public Relations Strategy Headquarters therefore traveled to the Tokyo home of Ms. Michiko Kitamura, the widow of the sculptor's late eldest son, Mr. Haruyoshi Kitamura. Director Fukao explained that the establishment of the Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition was infused with Nagasaki's aspiration for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and that the design would be used in a logo that communicated this aspiration to the world, whereupon Ms. Kitamura readily gave permission.

Mr. Kenji Toge of *The Nagasaki Shimbun* was received as a visiting

professor in July. He started a column called "RECNA Mail" in the newspaper, and promptly began providing information to the public.

RECNA has been active from that April on, providing information on the NPT preparatory meetings in Vienna, arranging lectures by the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), putting up an information-packed website that is rapidly maturing and growing, founding a university student organ-

ization called RECNA Supporters, and inaugurating a lecture in the General Education module titled "Aiming for a World Without Nuclear Weapons." In December, a former special assistant to the US president and others were invited to Nagasaki University where lecture meetings oriented to university students and the general public were held in conjunction with an international conference titled "Toward a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone: Time for a New Approach." Center activities have proceeded at a furious pace, and I have great hopes for further development in the time ahead.

RECNA Research Project:

Quest for a Bold Negotiating Package for the Denuclearization of Northeast Asia

Hirofumi Umebayashi (Director, RECNA)



(Director Umebayashi at the Workshop on a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, Dec. 2012)

that criticism is turned against North Korea, the less it is turned against the weapon itself. North Korea, in its anachronistic notion that possessing nuclear weapons would give it a bargaining chip for security, should be criticized severely, but we cannot say this without referring also to the reality of international society, which is pushing the market value of nuclear weapons higher.

North Korea is carrying out underground nuclear test in the effort to make its nuclear weapons more compact as it proceeds to master the basics of their manufacture. The United States is conducting subcritical nuclear tests in order to master the technology for assuring the reliability of the nuclear weapons in its possession without resuming underground nuclear test. In the past seven years, North Korea has conducted underground nuclear tests at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site three times, but during that same period, the United States conducted subcritical nuclear tests at the old Nevada nuclear test site six times. Even though there is an enormous difference between the two countries in their technical level, they are no different in the degree of their fixation on nuclear weapons.

President Obama's vision of "a world without nuclear weapons" was intended in part to break through this uneven but parallel relationship. The four non-partisan former high officials (Shultz, Perry, Kissinger, Nunn) who supported Obama's vision wrote in their first article that for "leaders of the countries in possession of nuclear weapons to turn the goal of a world without nuclear weapons into a joint enterprise...would lend additional weight to efforts already under way to avoid the emergence of a nuclear-armed North Korea and Iran." (January 4, 2007, *Wall Street Journal*) Their point is that in order to pressure North Korea to abandon nuclear weapons, it will be necessary to take action to abandon their own country's nuclear weapons. In that same context, President Obama stated in his Prague speech in April 2009, that "as a nuclear power, as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act."

President Obama's State of the Union address, delivered immediately after the nuclear test on February 12, fortunately had not lost sight of this inspiration. Very few references were made to the nuclear problem, but among them was his statement that "our ability to influence others depends on our willingness to lead and meet our obligations" as he declared the necessity for nuclear arms reduction with Russia.

On February 12, the DPRK or North Korea conducted its third underground nuclear test. The most barbaric and shameful weapon on earth is being put forth proudly as though it were the most advanced of weapons. Criticism by the media is directed almost entirely at North Korea, but the more

However, looking just at President Obama's recently stated objective of gradually reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policy, the conservatives in the United States are adamantly standing in the way of his forward movement. On February 23, the *New York Times* published an editorial titled "The Nuclear Agenda" that, anticipating these circumstances, unfortunately appears to lower the level of what this publication thinks the Obama administration should do in his second term.

Now more than ever, when the United States has no choice but to mark time, there is a need for policy initiative and action on the part of Japan. This point comes, moreover, at the same time when the necessity for a policy shift by Japan itself is apparent to the world. That is, while it was involved with the 35 countries that announced their Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Dimension of Nuclear Disarmament announced at the UN General Assembly in the autumn of last year, the Japanese government was unable to participate. Meanwhile, the government of Japan, as a country that experienced nuclear bombing, has repeatedly expressed the view that the use of nuclear weapons goes counter to humanitarianism. This inconsistency between thought and action derives from Japan's policy of dependence on the nuclear umbrella, as the Japanese government itself has acknowledged.

RECNA has entered upon a project of substantial research on Comprehensive Approaches to a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Northeast Asia. We are doing this because the policy proposal for the denuclearization of Northeast Asia developed here is aimed at achieving three goals with a single initiative. Namely, in addition to the primary goal of the denuclearization of Northeast Asia, two other goals are, to bring about a shift in the Japanese government nuclear umbrella policy, resolving the split between principle and action, and to contribute to the progress of the phased global objective of reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policy.

The "three plus three" arrangement has gained currency as a basic policy proposal seeking to realize a nuclear weapon free zone in Northeast Asia. This calls for the United States, Russia, and China to support a geographical nuclear free zone formed by Japan, the Republic of Korea, and North Korea (as well as Mongolia, if possible). As this arrangement is pursued, the question being raised is how to open the way to negotiations. Attention is being paid to the bold negotiating package proposed in the autumn of 2011 by Dr. Morton Halperin, former special advisor to the US president, for possible approaches. This package seeks to conclude a multilateral



(International Workshop on a NEA-NWFZ at Nagasaki, Dec. 2012)

agreement with chapters such as to turn the Korean War Armistice, now 60 years old, into a peace treaty, to issue a declaration that binds participants to have no hostile intent to each other, and to establish a

nuclear weapon free zone. Please see Halperin's proposal and the RECNA 's research project in detail at the website below.

<http://www.recna.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/en-asia/first/>

Proposal for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as International Humanitarian Law

Satoshi Hirose (Vice Director, RECNA)



(A Seminar by Dr. Rebecca Johnson in Nagasaki, Aug. 2012)

Ever since the final document was issued by the NPT Review Conference in 2010, the debate over the relationship between nuclear weapons and international humanitarian law has been gathering attention, and the topic was also raised in the First Committee of the UN General As-

sembly last year. There is nothing new, of course, in pointing out the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and the advisory opinion on the legality of nuclear weapons issued by the International Court of Justice in 1996 pointed out that the use of nuclear weapons would essentially be contrary to the principles of international humanitarian law. However, Dr. Rebecca Johnson and others who advocate laws prohibiting nuclear weapons as a matter of international humanitarian law can be considered to advocate a paradigm shift on nuclear disarmament in an effort to subject the orientation of approaches to nuclear disarmament to fundamental reconsideration.

It may of course be said that the basic framework of international humanitarian law itself has been agreed upon internationally, but there are aspects in which complete international agreement cannot necessarily be considered to have been reached on the details or on the fundamental nature of such law. Moreover, the use of "humanitarian" here is in large part linked conversely with what used to be called the law of war or the law of armed conflict, which presupposes the use of military force and which regulates the specific techniques of combat. This is something far removed from the ordinary image of what is humanitarian. Even though it may be anticipated that the use of nuclear weapons will bring inhumane results, and even though a regional nuclear weapon free zone treaty may be concluded that contains provisions explicitly prohibiting nuclear weapons, under the provisions of present international law, at least, a global treaty to that effect does not yet exist. In actuality, therefore, one cannot directly assert that nuclear weapons are in violation of international humanitarian law. Furthermore, in order to determine whether the use of nuclear weapons is in violation of international humanitarian law, it would be necessary as things are at present to weigh the circumstances of a specific use of nuclear weapons against the results of that use, and to examine its legitimacy accordingly. As far as the prevention in advance of nuclear weapons use is concerned, this cannot be considered at all adequate.

The question, then, is how international humanitarian law is to be used to abolish nuclear weapons. What Dr. Johnson and others with like aims propose is to create treaties that prohibit nuclear weapons by utilizing the mechanisms for implementation of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law, and particularly treaties regarding the protection of human rights in times of armed conflict, are predominantly in the nature of agreements created to achieve the common international purpose of protecting human dignity. Consequently, if some country were to act in violation of a treaty, it could not immediately be concluded that this action had caused

substantial disadvantage to other countries that are meticulously observing the treaty. With most treaties relating to human rights, there is considerable disparity between countries in the extent to which they have achieved the treaty objectives. In the case of the usual human rights treaty, there is a system for the countries involved to make periodic reports on their achievement of the treaty objectives and on their policies to further the achievement of those objectives. When necessary, international inspections are carried out, and if a serious violation occurs, it will be made known internationally. If achievement of the objectives is insufficient, or if progress is slow, a country is required to receive support internationally or individually, or to receive international advice or admonishment, as it continues its efforts to achieve the objectives.

In the case of treaties on disarmament, a system for strict monitoring and verification is commonly adopted, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the international monitoring network for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), to ascertain whether the countries concerned are properly observing the treaty. This is because treaties on disarmament are founded upon a balance between the countries concerned. If one country were to violate the treaty and secretly develop the restricted arms, or manufacture, purchase, or possess them, that would be to put other countries that are observing the treaty and limiting their arms into a militarily disadvantageous position. It would be conceivable, therefore, that if war were then to arise, the country that violated the treaty would have an advantage, and the security of the country that observed the treaty in good faith would be threatened, a serious situation which would be unjust in the extreme. In other words, treaties on disarmament are founded on the notion of give and take, whereby profit to one party is loss to the other, and therefore they demand that all the countries involved rigorously fulfill their obligations. Thus they have been considered to be of a different nature from human rights and other such treaties, under which it is thought ultimately sufficient if all the countries involved make progress toward the objective.

The proposal from Dr. Johnson et al. does not consider the treaty for abolition of nuclear weapons as a treaty on disarmament, as used to be the case. Instead, it takes the abolition of nuclear weapons to be a common objective for the international community as a whole. In order for each country to achieve the objective individually or jointly, it proposes that the treaty be created using the framework of human rights and humanitarian treaties. In this case, unlike the NPT or the CTBT, it could be considered not strictly necessary for the treaty to establish an international system for verification to monitor implementation of the treaty, nor detailed procedures for such implementation. In sum, it will suffice if the international objective of the abolition of nuclear weapons is firmly set forth. One may wonder how effective such a treaty would actually be. It is not certain, either, whether every country will actually accept a treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons that is so far removed in its substance from the conventional concept of security based on the balance of military power. If this kind of treaty for the prohibition of nuclear weapons using the framework of human rights and humanitarian law is concluded, however, then at least the existence of nuclear weapons will become illegal and something that must be corrected in the near future in accordance with the treaty. There is no question, therefore, that it will be an important step toward the actual abolition of nuclear weapons.

In the autumn of 2012, RECNA instituted fixed-point monitoring of international discussion involving nuclear weapons. In addition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, this took the form of monitoring of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

The First Committee of the 67th United Nations General Assembly met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from October 8 to November 7, 2012. The Chair was Ambassador Desra Percaya of Indonesia. The First Committee, which is one of six main General Assembly committees, is a forum for addressing a variety of problems relating to disarmament and international security. The general flow of Committee sessions has three stages: (1) General debate (in which each country expresses its basic stance), (2) thematic debate (in which debate occurs on the separate topics of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, outer space, conventional weapons, regional disarmament and security, other disarmament measures and international security, and disarmament machinery) for the presentation and discussion of draft resolutions, and (3) voting on draft resolutions. Resolutions that pass the First Committee are brought to a vote again about one month later in the UN General Assembly. In 2012, there were 53 draft resolutions (recommendations to member countries) and six draft decisions (orders to be implemented by the United Nations) that passed through the First Committee and all of them were adopted in the main session in early December except for the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) resolution, which was postponed.

The draft resolutions and voting patterns show no change for the better in most years. People frequently have the impression that the First Committee is for business as usual, but 2012 brought a number of new efforts that drew the attention of the global community. What lies in the background is a strong sense of dissatisfaction and crisis regarding the overall stagnation in nuclear disarmament, about which many non-nuclear weapon states had in fact sounded the alarm during the general debate at the beginning of the session. It was pointed out that the only multilateral "negotiation" agency among them is the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, and that had been unable to enter into substantive consultations since the negotiations for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. It had, in fact, fallen into dysfunction (for details in Japanese, see the CD Blog). As stated in the below opening remarks by Angela Kane, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, there were growing calls for new approaches to break through the current impasse.

"A 'business as usual' approach may well be the easiest to pursue, but it will not suffice to solve the problems we face in achieving disarmament goals and will only aggravate the global crisis we are facing in this field, especially with respect to nuclear disarmament."

Against the backdrop of this sense of crisis, a number of specific proposals managed to receive the approval of the international commu-

nity. One of them, which was proposed by Austria, Mexico, Norway, and other countries, called for the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in order to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations. The resolution presented by the above three countries ("taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations") made specific provision for the creation of a working group that, as the name suggests, is intended to create various proposals aimed at advancing multilateral disarmament negotiations for the purpose of achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. This working group is to be convened in Geneva in 2013 for a period of 15 working days at the longest. The resolution also provides for a working report to be submitted to the next General Assembly. The First Committee adopted this draft resolution by a majority, with a vote of 133 in favor, four against, and 35 abstaining. The votes against it were cast by four of five nuclear weapons states (with the exception of China, which abstained), which were the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, and France.

Adoption of the resolution for a "high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament" presented by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, which were formerly actively for disarmament, resulted in the decision to hold a high-level meeting will be convened on September 26, 2013, "to contribute to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament." Voting results in the First Committee were 165 in favor, zero against, and four abstaining (the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and Israel). I will be interested in watching future movements to see whether the efforts made here, in combination with the Working Group described above, will be able to discern some way to break through the current stalemate.

Also emerging in the First Committee in 2012 were movements to further advance disarmament approaches that are focused on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons. This movement has recently been attracting attention. In thematic debate regarding nuclear weapons on October 22, a Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Dimension of Nuclear Disarmament was presented by 34 countries including Norway and Switzerland (and the Holy See as an observer state). This statement was similar to that issued in May 2012 by 16 countries at the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference, which pointed out the "catastrophic humanitarian consequences" of the use of nuclear weapons, on which basis it affirmed that "all States must intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons." Despite strong demands from all sectors, led by the places that had experienced nuclear bombing, the Japanese government did not add its name to those presenting this statement.

Needless to say, the circumstances involved in disarmament are severely demanding. Even so, however, the international community is continuing with unceasing efforts to discern some specific prospects in those circumstances. Our monitoring activities at RECNA will carefully scrutinize such movements in the hope that we may help build bridges to citizens and society at large.