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Nagasaki Youth Delegation: Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

Hirono Shiranami, (2nd year Nagasaki University, Fourth Nagasaki Youth Delegation)

The program of the current, Fourth Nagasaki Youth Delegation is different from the usual year of participation in Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) activities. Instead, we worked up a plan ourselves, in the first time such attempt, and considered the things we wanted to do out of "What We Young People Can Do for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons." Being able to handle this as we like is one of the greatest attractions of the Nagasaki Youth Delegation this year. At the same time, however, it was also a great ordeal in which we could not see what lay ahead or what lay to our left or right. In the midst of it, we identified the two issues of the Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NEA-NWFZ) and Peace Education, and we tackled these issues from the perspective of youth.

Of these two issues, I committed to activities for the NEA-NWFZ. The NEA-NWFZ is an example of a concept oriented toward the abolition of nuclear weapons, and it seemed to me that a premise of this concept is friendly relations in Asia, and beyond that among Japan, China, and South Korea, and then also North Korea. It seemed necessary to improve relations in particular at the level of the citizens of these countries. It also seemed that Mongolia, which established a national nuclear weapon-free status, might have hints to offer regarding the NEA-NWFZ. Based on these feelings, we visited Mongolia, China, and South Korea and pursued our search for things we could do as young people. When activities in these places actually got started, we were able to establish occasions for exchanging views with people connected with the governments and organizations in these countries, with a focus on the youths. Numerous issues came up in the various countries, and we made many discoveries.

What we came to see by means of these activities was, that there was a strong tendency for the "youth" in each country to have an awareness of other countries that was distinctly divided between the government level and the private citizen level. This phenomenon was common among all the countries we visited this time, and it can be considered both as a distinctive characteristic and as a strength of "youth" that transcends national boundaries. The generation of youth that are able to see more of each others' circumstances through the diffusion of the internet, the generation of youth that is linked together by pop culture, and the generation of



Meeting at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Photo by Nagasaki Youth Delegation

youth that has flimsier filters imposed on their view of what lies outside, have an eye to grasp other countries in terms of the connections between people, even in the midst of collisions between countries due to the media or government.

Friendly relations between nations are sought as the great premise of the abolition of nuclear weapons, and in building these relations, I think that the presence of young people and their eye is highly significant. The events of this program made us feel that vividly, and at the same time, the question of how to promote friendly relationships at the private citizen level, and particularly among young people, emerged as an issue for the future.

Another matter that became clear to us during these activities is that Asia in a future may take advantage of Mongolia's unique qualities. Mongolia possesses extremely distinctive characteristics as a country in Asia that established its national nuclear weapon-free status, and also as a country sandwiched between the two giant power of China and Russia. Mongolia also enjoys friendly relations with North Korea, and is distinguished by the relative ease with which its people are able to come and go. If these distinctive characteristics of Mongolia can be used to best advantage, then, for example, even when Japan, China, South Korea, and North Korea alone have difficulty building their relationships, that work of connecting could be done through Mongolia. For the Mongolians, functioning in that role would be

beneficial in raising their international status and aiding the development of their country. I felt that the unique qualities of Mongolia might have the potential to lead Asia toward a better future.

The activities of this delegation led to various discoveries, including the importance of strengthening connections at the private citizen level with young people as the focus, and the possibilities that Mongolia's unique qualities present for Asia. At the same time,

however, numerous issues also surfaced, such as how to promote friendly relations among young people, and how we can make advantageous use of Mongolia's uniqueness. I want to continue working out how the things we gained on the overseas travel for this program can be made to contribute to the next stage of things, and how, while taking good care for our positions as "youth," we can go on with the things that we are able to do precisely because of who we are, and the things that only we can do.

Nagasaki Youth Delegation: Peace Caravan

Ayumi Inagaki, (3rd year Nagasaki University, Fourth Nagasaki Youth Delegation)

The sparkling eyes of the kids and endless applause. Every day after classes and club activities, we gathered from ten o'clock at night, and despite heavy heads and dark rings under our eyes, we discussed our class plans until the middle of the night. What was it that made its mark on the hearts of some 700 people in five prefectures (Nagasaki, Hiroshima, Osaka, Wakayama, Aichi) over this turbulent six months?

It all began with the NPT Review Conference held last year. An even greater disappointment than the Conference itself, which failed to open a road to elimination of nuclear weapons, was the interaction between the governments of Japan and China. The proposal to recommend a visit to Nagasaki and Hiroshima was eliminated all too easily, and Japan's lack of a voice as a country that experienced nuclear attack, and the depth of the historical antagonism with China, became apparent. Realizing this serious gap was the starting point for the "peace caravan" plan. The driving force was the desire to present peace education from Nagasaki to young people in schools all over Japan, considering the issue of nuclear weapons from the perspective of the present, past and future, addressing not only Japan's history as victims but also as aggressors.

First of all, we wanted to study the issues ourselves, so we visited Nanjing and Shanghai in China, and Seoul in South Korea. In China and Korea, we visited universities, research institutes, and NGOs, exchanging views on various issues between Japan, China, and Korea, particularly perceptions of history. Even when discussing heavy topics such as wars of aggression and the comfort women issue, nobody became emotional, and we were able to come up with specific proposals for overcoming historic rivalries together. It was encouraging to encounter people who are of a similar generation to our own who are facing these problems with a positive attitude.

earnest. There was a wide variety of content to include in our class including the reality of atomic bomb damage, the international situation concerning nuclear weapons and Japan's point of view, the connection between nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons, and issues of historical perceptions. We struggled to strike a balance between the amount of information and what children can understand. We also had occasion to rethink our entire framework from scratch. There was intense discussion among the members concerning our insistence above all to incorporate what each member wanted to convey into the lesson. But looking back, we realized that accepting others with different values and ideas, and engaging in dialog with them is one embodiment of peace education. Ultimately in a class lasting about two hours, we agreed on a program with thirty minutes' input, with the rest dedicated to question and answer, discussion and joint output. We sought to draw out the diversity of the kids to the full, producing a class that represented our stance of proposing points of view and ways of thinking. Although the target audience was restricted to high school students, tailoring each lesson taking into account a range of variables (public and private schools, clubs, classes, grades overall, location within A-bombed areas or not), was much harder than we expected.

We continued to make improvements on the day of the class, even right before the start. When the class began, everybody spoke confidently, and they really seemed to enjoy talking to the children. The children responded by asking lots of questions and offering their opinions. In the questionnaire taken after the class, an impressive 90% or so of the children checked "The class was easy to understand" and "The class was enjoyable".

I don't honestly know how much of our class resonated with the kids. Still, I believe that this little seed will be slightly useful someday when they go out into society.

Back in Japan, we started work on our class plan in

On August 19, the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) held at the United Nations Office at Geneva adopted by majority vote a report to the UN General Assembly recommending that a conference be held in 2017 to negotiate a “legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.”¹ This has established a new direction in nuclear disarmament, led by the non-nuclear nations. It is undeniably a historical achievement for civil society and the nations that have taken a humanitarian approach in calling for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. However, at the same time, through the series of OEWG discussions, fissures became apparent again between the nations, in various combinations such as nuclear powers and non-nuclear nations, nations under the “nuclear umbrella” and other non-nuclear nations, and between the nations under the “nuclear umbrella”.

Leaving detailed analysis of the progress of discussions to another opportunity, here we’ll consider the issues facing the Japanese government over the next few years. Of course there are currently many uncertainties about the form that negotiations will take. However, based on the results of the OEWG, while there’s a strong likelihood that the autumn United Nations General Assembly First Committee will decide to hold negotiations, the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will need to think about what the Japanese government should call for based on this assumption. The following points are important.

1. “Bridging the gap” is possible

The Japanese government must participate in the conference as a matter of course, and it will be expected to play a role as an honest broker between the nations that support a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, and the negatory nuclear powers and nations under the “nuclear umbrella”. Consequently, rather than stressing the obsolete step-by-step ap-

proach alone, it’s necessary to take discussions to a more advanced level by making specific proposals, including a framework agreement towards prohibiting nuclear weapons. If a proposal that appeals to nations that support both a Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty and step-by-step is possible, there are areas that haven’t been sufficiently discussed so far. The framework agreement proposals from Sweden or Switzerland, or the existing framework conventions for conventions in other fields may also be a useful reference for these deliberations.

2. A treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons won’t compromise security

With DPRK’s nuclear tests, the nations that oppose a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons will no doubt stress the need for even stronger nuclear deterrence, and at the same time, will develop the argument that discussion of such treaty will derail and undermine the current nonproliferation regime based on the NPT. In Japan, it’s necessary to promote the idea that achieving a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons is a way to fulfill nuclear disarmament commitment under the NPT’s Article 6, and will lead to strengthened international security, including solution of the DPRK nuclear issue as a result. Active participation of the Japanese government in discussions of such treaty will have the added benefit of fostering regional trust and confidence.

¹ See the public database for excerpts and provisional translations of the report.

<http://www.recna.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/recna/datebase/document/no6/oewg20160819>

See below for the full text (in English).

[http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/\(httpAssets\)/B7F8C26BC8E15317C1258018003E1D71/\\$file/Final+Report+of+the+OEWG,+as+submitted+to+GA+\(clean\).pdf](http://www.unog.ch/80256EDD006B8954/(httpAssets)/B7F8C26BC8E15317C1258018003E1D71/$file/Final+Report+of+the+OEWG,+as+submitted+to+GA+(clean).pdf)

Dispatches from Nagasaki No.17

The Reaction in Nagasaki to Reports on Obama Administration "No-First-Use" Nuclear Weapons Policy

Tastujiro Suzuki (RECNA Director)

On July 10, 2016, the Washington Post in the US reported that the Obama Administration was considering the adoption of a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons. Mr. Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki, joined with Hiroshima Mayor Matsui in sending a joint letter on August 10 to the Japanese government asking it to stand behind the United States' move toward a no-first-use nuclear weapons policy. In the letter, they wrote that "the direction taken in this reassessment is in line with Japanese government policy to date," and called on the government to exercise leadership as the only country that has experienced nuclear bombing.

On July 22, RECNA issued a "Statement on 'No-First-Use' Nuclear Policy" (<http://www.recna.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/recna/en-recnaseye/no6-en>) in which it expressed the view that the Japanese government should support the no-first-use policy. On July 27, the three organizations of the Japan Congress Against A- and H-Bombs, the Citizens' Nuclear Information Center, and the Nuclear Information website also sent a letter to Prime Minister Abe asking that he support the no-first-use policy. In the letter, they declared that "A country that has experienced nuclear bombing should not interfere with movements that reduce the nuclear risk." (Chugoku Shimbun, July 28, 2016)

On the Nagasaki side, the Organizing Committee of the Nagasaki Global Citizens' Assembly for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (Organizing Committee Chairman Masao Tomonaga) held a press conference at the Nagasaki City Hall on the 27th announcing that they had visited the US Ambassador and presented a petition on the 26th. The petition called for President Obama to make a visit to Nagasaki, where it asked that he "announce to the world his appeal and his resolve to make Nagasaki the last place to be subjected to nuclear attack." (*Nagasaki Shimbun*, July 27, 2016) Then, on August 9, a joint letter consisting of a single sentence asking Prime Minister Abe not to obstruct the adoption of a no-first-use nuclear weapons policy by the Obama Administration was sent from Nagasaki by atomic bomb survivors' organizations and nuclear disarmament experts from around the world. (International Open Letter Calling on the Japanese Government Not to Object to a US Nuclear Weapons No First Use Policy, "Please do not oppose a US pledge not to be a first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict, August 9, 2016, http://kakujo.net/npt/ltr_nfu2.html) Among the signers were Hideo Tsuchiyama (former President of Nagasaki University), Chairman Masao Tomonaga of the Organizing Committee of the Nagasaki Global Citizens' Assembly for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, President Toyochi Ihara of the Society of Hibakusha

Certificate Holders of Nagasaki Prefecture, and President Keiji Matsuda of the Nagasaki Prefectural Council Against A- and H-Bombs, among others.

However, a report that the Japanese government did oppose this for the reason that "the no-first-use nuclear weapons policy would weaken nuclear deterrence" was published in the US by the *Wall Street Journal* of August 12. Nagasaki Mayor Taue responded during his regular press conference on the 17th, saying that "if (this stance of opposition) were confirmed, then a protest or some form of appeal to the Japanese government would probably be made." (*Asahi Shimbun*, August 19, 2016)

On August 16, the Asia Pacific Leadership for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament issued a statement supporting adoption of a no-first-use nuclear weapons policy. It was signed by 45 experts from 15 countries. (http://www.a-pln.org/statements/statements_view/APLN_No_First_Use_Statement_2016)

The signers from Japan included Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Foreign Minister of Japan, Nobuyasu Abe, Commissioner of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission, and Tastujiro Suzuki, Director, Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition.

As is apparent, therefore, the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many experts, citizens' groups, and atomic bomb survivors' organizations, among others, support the no-first-use nuclear weapons policy. Although they called on the Japanese government not to obstruct the adoption of that policy, however, the *New York Times* of September 6 reported that the Obama Administration appeared likely to put off that policy change, in part due to opposition from allied nations.

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Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, Nagasaki University

1-14 Bunkyo-machi, Nagasaki, 852-8521, JAPAN

Tel. +81-95-819-2164 Fax. +81-95-819-2165