

# Hiroshima Observes 51st Anniversary of A-Bombing

## Citizens Remain Committed to Nuclear-Free Goal

Today Hiroshima commemorated the 51st anniversary of the atomic bombing of the city. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony was solemnly observed at Peace Memorial Park, which is situated in the city's Naka Ward. In the year that has passed since the 50th anniversary of the bombing and Hiroshima's renewal of its commitment to the abolition of nuclear weapons, the city's people have been confronted with the harsh reality of international politics. Two of the nuclear powers, China and France, pushed ahead with a total of 9 nuclear tests, despite strong negative international reaction. In early July, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), while stating in an advisory opinion that, "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law," failed to reach a decision concerning the threat or use of such weapons for self-defense. This was much to the disappointment of the citizens of Hiroshima, who had anticipated a ruling declaring nuclear weapons unlawful under any circumstances. The first people in human history to experience the horrors of an atomic bombing, these citizens are now more determined than ever to continue working to strengthen international sentiment for the eradication of nuclear weapons by letting the world know that such arms are more cruel and inhumane than any of the weapons banned by international law.



Mayor T. Hiraoka

Beginning very early in the morning, citizens and relatives of the A-bomb victims visited the various monuments that stand scattered around Peace Memorial Park and its surrounding area, bringing bouquets of flowers and bundled sticks of incense with them. The memorial ceremony began at 8:00 a.m., with about 50,000 people attending. At 8:15, the time when the atomic bomb was dropped 51 years ago, the Peace Bell was sounded and all those present observed a minute of silence. Takashi Hiraoka, Mayor of Hiroshima, then presented the Peace Declaration (see full text), appealing anew to the world for the eradication of

nuclear weapons and the realization of eternal peace.

A half-century of such appeals by Hiroshima, however, have failed to reach China and France, which, over the past year, conducted a total of 9 nuclear tests. France explained that its testing was for the purpose of developing the technology for nuclear-explosion-free test simulations, while China asserted the legitimacy of its actions, saying that it has consistently exercised the utmost restraint with its testing. It is likely that these two nations pushed ahead as they did in order to "get in under the wire" with their efforts to catch up with other nuclear powers in nuclear development technology, aiming to do so before the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Their actions brought increased international criticism of such kinds of self-centeredness on the part of nuclear nations. Both in Japan and abroad there was an unprecedented surge of protest against China and France. In Tahiti, which is lo-

cated in the South Pacific near France's test site, A-bomb sur-



The Flame of Peace, which will burn until the day that all nuclear weapons are abolished, with the A-bomb Dome at night

vivors, ordinary citizens, and members of the legislatures of 14 different countries marched in demonstrations. The sixteen member nations of the South Pacific Forum broke off talks with France, and the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for an immediate suspension of nuclear testing.

As demonstrated by last May's indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and this September's anticipated signing of the CTBT, international restrictions are gradually being imposed on nuclear arms. Nevertheless, the 5 nuclear powers, the United States, the former Soviet Union, Britain, France and China, still possess a total of 45,000 nuclear warheads, a dark legacy which continues to pose a threat to the future of mankind.

Along with working to reduce strategic nuclear weapons and otherwise promoting nuclear disarmament, the realization of a nuclear-weapon-

free world requires a variety of measures. These include the conclusion of a ban on the preemptive use of nuclear weapons and, even more desirable, a total ban on their use; the expansion of nuclear-free zones; the promotion of regional dialogue; and confidence-building efforts.

Regardless of how difficult it may be in reality to push ahead with nuclear disarmament, we must persist in working to put an end to the nuclear age and achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Hiroshima should continue its efforts to accelerate the trend towards the total abolition of nuclear arms by conveying to the world, through its convincing actions and logic, the true nature of the consequences of the atomic bombing. The city and its people must go on striving to strengthen the voices in the international community calling for the eradication of these cruel weapons, working to eventually induce the nuclear powers to change their policies.



### PEACE DECLARATION

August 6, 1996

No matter how many months and years may pass, the memory of Hiroshima lives on in our hearts.

Now more than half a century since that cataclysm, the world still faces the threat of nuclear weapons. Yet we refuse to abandon hope and will continue to argue that humanity cannot co-exist with nuclear weapons.

Even though the East-West conflict has ended, the nuclear powers continue to maintain their arsenals, and the dependence on military force that distrust and suspicion prompt does nothing to guarantee our security. Peace is shattered when disputes, poverty, discrimination, and other ills are exacerbated by military force. Nuclear weapons symbolize all the violence that obstructs peace.

Albeit only in general terms, the International Court of Justice has declared the use of nuclear weapons illegal. Gradually, inexorably, public opinion favoring the elimination of nuclear weapons is spreading worldwide. We hope that this rising tide will compel agreement on a new Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty prohibiting all nuclear explosions, of which there have been more than 2,000, and leading to a total ban on nuclear tests. At the same time, however, given the uncertain prospects for the elimination of nuclear weapons, we are deeply concerned that the nuclear powers are consolidating their arsenals.

As the next step, we thus intend to join in solidarity with the entire international community for a universal convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons and to work here at home for legislation formalizing Japan's non-nuclear status.

Another urgent imperative in the quest for peace is that of continuing to explain the realities of history's first atomic bombing and to see that these are conveyed across national and generational differences. The experiences, both the lives and the deaths, following the bombing of Hiroshima must be refined so they touch every heart and this culture of peace becomes part of humanity's shared legacy.

It is also essential that the extensive documentation on the bombing be archived. I hope that younger generations, far-removed as they are from the wartime realities and the bombing's horrors, will be inspired by the insights and impressions that they draw from the *hibakusha* testimonies and other documentation.

At the same time, I want to find policies for supporting the aging *hibakusha* in Japan and elsewhere commensurate with their real needs.

Marking the 51st anniversary of the bombing, we here today both pay our sincere respects to the souls of those *hibakusha* who died and renew our vow to work untiringly for the elimination of all nuclear weapons and for peace. Fully cognizant of Japanese history and in the spirit of the Constitution, I also pledge to work with the people of Hiroshima to make Hiroshima a creative, hopeful city of peace.

Delivered by Takashi Hiraoka  
Mayor of Hiroshima

## Hiroshima Hosts 3rd Disarmament Conference

### Discussion Centers on Test Ban Treaty

The Third United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues was held at the International Conference Center Hiroshima in the city's Naka Ward from July 17 to 20. The 62 delegates included representatives of the governments of 22 countries, including three of the five nuclear powers (the U.S., Great Britain, and China), and "threshold" nations, such as India and Pakistan. The delegates also were comprised of representatives of NGOs and researchers.

The theme of the conference was "Common Efforts toward a Safer and Nuclear-Weapon-Free World". The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), in the end stages of negotiation and approaching final agreement, formed the focus of discussion. The In-



Representatives of 22 countries took part in the UN conference

dian delegate, whose country is expressing an unwillingness to sign, criticized the draft treaty on the grounds that the five nuclear powers, who already possess nuclear test data, would be left with too many convenient loopholes, and would be allowed to retain their nuclear capability. A succession of delegates urged India to reconsider, and expressed their desire for agreement on the treaty to be reached as soon as possible.

The conference assessed the recommendations of the International Court of Justice, and addressed the issues of maintaining security in the Asia-Pacific Region and extending nuclear-weapon-free zones. The question of regulating land mines and small weapons such as automatic rifles was raised, and wide-ranging discussions were held regarding

arms limitation.

In the concluding speech on the final day of the conference, Mr. Prvoslav Davinic, Director of the United Nations Centre for Disarmament Affairs, described the draft treaty as "the best draft we can agree on." Urging speedy achievement of accord, he called on the U.S. and Russia to make an early start on destroying their nuclear weapons.

At the closing ceremony, Mr. Takashi Hiraoka, Mayor of Hiroshima's desire to see a nuclear-weapon-free world become a reality, and the city's determination to continue its efforts to this end. Hiroshima, he said, wanted to see the United Nations use the conference discussions as a springboard to positive steps toward effective nuclear disarmament.

### A-Bomb Dome as World Heritage Site ?

The soonest that the Atomic Bomb Dome, which stands in Hiroshima as a witness to the horror of nuclear weapons, could be added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites is December of this year. The citizens of Hiroshima attach much meaning to the addition of the structure to this list, since they feel that it will be of great significance if the dome is recognized by the world as a symbol of the importance of the eradication of nuclear weapons and the achievement of world peace.

A-bomb Dome is one of a small number of locations remaining that eloquently tell of the ravages of the bombing.

At present, 469 cultural, natural and "dual" (that is, designated both cultural and natural) properties throughout the world deemed as important to hand down to the next generation have been named as World Heritage sights. If the hopes of the people of Hiroshima are realized, the Atomic Bomb Dome will become the second sight which is related to World War II, after the former concentration camp at Auschwitz in Poland.

The various buildings that had been damaged by the bomb began to disappear. The

## Victims of Radiation Around the World

Fifty-one years have passed since atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Fortunately enough, not a single nuclear weapon has been used during this half-century of time. Indiscriminate mass killing. Dreadful effects of radiation

on human bodies. It can likely be said that the lessons learned from the two atomic bombings have played an important role in dissuading the world from sliding into a catastrophe. However, even since the end of World War II, the world has sadly seen the cre-

ation of many *hibakusha*, or victims of radiation, with large groups of people undergoing exposure.

The nuclear tests which the nuclear powers repeatedly carried out is a major cause of this tragedy. Such tests have been conducted in the Nevada

desert of the United States, in the Marshall Islands, in the waters of Polynesia, Australia and New Zealand, on Novaya Zemlya and in Semipalatinsk in the former Soviet Union, at Lop Nor in China... And the residents of the areas near these test sights, as well as soldiers who took part in the tests, have suffered from the same sort of radiation sick-

ness found in the A-bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The human harm done by the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident continues to increasingly reveal itself, even 10 years later. A great number of people have been exposed to radiation in nuclear weapons plants, uranium mines and refineries, nuclear fuel reprocessing plants, and places where radiation is used for industrial and medical purposes. In Malaysia, ongoing thorium contamination—carried out by a Japanese company—was brought to light.

During a period beginning in 1989 and lasting more than a year, the Chugoku Newspaper sent reporters to 15 countries and 21 other areas throughout the world to investigate and report on the damage caused by radiation since Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The map below provides a summary of the results of this project. In the time following the completion of the study, even more cases of serious harm being caused by radiation have occurred, and the human radiation experiments earlier carried out by the United States were uncovered.



## CTBT Faces Difficulties

Aiming for the adoption of a final draft of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Conference on Disarmament resumed in Geneva on July 29. Progress has stalled at the final stage, however, because of opposition from India and other difficulties. If agreement is reached, the draft treaty will be presented to the United Nations General Assembly in September. For the more than 40 years since Prime Minister Nehru of India first called, in April, 1954, for the complete cessation of nuclear testing, non-nuclear nations have worked for the conclusion of a treaty such as this. With the adoption and signing of the CTBT at the UN

General Assembly, their goal would finally be realized.

The CTBT forbids all nuclear arms testing involving nuclear explosions, stipulates monitoring at over 300 observation centers around the world by seismic wave measurement and other means, and formulates arrangements for local investigation in cases of suspected infringement.

Under the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963, nuclear tests were prohibited in the atmosphere, underwater, and in outer space. Underground nuclear testing, however, continued. The CTBT extends this prohibition to include underground nuclear testing.