

Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee - Youth Speech Vienna, May 2007

Ambassador Amano, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

The youth present at this meeting want to thank you and the NGO community for inviting us to give a statement at the NGO presentations at this conference dealing with topics of vital importance to the future of our world.

Two years ago, some of us attended the NPT Review Conference in New York and had the opportunity to present the youth speech. Two years ago, we told you that we don't want to live in a world where nuclear weapons threaten our existence, and where those in power turn away from the rule of law, multilateralism, democracy and morality. Today, once again we are seizing this opportunity to take responsibility for our future and to call upon you to do the same.

When we look back at what happened at the conference in 2005, and in the years since then, **what we can see is simple and highly unsatisfactory — Deadlock and many steps backwards. We are tired of these political games.**

Can it be true that the guardians of our states and nations, have not been able to reach agreement on any topic related to nuclear weapons?

Can it be true that some leaders responsible for our future, are arguing that nuclear weapons do not pose a dangerous threat as long as they are in the “right” hands?

Can it be true that the nuclear weapon states, who argue in favour of a policy of “deterrence”, really want a future which is dominated by fear?

Can it be true that some states still speak about First-Strike doctrines while the Hibakusha tell us about the victims and the incredible horror of the atomic bombings in 1945?

In your negotiations you have to bear in mind the atrocious consequences of fatal decisions. Even in the hands you call capable, nuclear weapons could be launched just because of a human mistake or technical error, initiating a chain reaction that could destroy the world. Thus we have the duty to act to prevent a catastrophe. And the only prevention is elimination of all nuclear weapons.

We want security.

Security for every human being.

However, there is no security based on nuclear weapons.

The elimination of all nuclear weapons is a key element of global security.

In January of this year, the Doomsday Clock of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved forward showing us how close we are to a nuclear disaster. We are just five minutes before midnight, five minutes until our future will be destroyed. The time is ripe for concrete steps toward nuclear disarmament.

**It's your turn to act. It's the responsibility of the state parties.
We urge you to think carefully about it,
because it is your children's future, it is OUR future!**

We, the youth, call on you to break the deadlock and move forward in the direction of nuclear disarmament. Nuclear weapon states have to fulfill their part of the bargain under Article VI and begin negotiations on nuclear disarmament. States outside of the NPT should renounce their arsenals and join the Treaty. Non-nuclear weapon states should continue to uphold international law through the formation and maintenance of nuclear weapon free zones, and work with civil society to pressure nuclear weapon states to stop modernising their nuclear weapons and begin the process of irreversible, verifiable nuclear disarmament.

The history of humankind tells all of us that drastic paradigm shifts in international politics were only taken when there were millions of victims. We can learn from this historical truth. We must think about the actions we all have to take to prevent a repetition of human tragedy like humanity suffered in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Everybody in this room knows if humankind and political leaders fail to act, those who can influence the turn of events now should know they might actually be condemning innocent future victims to burn in the nuclear fire.

We call on you to ensure that the welfare of humankind will stand above military power on your government's agenda. As Nobel Peace Prize winner Joseph Rotblat said "We appeal, as human beings, to human beings: Remember your humanity and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death."

- When we remember our humanity we can change distrust into trust.
- Remembering our humanity gives us the fortitude to build confidence and make assurances.
- Remembering our humanity gives us the strength to uphold treaties because we can have confidence in each other.
- Remembering our humanity gives us the wisdom to accept the fallibility of every human being, as well as the ability to commit to conflict prevention without resorting to violence.

Are you prepared to remember your humanity and face up to the responsibility to truly prevent nuclear proliferation and work towards the NPT's goal of total disarmament?

As young people we use a lot of our energy to push for the elimination of nuclear weapons. It makes us sad to see that we have to go this long way without the support of some of the diplomats attending this meeting.

All we can do is stay on our path and work for disarmament, and we will invite you again and again to travel with us, with your children and grandchildren together, on the way into a peaceful world.

Thank you for your attention.