
First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

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Message from Youth in Japan

Working paper submitted by KNOW NUKES TOKYO

I. Introduction

1. Recognizing that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) plays an essential role in eliminating nuclear weapons, we, KNOW NUKES TOKYO, held a “Mock Meeting of the States Parties” with about 40 high school and university students from Japan to simulate the actual meeting, the First Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW in Vienna. Based on the text of the TPNW and the stance of each country, we attempted to create a Final Document that reflects the simulated outcome of the meeting.
2. Based on the Final Document we created, we are kindly presenting this working paper that represents the voice of “the youth of Japan, the only country in history to have suffered the atomic bombing during the war,” and describes our expectations and demands from the TPNW as the “young people who will live in the future”.

II. The Summary of the Final Document

1. The devastating consequences caused by the use of nuclear weapons can never be justified for whatever reason. When facing the threat of the use of nuclear weapons deployment, the anxiety and fear of Japan and states bordering nuclear powers is immeasurable. All nations must work together to achieve the total abolition of nuclear weapons in order to make the world the safest, most prosperous, and free in its history.
2. The involvement of the nuclear weapon states is of paramount importance. State Parties to the TPNW must continue their efforts to involve nuclear powers and work together with them to promote nuclear disarmament.
3. To this end, each country should actively attend the relevant meetings of the TPNW and act as a bridge between TPNW proponents and the nuclear weapon states through close communication.
4. They must also share the principles of the SDGs, strive to understand and contribute to solving the existing problems of environmental destruction and

gender disparity related to nuclear weapons, and seek common ground for discussion and mutual cooperation.

5. Although the article of the TPNW defines the target of assistance as "individuals under its jurisdiction who are affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons", we believe that this precludes uranium miners and victims of nuclear accidents such as Chernobyl disaster from being recognized as nuclear victims. We confirm the need to redefine the term "nuclear victims" to ensure that all victims of nuclear activities are not left out of the assistance package.
6. In addition to the victims of direct nuclear damage, comprehensive compensation for soldiers and veterans affected by atomic testing, families and survivors of nuclear victims, and those accidentally impacted by the use of nuclear weapons is also required, as well as support for the storytellers of their experiences.
7. (Japan, as a nation which experienced atomic bombing, has much to contribute in terms of assistance to nuclear victims.)
8. Apart from the creation of an international organization to support victims, we propose to provide medical support specified for "female victims" who are vulnerable to radiation damage, to support people's private initiatives (such as citizens tribunals) to clarify the responsibility of the perpetrating countries, and to mobilize public opinion to support these efforts for assisting nuclear victims.
9. The link for the full text of the final document:
know-nukes-tokyo.com

III. Our Message

1. We congratulate the birth of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the convening of the First Meeting of States Parties from the bottom of our hearts and pay our respects to all those involved.
2. Born and raised in Japan, we have met many Hibakusha. They all say the same thing, "The atomic bombs did not allow us to die nor live as human beings."
3. We feel the greatest anger towards today's society that has grown to accept nuclear weapons as necessary evil, though in fact they would deprive us of our dignity as human beings completely. That is why we are taking action.
4. We are also disappointed that Japan and several governments have chosen not to participate in the discussions at this stage now.
5. The effectiveness of the TPNW tends to be questioned. However, the treaty is never incompetent. It is just not all-powerful. This is the time to start anew, to make the treaty a stronger, more flexible norm.
6. We want to tell more people the wonderfulness of establishing "an international norm even without countries with the power of nuclear weapons". With the TPNW as our hope, we want to move forward into the future.
7. In closing, we hope you will stand in solidarity with us and continue to act for the abolition of nuclear weapons.
8. We yearn for the country of your roots to commit itself more deeply to the TPNW than it does now.