For all people on the planet who could become Hibakusha

Working paper submitted by the Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition

1. The Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition\(^1\) welcomes the First Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), taking place between June 21-23, 2022. This opportunity reaffirms the weight of our responsibility as Japanese NGOs and citizens with the experience of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to universalise the TPNW and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

2. Our network has regularly held dialogues with the Government of Japan, appealing about the significance of the TPNW and that if Japan is unable to immediately sign and ratify the treaty, it should at the very least participate in the MSP as an observer. Underlying these activities is the strong will and determination to ensure that the long years of “unacceptable suffering” experienced by the Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) and survivors of nuclear testing, who have continued to appeal to the world, must never be repeated.

3. On February 24 of this year (2022), the Russian military began its invasion of Ukraine. Putin’s threat to use nuclear weapons on this occasion, as well as attacks on nuclear power facilities, are a stark reminder of the fact that all people on this planet face the danger of becoming a Hibakusha.

4. The humanitarian impact of another use of nuclear weapons was examined by the government representatives, international organizations, as well as civil society including researchers, Hibakusha and nuclear test survivors, who gathered in Vienna in December 2014, and this was presented in the Chair’s Summary by host country Austria. It states:

5. “The impact of a nuclear weapon detonation, irrespective of the cause, would not be constrained by national borders and could have regional and even global

\(^1\) The Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition was founded in 2010, comprising of NGOs and individuals, and is working in particular on the following objectives: (1) Building a global system toward the abolition of nuclear weapons, including the universalization of the TPNW; (2) Reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies; (3) New measures to ensure nuclear non-proliferation while safeguarding the civilian use of nuclear energy; and (4) A regional security system ensuring a peaceful nuclear-weapon-free Northeast Asia. [https://nuclearabolitionjpn.wordpress.com/]
consequences, causing destruction, death and displacement as well as profound and long-term damage to the environment, climate, human health and well-being, socioeconomic development, social order and could even threaten the survival of humankind."

6. On January 3 of this year (2022), the Nuclear-Weapon States of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States announced a joint statement. Therein, it is affirmed that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” And yet, immediately after this, Russia threatened to use nuclear weapons. We feel beyond deep disappointment, and rather strong anger and sadness, at this outrageous betrayal of commitment to the international community.

7. Through Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, we have once again confirmed the sobering fact that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the survival of humanity will continue to be threatened. The preamble of the TPNW reaffirms that “to completely eliminate [nuclear] weapons... remains the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances.” There must never be a security system that depends on nuclear weapons, with the very survival of humanity at stake.

8. Therefore, in order to ensure that no new Hibakusha are created, we demand the following:

   (a) That governments and citizens of the states which have sent governmental delegations to this meeting (including observers) are deeply mindful of the importance of the TPNW, and work together with global civil society toward the universalisation of the treaty;

   (b) That citizens of the states which are opposed to the TPNW and have not sent governmental delegations strongly recognise the fact that they themselves could one day become Hibakusha, and work together with global civil society to appeal for their own governments to sign and ratify the TPNW.