

**PEACE THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS:  
A CALL TO G7 HIROSHIMA SUMMIT LEADERS TO ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

***Statement of the Asia & the Pacific Interfaith Youth Network  
on the G7 Hiroshima Summit***

We, the Officers of the Asia and the Pacific Interfaith Youth Network, elected representatives of the youth of the Asian Conference of Religions for Peace, have gathered in the historic City of Hiroshima for the G7 Hiroshima Summit Prayer and Symposium by Religious Leaders hosted by WCRP Japan (Religions for Peace Japan) on 10 May 2023. During the Symposium, we heard the testimony of Mr. Shigeaki MORI who shared his experiences during the bombing of Hiroshima and the impact it had in his life. We heard from a survivor's perspective of the severe suffering of the people. We also heard from various speakers and religious leaders who helped us learn about the importance of abolishing nuclear weapons and why we need to act now.

We had the honor and privilege of visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum which commemorates the painful events of 6 August 1945 when an atomic bomb exploded in Hiroshima that led to the death of approximately 140,000 lives. This visit allowed us to learn about the horrific and inhumane impact of nuclear weapons and the devastation it has caused on human lives and to our environment. We felt the pain of the suffering of the victims of the atomic bomb and share the grief of their families and friends. We recognize that the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were two of the worst events in our history.

Our Moderator, Dr Renz ARGAO spoke during the Symposium and emphasized that disarmament can contribute positively to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and in protecting our environment. He emphasized that the abolition of weapons can help reduce carbon emissions from weapons production and military operations, prevent the destruction of the environment caused by weapons testing, and provide funding to programs towards the SDGs through the reallocation of military budgets.

Understanding the destructive impact of nuclear weapons and learning about the positive impact of disarmament, we see the urgency of fully implementing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and ensuring that State Parties comply with their obligations and commitments to the Treaty. We recognize that it is important that the global powers become a party to and ratify the TPNW. With the current conflicts happening around the world, especially the armed conflicts in Ukraine that poses a threat of a nuclear crisis, we are deeply concerned regarding global peace and security.

We recognize that the future of the youth is facing a serious threat. With all the crises happening around the world, we are apprehensive that the future generations will not have a peaceful world to live in. We are hurting from the harsh realities that the future generations may not be able to enjoy the beauty of our environment, live without the threat of war, or

pursue their happiness if we continue to destroy our common home. While the present threats are already challenging us, we know that their impact will last for generations to come.

Therefore, as youth leaders, we call on the Leaders attending the G7 Hiroshima Summit to take action and to commit to protecting the future of the youth. Specifically, we ask the G7 Leaders and other leaders of the world to:

- A. Sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to set an example for the other global powers and to show their commitment to peace and security;
- B. Act on the total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and to work towards eliminating other weapons of war;
- C. Reallocate military spending towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG 13 Climate Action, SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and,
- D. Ensure active youth participation on issues concerning peace and security, aligned with the UN Security Council Resolution 2250.

Our experience in Hiroshima helped us realize that, indeed, there are no winners in war. More specifically, when we use weapons that destroy human lives, we all lose. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is the worst atrocity of humanity against humanity. We echo the call “No more Hiroshimas and Nagasakis” as we call for the abolition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We must not repeat the evils of our past.

Sustainable and lasting peace is not possible if we use weapons of war. Production, storage, and use of weapons create threats to global security, prompting militaries to protect their countries using the same weapons. It is a never-ending and vicious cycle. We can only eliminate the threats to global security if we let go of the weapons that are the real threats. We can only achieve peace through peaceful means: through dialogue, cooperation, collaboration, and common action.

We also recognize that as young people, the task of calling on the G7 Leaders and the leaders of the world to commit towards disarmament is a huge challenge. However, we have a moral responsibility to our fellow youth to ensure that the youth voice is heard, and that the future of the youth is secured. We take this challenge and responsibility for we believe in the strength of our friendships and of our faith.

*10 May 2023  
Hiroshima, Japan*