



## Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone: Launch of the “Nagasaki Process”

Tatsujiro Suzuki (RECNA Director)

**I**mplementation of the “Nagasaki Process”—which aims to build trust and denuclearize the Northeast Asia region—has finally begun.

The first meeting of the Panel on Peace and Security of Northeast Asia (PSNA) was held in Nagasaki over three days, November 19–21, 2016. The PSNA was established in accordance with an agreement reached at a workshop held in February 2016, again in Nagasaki, by approx. 25 specialists from mainly the Northeast Asian region namely the United States, China, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Australia, and Japan. In addition to considering the PSNA’s mission and operational system, workshop participants frankly discussed issues such as increasing tensions regarding the North Korea’s nuclear development and the problem of plutonium accumulation and nuclear fuel cycles.

Membership of the PSNA comprises 15 specialists from the 7 countries mentioned above, with former RECNA Director Dr. Hiromichi Umebayashi (Japan), Dr. Morton H. Halperin (United States), Professor Michael Hamel-Green (Australia), and Professor Chung-In Moon (Republic of Korea) elected as the inaugural co-chairmen. It was decided that the main mission in the PSNA is to “facilitate political processes, through timely policy recommendations and public engagement, to create a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in Northeast Asia (NEA-NWFZ) as part of establishing peace and security in the region.” The workshop closed with the adoption of “Statements and Recommendations” by the panel’s co-chairmen, which were made public after the workshop. These “Statements and Recommendations” pointed out with regard to the current situation in Northeast Asia that the “there continues to be the stalemate, or even rather at the regression,” expressing concern that “the so-called “strategic patience” policy by the US is not working, and so far no major initiatives have been taken by members of six party talks to break this stalemate .”

It was therefore proposed that a platform be established for discussing “comprehensive security approaches,” including the NEA-NWFZ concept. In addition, United States President-elect Donald Trump was strongly requested to “carefully consider new nuclear



The first meeting of the Panel on Peace and Security of Northeast Asia (PSNA), 19 November 2016  
Photo by RECNA

Weapon policy options through dialogues at both official and civil society levels instead of pursuing purely military solutions”

Following the PSNA meeting, a public symposium entitled “How to deal with Nuclear Threats; Security Challenges and Denuclearization of Northeast Asia” was held in Nagasaki, while in Tokyo another public symposium with the same title was held jointly with the Security Studies Unit (SSU) of the Policy Alternatives Research Institute (PARI), The University of Tokyo, with both symposiums attracting a large audience. Furthermore, in Tokyo, co-chairs of panel members visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and talked with Diet members from the Komeito and Democratic Party, introducing the PSNA and discussing recommendations.

For the second PSNA meeting, to be held in 2017, organizers are considering moving the venue from Nagasaki to Mongolia. Such a move would make it possible for North Korean specialists to also attend the meeting. The “Nagasaki Process”—which aims to build trust and denuclearize the Northeast Asia region—has finally begun activities aimed at contributing, even just a little, to overcoming nuclear and security issues in Northeast Asia, which are currently in a blocked state. This achievement is again due to the warm support of Nagasaki Prefecture, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki University, and the residents of Nagasaki, and we humbly request that you continue to provide your support and cooperation in the future.

## First Committee, General Assembly of the United Nations: Adoption of a Resolution to Commence Negotiations on a Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons

Keiko Nakamura (Associate Professor RECNA)

In a meeting held in New York on October 27, 2016 (local time), the First Committee, General Assembly of the United Nations, adopted Resolution L.41 (“Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”) proposed by Mexico and other countries by a majority vote of 123 in favor to 38 against, with 16 abstentions. This resolution “decides to convene in 2017 a United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination” and can be said to be an historic milestone for the people of the world, who have continued to call for the legal prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.

However, in Japan—and particularly in the areas that suffered the atomic bombings—adoption of this resolution, which should have been good news, was instead greeted with mixed emotions. The major reason for this response was anger and disappointment towards Japanese government, which voted against the resolution. While up until this point it had taken a passive stance towards discussions regarding the legal prohibition of nuclear weapons—which is founded in awareness of the inhumanity of such weapons—the Japanese government had always chosen to abstain from voting. It can be said that in addition to consideration for Japanese public opinion, especially in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this stance was influenced by Japan’s belief that it should preserve its moral responsibility within the international community as the “only country to have suffered atomic bombings during wartime”. This time, however, just as the United States exerted blatant pressure on NATO countries, as opposition from nuclear states mounted, the Japanese government chose to externally display its “loyalty as a nuclear ally” rather than its unique authority as a country that has experienced atomic bombings in wartime. This fact should also be considered seriously in terms of Japan’s international voice and influence in the future.

In contrast, however, it is being reported that the Japanese government is intending to attend the negotiations

on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, which are scheduled to commence in March 2017. With virtually no likelihood of any of the nuclear states attending the negotiations, attention is focusing on the role that Japan will play. Japan has long perceived itself as a “bridge” between nuclear and non-nuclear states, and this self-characterization was continued even in the explanation of the voting (EOV) for opposing the negotiations on October 27, 2016. To ensure that such proclamations do not end up as merely rhetoric, the Japanese government should participate proactively in the negotiation meetings, drawing nuclear states and other countries that are dependent on the “nuclear umbrella” into the discussion and making concrete proposals for opening up paths for encouraging their signing and ratification of the treaty.

One idea that Japan could propose for increasing incentives for countries dependent on the “nuclear umbrella” to join the treaty is adjusting provisions related to reservations and conditions for entry into force of the treaty. However, such adjustments must of course encourage countries dependent on the nuclear umbrella to gradually change their policies without weakening the essential value of the treaty.

Finally, behind the passive views on legal prohibition of nuclear weapons amongst the Japanese public lies concerns that “a treaty banning nuclear weapons will not resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and will not improve security in Northeast Asia”. Certainly, it is not anticipated that North Korea will participate in negotiations on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons or promptly sign/ratify the treaty (even though it was in favor of the resolution). However, Japan’s proactive involvement in global prohibition of nuclear weapons will have a positive effect on building trust within the region. In fact, the increased opportunity for prohibiting nuclear weapons on a global scale should be interpreted as a uniquely golden opportunity for advancing construction of a scheme for prohibiting nuclear weapons in the Northeast Asia region.

## Public Symposium: Security Challenges and Denuclearization of Northeast Asia

Satoshi Hirose (RECNA Vice Director)

On the afternoon of November 20, a public symposium entitled “Security Challenges and Denuclearization of Northeast Asia” was held by RECNA and the PCU Nagasaki Council for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (PCU-NC) in the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum Hall, with Dr. Jeffrey Lewis (Director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Program (EANP), James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, USA) presenting the keynote address. During his keynote address, Dr. Lewis explained that satellite image analyses indicated that North Korea’s development of nuclear warheads and missiles was progressing at a faster rate than having predicted, expressing the view that within two to three years North Korea could potentially have the capability to deploy modern mobile nuclear missiles and attack the U.S. mainland. He also stated that, although it is unrealistic to hope for the immediate denuclearization of North Korea, further nuclear development by North Korea should be stopped by whatever means, and to achieve this there is no other option but to resume negotiations with North Korea without delay.

According to conventional thinking, a state of “nuclear deterrence” occurs amongst countries with nuclear weapons that prevents them from using their nuclear weapons due to the danger of mutual destruction and serious damage on both sides. However, Dr. Lewis indicated that, considering the situation of the Korean Peninsula, North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons in fact would greatly increase the danger of actual use of nuclear weapons. This opinion was based on the view that, for North Korea, the United States is an “enemy country that should be controlled”, and that as a warning to the United States, there is a high possibility that North Korea will use nuclear weapons in a preemptive attack on South Korea or Japan—United States allies where American military bases are located. North Korea is likely estimating that it is highly possible that such a preemptive strike would make the United States fear the risk of North Korea next carrying out a nuclear strike on the U.S. itself and capitulate to North Korea’s demands without avenging the attack on South Korea or Japan. That is to say, in Dr. Lewis’s opinion, North Korea believes that, as long as they have acquired that capability to carry out a direct nuclear strike on the U.S. mainland, carrying out a preemptive strike on South Korea or Japan would be a gamble with ample prospects for victory.

Of course, the United States and South Korea are both formulating countermeasures to North Korea’s strategy. Due to the difficulty of completely destroying



Dr. Jeffrey Lewis giving a Keynote Address at the Symposium in Nagasaki, 21 November 2016  
Photo by RECNA

all of North Korea’s nuclear weapons in advance, the United States and South Korea are carrying out joint exercises under a so-called “decapitation operation” aiming at destroying North Korea’s chain of command for launching nuclear weapons in a short period of time. In concrete terms, North Korea’s leadership would be annihilated in an extremely short period of time using extremely precisely guided missiles before they had the chance to issue orders to launch the nuclear weapons. An absolute precondition for the timing of implementation of this operation is that it is carried out “before North Korean nuclear weapons are launched”, and so it is likely to be carried out as a surprise attack without waiting for North Korea to launch an actual strike either before North Korea develops nuclear weapons with the capability of striking the U.S. mainland or at the point where it is suspected that North Korea is about to use nuclear weapons. Based on the state of tension in the Korean Peninsula, Dr. Lewis warned that, if the present situation continues, an extraordinarily dangerous state of affairs may arise in the near future for a mutual preemptive attack between the two Koreas under the premise that “the country that attacks first, survives.”

In response to Dr. Lewis’s comments, panelist Dr. Morton H. Halperin (formerly Special Assistant to the President of the United States) pointed out that the U.S. Government’s stance of not negotiating with North Korea until North Korea abandons nuclear development has in fact had the consequence of giving North Korea time to advance its nuclear development, and so negotiations need to be resumed immediately. Other panelists also commented that, considering the fact that a military resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue is impossible and that international sanctions have had little effect, there is an urgent need to resume negotiations



with North Korea. Panelists also commented that the longer it takes to achieve a resolution to this problem, the further North Korea's nuclear development will advance and the more serious the situation will become, expressing approval of Dr. Lewis's recommendation to urgently resume negotiations with North Korea and pro-

posal to take an approach of first of all freezing North Korean nuclear development rather than urging North Korea to completely renounce nuclear weapons from the outset.

## Dispatches from Nagasaki No.18

### The Reaction in Nagasaki to the UN's Adoption of a Resolution for Negotiations on a Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons

Keiko Nakamura (Associate Professor RECNA )

On October 27, 2016 (local time), at a meeting of the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) of the United Nations General Assembly held at UN headquarters in New York, a draft resolution on "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations" was approved by a majority vote of 123 in favor to 38 against, with 16 abstentions. In spite of repeated requests from atomic-bombed cities, Japan, which is the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during wartime, voted against the resolution, in line with the United States and other nuclear states, and many other countries dependent on the "nuclear umbrella."

Previous to the meeting of the First Committee, Mr. Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima City, and Mr. Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki City, submitted a joint request to Fumio Kishida, Minister of Foreign Affairs, asking the Japanese government to show strong leadership during 2017 in the commencement of negotiations to prohibit nuclear weapons ([http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi\\_list/79.html](http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi_list/79.html)). When reports came through on October 27 that Japanese government may vote against the resolution, Mayor Taue sent an urgent request to Minister Kishida warning him that "a vote by Japan against the resolution would create problems for future generations ([http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi\\_list/80.html](http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi_list/80.html))."

After receiving news the next day of the voting results, Mayor Taue sent a request to the Minister for the third time, saying that "opposition to the resolution by Japan would be a betrayal of the sincere hope of *hibakusha*, and the cities that experienced nuclear bombing, for the realization of a world without nuclear weapons. It would trample on endeavors made thus far by such cities for the elimination of nuclear weapons and that the nuclear-bombed city of Nagasaki could not overlook this betrayal." and "This opposition to the resolution would seriously damage any trust the international community had in Japan while being an utter disappointment for the many countries aiming for the elimination of nuclear weapons." As well as his harsh judgement, Mayor Taue also urged the Japanese government to vote affirmatively at the General Assembly scheduled

in December and also urged Japan to participate in the treaty negotiations by taking an active role ([http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi\\_list/81.html](http://nagasakipeace.jp/japanese/abolish/protest/kogi_list/81.html)). In accordance with a decision made at the 6th Japanese Member Cities Meeting of Mayors for Peace, Mr. Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima City and also the President of Mayors for Peace, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on November 24 and submitted a Letter of Request for Prime Minister Abe signed jointly by Mayors Matsui and Taue (Vice President of Mayor for Peace). As well as referring to the voting against the resolution as "the betrayal of the sincere hopes of *hibakusha* and extremely regrettable," a request was made for the Japanese government to make diplomatic endeavors to facilitate constructive discussion about the negotiations by all United Nation member states ([http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/jp/activities/statement/request/161124\\_jp/index.html](http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/jp/activities/statement/request/161124_jp/index.html)).

Due to Japanese government's vote against the resolution this time, *hibakusha* in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who have continually appealed for the elimination of nuclear weapons, expressed strong feelings of disappointment and anger. Dr. Hideo Tsuchiyama, former President of Nagasaki University, said "Japanese government's vote was a shameful example of its docile subservience to the United States." He expressed his anger by saying that "although Japan states that it is the only country to have suffered atomic bombings in wartime, actually the country's actions are not aimed towards the elimination of nuclear weapons; instead, they are going against the current of the times" (*Mainichi Shimbun*, October 29, 2016). The civil society organization, the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Testimonial Society, which is made up mostly of *hibakusha* and which has been continuing to compile testimonies for about forty years, sent a letter of protest Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kishida. This letter of protest refutes as groundless the claims that the Japanese government has repeatedly given as reasons for not advancing the legal prohibition of nuclear weapons such as "it would deepen divisions between nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states," or that "even if a treaty, which nuclear states would oppose, were made, it

would not have any effectiveness.” Furthermore, the letter voices strong criticism by saying that “Japan voted that way because of fears that the ‘nuclear umbrella’ would become a ‘broken umbrella’ and so the vote was representative of the Japanese government’s strong intention to try to stem the international tide in favor of prohibiting nuclear weapons.” (The letter of protest will be posted on the website of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Testimonial Society in its entirety, at a later date (<http://www.nagasaki-heiwa.org/n3/t3/katsudou.html>)).

On November 25, representatives of Nagasaki *hibakusha* including Mr. Sumiteru Taniguchi, President of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council; Dr. Masao Tomonaga, Honorary Director of the Japanese Red Cross Nagasaki Genbaku Hospital; representatives of Hiroshima *hibakusha*; representatives of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organization, a nationwide *Hibakusha* organization; and people from the Japan Promotion Committee for the Hibakusha Appeal for a nuclear ban treaty visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together to lodge a protest about the stance of the Japanese government and to demand a more active attitude towards the establishment of a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. Following that visit, an emergency meeting was held in the Members' Office Building of the House of Councillors, to request that the government vote in favor of the resolution to prohibit nuclear weapons (Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Council Newsletter No.398 <http://www1.cncm.ne.jp/~hisaiky/>).

The dilemma regarding elimination of nuclear weapons and dependence on nuclear deterrence has also become an issue in Nagasaki, a city that has suffered nu-

clear bombing. On December 21, a proposal to protest Japanese government’s vote against the UN First Committee resolution was voted down by a majority in the Nagasaki prefectural assembly. Assemblymen who voted against it said “Japanese government has actively pursued diplomacy in favor of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. This is just a different approach, and is the same as aiming for a world without nuclear weapons. We cannot approve of something [a protest] with a title and content that looks like the government is not aiming for elimination of nuclear weapons.” (*Asahi Shimbun*, December 22.)

On December 24, the General Assembly adopted the resolution, which had passed the First Committee, with a majority approval of 113 in favor to 35 against, with 13 abstentions. Japanese government again voted against the resolution and many citizens in the two cities that have suffered nuclear bombing voiced their disappointment. In a comment on the same day, the Mayor of Nagasaki City warmly welcomed the decision [to adopt the resolution] and said that “adoption of the resolution means for the *hibakusha* and cities who have continually demanded the elimination of nuclear weapons so that no person in the world will ever have to go through that tragic experience, that things will move in a great new direction.” He also expressed his hope that “from now on, all countries including nuclear weapon states and those countries under the ‘nuclear umbrella’ should join the negotiations” and that “they would gather their wisdom together for a world without nuclear weapons,” emphasizing anew how Japan, a country that has experienced nuclear bombing, should also play an important role (<http://www.city.nagasaki.lg.jp/syokai/710000/713000/p029247.html>).

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