



peech by NGO Representative

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Thank you very much for the opportunity to join you here today. It has been a few years since I have had the luxury of travelling to this beautiful country, and I have not been in Nagasaki since 2005. I am honoured to be here, and grateful for the generosity and kindness of the organising committee for inviting me.

When confronting the ever present threat to our human survival from nuclear weapons, we have some similarities between Europe and Japan. In Europe, there continues to be a reliance on the concept of extended nuclear deterrence. The same situation is in place here in Japan. In Europe it is quite concrete in consensus based security doctrines- and it will require action on the part of many to change.

Let me briefly explain what we're up against.

NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, which includes 28 countries (3 with their own nuclear weapons), agreed in their latest Strategic Concept that NATO would "remain a nuclear alliance as long as nuclear weapons exist". This is much stronger language than in previous NATO doctrines, which referred to nuclear weapons quite extensively, but never went so far as to call NATO a nuclear alliance. This makes our work much more difficult as we are told that the only way to change anything is through NATO. However, as we learned with other weapons, that is just not true.

There was a small bit of progress in the 2010 Strategic Concept, and in the 2012 Defence and Deterrence Posture Review. The reference to peacetime basing of nuclear weapons on the territories of alliance members was removed. This is helpful, because five European countries- Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey host US nuclear weapons. These are B61 gravity bombs, and they are designed to be dropped from airplanes, like the bombs used on Hiroshima and here in Nagasaki. Four of these countries (all but Turkey) have pilots that train, every year, to use these weapons. All of these countries have expressed their desire to have the US weapons removed, but they have not yet been able to do so- again because they are held hostage to the notion of consensus.

Instead, the US plans to spend 12 billion USD on modernising the B61 bomb. Making them more usable. Increasing the chance that they will be used again- intentionally or accidentally. And making it less likely that we will be able to remove them.

This is highly problematic.

The Dutch parliament, in an overwhelming majority vote in 2010, demanded that the Dutch government tell the US that our country no longer relies on these nuclear weapons for our security. According to some diplomats, this was definitively explained to the US government by our Ambassador in Washington DC. The response, was, unfortunately, that the weapons will remain until NATO has a consensus to remove them.

Now this is a problem, and was quite offensive to a number of our members of parliament who believe that we should have a sovereign right to decide our security future. A democratic right to choose whether or not we want to be stuck under what many call a nuclear umbrella. Unfortunately, even if these weapons are removed, at the current time, the Dutch, and all NATO countries, will continue their nuclear weapons dependency. At least until NATO as a whole changes its policy.

Although NATO is not making progress as a whole, in the individual NATO countries, we are seeing some changes. This is a result of our collective shift away from nuclear weapons as a symbol of status or security, instead focusing on the indiscriminate, inhumane consequences of any nuclear weapon use. We are talking about nuclear weapons as weapons again, not as symbols or constructs of power.

This has been an ongoing message of those who have been directly impacted by the use and testing of nuclear weapons. A lesson that was born here, more than 68 years ago.

When we share the tragic stories of what nuclear weapons actually do to people, we change the way people think. And, we change people's lives.

My own engagement in the global struggle for nuclear abolition began when I started working with the affected community around the US nuclear test site. I will never forget the story of a day gone wrong when a test went badly at the Nevada Test Site. How schoolchildren were told to go outside because there was a chance of an earthquake that could knock down their building. Then while outside, the air went sparkly. As soon as it cleared, several children were covered in bruises – head to toe. Within a few years from that day several of those children died of leukaemia. Others survived to adulthood, only to find that they were unable to have children themselves. One woman told me how she always wanted a big family, but after suffering 17 miscarriages, decided that her only option was to become a teacher. This story left a permanent mark on my view of the world, and I swore to do everything I could to prevent it from ever happening again.

The stories of Hibakusha are necessary to educate and advance our understanding of the impact of nuclear weapons. The stories of nuclear testing victims- continue to tell the tale of the horrendous impact of these weapons. This is not something I need to say here, in Nagasaki, the last city to see the use of atomic weapons in war. However, it is something that I need to repeat often, in the European context, to help people understand the consequences of these weapons so that they are never used again.

Fortunately, the global community is recognising this again. Two weeks ago at the UN General Assembly First Committee on International Peace and Security, 125 countries supported a joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. They said that these weapons should never be used again, under any circumstances. These countries are focusing their discussion on the consequences of use, and we all know that once you understand the consequences, the only responsible action is to outlaw and eliminate the weapons equally for all.

Another thing that is changing the discourse in Europe is the engagement of National Red Cross and Red Crescent societies on a political level in different countries who are demanding action to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons.

For the first time ever, the Dutch Red Cross went on the record calling for the removal of US nuclear weapons from the Netherlands last week. In Germany, the Red Cross society is looking for ways to engage on this issue- including by providing public information about national lack of preparedness to deal with any nuclear weapon detonation. In Norway, the Red Cross plays a significant role in producing materials for public education about the effects of nuclear weapons.

There are other new and exciting actors coming on board in our global effort to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons. I'll spend my last few minutes talking about something we don't often look at in disarmament discussion- namely banks and financial institutions.

On 10 October, IKV Pax Christi launched a global report on the financing of nuclear weapons producers. This report does a number of things. It looks at how private sector money- from banks to pension funds, sovereign wealth funds and asset management- are paying for the maintenance and modernisation of nuclear weapons.

The report looked at 27 companies that are involved in the nuclear arsenals of France, India, the UK and the US. We focused on private contractors, and that limited the scope of our research a bit. Not every nuclear armed country uses private industry to build and maintain its nuclear arsenals. We then looked at what financial institutions provided loans, or investment banking, or owned shares or bonds of these companies. We found a total of 298 financial institutions from 30 countries involved.

Including here in Japan.

Here there are actually five (5) financial institutions that invest over USD 7 billion in nuclear weapons producing companies. These are Chiba Bank, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial, Mizuho Bank, Orix Corporation and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking. They have invested in companies that are developing key components to maintain the nuclear arsenals of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and India.

That can be rather depressing. To find out that financial institutions whose headquarters are here, in the only country to have ever suffered the use of nuclear weapons in war, are trying to

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