

# Second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

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## Message from the Japanese Youth

### Working paper submitted by KNOW NUKES TOKYO

#### I. Introduction

1. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the organizers of the conference. Given the increased international attention, urgency, and need for the framework the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) provides, we are greatly pleased that this conference is taking place here today.

2. We are KNOW NUKES TOKYO, a youth-led NGO working for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and abolition. Formed and led by Japanese university students, we started our work in Tokyo as an ICAN Campaigner organization in 2021. We participated in the 1st Meeting of States Parties of TPNW as well as the Humanitarian Conference in 2021, and we continue to participate in the 2nd MSP of TPNW in 2023 here. Our main goal for this conference is to ensure that the momentum for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remains sustained globally despite the difficult time we are in. In this working paper, we would like to express our messages and provide recommendations for the conference.

#### II. Our Message

3. In the face of an intensified global situation, including the war in Ukraine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we must reconsider the nuclear issue.

4. Our generation continues to be faced with nuclear threats. We have seen statements that can be taken as nuclear threats during both the war in Ukraine and also during the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These repeated nuclear threats should strongly remind us of the reality that political decision-makers always have a choice of dropping nuclear weapons on the most vulnerable citizens. Even if nuclear weapons are not used, we are deeply concerned about our future filled with anguish and fear caused by this reality as "victims of nuclear threats".

5. The question of humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons is of utmost significance today. Countless, especially those who are socially vulnerable continue to be victimized by ongoing wars as decision-makers do not make decisions on humanitarian grounds. Not only these wars but the aging Hibakushas push us to question ourselves once

again on the humanitarian aspects of nuclear weapon usage. The hibakushas, whom we have heavily relied on in relaying their first-hand experiences of the inhumanity of nuclear bombings are aging and slowly disappearing. In such a present of waging war and quickly approaching a future without hibakushas, we urgently ask that the question of humanitarianism be reinforced in the conference.

### **III. Recommendations**

6. As a representative of the youth of Japan, a nation that experienced the A-bomb, our expectations for the 2MSP of the TPNW are as follows.
7. Reconsider the nuclear issue on humanitarian grounds together as an international community in light of the ongoing wars.
8. Advance an actionable plan at 2MSP;
  - We call for schemes to effectively motivate nations like Japan to join the treaty. Although we have been lobbying our own (Japanese) government for the signature and ratification of the treaty as the youth of Japan, it refuses to do so due to national security reasons. From the perspective of universality, countries like Japan are to be included in the framework of TPNW.
  - We would like to see more educational and political opportunities for youth as well as rigorous assistance for developing the next generation in nuclear disarmament.
  - We propose with regards to the International Trust Fund for Victims under Articles 6 and 7, that private corporations be included in the fund to increase its financial strength.
  - We propose that a working group to coordinate specifically with the media to expand awareness of the treaty be created.
  - We would like to see a continued discussion of gender-related perspectives surrounding the nuclear issue.
9. On humanitarian grounds, the existence of nuclear weapons is unacceptable, and we need to continue working towards a nuclear-free world. Hoping that TPNW will become a framework that steadily progresses toward a nuclear-weapon-free world, we will contribute as an important actor.

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