

Thank you for Your Pledge

Dear Laura

My name is Setsuko Thurlow and I speak as a member of the family of Hibakusha – those of us who, by some miraculous chance, survived the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I want to thank you for joining 787 people in pledging to join us in the fight to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons.

For 75 years, we have worked for the total abolition of nuclear weapons.

As a 13-year-old schoolgirl, I witnessed my city of Hiroshima blinded by the flash, flattened by the hurricane-like blast, burned in the heat of 4000 degrees Celsius and contaminated by the radiation of one atomic bomb. A bright summer morning turned to dark twilight with smoke and dust rising in the mushroom cloud, dead and injured people covering the ground, begging desperately for water and receiving no medical care at all. The spreading firestorm and the foul stench of burnt flesh filled the air.

Within that single flash of light, my beloved Hiroshima became a place of desolation, with heaps of rubble, skeletons and blackened corpses everywhere. Of a population of 360,000 -- largely non-combatant women, children and elderly -- most became victims of the indiscriminate massacre of the atomic bombing. As of now, 75 years later people are still dying from the delayed effects of an atomic bomb considered crude by today's standard for mass destruction.

As the 75th anniversary of bombings Hiroshima and Nagasaki approaches, this is the very time to solidify our partnerships to achieve nuclear disarmament, for make no mistake: the majority of the world's people want to live in a world without nuclear weapons. And the majority also want to live in a world where the human rights of all people are celebrated, as we can see now across the globe as citizens rise up to confront systemic racism. Hibakusha understand the sting of discrimination all too well. We join with peaceful people everywhere, demanding change.

The adoption of the [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) by 122 UN member states was a moment of great joy, marking the beginning of the end of the most horrific weapons ever made. With each state that signs and ratifies this extraordinary treaty,

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we move closer to our goal becoming a reality. Seventy-five years after that great crime against humanity we can see the glimmer of a new dawn — an era of peace built on stability, grounded in human rights, humanitarian law and secured through cooperation, not threats of global annihilation. Raise your voice with me and all Hibakusha who declare now is the time for all nations to join the nuclear ban treaty — to end the darkness of this era and welcome the sunrise on a new day through the force of law and the will of the people. We now have the opportunity to bring the treaty into force. We now have the opportunity to bring the treaty into force. We now have the opportunity to stop funding nuclear violence instead of funding human needs. We now have the opportunity to stop risking the life of future generations.

Thank you for taking action and choosing to work with us to make this dream a reality.

Setsuko Thurlow

Russian Nuclear Weapons Policy and the Right to Life

By: John Burroughs {June 9, 2020}

On June 1, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy and Western States Legal Foundation submitted a report ([pdf](#), [html](#)) to the UN Human Rights Committee review of Russia. The report suggests questions to be asked of Russia regarding its nuclear weapons policy in advance of the in-person review, likely to take place in the winter of 2021. It addresses doctrine as to nuclear use, actions regarding disarmament, and diversion of resources to nuclear arms.

The report is based on the powerful Human Rights Committee finding in para. 66 of [General Comment 36](#) regarding the incompatibility of nuclear weapons with the right to life recognized by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), a major human rights treaty to which Russia is a party. The report explains that **Russian doctrine regarding use of nuclear weapons** is contrary to the Committee's finding that: "The threat or use of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, which are indiscriminate in effect and are of a nature to cause destruction of human life on a catastrophic scale, is incompatible with respect for the right to life and may amount to a crime under international law."

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It similarly is contrary to international humanitarian law, whose rules and principles, applying to all states, are set out in the preamble to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The report further explains that **Russian actions regarding nuclear arms control and disarmament** fail to fulfil the international legal obligation, affirmed by the Committee, “to pursue in good faith negotiations in order to achieve the aim of nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

The report finally observes that in accordance with the duty to protect life, the **resources diverted to nuclear arms** should be spent on public health and other human needs:

In para. 26 of General Comment 36, the Committee observed: “The duty to protect life also implies that States parties should take appropriate measures to address the general conditions in society that may give rise to direct threats to life or prevent individuals from enjoying their right to life with dignity.” Among those general conditions are “degradation of the environment,” “the prevalence of life-threatening diseases, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria,” and “widespread hunger and malnutrition and extreme poverty and homelessness.”

Action to alleviate such conditions requires resources, as the present Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated all too well. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called for a global cease-fire so that humanity can defeat its common enemy, the virus. Similarly, the vast human and financial investment in nuclear arms can and should be devoted to public health, reducing inequality and poverty, protecting the climate and the environment, and other beneficial ends. A recent report of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons estimates that in 2019, the world’s nine nuclear-armed countries spent \$72.9 billion USD on nuclear weapons; Russia’s share was \$8.5 billion.

As the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty recalls in its preamble, under the United Nations Charter the “establishment and maintenance of international peace and security are to be promoted with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources.” Ending the diversion of resources to nuclear arms would greatly promote the protection of life in accordance with Article 6 of the ICCPR.

Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, Western States Legal Foundation, and Swiss Lawyers for Nuclear Disarmament provided a similar analysis of the incompatibility of US nuclear weapons policy with the Human Rights Committee’s finding in an October 2019 [report](#) submitted to the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review of the United States.

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Nagasaki Day 2020

By: Laura Savinkoff

Seventy-five years! Imagine living with poison cursing through your body for that long? Imagine living and struggling with the effects of radiation poisoning for 3/4s of a century!

There are still a few survivors living after the USA bombing of Hiroshima on August 6th and Nagasaki on August 9th of 1945. This is the pivotal act that signalled the beginning of the Nuclear Age. Some still view this action as a necessary evil and others, such as the Boundary Peace Initiative and many others globally, see this as an evil act that keeps on giving and giving and giving and was not necessary at the time and must be portrayed as the evil it is then and now.

The original Hibakusha, the survivors of that holocaust, plead with the governing bodies of the world, to stop! *Just stop!* Stop the mining of uranium. Stop the research and development of nuclear products. Stop enriching uranium to produce electricity. Stop enriching uranium to produce weapons. *Just Stop!*

Sadly, the world’s leaders have not listened and do not hear their pleas to stop destroying the people and the planet. They do not heed the warnings of the Scientists that the stockpiles of weapons can destroy the planet many times over. One of the current bombs is at least 3,000 times more deadly than those used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And those bombs killed up to 160,000 in Hiroshima and 80,000 in Nagasaki immediately or within days and continue to kill and maim children born of survivors and their children and their children.

Imagine children walking happily on their way to school and adults to work as the bombs exploded. They were vaporized into the sides of buildings, the sidewalks and their shadows are all that is left; others roamed the streets after the mushroom cloud tunnelled miles into the air around them as charred skin hung down in strips and eyes and ears hung out of place; some were burning from the inside out and jumped into the river to try cool off but the river was boiling and cooked them; as ‘black rain’ pelted down it infected even more; the animals and the fish and birds dropped dead or roamed around with eyes bulging and fur and skin dripping just as the people did. (Continued page 3)

Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

BPI web site: www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org

BPI regular meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. To commit or for info: (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email L4peace@telus.net.

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Today, there are thousands of these weapons ready and waiting to be used: Russia holds 6,850 and the USA 6,125 and the other 7 nuclear weapons states bring the total to approximately 15,000 for not one country will release the exact numbers. At least 1500 are classified as 'on hair trigger alert' because they are loaded and ready to be launched within 15 minutes, as soon as the signal is sent. Imagine that! In 15 minutes the lives of over 7 Billion people rests in the hands of one head of state. For if one launches so will the other and the other and the other. But all it would take, in reality, is one blast and the world is done for minimum of 4.5 billion years, when it may become sort of habitable. So, for that many years absolutely nothing will grow that is not full of radiation and every living organism would be infected and pass on that infection to their progeny. Four and one-half billion years for the radiation to dissipate to half strength. That is what is in a few brief cases holding the code names and numbers to launch a nuclear bomb.

The majority of these weapons, my friends, are just across the border from us here in Canada—in the USA and just across the ocean and the Arctic Circle in Russia; in lesser numbers they reside in China, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea and others nations are rumoured to have programs to develop these weapons of mass destruction.

And the leftovers from the uranium mining and the enrichment process, dubbed Depleted Uranium (DU) and waste, are not depleted at all but emit radiation and will for the next 4.5 Billion years. This DU is part of electricity production any process that extracts ions and particles from uranium and the piles of the product keep piling up higher and higher and take up more and more storage. Yet the storage of this very dangerous material is not secure, is not safe and in many facilities it rests in barrels piled on top of each other, in buildings close to rivers, and lakes and oceans. Just as all Electrical production facilities, medical isotope facilities, weapons manufacturing facilities need fresh, cold water in order to ensure safe operation, so that the core does not melt down and the rods remain stable. And the radiation leaches, little by little into the soil and into the ground water and into the aquifer. It is not only the weapons that pose the danger to our health, to our wellbeing, to our very lives. Chernobyl still keeps on giving its payload as does Fukushima and there are others with leaks not as dramatic but sharing their bounty of infection with us.

And yes, we must not forget the use of DU weapons by the military in Bosnia, Serbia, Afghanistan, Iraq and who knows where else. At one point in Iraq USA soldiers wore vest lined with DU that were poisoning them. And it was discovered that those Bunker Buster bombs were tipped with DU and that radiated dust floated on the air currents for thousands of miles. And those tanks shooting DU tipped shells and the guns shooting DU tipped bullets infected the soldiers as well as the people and to this day

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the wrecks of tanks and jeeps that litter the country continue to do their job of infecting children playing in and around them, young men who collect metal and scrap to make a living bring home that radiation to their parents and wives and children.

This is what the nuclear industry in all its forms does. If it doesn't kill immediately, well, then it gives of itself unconditionally to anyone who comes in contact with or feels the wind in their face or drinks the water or eats food grown in or around the affected areas.

In recent years the USA has pulled out of treaties developed to control the spread of and get rid of this destruction, to stop testing these weapons that destroy the environment and people. And so the nuclear arms race is back in business and the threat to our very existence is becoming more imminent.

The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists estimates that we are 100 seconds away from annihilation, of total destruction of the ability for people and animals to live on this planet. Imagine 100 seconds and the world we know can be gone. What this means is that we are seconds away from some leader choosing to destroy us all for some reason only understood by that leader, guided by some need to prove superiority. In fifteen minutes missiles carrying deadly nuclear bombs can be launched and hit their targets in some cases in less than 30 minutes. We would have no chance for survival.

The world has come so close so many times to this Armageddon but no one wants to talk about it. And the drive to improve on the deadliness of 'the bomb' continues. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signed on July 1, 1968 by 189 or 193 nations took effect on March 5, 1970 but has yet not been fully implemented. Article 6 states that every nation must work, in good faith, towards disarmament yet the nuclear arms race continues and in recent years has escalated: SALT 1 & 2 slid away without out much dismantling of the arsenal anywhere while India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea acquired weapons and it is rumoured that other nations are exploring doing so.

On July 7, 2017 a treaty was brought to the United Nations asking the world to declare nuclear weapons illegal, banning the development and use of such weapons for all nations, demanding that those nations with nuclear weapons dismantle and disarm all of them, leaving none able to be used or put together ever again. It took a decade by dedicated peace activists to bring this treaty to the point of the majority, 182 nations, signing. But we still wait for at least 50 nations to ratify it so it becomes law. Sadly, the major possessors of these weapons have not signed and certainly not ratified it. Included in this cabal, this minority is Canada. We do not have weapons but we do sell uranium (we are the third largest supplier globally) and DU from our nuclear energy and medical facilities and don't forget we border one of the largest possessors of destruction.

So, the race to destruction continues and Canada, that prides itself as a 'peace keeper', is part of the problem. As long as Canada remains a member of NATO and an ally of the USA, with both entities reserve the right for first strike with nuclear

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WHAT'S UP?

Nagasaki Day: Come see the Boundary Peace Initiative information table at **Market Avenue** in Grand Forks on **August 8th** starting at 10 am.

Check out activities and Webinars for **Nuclear Remembrance Week** from Aug. 1st to 9th at: www.abolition2000.org

Hiroshima Day Peace Memorial Aug. 5th @ 3:30 pm
@ St. Saviors Anglican Church
701 Ward Sr. Nelson, B.C @
Peace Pole. Please wear masks.
For info: email tom12@gmail.com or call 541-729-1263.

PEACE SYMBOL CONTEST

A great way to spend time while self-isolating. **Enter the Peace Quest Regina 2020 Peace Symbol Contest.** Create a peace symbol on any surface: paper, cloth, a cake or cookies, a sidewalk, a rock....The options are limitless. Email a picture to: makingpeace@sasktel.net. You will receive a peace gift and be eligible to win a major peace prize. Entry deadline is midnight August 31 2020. Winners will be announced September 21, International Peace Day. Visit the Peace Quest Regina Facebook page to entries: https://www.facebook.com/pg/PeaceQuestRegina/photos/?tab=album&album_id=2546836035589182

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weapons, those in command of Canada, say they cannot sign the treaty. One excuse is that the NPT exists and until the nuclear weapons nations reject and disarm there is no point in making them illegal. And it is NATO that protects us from 'the enemy from over there'. Well, that kind of rhetoric really does not hold much water, the vessel holding that water is pretty leaky. With that kind of reasoning we should still have slavery, we should still be allowed to drive without seatbelts and child car-seats, we should still have unregulated water sources, unregulated medical systems, etc because until the slavers agree to let their slaves go we cannot make it illegal, we cannot ensure that women and children are treated with respect and honour until the abuser agrees to the terms, and so on and so on and so on. Is this reasonable? Well, that is the stance of the states that have not signed the treaty and the states needing to ratify face those same types of arguments within their governments and populations.

So, we the people, have two major issues that need our attention if we are to move back the hands of the Dooms Day Clock. I think the actual goal for this clock is to eliminate the need for the warning of annihilation. We must press for Canada to stop being part of the problem by signing and ratifying the Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons. That would also require Canada to withdraw from the most militarily destructive alliance in the world--the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO has now expanded its reach beyond its original intentions into South America and Asia and encircled Russia and creeps ever closer to China. This self-appointment as the world's policeman and dominant ruler dictates to the United Nations and those nations who do not 'belong' to an alliance who needs war and conflict to justify its existence.

We the people can and must insist that the United Nations take on the role it was intended for—to end the scourge of war, uphold human rights and ensure that the world lives in peace not just the absence of war. We, the people of the world, must insist that we have a civilized and enlightened society. We must call for an end to the nuclear arms race, to all actions, to all development that destroys the lives of humanity and the environment. This call must include all nuclear development from uranium mining to research to nuclear power and even nuclear medicine. There is research into replacing nuclear medicine, we do have the capacity for sustainable and renewable power/electricity, and we can dismantle and disarm nuclear weapons. The technology does exist. What it will take is political will and to get political will it will take you and I to insist on it, to vote into government those who will move in that direction, to educate ourselves and our friends and family to the need to end this untenable Mutually Assured Destruction regime of constant war and military spending.

If this behaviour, creating and perpetuating self destruction is what enlightenment and civilization is about I cannot imagine what the opposite is? Is this what we are handing to our children and grandchildren? Is this the way we wish them to live? For it is only a matter of time that these bombs and missiles will be used and there will be no more living for our children and grandchildren. Is this our legacy—self destruction?

If that is not what we want, then we must act and act quickly. We must non-violently demand that Canada sign and ratify the Treaty to Ban Nuclear Weapons, pull out of NATO, take the steps necessary to work towards a world free of violence and abuse, free of racism and discrimination, take the steps necessary to clean up our environment so that there will remain life and living for all Creation. And we must insist all nations do the same. Together we can rid ourselves of all nuclear weapons as the first step in total disarmament of all weapons. It is possible if we have the will to be the enlightened people we think we are, if we take the steps to truly live and breathe peace, justice, equity, equality, compassion, and love.

I am ready to do all I can. Are you?

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email L4peace@telus.net.

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000 and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We also work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>