

August 6, 1945. The atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima for the first time in human history. 3 days later, on August 9th, atomic bomb was dropped in Nagasaki. I am from Hiroshima where it suffered atomic bombing. My grandmother is an atomic bomb victim. When my grandmother was 4 years old, she was exposed to radiation from the atomic bomb at her house situated 2.5 km away from the center of the explosion. Violent heat ray and blast attacked her, and her house was destroyed. Nevertheless, she was alive miraculously because her brother carried her on his back. After that, they walked around burned Hiroshima with their father to look for a safe place. She told me, "I still remember the fear clearly" Her life was about to disappear when she was exposed to the bomb. Thanks to my grandmother for surviving, I can be here today. I have no choice but to feel the value of life.

Please look at this picture. This is a picture of Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped. This place was a center of Hiroshima and many people lived there. The atomic bombings completely destroyed the entire cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Between August and the end of 1945, approximately 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 70,000 people in Nagasaki lost their precious lives. Many children and young people like us were killed. Furthermore, all survivors suffered ;some were burned, poisoned, and others were injured. Presently, radiation continues to impair all the survivor's bodies even after 76 years have passed. The physical and psychological pains have never been healed.

Each one of the victims had their own future. However, one atomic bomb took away their future and gave them lasting pain.

I am a young person born in Hiroshima and have a bomb victim in my family. I have a strong sense of responsibility and mission to abolish nuclear weapons. The hope of the victims is "not to repeat the same suffering as they have suffered". Nuclear weapons must never be used again.

Passing on the thoughts of victims and telling them to the world is our mission. Peace messengers have been transmitting the voices of victims for 24 years. Signing activity was started to abolish the nuclear weapons and to realize a peaceful world. It was supported by many people and the total number of signatures has reached 2 million. Bomb victims are ageing and a baton for peace was handed down to us, young generation.

This year marks the 76th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We must take a big step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We, young people have a responsibility for the future. I hope that the world will respond to our call.

Thank you for listening.

Rio Sasaki