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## **Peace Boat Welcomes the Adoption of the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty**

JULY 7, 2017 – Today, a majority of the world’s governments concluded negotiations at the United Nations in New York and formally adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Peace Boat welcomes the adoption of this historic treaty, which declares unambiguously that nuclear weapons are now not only immoral, but also illegal.

For the first time since the beginning of the nuclear age, a legally-binding international instrument categorically prohibits nuclear weapons – their development, testing, possession, transfer, use or threat of use, as well as any form of assistance, encouragement or inducement of these prohibited acts. It also provides a pathway for nuclear-armed states to join the treaty and destroy their nuclear weapons in a time-bound, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Peace Boat is pleased that the treaty, strongly grounded in international humanitarian law, recognizes the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and acknowledges the unacceptable suffering of Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) and nuclear test survivors. It also clearly acknowledges the disproportionate impact that nuclear weapons and related activities have on indigenous peoples, women and girls.

Since 2008, Peace Boat has organized the “Global Voyage for a Nuclear-Free World: Peace Boat Hibakusha Project” to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Over 170 Hibakusha from Hiroshima and Nagasaki have participated in this project to date, to speak about their tragic experience and tell the world about the humanitarian imperative to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. The adoption of this treaty is the result of their tireless appeal that nobody should ever have to endure what they have suffered.

Over 130 countries have participated in the negotiations. Peace Boat deeply deplores the decision by the Japanese government to boycott this process, despite popular support of the people of Japan. We call on the government of Japan to shift its policy and join this treaty. Japan can adhere to the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty, should it commit not to engage, under any circumstances, in the use of nuclear weapons. The treaty is in fact very much in line with Japan's existing Three Non-Nuclear Principles - not possessing, not producing and not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons.

Peace Boat has long held nuclear disarmament and abolition as a priority, and is an active member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Peace Boat will continue to work with Hibakusha and other people affected by the nuclear chain to raise awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and spread the Hibakusha’s message to the world. Furthermore, Peace Boat will actively promote the treaty, encourage governments around the world to sign and ratify the treaty to ensure its early entry-into-force, and support its implementation.

Adopted as the successful outcome of a humanitarian disarmament process, this treaty contains clear and robust prohibition and represents an essential step towards bringing the nuclear era to an end and realizing the Hibakusha’s dream of a world free of nuclear weapons during their lifetime.