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Nuclear Survivors Forum 2025

At the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), several non-governmental and civil society organizations hosted side events to highlight nuclear affected communities and provide space for them to share their experiences with nuclear harm, as well as discuss various aspects of the TPNW, its implementation, and other pathways for nuclear disarmament. One side event hosted by ICAN in partnership with Peace Boat was the Nuclear Survivors Forum (NSF) 2025, which aims to create a safe space for survivors of different nuclear-affected communities to convene and share their stories with each other and allies. The Forum also leads discussions on Articles 6 and 7 of the TPNW, which outline victim assistance and environmental remediation, as well as international cooperation and assistance. This year was the fourth NSF hosted by ICAN and Peace Boat, with the first NSF in 2021.

The NSF2025 was set up with one circle of nuclear-affected community members, and lines of allies sitting behind in theater-style. The first session of the Forum began with welcome remarks by Yerdaulet Rakhmatulla, Co-Founder of the Qazaq Nuclear Frontline Coalition (QNFC), and moved on to time for all participants to introduce themselves to each other and discuss how they came to this space. Following these introductions, two Hibakusha shared their testimonies: Mr. Jiro Hamasumi, a Hiroshima Hibakusha (prenatally-exposed survivor), who is the Assistant Secretary General of 2024 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Nihon Hidankyo and Co-Founder and President of a Tokyo-based Hibakusha Association, as well as Ms. Park Jungsoon, a Korean survivor of Hiroshima and Advisory Committee Member of the Korea Atomic Bomb Victims Association, Busan Branch. In their stories there were points with which other nuclear affected community members could relate, including the fear and grief from the death of family members caused by the bombing and radiation exposure, negative impact on their mental health caused by the social stigma, and the fear of their own illness and death caused by the bombing. They also pointed out insufficient or complete lack of the recognition and medical and financial support.

The second session began with a brief update from Alicia Sanders-Zakre, ICAN's Policy and Research Coordinator, on the latest status of Articles 6 and 7 of the TPNW. Sanders-Zakre outlined the requirements of fulfilling Articles 6 and 7 of the TPNW and detailed the relevant Vienna Action Plan recommendations, specifically conducting initial assessments of harm in nuclear-affected communities to determine what the communities need in terms of victim assistance and environmental remediation. She also discussed the progress of the Informal Working Group of Articles 6 and 7, co-chaired by Kazakhstan and Kiribati. Sanders-Zakre announced that the Co-Chairs officially submitted their report for the 3MSP, and that it is [available on the UN website](#). It includes details on the discussions between states parties and other stakeholders, including civil society and representatives of nuclear impacted communities about advancing implementation of Articles 6 and 7, including through the establishment of an international trust fund for this work. Additional work is needed to reach agreement on some aspects of the trust fund, such as who receives and can provide funds, so discussions about it will likely continue into the next intersessional period leading up to the Review Conference.

The second session's main group discussion was directed by key questions provided by the facilitator about survivors' needs and expectations and what actions allies could take to support these needs. The survivors' group discussion revolved around the questions: "What are the primary issues and needs of your community?", "What is common, and what is different among different communities?" and "What is your message to the two co-chairs of the Article 6 and 7 Working Group?". Participating survivors came from diverse backgrounds, including Māohi Nui/French Polynesia, the Navajo Nation in the United States, the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, and Japan.

Members of the affected communities voiced concerns over the lack of public data on health and environmental contamination and the need for truth-telling, transparency, and accessible, declassified documents relating to nuclear testing and detonations. Regarding transparency, they specifically called for greater intergenerational communication among Indigenous affected communities, as well as increased communication, both inter-governmental and civil society. They also highlighted the need for more education on the effects of nuclear weapons within affected communities and within civil society, as well as more inclusion of civil society in TPNW discussions. Each survivor group also mentioned actions specific to different affected communities, such as Kazakhstan recognizing the multi-generational impacts of the nuclear testing and compensating younger generations who were not alive for it, and Korean

Hibakusha asking for official recognition from the Japanese government and for the US to take responsibility for the atomic bombings. Lastly, a Hiroshima Hibakusha remarked that she and other nuclear survivors “want to see the abolition of nuclear weapons before we leave this world.”

The allies’ group discussion sought to answer the following question: “What can we do as allies of affected communities to support the fight for justice and support Articles 6 and 7?”. The groups of allies discussed increasing education on the TPNW, nuclear disarmament, Hibakusha, and other affected communities’ experiences and called for more support from allies that would empower Hibakusha to teach younger communities about their experiences. They also stressed the dire need to give platforms to affected communities and highlight their voices in discussions, referring to “making space, not taking space.” The allies also stress incorporating Indigenous ways of knowledge and thinking into nuclear disarmament by advocating not just for affected human communities but also for land and animals that have been impacted by nuclear weapons. Lastly, they provided two tangible calls to action for allies: utilizing mass media campaigns to bring attention to nuclear harm and survivor stories, as well as demanding nuclear-armed nations to donate to the international trust fund.

The NSF2025 ended with closing remarks from the facilitator Rakhmatulla, and ICAN’s Executive Director, Melissa Parke, expressing their deep gratitude for the Hibakusha’s strength and willingness to share their stories. Parke closed the NSF2025, stating, “Every time you reshare your stories, you’re reliving your childhood trauma, your family’s trauma. Thank you for having the courage to share it again and again.”