



# *Dialogue on* **Nuclear Weapons**

An appeal for humanity from the Red Cross

No one can save the victims of  
nuclear weapons



Japanese  
Red Cross Society

Japanese Red Cross Institute for Humanitarian Studies



Japanese  
Red Cross Society

# Dialogue on Nuclear Weapons

An appeal for humanity from the Red Cross

The structure in the foreground in the centre of this photo stands amongst the ruins near the A-bomb Dome. On that day, in this building (Japanese Red Cross Society: JRCS Hiroshima Branch), which was almost directly below the hypocentre, our Red Cross colleagues lost their lives in an instant. In the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital, 1.5km away from the centre of the explosion, many of our colleagues lost their lives and those who survived were injured as they helped the wounded. Some of them were young nurses. .... Why does the Red Cross speak out on the issue of nuclear weapons? The answer is clear from this photo: we remember the fact that nuclear weapons have killed so many of our Red Cross staff and we do not want to repeat the same tragedy. This picture is the starting point of our wish for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

In 2011, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted a resolution at its Council of Delegates, calling on the world to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. The resolution was based on the Movement's unique humanitarian perspective, notably the consideration that any use of nuclear weapons would pose insurmountable challenges for humanitarian assistance. When the atomic bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or when nuclear tests were conducted around the world, what were the consequences for human lives and dignity, and how did people cope with it? Let's listen to the "words" of the people of the Red Cross in the face of the threat of nuclear weapons. From that moment on, a quiet "dialogue" on nuclear weapons will surely begin between you and them.

The origin of our wish:  
Why the Red Cross and Nuclear Weapons?



## Table of contents

Chapter.	<b>Hiroshima</b>	
I	I am a Red Cross nurse	
	—The beginning of relief missions in the uncharted medical field	04
	The wounded Red Cross	
	—Restoring human lives and dignity	06
	The benefactor of Hiroshima	
	—Dr. Marcel Junod	08
	[Column]	
	Words of Oka Nobuko, JRCS nursing student	10
Chapter.	<b>Nagasaki</b>	
II	Suddenly the lights went out	
	—A message from the command post of the relief effort	12
	Lives saved by a train delay	
	—The rescue trains and the Red Cross rescue teams running through the bombed area	14
	What a rescue nurse saw in Nagasaki	
	—When she was 20 years old	16
	[Column]	
	Words of Masae Yukinaga, JRCS rescue nurse	18
Chapter.	<b>The pacific ocean</b>	
III	March 1, 1954, the 3rd flash	
	—Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and "Lucky Dragon No.5"	20
	Damn that atomic bomb!	
	—Dr. Masao Tsuzuki who continued to fight for Hibakusha	22
	[Column]	
	Appeals from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement	24
Chapter.	<b>To the world</b>	
IV	Hibakusha, they inspired me	
	—Towards the movement for a world without nuclear weapons	26
	No one can save the victims of nuclear weapons	
	—An intolerable threat to humanity	28
	Message to the next generation from the Red Cross	30

\*The information in this booklet is current as of March 2023, and the names of organisations and positions mentioned are, in principle, current as of that date.



# Hiroshima

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On 6 August 1945, a nuclear weapon was used against human beings for the first time in history. By the end of the same year, approximately 140,000 people had lost their lives in Hiroshima, and treatment for survivors is still ongoing at the Red Cross Hospital and other hospitals in Hiroshima. Medical research and investigation into the effects of the atomic bombing on future generations has continued to the present day.

Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital immediately after the atomic bombing. The main hospital building, a reinforced concrete structure that survived the bombing amidst a burnt-out field on all sides, was also called an 'oasis amongst the ruins.'



Tension ran all over my body and jumped out with the determination that

'I'll do my duty, I have to do it!'

— Mieko Gojo, JRCS nursing student

### Episode

## I am a Red Cross nurse

— The beginning of relief missions in the uncharted medical field

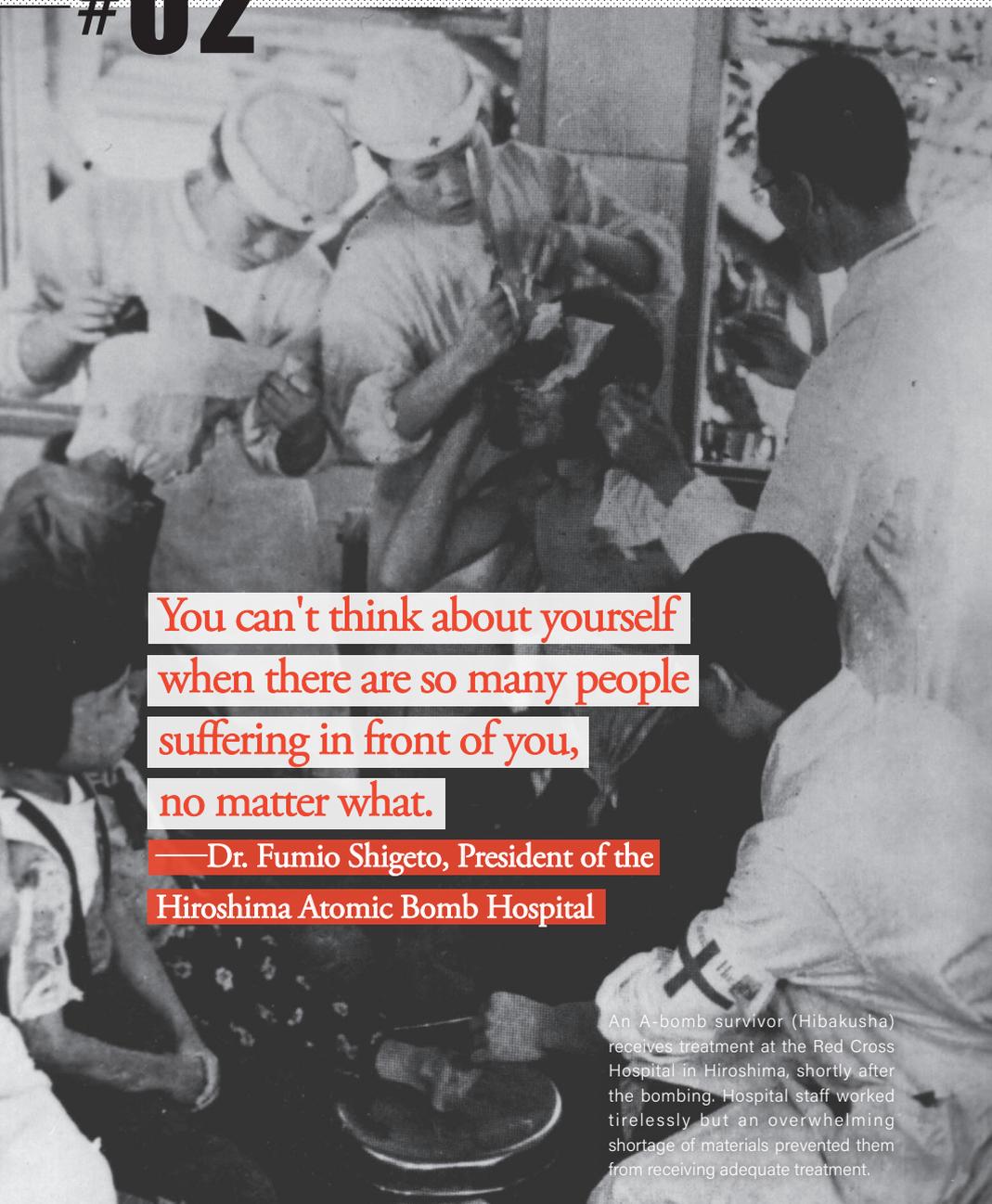
On the day when a nuclear weapon was used for the first time in the world, the Red Cross carried out an unprecedented relief operation in Hiroshima. The Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital is located about 1.5 kilometers from the hypocenter. The hospital, which was devastated but miraculously not completely destroyed, received many victims (Hibakusha), who had seen the Red Cross flag on the building's exterior. At the time, most of the hospital's doctors and nurses had been sent to various locations outside Hiroshima for wartime relief, and the nursing students filled the shortage. The atomic bomb was dropped on a clear morning just as their day was about to begin.

"When I came to, I was lying down in a corridor a few meters away from where I had stood. Tension ran all over my body and jumped out with the determination that 'I'm a JRCS nursing student. I'll do my duty, I have to do it!'" (Mieko Gojo, JRCS nursing student, 17 years old at the time.)

In "A-bombed Buildings in Hiroshima: A

Survey Report on the 45th Anniversary of the A-bombing" (1990) by the Association for the Study of A-bombed Buildings, the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital is described as follows: "Fortunately, all those who were not badly injured were engaged in relief work soon after the first great shock." But how was it possible to do that without panicking at the sudden flash of light, the blast, and the horrible crowd of injured and half-dead people? The reason for this is spelt out in the text that follows. "I think the biggest reason was that there was a power inherent in them that went beyond panic. It was their sense of mission as doctors and nurses in the face of the people suffering, and even more so, their duty or compassion as human beings that went beyond such things."

In reality, however, many difficulties awaited them, including insufficient treatment in the absence of many doctors and nurses, and a shortage of medicines. In addition, those hospital staff themselves, including nursing students, were exposed to nuclear radiation.



You can't think about yourself  
when there are so many people  
suffering in front of you,  
no matter what.

—Dr. Fumio Shigeto, President of the  
Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Hospital

An A-bomb survivor (Hibakusha) receives treatment at the Red Cross Hospital in Hiroshima, shortly after the bombing. Hospital staff worked tirelessly but an overwhelming shortage of materials prevented them from receiving adequate treatment.

### Episode

## The wounded Red Cross

— Restoring human lives and dignity

On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped targeting the Aoi Bridge in Hiroshima City. Hospital staff and patients at the Shima Hospital, located southeast of the bridge, were killed and injured. The JRCS Hiroshima branch, which was located close by, was devastated and all staff working that morning are said to have been killed instantly. The doctors, nurses, and nursing students who survived were exposed to the dangers of nuclear radiation, but they had no way of knowing this at the time, so they just threw themselves into relief efforts. Dr. Fumio Shigeto, then Deputy President of the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital, was one of those survivors. "You can't think about yourself when there are so many people suffering in front of you, no matter what", he recalled at the time.

"Even if I knew it was caused by nuclear radiation, I had no idea if I could treat it or not. Young women and girls were crying and saying 'I lose my hair and my head becomes bald! What can you do for me?' But we don't know if it can be treated or not."

Injuries to the human body caused by the combined effects of the heat, blast, and radia-

tion emitted by the atomic bomb were called the "Atomic Bomb Disease". However, the fact that the cause of this disease has been identified, does not mean that an effective medical treatment for victims of nuclear weapons has been found. To this day, the intergenerational genetic effects of nuclear radiation is a subject of medical research.

Dr. Shigeto was transferred to the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital about two weeks before the atomic bomb was dropped and was exposed to nuclear radiation. After that, he served as the president of Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Hospital, which was established in 1956, and dedicated his life to medical care for atomic bomb victims and studies on the relationship between radiation and leukemia, until his death in 1982.

"Unless we make it clear in our time whether leukemia will actually develop among the second generation of Hibakusha or not, we will leave unresolved issues for future generations, and we will not be able to report the reality of the disaster we experienced in a clear manner to the next generation. What did people do in those days? Of course, it's our responsibility, so I feel it keenly."

Countless cries for your help.

—Monument in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



Monument in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, erected in 1979 by the Hiroshima Prefectural Medical Association and the Japanese Red Cross Society. A monument with the same relief was erected in Geneva in 2006.

Photo: Ryusuke Kawai

Episode

## The benefactor of Hiroshima

— Dr. Marcel Junod

In a corner of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, there is a monument in honor of Dr. Marcel Junod, a Swiss physician. A memorial service is held around the monument every year on or around June 16, when Dr. Junod passed away. In 2011, at the 50th anniversary of the doctor's passing, the mayor of Hiroshima and the Swiss ambassador to Japan attended an event to commemorate him. During the event, which took place only a few months after the Fukushima nuclear disaster, Mr. Tadateru Konoe, President of the Japanese Red Cross Society, said: "We are now in the midst of an unprecedented earthquake and nuclear accident in Tohoku region. We are facing two nuclear accidents, nuclear power plant and atomic bomb. It is meaningful to hold such a commemoration in the midst of the two nuclear disasters that human beings are facing." What were the achievements of Dr. Junod, who is still remembered by many as the "Benefactor of Hiroshima"?

On August 9, 1945, the day the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, Dr. Junod arrived in Tokyo as the Chief Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to Japan. The purpose of his visit to Japan was to improve the conditions of Allied prisoners of war (POW), but at the end of that month, he received the following report from Fritz Bilfinger, an ICRC delegate who had visited Hiroshima and witnessed the

damage caused by the atomic bombing: "Situation horrifying. 80% of town razed. All hospitals destroyed or severely damaged. Have visited two provisional hospitals: conditions indescribable. ...Appeal allied high command asking supplies be parachuted immediately into centre of town. ...Immediate action necessary".

Upon receiving the report, Dr. Junod immediately contacted the General Headquarters, Supreme Command for Allied Powers (GHQ). The GHQ, which wanted to keep the devastation caused by the atomic bombing a secret, initially refused to allow foreign nationals to enter Hiroshima city. Due to persistent diplomatic efforts by Dr. Junod, however, the GHQ eventually accepted his request. Dr. Junod sent 15 tonnes of medical supplies, including penicillin, dried plasma and bandages, and himself entered Hiroshima to survey the damage and treat survivors. These medicines are said to have saved more than 10,000 lives.

"My father was a man who would go to any length to rescue the wounded and victims," said Dr. Benoit Junod, his son, who attended the 2011 memorial service. Dr. Junod is said to have continued to call for the abolition of nuclear weapons even after leaving Japan. The inscription on the back of the monument reads: 'Countless cries for your help'.

“

…On August 9th, I was hit by the atomic bomb while at my home in what is today Sumiyoshi-machi and sustained injuries to the left half of my body from the blast wave of the bomb. Three days after the bombing,

I received a telegram that said "show up for aid duty" from Nagasaki Prefectural Branch of the Japanese Red Cross and I was mobilized to the Shinkozen first aid station.

I was still only a nursing student, so I aided the victims as I learned by watching from the other nurses and combat medics. One after another, victims of the bombing were carried into the three-story first-aid station, and the second and third floors filled up very fast. There were so many dead. We would put the bodies on boards and two women would carry them to the playground where men would then throw them into the backs of large trucks like they were piling up lumber. Some bodies were carried to the autopsy room.

I saw one body that was covered with maggots from the chest to the abdomen and nearly ran away, but a combat medic yelled at me, "You call yourself a rescue worker!?" which brought me back to my senses and

I powered through.…”

”

—OKA Nobuko, Atomic Bomb Survivor Representative, August 9, 2021,  
Extract from the Pledge for Peace at the 76th Nagasaki Peace Ceremony

Chapter.

II

# Nagasaki

On 9 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, following Hiroshima, and by the end of the same year approximately 74,000 people had lost their lives in Nagasaki. As in Hiroshima, treatment for Hibakusha continues today at the Red Cross Hospital and other hospitals in Nagasaki, and together with Hiroshima, Nagasaki has become a centre for the movement for a world without nuclear weapons.

Nagasaki Medical College Hospital, which at the time had a camouflage pattern on its buildings and the Red Cross mark on the roof. The interior was burnt out by the atomic bomb, which claimed the lives of many patients, staff and students.



**The atomic bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki City on August 9 caused great damage, and most of the victims were non-combatants.**

**— Mr. Wakamatsu Nagano,  
the President of the JRCNS Nagasaki Branch**

## Episode

## Suddenly the lights went out

— A message from the command post of the relief effort

"I [had] gathered everyone at the governor's office. Just as I was about to say 'Well then' [to end the meeting], Sasebo Mayor Oura arrived and I let him in. 'Hiroshima is in a lot of trouble.', he said. As I started to say, 'I was just about to start a meeting about that,' the lights went out. I went outside to take a look. In the distance, the entire Urakami area was enveloped in black smoke, and although red flames could not yet be seen, dense smoke indicated a great fire, and clouds of smoke had filled the sky above the area."

This is testimony given by Mr. Wakamatsu Nagano, the Governor of Nagasaki Prefecture and the President of the JRCNS Nagasaki Branch, at the time of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945.

Mr. Nagano, who was not directly injured by the atomic bomb because he was at the site of the Nagasaki Prefecture Defense Headquarters (Tateyama bomb shelter), which was about 2.7 km away from the epicenter of the explosion, gradually received reports of the devastation caused by the atomic bomb. In the following days, he coordinated rescue activities and requested each prefecture in the Kyushu region to dispatch a rescue team. In contrast to Hiroshima, it was fortunate that the chain of command continued to function in Nagasaki. However, the former Nagasaki Medical College Hospital, which had been used as a base for rescue operations, was destroyed except for the reinforced concrete outer enclosure, despite having a Red Cross mark on its roof. The inside of the building

was destroyed by fire, and the Hospital president, 892 staff and students, and approximately 200 patients were killed.

Seeing that most of the victims of the atomic bomb were civilians, Nagano wrote the following telegram to the headquarters of the JRCNS in Tokyo: "The atomic bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki City on August 9 caused great damage, and most of the victims were non-combatants. We urgently ask the International Red Cross for the consideration of an on-site investigation."

The most fundamental principle of the Geneva Conventions (international humanitarian law) is based on the idea that civilians should be protected from attack and those who are wounded should be rescued. The telegram did not ask for help but for an investigation into possible violations of the Geneva Conventions. Although the telegram was not sent to the headquarters of the JRCNS, in 1963 the Tokyo District Court ruled that "the dropping of atomic bombs violates international law". In 1996 the International Court of Justice of the United Nations confirmed that the use of nuclear weapons is against the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law. The telegram written by Mr. Nagano, who became the commander of relief activities in Nagasaki immediately after the atomic bombing, can be said to be a valuable, and early, message to the world regarding not only the inhumanity of nuclear weapons but also their illegality under international humanitarian law.



**I was paralyzed by the misery  
and my body began to shiver.**

**—the JRCS Saga Branch  
No.713 Rescue Team**

Medical rescue operations by the JRCS Saga Branch No. 713 Rescue Team. The nurse in the photo, Fusako Tsutsumi, fell ill after this operation and died at the age of 20.

Photo: Yosuke Yamahata (August 9, 1945/Nagasaki)

*Episode*

## Lives saved by a train delay

— The rescue trains and the Red Cross rescue teams  
running through the bombed area

Wakamatsu Nagano, then governor of Nagasaki Prefecture and the President of the JRCS Nagasaki Branch, immediately arranged the dispatch of rescue teams to restore medical functions in Nagasaki City as soon as possible. "The first thing that troubled me the most was medical aid. A systematic relief organization had been formed around Nagasaki Medical College Hospital, and more than enough medicines necessary for emergencies were prepared and stored in a reinforced concrete warehouse at the university, but that university itself was destroyed in an instant." Some prefectures sent out relief teams without waiting for a request, and numerous doctors and nurses arrived in Nagasaki to help.

The rescue trains from Japan National Railways (JNR) played a major role in accessing Nagasaki City. On August 9, the JNR train, which escaped exposure due to the fact that its arrival at Nagasaki Station had been delayed by chance, approached the vicinity of the hypocenter where the fire had not subsided 3 hours after the dropping of the atomic bomb, and started transporting the injured to hospitals located around the area at the end of the line. Within that day, 4 trains were in operation, and it is said that approximately 3,500 people were transported to medical facilities in Isahaya, Omura, Kawatana and

Haiki along Omura Bay.

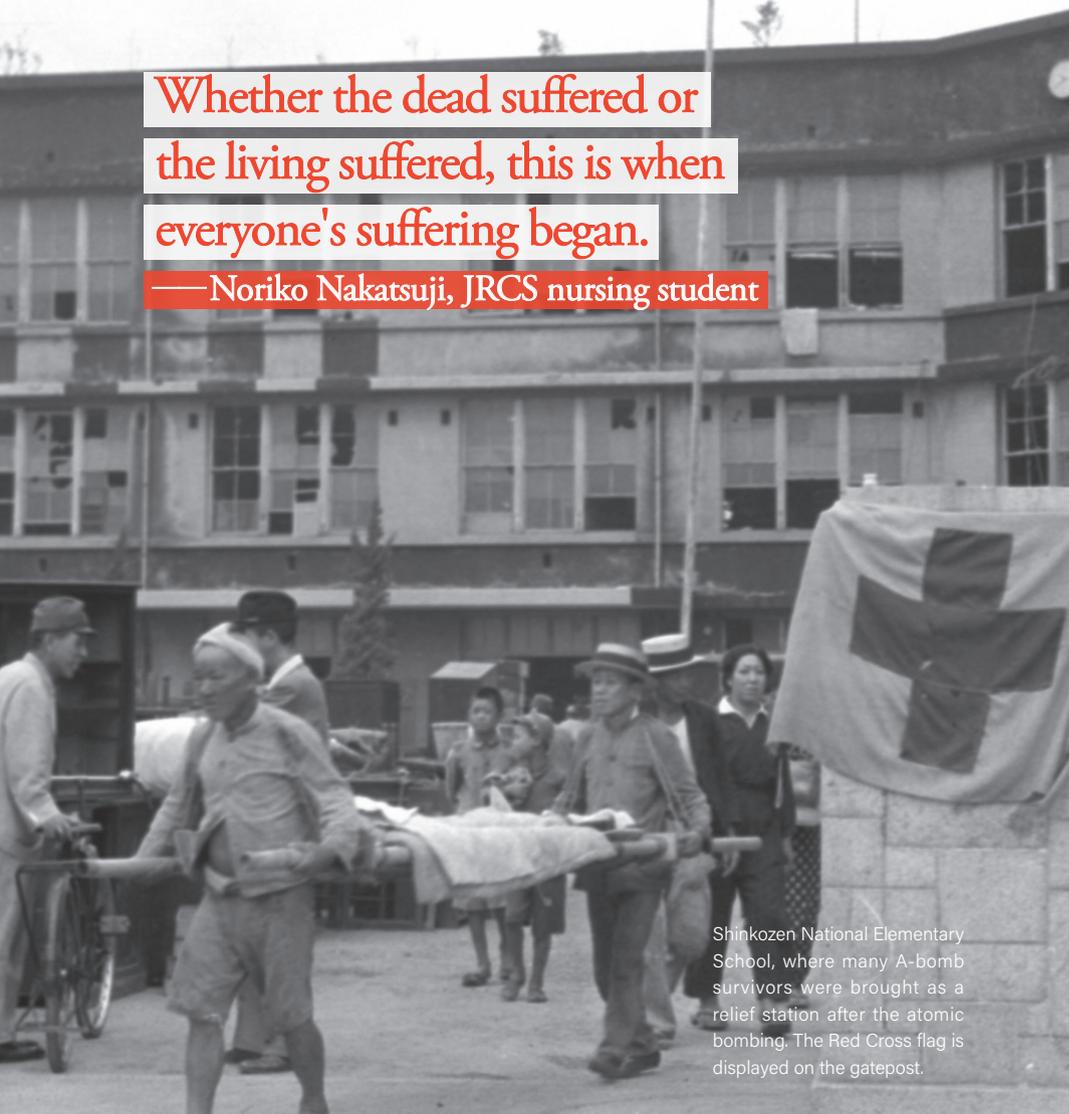
The day after the atomic bombing, the number of rescue teams from neighboring prefectures increased. One of them, the JRCS Saga Branch No.713 rescue team, dispatched from Saga Army Hospital, departed from Saga Station at midnight on August 9, and started rescue operations in front of Michinoo Station and at some other sites in Nagasaki City on August 10.

"At the temporary first-aid station in the plaza in front of Michinoo Station, many victims were sleeping on straw laid on the ground and covered with straw mats in the hot midsummer. Seeing this, I was paralyzed by the misery and my body began to shiver. Pulling myself together, I did my best to deal with treating with first aid one person after another, without having time to change my clothes."

After witnessing the misery of the atomic bombing victims (Hibakusha), the rescue nurses did not waste time changing into nursing gowns, they immediately started giving aid while still in their dark blue uniforms. The No.713 rescue team returned to Saga by train on the night of the end of the war on August 15, and wrote, "It was with great reluctance that I left the victims behind."

Whether the dead suffered or  
the living suffered, this is when  
everyone's suffering began.

—Noriko Nakatsuji, JRCS nursing student



Shinkozen National Elementary School, where many A-bomb survivors were brought as a relief station after the atomic bombing. The Red Cross flag is displayed on the gatepost.

Photo: The Asahi Shimbun Company

### Episode

## What a rescue nurse saw in Nagasaki

— When she was 20 years old

"A dead mother looked as if she were sleeping among the many patients. She was holding her baby tightly in her arms. The baby was sucking her breast and crying for milk. Whether the dead suffered or the living suffered, this is when everyone's suffering began." said Noriko Nakatsuji, then a first-year student at Osaka Japanese Red Cross Nursing School. She entered the school in April and went back to her hometown in Nagasaki, due to the escalation of the war. This memoir is about an incident she witnessed at a first aid station in the city. Many other rescue nurses also wrote about devastation in Nagasaki.

"When his mother's body was taken away in a carriage, the wounded boy could not get up and had to watch the sad figure of his mother leave him forever. When I look back on the A-bomb relief efforts, I will never forget that sad, resigned look of the boy's eyes."

(Kei Kami-Beppu)

"I remember that I stood in the corridor between the wards and the operating room, with no time to eat, sorting the many patients: 'This one to the operating room, that one to the morgue, and this one to the hospital room.' The entire hospital staff stayed up without sleep, they accommodated hundreds

of injured people at the same time and devoted themselves to relief. When I went to check on the patients in the hospital room after dawn, I found some of them were not breathing, some had their hair falling out, some had burns all over their bodies and no idea who they were, and an old naked lady had only a sheet around her waist. Everyone was speechless because we were shocked."

(Kimiyo Okubo)

"A person faced with death was in so much pain that he wanted to die quickly. He put his palms together and asked: 'Nurse, please hurry up and bring me a rug and put me on it. (In those days, when a person died, he or she was placed on a rug and carried to the morgue.) It was difficult to calm him down. I was the only one working the night shift, and I had to devote myself almost entirely to that person... It was a situation when I was not allowed to indulge in sentimentality.'" (Kazuko Hasegawa)

"In 1945, I was twenty years old and in my second year as a relief nurse at the Omura Naval Hospital... Although my memories are gloomy, I now feel nostalgic for my twenty year-old youthful self, burning with passion as I experienced the awfulness of the atomic bombing." (Yoshiko Uchida)



As we moved farther away from the defeat in the war, people's memories of the misery of the war and the pictures of the hell of the atomic bomb gradually faded away. At the same time, there were people who, unbeknown to others, agonized over the atomic bombs' after-effects. They hid their identities as atomic bombing victims in order to evade prejudice from society, and lived quietly as if they were people who had committed crimes

... these are my feelings... For those who have died and for those who are going to live, I want to talk about our war, atomic bombs and peace.



—Masae Yukinaga (ed), *The Mushroom Cloud: Memories of the Japanese Red Cross Nurses Attached to the Forces*, (translated from Japanese) Tokyo: All Publishing, 1984

Chapter.

III

# The pacific ocean

Since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons have not been used in war. Instead, nuclear tests have been conducted repeatedly. In addition to having had a serious impact on the lives of people living at the test sites and some military personnel, they have also caused extensive damage to animals and the natural environment.

The Japanese tuna fishing boat, Daigo Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon No.5) is on display in Yumenoshima Park, Koto-ku, Tokyo. On the verge of being disposed of, a newspaper speculation triggered calls for its preservation.

**We have to keep crying out about the horror of nuclear weapons.**

**—President of the Japanese Red Cross Society,  
Tadatsugu Shimazu**

*Episode*

## March 1, 1954, the 3rd flash

— Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and "Lucky Dragon No.5"

"Before dawn I saw a great flash glaring like a bright lightning bolt on the quiet sea, and the light turned the sky, sea, and boat yellow."

At 3:45 AM on March 1, 1954, Matashichi Oishi, one of the crew members of the Japanese tuna fishing boat, Daigo Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon No.5) who saw a bright flash of light in the western sky at the moment of the nuclear explosion, testifies like this. When the sun rose and it started to get light, the rain started to mix with white powder (so-called "ashes of death" such as dust from coral reefs contaminated by radioactivity) which eventually piled up on the deck like snow. That evening dizziness, headache, nausea and diarrhea attacked the crew. Before arriving at Yaizu Port in Shizuoka Prefecture on March 14, the crew members had been covered in the "ashes of death" for two weeks and forced to live on contaminated water and food. One of the crew members, Aikichi Kuboyama, the head radio operator, passed away half a year later on September 23.

Although Daigo Fukuryu Maru was about 160 kilometers away from the epicenter of the explosion, it is estimated that it was exposed to between 2000 to 3000 millisieverts. This is equivalent to the radiation dose at a point 800 meters from the hypocenter of the blast in Hiroshima. We learned how dreadful radiation was after the hydrogen bomb (about

1,000 times the size of the Hiroshima atomic bomb) exploded.

The then president of the JRCS, Tadatsugu Shimazu, wrote in his memoir: "There was always a feeling in my mind that even if all the other countries were hesitant, tired of, or opposed to crying out about the horror of nuclear weapons, Japan had to keep crying out, and only Japan had the right to cry out. To say nothing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Japanese fishing boat was also exposed to the fallout from the nuclear tests conducted in Bikini in the South Pacific in 1954. The tragic death of Aikichi Kuboyama, who was a good member of the fishing boat crew, must be kept in the memory of all Japanese people."

The death of Kuboyama led to the nationwide campaign to ban atomic and hydrogen bombs. 30 million signatures were collected and in the year following Kuboyama's exposure to radiation, the First World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima. In spite of this, between 1945 and 2013, more than 2050 nuclear tests were conducted worldwide. The tests in the Pacific Ocean have caused radioactive substances to fall into the ocean and contaminate the natural environment, as well as posing a health hazard to the inhabitants of Pacific island countries.

Tsuzuki conducts an atomic bomb survey after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. On his arm he wears a Red Cross armband.

**We must research and develop the effective treatment for the disease with empathy with the people whose hearts are full of agony.**

**— President of the Japanese Red Cross Central Hospital**

Photo: The Chugoku Shimbun Company

### Episode

## Damn that atomic bomb!

— Dr. Masao Tsuzuki who continued to fight for Hibakusha

After the Daigo Fukuryu Maru was exposed to the nuclear radiation, Masao Tsuzuki, who was the director of the JRCS Central Hospital (now the JRCS Medical Centre), was responsible for the treatment of the crew, and is known worldwide as a leading researcher on Atomic Bomb Disease.

"It's a blood infection ... The white blood cells are almost gone ... The gamma ray ... There is no way to prevent ... She will die tonight or tomorrow ... Damn that atomic bomb!"

Tsuzuki is reported to have said this when he came into contact with Hibakusha in Hiroshima. At a time when the atomic bomb was used for the first time in history and there was no known cure, Tsuzuki was the first person in the world to recognise Atomic Bomb Disease.

"A patient who said he was a victim of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima came to see me. ... He had only a slight scratch on his back and nothing unusual but was very fatigued and incapacitated. ... and I was surprised to hear that after all the tests, he had only 400 white blood cells per cubic millimeter. ... I realized that this was going to be a big problem and I decided to put all my energy into studying the illness."

He made efforts to communicate the facts about the dreadful health effects of the atomic bomb at every opportunity. However, at that time, the facts related to the atomic bomb were classified as strictly confidential matters by the Allied Occupation Forces, and his research presentation could not escape the pressure. "In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, even at this very moment while I am speaking here, many atomic bombing victims are dying one after another. Atomic Bomb Disease is a new illness that has not yet been fully understood, and there is no way to treat it unless its true nature is determined. From a humanitarian point of view, it is not permissible to prohibit the publication of research on medical issues, even though that is the order of the Allied Occupation Forces". When Daigo Fukuryu Maru was contaminated by radiation in 1954, Dr. Tsuzuki served as a doctor to treat the crew. At the International Conference in Geneva at the time, he reported the actual situation of Hibakusha to the world. Dr. Tsuzuki says, "I think we must research and develop the effective treatment for the disease with empathy with the people whose hearts are full of agony."



1. emphasizes the incalculable human suffering that can be expected to result from any use of nuclear weapons, the lack of any adequate humanitarian response capacity and the absolute imperative to prevent such use;

2. finds it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law, in particular the rules of distinction, precaution and proportionality;

3. appeals to all States:

- to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used, regardless of their views on the legality of such weapons,
- to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement, based on existing commitments and international obligations...



—Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Resolution 1: Working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons



# To the world

From the experiences of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and the nuclear tests, people gradually began to realise the devastating effects of nuclear weapons. The word 'Hibakusha' spread around the world and the inhumanity of a nuclear weapon is now a strong driving force in the global movement for a world without nuclear weapons.



**Most devastating is the psychological terror that Hibakusha must endure for the rest of their lives.**

**— Dr. Masao Tomonaga, President of the JRCS Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospital**



Dr. Tomonaga speaks at the 2011 Red Cross Conference in Geneva. He is a physician who majored in hematology and radiation injury medicine and is also an activist calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

*Episode*

## Hibakusha, they inspired me

— Towards the movement for a world without nuclear weapons

"Until then I had never heard of Hibakusha. My life changed forever when I read their stories, and showed photos and their paintings to my young students. The Hibakusha inspired me to dedicate my life to help them abolish nuclear weapons."

Kate Dewes, a music teacher in New Zealand, was first introduced to the issue of nuclear weapons when she taught the Polish composer Penderecki's piece 'a Threnody ('song of lament') for the Victims of Hiroshima' in class. At the time, radioactive fallout from nuclear tests was detected in the breast milk of a New Zealand woman, so for her the issue was not something of the past, but of the present. This is how she became involved in the peace movement and came across the idea of taking the issue of nuclear weapons to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), one of the UN bodies. The idea became a global movement, and in 1996, almost ten years after the idea was conceived, the Court finally delivered its opinion, confirming that the use of nuclear weapons is generally contrary to international humanitarian law.

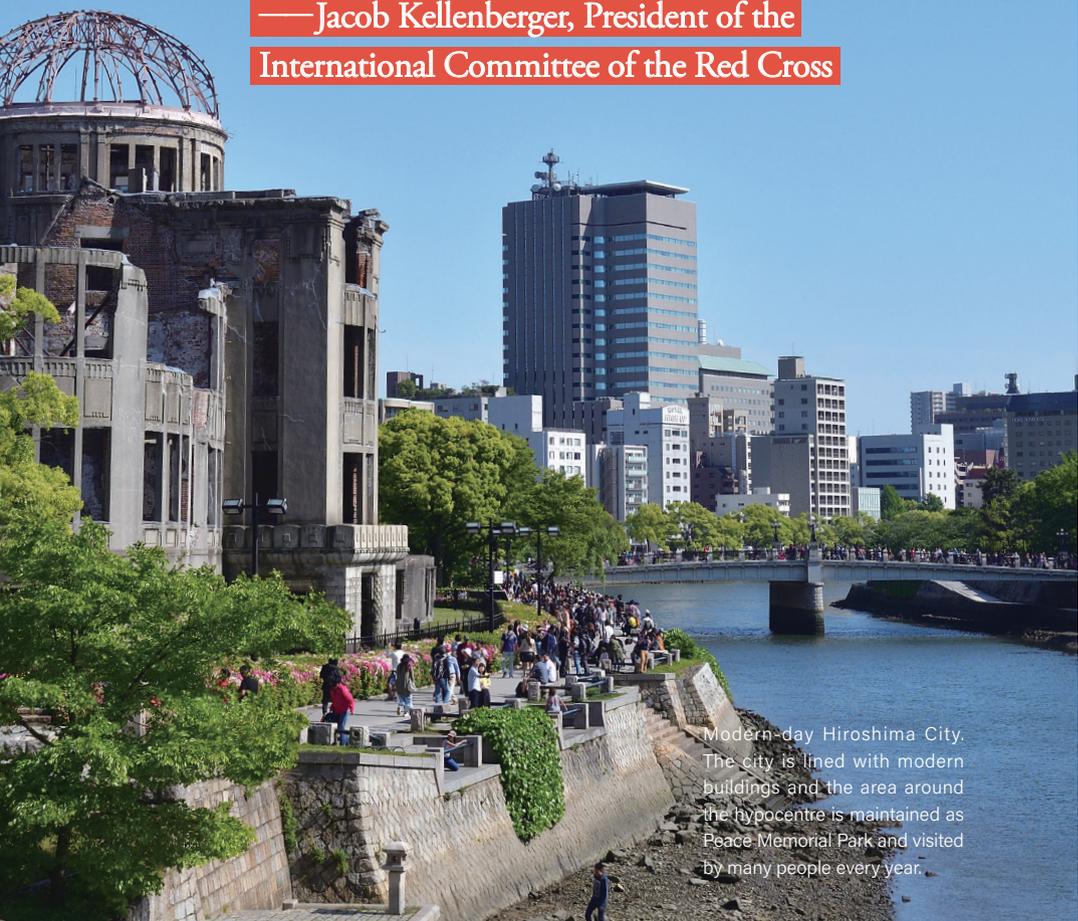
One of the judges, Judge Abdul G. Koroma from Sierra Leone, delivered the following separate opinion (summary). "According to the testimony of the Mayor of Hiroshima, the atomic bombs indiscriminately reduced all

innocent civilians to ashes... According to the testimony of the Mayor of Nagasaki, many of the survivors are suffering from aftereffects. It is clear from this that any use of nuclear weapons is contrary to international humanitarian law."

The ICJ's view has been repeatedly confirmed at Red Cross conferences, with Dr. Masao Tomonaga, President of the JRCS Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospital, stating at the Council of Delegates of International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in 2011: "I was exposed to the atomic bomb in Nagasaki as a child, but I have no memory of the time of the bombing. Later, as a haematologist, I witnessed the aftereffects of the atomic bombing and came to fully agree with the 1996 ICJ that the use of nuclear weapons is immoral and contrary to international humanitarian law... Recent studies have also shown that Hibakusha who were young at the time of the bombings are now suffering from a second wave of leukaemia as they grow older. Most devastating is the psychological terror that Hibakusha must endure for the rest of their lives". Thus, the reality of exposure gradually began to spread and be shared around the world and became the driving force behind the movement for a world without nuclear weapons.

**We must never allow ourselves  
to become morally indifferent to the  
terrifying effects of a weapon.**

**— Jacob Kellenberger, President of the  
International Committee of the Red Cross**



Modern-day Hiroshima City. The city is lined with modern buildings and the area around the hypocentre is maintained as Peace Memorial Park and visited by many people every year.

*Episode*

## No one can save the victims of nuclear weapons

— An intolerable threat to humanity

"Thousands of people lined up in a long line with their faces burned, their hair shrunken, and their noses swollen so big that people could not tell whether they were men or women. Patients should have been desperate for help. They cried 'Hurry to treat! Do something please!'. The only way to treat them was to give them injections of hemostatic agents, cardiotoxic agents, anti-inflammatory agents, and many other medicines as we had. (Testimony of the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital rescue nurse)

On August 6, 1945, immediately after the atomic bombing, 270 out of 300 doctors, 1654 out of 1700 nurses, and 127 out of 140 pharmacists died in Hiroshima. The Shima Hospital and JRCS Hiroshima Branch, which were located directly below the hypocenter, were completely destroyed. The Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital, located about 1.5 km away from there, and its stockpiled medical supplies, was devastated by fire, leaving only the exterior of the building. At the Nagasaki Medical College Hospital, which was a base for rescue operations, most of the faculty and medical students were killed immediately, even though the hospital was displaying the Red Cross emblem.

The average power of nuclear weapons in the world today is said to be capable of instantly destroying a city of one million people with a single shot. It is clear that their use would

have an indiscriminate impact, with even medical facilities and Red Cross relief workers, who should be protected by the Red Cross emblem, being indistinguishable from the target. In this regard, Jacob Kellenberger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, made the following statement in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2010. "Although nuclear weapons' potential for destructive force increased by a factor of many thousands during the Cold War, the ability of States and international agencies to assist potential victims did not. (...) We must never allow ourselves to become morally indifferent to the terrifying effects of a weapon that defies our common humanity, calls into question the most fundamental principles of international humanitarian law, and can threaten the continued existence of the human species."

This statement led the international community to take a fresh look at the horrific reality of nuclear weapons and take action to prohibit and eliminate them (humanitarian approach). The humanitarian approach opens a window on this issue, which has hitherto been covered by abstract discussions from the perspective of nuclear weapon states, such as "nuclear deterrent" and "national security". It also tells us that there is a reality we must not turn our back on before it becomes irreversible.

# Message to the next generation from the Red Cross

## Yoshiharu Otsuka

Honorary President, Japanese Red Cross Society

Many of you may wonder why the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS), known for its disaster relief, medical and blood services, is involved in the fight against nuclear weapons. Indeed, the JRCS has consistently called for the abolition of nuclear weapons since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

On August 6, 1945, the Red Cross Hospital in Hiroshima, located about 1.5 kilometers from the epicenter of the atomic bombing, was severely impacted by the blast. Miraculously, however, the outer shell of the building remained largely intact. This enabled the Red Cross in Hiroshima to signal, by raising the Red Cross flag at the hospital, that it could receive and provide care for the many atomic bomb survivors. Similarly, in Nagasaki, Red Cross teams rushed to the bombed area and provided relief for the survivors. The relation-

ship between the Red Cross and nuclear weapons – the most terrifying weapons ever invented – can be traced back to this very moment.

Japan was not the only country to suffer from nuclear weapons. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, more than 2000 nuclear weapons tests were conducted around the world, exposing the local population to the horrific and long-lasting impacts of ionizing radiation. In 1954, Daigo Fukuryu Maru (Lucky Dragon No.5), a Japanese tuna fishing boat operating in the Pacific, was exposed to radiation from one of these tests, causing major public concern in Japan. In his memoirs, Tadatsugu Shimazu, then president of the JRCS, wrote: "I strongly believe that even if all other countries hesitate, give up or oppose the abolishment of nuclear weapons, Japan must continue the fight, and indeed only Ja-

pan has the moral right to do so." —Tadatsugu Shimazu, *Under the Flag of Humanity: 35 Years with the Red Cross*, Kodansha, 1965.

This sentiment has been handed down through the years, not only in Japan, but also around the world. The Council of Delegates of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 2011 adopted the resolution "Working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons," which reiterates the Movement's call for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. The resolution is informed by: 1) the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that any use of nuclear weapons would have; 2) the lack of any adequate humanitarian response capacity to provide assistance for victims in case of use of nuclear weapons; and 3) the difficulty to envisage any use of nuclear weapons that would be compatible with international humanitarian law.

The adoption of the resolution was supported by the strong leadership of Mr. Tadateru Konoe (currently transitioning to President Emeritus of the JRCS), then president of both the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the JRCS. This resolution demonstrates that the mem-

ories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki inspire decision making – and will continue to inspire action for many generations to come.

The preamble to the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) recognizes the long-time contribution of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to the debate on the nuclear disarmament. The JRCS shall continue to strive for the abolition of nuclear weapons by taking the initiative in international discussions. At the same time, the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will leave an indelible impression on those involved in this journey, and this baton should be passed to future generations. In this respect, we believe that the Japanese Red Cross can make a unique contribution to this endeavor.



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## Dialogue on Nuclear Weapons

### —An appeal for humanity from the Red Cross

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Hiroshima Red Cross and Atomic Bomb Survivors Hospital Memorial Park

### Editor's Note

#### - The power of the words of rescuers

Unexpectedly, there were major developments on the issue of nuclear weapons during the compilation of this booklet. One was the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Another was the growing concern over the use of nuclear weapons during the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. Both are major events that will determine the future of the issue of nuclear weapons and illustrate the fact that the international community has not yet been able to settle the issue after Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In this sense, this booklet is not just a collection of records of past events, but also contains powerful words that should be passed on to future generations to face the problems that still exist today and to inspire them to never repeat this tragedy. We strongly hope that the dialogue with the words in this booklet will encourage as many people as possible to take a closer look at this issue. In producing this booklet, we have gained a great deal of knowledge from the research of Red Cross history researchers Ryuko Yoshikawa, Michiko Suzuki and Tomoko Onishi, who are also mentioned in the References. We have also great assistance from the Japanese Red Cross Language Service Volunteers (LSV) and Mr. Richard Lennane of the ICRC in translation. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them.