Statement
for the Second PrepCom for the 2020 NPT Review Conference

Yayoi Tsuchida (Fujita)
Japan Council against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Gensuikyo)

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you. Aiming to prevent nuclear war, to totally ban and eliminate nuclear weapons and to support the Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors), our organization Gensuikyo has organized grass-roots movement across Japan, the only country to have suffered the atomic bombing. We will soon commemorate the 73rd anniversary of the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These two cities were obliterated by only two atomic bombs, and 210,000 people were killed by the end of 1945. According to the survey conducted by the Hibakusha themselves, 90% of the victims were civilians. Still now, about 160,000 survivors continue to suffer from the aftereffects physically and mentally. I do hope you will learn from the testimony of the Hibakusha Michiko Kodama and the depth of inhumane damage caused by nuclear weapons.

In two years, 50 years will have passed since the NPT came into effect. During these years, many efforts have been made to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, stop nuclear arms race and to achieve complete nuclear disarmament. Most of the continents and oceans of the world have been covered by nuclear-free zones. In July 2017, two-thirds of the UN member states worked together to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. On the other hand, the nuclear weapon states have failed to make real efforts or conduct negotiations for even the reduction of nuclear armament, let alone their elimination. On the contrary, they are trying to develop low-yield nuclear weapons or to “modernize” their arsenals, and are even making operational plans and conducting military exercises with the assumption of using nuclear weapons.

The recent heightened tension over the Korean Peninsula typically demonstrates the nuclear danger the world is facing. Recalling the spirit of the UN Charter that obligates the member States to settle international disputes by peaceful means, we call on all parties concerned to immediately stop threatening by nuclear and armed force, including military exercises, not to mention nuclear and missile tests, to return to the agreement of the Six-Party Talks of September 2005 and to begin negotiations for denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and building a peace system of Northeast Asia.
The present situation also clearly demonstrates that the privileged possession of and threatening with nuclear weapons by certain countries not only poses threats to international peace and security, but serves as a driving force of nuclear proliferation. We call on all states parties to the NPT to undertake concrete “efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons”, implementing the obligations and agreements of the NPT, in particular, those of Article 6 and the NPT Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Especially, whether by nuclear-armed states or nuclear dependent states, threatening other countries with nuclear weapons is a clear violation of the UN Charter. Looking to the 2020 NPT Review Conference, the determination and planning should be clearly presented in this PrepCom to implement the “unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament”.

The “complete, verifiable and irreversible” denuclearization is not something only North Korea is required to do. In the light of all the debates and agreements in the NPT, it is what the nuclear weapon states are required to do more than anyone else.

In conclusion, I want to make one proposal. The 2015 NPT Review Conference could not come to agreement due to resistance of some states. In spite of the failure, humanitarian initiative opened the eyes of people of the world to catastrophic impact on humankind by any nuclear weapon use, and brought hope and prospects for the abolition of nuclear weapons. From this lesson, I will call on all States parties that have responsibility for security of their people and humankind to invite the Hibakusha, listen to their appeal for the survival of humanity, and undertake building up consensus agreement for achieving a world without nuclear weapons towards the 2020 NPT Review Conference.