



Statement in Commemoration of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings

On these solemn days of 6 and 9 August 2021, we commemorate the men, women and children of Japan who perished when the United States used atomic bombs against the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Tens of thousands of people were killed in the initial explosions and many more would later die or get sick from radiation. As a peace movement, we regard this first use of nuclear weapons as one of the most devastating events in history and a wake-up call for humanity.

This year, at last, nations around the world are taking concerted action to ban nuclear weapons. The tireless witness of survivors from 1945 has helped to inspire governments and civil society organizations to strive for the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which entered into force on 22 January of this year. It's truly a milestone that nuclear weapons have finally been prohibited under international law and an important step in making sure that the atrocities which have happened in Japan will never happen again.

As we remember the victims of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Pax Christi International calls upon governments to swiftly proceed with signing, ratifying, and implementing the nuclear ban treaty. 55 states have already joined it. Austria is hosting the first meeting of states parties in January of next year. The new treaty enables all countries to join in ending the catastrophic threat which has hung over the world since the atomic bombings of 1945. Concrete first steps in the treaty include assistance to victims of nuclear tests and restoring contaminated test sites.

Let this commemoration give us the strength and perseverance—together with the *Hibakusha* survivors, church leaders, peace organizations, activists, policy makers and other persons around the world — to continue our work for nuclear disarmament and for justice for those affected by nuclear tragedies since the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.