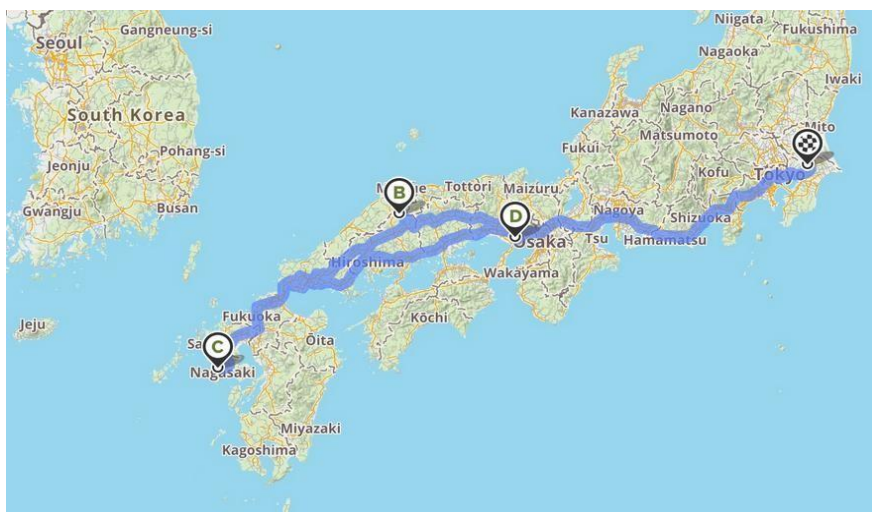


# 2019 Nuclear-Free Future Tour Narrative: Japan

Ellen Thomas, Nuri Ronaghy and Alan Shorb



## JAPAN TOUR – AUGUST 1 TO 15

### August 1-6, 2019 in Hiroshima, then on to Nagasaki, Kobe, and Camp Zama

July 31, 2019—Nuri Ronaghy, Alan Shorb, and Ellen Thomas, Members of the [WILPF US](#) Disarm/End Wars Issue Committee, left Los Angeles airport on United 32 at 11:55 am, arriving over 13 hours later at Narita Airport, Japan, August 1, at 3:10 pm, which was 5:10 am California time. After breezing through customs (there were wheelchairs waiting for them at the plane, thanks to IACE travel! A great help!), they rode an airport shuttle to a nearby hotel,



Ellen Thomas in L.A.X.



Nuri Ronaghy and Alan Shorb at Narita



Crowne Plaza Hotel lobby

### August 2 (Fri)

Early in the morning, after sampling the hotel's amazing breakfast buffet, the rested travelers took a shuttle back to Narita Airport, where they caught a 5-hour Japan Rail (*Shinkansen*) ride to Hiroshima.



There they took a taxi to Hotel Sejour Fujita, their home for the next five nights, where they gathered in the mornings with friends for a great breakfast. “The toilets can surprise you if you hit the wrong button!” - et



They had to hike several blocks to their first meeting at headquarters (Hotel Sunroute), an information session for overseas delegates chaired by Yayoi Tsuchida; they were a little late, but greeted like beloved family.



1) Alan Shorb, Nuri Ronaghy, and interpreter Mizuki NAKAMURA; 2-4) briefing of overseas delegates by Yayoi TSUCHIDA (Organizer)

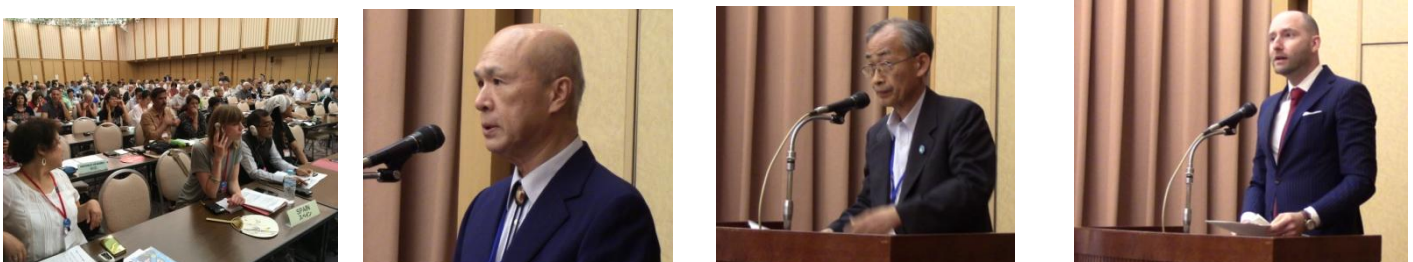
**August 3 (Sat)** (temperature 95%, 76% humidity; it's hotter every year, they were told)

In the morning they visited a hospital/nursing home for *Hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors), and then they headed for the opening of the [World Conference Against A & H Bombs](#).



Photos 1-2) Interpreter Yuki SATO translates at the nursing home. 3) Norio OKADA (Akahata) and Hiroshi TAKA (Gensuikyo Representative Director) with other staff; 4) Jun Hamamoto, Nuri Ronaghy and Alan Shorb (WILPF US), Joseph Gerson (AFSC), Emily Rubino (Peace Action NY State), Yuki SATO, Shinji YAMASAKI, and Ellen Thomas, gather for photo at the opening Plenary.

2:00 pm – At the Opening Session of the International Meeting at Hiroshima's Bunka Koryu Kaikan Hall, Conference co-organizer **Kunikazu NOGUCHI**, and **Jiro HAMASUMI**, Assistant Secretary General of Hidankyo, welcomed participants and overseas delegates on behalf of the *Hibakusha*; and **George-Wilhelm Gallhofer**, Austrian Minister overseeing European nuclear weapons, gave the [keynote speech](#).



Yayoi TSUCHIDA (Gensuikyo); 2) Kunikazu NOGUCHI (organizer); 3) [Jiro HAMASUMI](#) (Hidankyo); 4) [George-Wilhelm Gallhofer](#) (Austrian Minister)



At 3:15 pm, [Saito OSAMU](#), a doctor from Fukushima's Watari Hospital, **Takato SEIJI**, a Hiroshima survivor, **Abacca Anjain-Maddison** from the Marshall Islands; **Lee Gyu Young** from Korea; [Oleg Bodrov](#) from Russia; and **Sakamoto MEGUMI** from Fukushima University spoke about “**Damage and Suffering from A-Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Inhumanity of Nuclear Weapons; Struggle of the Hibakusha.**”



1) Dr. [Osamu SAITO](#), Fukushima 2) [Lee Koo Young](#), Korea (I) 3) [Oleg Bodrov](#), Russia 4) [Megumi SAKAMOTO](#), Fukushima

Then, from 5-7 pm, [Joseph Gerson](#) from the US, [Hannah Kemp-Welch](#) of London CND, **Kim Jinyoung** from Korea, and [Masakazu YASUI](#), Secretary General of Japan's Gensuikyo, spoke about “**Prohibition and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and Role of Citizens and Peace Movement – Tasks and Prospect for 2020, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing.**” It was proposed that the next meeting of the World Conference Against A & H Bombs be in New York City at the end of April, 2010, during the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, at which time the “Hibakusha Appeal,” a petition calling for nuclear weapons abolition that had over 10 million signatures from around the world at the time of this August 2019 conference, will be delivered to the United Nations, and antinuclear activists from Japan and around the world will come to encourage U.S. activists in their lonely endeavors, said **Hiroshi Taka** of Gensuikyo, who has great sympathy for our struggling movement.



1) [Joseph Gerson](#) (USA) 2) [Hannah Kemp-Welch](#) (UK) 3) **Kim Jinyoung**, Korea, 4&5) [Masakazu YASUI](#) & **Hiroshi TAKA** (Gensuikyo)

## **August 4 (Sunday)**

9:30-12:30 Plenary Session, International Meeting: (Ginga, 3F, Bunka Koryu Kaikan Hall)

[Rosalie Brooks](#) (Peace Action USA), [Chloe Meulewaeter](#) (Spain), [Gurrero AG Sano](#) (Philippines), [Toguchi Osamu](#) (Okinawa), and [Reiner Braun](#) (Co-President, International Peace Bureau) spoke about “**Cooperation and Solidarity for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons – with Movements for Peace and No War; Zero Nuclear Power; Environment; Human Rights and People's Living.**” Reiner Braun warned, “The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is only the first step.” There were questions from the audience.



1) [Rosalie Brooks](#) 2) [Chloe Meulewaeter](#) 3) [Gurrero AG Sano](#) 4) [Osamu TOGUCHI](#) 5) [Reiner Braun](#)



From 2-6 pm there were three workshops that echoed the themes from the morning speeches. Ellen attended Workshop II, “**Prohibition and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and Role of Citizens and Peace Movement – Tasks and Prospect for 2020, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing.**” Participants were invited to share their ideas, and [Ellen spoke briefly](#), describing her experience with vigiling (“be patient and consistent, eventually people want to know what you have to say”) and a voter initiative (“it makes people stop and think about the idea, and it’s about the only tool that makes politicians pay attention”).



1) Lee Jun Kyu, Korea



2) [Ellen Thomas](#)



3&4) Corazon Fabros & [Mercedes Angeles](#), Philippines



We feasted with Japanese friends from Kobe, and Rosalie Brooks from Maryland, who works at Peace Action.

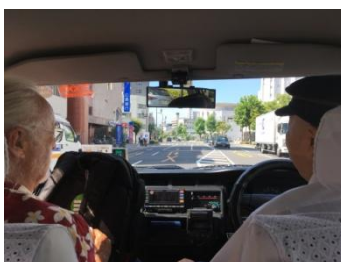


## August 5 (Monday)

Early in the morning we walked through Hiroshima to Bunka Koryu Kaikan Hall for closing plenary of Hiroshima events...



Downtown Hiroshima



Alan Shorb and taxi driver



3) Ellen films, Nuri & Alan listen



4) Jun Hamamoto





Shunichi SAITO



[Mercedes Angeles](#)



Koji TOMIDA



press

At noon on August 5, Yoko NISHIMURA drove the travelers to lunch with two Hiroshima WILPF members:



Yoko NISHIMURA,



Emiko MAGOSHI, President of  
WILPF Higashi Hiroshima,  
& Alan Shorb



Noriko TANIO, Yoko NISHIMURA,



Alan with Emiko MAGOSHI  
& and Makiko MAGOSHI (right),



Emi SUEYOSHI,  
Yumi HAGIO, Nuri Ronaghy,



Hisako KOU MEN, Hiroshima  
WILPF President, & Yoshimi  
KUMAGAI



Hostess who took the photo below:



**On August 5, from 6:30-8:30 pm, there was an exchange forum for citizens and overseas delegates at Bunka Koryu Kaikan Hall, a special occasion for the citizens of Hiroshima to interact with overseas peace workers, especially young delegates.** Panelists: Moderator **Hayato KOGA**; **Emily Rubino**, Peace Action New York, USA; **Hannah Kemp-Welch**, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, UK; **Nityalia Saulo**, DAKILA – Philippine Collective for Modern Heroism/International Youth Relay Marcher, the Philippines; **Kim Jinyoung**, Director of Policy Education, People's Solidarity for Social Progress, South Korea; and **Takae HIRONAKA**, President of Hiroshima Committee, Democratic Youth League of Japan.



1) Hayato KOGA



2) Emily Rubino



3) [HannaH Kemp-Welch](#)



4) Nityalia Saulo



*Jun Hamamoto joins photographers*



*Kim Jinyoung*



*Takae HIRONAKA*



*Authors of the A-Bomb Drawings, Graduates of Motomachi Senior High School, Hiroshima. These four young women spoke of their art project, interviewing Hibakusha and then painting their stories.*

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## August 6 (Tuesday) - “Hiroshima Day”

8-8:45 **Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony:** Children handed out flowers as we walked to [Peace Park](#), where our guides walked us past the crowds and into prime seats.



1,2&3) Kim Jinyoung, Keisuke FUSE, Emily Rubino, Jun Hamamoto, Rosalie Brooks, Alan Shorb & Joseph Essertier; 4) ceremony

[Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi MATSUI](#) and [Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe](#) made fine speeches, and the elegant Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Izumi NAKAMITSU, presented the [UN Secretary General's message](#), “...As we mark this seventy-fourth anniversary of the first use of a nuclear weapon in war, nearly 14,000 nuclear warheads exist, many still on hair-trigger alert. Much work remains to be done to lessen and ultimately remove this peril. Inspired by the resilient spirit of the people of Hiroshima, I am fully committed to working with the *hibakusha* and all others to realize our shared goal: a world free of nuclear weapons.” Two 6<sup>th</sup> graders, Tadahiro Ishibashi and Shuka Kaneda, read the [Children's Commitment to Peace](#), ending, “With our hearts and the hearts of the *hibakusha* as one, we shall bring the ideals of peace to the world.” There was commitment to carrying the stories of the *Hibakusha* into the future, when they are no longer here to tell them.

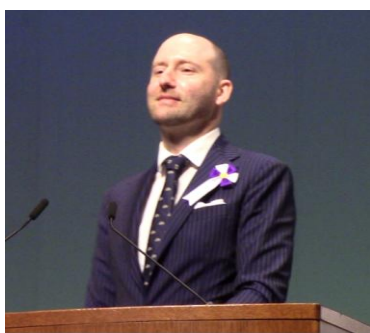
Some in our group suggested that Prime Minister Abe wasn't [speaking](#) the whole truth when he said, “The tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated. As the only country to have experienced the horror of nuclear devastation in war, Japan has a mission of persistently working to bring about ‘a world free of nuclear weapons.’” If that is the case, why does Prime Minister Abe not sign the [U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#)? We wonder.



1) Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi MATSUI, 2) Prime Minister Shinzo ABE, 3) Izumi NAKAMITSU (UN), 4) Tadahiro Ishibashi & Shuka Kaneda were official speakers at the gathering in Hiroshima Peace Park the morning of August 6, 2019, 74 years after the bombing.

## August 6 - Afternoon Rally at Hiroshima Prefectural Gymnasium

Speeches by national government representatives:



1) Yayoi TSUCHIDA, Organizer, 2) George-Wilhelm Gallhofer (Austria), 3) Maylem Rivero (Cuba)

Presentation of paper cranes and petitions:



Speeches by overseas delegates:



Akari Izumi Kvamme (Norway); [Shankar Lal Shrestha](#) (Nepal);  
& Mai OISHI (interpreter/staff)

Eum Mikyung (Korea),

[Ellen Thomas](#)  
(video on [YouTube](#))

Other Japanese Speakers



Miwa MATSUSHIGE, Akio MASAUJI, Hiroshima Mayor's deputy (left), Kunihiro SAKUMA,  
Toshiyuki MIMAKI, Nihon Hidankyo (center)

Tamiko NISHIMOTO,  
Hibakusha of Hiroshima





Mariko MORI



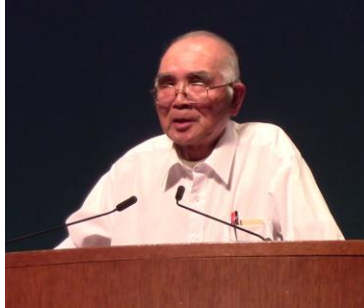
Etsuko SHOMOTO



Yoko MIYAZAWA



Akio MASAUI,  
Hiroshima mayor's deputy



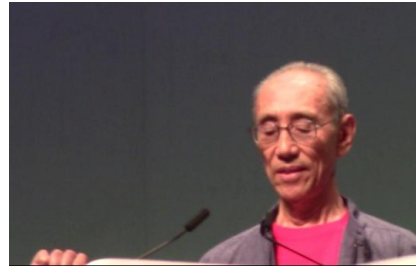
Yukio YOSHIOKA,  
Hiroshima Hidankyo



Kim Ginho,  
Hiroshima Council of Korean Hibakusha



Itsuro YAMAGUCHI,  
Peace Marcher



Shoichi TAKASAKA, Akita, Japan



Rina YAMADO,  
Motomachi High School graduate



Nguyen Thi Minh Phuong (left)  
and Bui Lien Huong (right), Vietnam



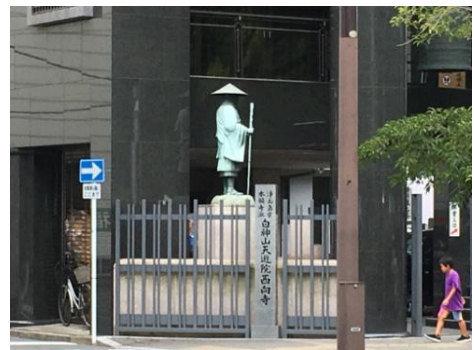
Ryo KOMARU, Hiroshima  
(who read out Hiroshima rally  
resolution)

## Photographers:





**August 6 late afternoon - Exploring before the evening candle float:**



**7:30-8:30 August 6, 2019 Lantern Floating Ceremony (Motomachi River Park), Hiroshima**





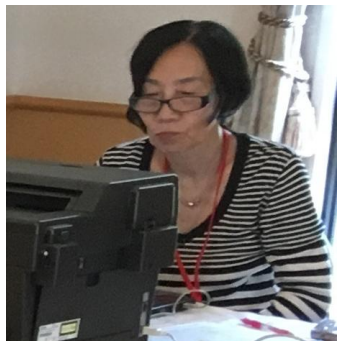
On August 7, 2019, the travelers went to Nagasaki to present [letters](#) and [petitions](#) with 7,500+ signatures to [Hidankyo](#) supporting the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons from [WILPF US](#).



**We thank our wonderful interpreters:**



*Rieko ASATO,*



*Fumiko KATAOKA,*



*Mizuki NAKAMURA,*



*Keisuke FUSE, Zenroren,*



*Yuki SATO,*



*Mai OISHI,*



*Emiko HIRANO,  
Shinfujin*



*Lee Jun Kyu, Korea,*



*Akiyo KANAMORI.*

**And thanks for the joyous songs of hope:**



