

Don't Oppose a Biden Administration's Declaration of No First Use and Sole Purpose

An open letter from Japanese organizations and individuals requesting that the leaders of the Japanese ruling and opposition parties not oppose the Biden administration's declaration of no first use/ sole purpose

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[Unofficial translation from the Japanese original by Masa Takubo]

On August 9, the 76th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki, 21 U.S. nuclear experts, including former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and five organizations, including the Federation of American Scientists (FAS), Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), and the grassroots anti-nuclear peace group Peace Action, sent an open letter to you - the leaders of Japanese political parties - urging you not to oppose a Biden administration's declaration of no first use and sole purpose.

The letter begins by pointing out about the declaration that the Biden administration is expected to consider adopting as follows

The Biden administration will consider declaring in the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), to be completed in January 2022, that in order to reduce the risk of nuclear war, the United States will not use nuclear weapons first/that the sole purpose of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter and, if necessary, retaliate against nuclear attacks against the United States itself, U.S. forces abroad, or its allies.

The letter notes that Biden, as vice president of the Obama administration and as a presidential candidate, has said he would support such a no-first-use, sole-purpose declaration. It says that such a unilateral "declaration by the United States would not affect our security arrangements with our allies - including extended nuclear deterrence against nuclear attack on these countries" and asks you to:

- Make it clear that you will not oppose a Biden administration's declaration of a no-first-use, sole-purpose policy.
- Assure that such a policy will not increase the likelihood of Japan becoming a nuclear power.

The reason why experts from the U.S., the country that dropped the atomic bombs, are making such a request to the leaders of the political parties of Japan, the "A-bombed nation," which is not only a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but also has adopted the "three non-nuclear principles" as its national policy, is that Japan has taken the position since at least 1982 that the threat of U.S. nuclear retaliation is necessary to deter attacks by weapons other than nuclear weapons.

One of the reasons is that there is a view in the U.S. that Japan, which has reprocessing and uranium enrichment technologies and possesses a large amount of plutonium, is the country with the highest capability to develop nuclear weapons among the countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. In fact, when the Obama administration was considering a no-first-use declaration, it was reported that one

of the main reasons for abandoning the declaration was the concern that Japan might go nuclear if Japan's opposition was ignored.

Since Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato and Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Mogi spoke out against a no-first-use declaration in April this year, there are fears that this time, too, "the possibility of Japan going nuclear" will be an actual concern or used as an excuse to insist on abandoning the declaration.

The letter says, it would be "tragic if Japan were to block this small - but important - step toward nuclear abolition as a result"

If the declaration is abandoned again because of Japan's opposition, many people in Japan will be surprised and angry, saying, "Can't Japan support a declaration by the U.S. that it will not use nuclear weapons first?", "Is the abandonment of the declaration due to concerns about Japan going nuclear?"

We, the undersigned, like the U.S. experts, urge you, as Prime Minister or as leaders of other political parties, to make clear that you do not oppose the Biden administration's declaration of a no-first-use, sole-purpose policy, and to assure that such a policy will not increase the likelihood of a nuclear-armed Japan. We request that you make it clear that you do not oppose the declaration of this policy and assure us that such a policy will not increase the possibility of Japan becoming a nuclear power.

Endorsers of the open letter

Lead organizations:

- Global Citizens for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons Nagasaki Rally Executive Committee (Chairman: Masao Tomonaga)
- Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (HANWA) (Co-Chair: Haruko Moritaki)
- Citizens' Nuclear Information Center (Executive Director: Hajime Matsukubo)
- Peace Depot (Yosuke Watanabe)
- Japan Pugwash Conferences (Representative: Tomohiro Inagaki)

Lead Individuals

- Hiromichi Umebayashi (Special Advisor, Peace Depot. PNND Coordinator for North East Asia)
- Michiji Konuma (Professor Emeritus, Keio University)
- Tatsujiro Suzuki (Professor, Nagasaki University)
- Takao Takahara (Professor, Meiji Gakuin University)
- Keiko Nakamura (Associate Professor, Nagasaki University)

Other endorsing organizations

- Japan Lawyers Association for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (Kenichi Okubo, Chairman)
- Japan Congress Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs (Co-Chair Koichi Kawano)
- Japan YWCA (President: Satoko Fujitani)
- FoE Japan (Representative Director Herten Randall Allan)
- Chernobyl Hibakusha Relief Kansai (Representative: Kazuko Yamashina, Nagasaki Hibakusha)
- Earth Rescue Action 97 (Representative: Minako Inaoka)
- ANT-Hiroshima (Tomoko Watanabe, President)
- Fumin Women's Democratic Club (co-chair Eiko Kataoka)

- Forum for Peace, Human Rights and the Environment (co-chair Yasunari Fujimoto, co-chair Kazuhiro Katsushima)
- Peace Boat (Co-Chairman: Akira Kawasaki)
- Campaign Against Hibakusha (Representative: Noboru Tatebe)
- Hiroshima Prefecture Council of Atomic Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Acting Chairman Toshiyuki Mimaki)*
- Nagasaki Council of Atomic Bomb Survivors (Chairman: Shigemitsu Tanaka)
- Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors Association (Chairman: Tamashii Honda)
- Nagasaki Prefecture Hibakusha Pocketbook Friendship Association (Chairman: Masao Tomonaga)
- Nagasaki Prefecture Association Official Atomic bomb Survivor Certificate Holders (Chairman: Naoto Nagata)
- Nagasaki Prefecture Peace Movement Center Hibakusha Liaison Council (Chairman: Koichi Kawano)

Other endorsing Individuals

- Jusen Asuka (Professor, Tohoku University)
- Prof. Kouki Abe (School of International Studies, Meiji Gakuin University)
- Nobuyasu Abe (Senior Advisor, Council on Strategic Risks)
- Ikuro Anzai (Professor Emeritus, Ritsumeikan University)
- Tetsuya Iida (Director, Institute for Sustainable Energy Policies)
- Koichi Ishizaka (Adjunct Lecturer, Rikkyo University)
- Kazuo Ishiwatari (Chairman, Peace Committee, Soka Gakkai)
- Kenji Urata (Professor Emeritus, Waseda University; Vice President, International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms)
- Akari Endo (1st year student of the Master's Program of the Graduate School of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University)
- Ken'ichi Oshima (Professor, Ryukoku University)
- Masaaki Gabe (President, Okinawa Foreign Affairs Study Group)
- Satoshi Kamata (Reportage writer)
- Kimiaki Kawai (Secretary, Japan NGO Liaison Committee for Nuclear Weapons Abolition)
- Kazuyuki Kawamura (Former member of the Shinjuku Ward Assembly, former sponsor of the National Grassroots Network of Non-Nuclear Local Authorities)
- KINOSHITA Koh (Deputy Secretary General, All Japan Federation of Civil Medicine)
- Shoji Kihara (Representative of the Hiroshima Citizens' Association, which wants no nuclear power plants)
- Akira Kimura (Professor Emeritus, Kagoshima University)
- Shin'ichiro Kumagai (Editor-in-Chief, Sekai (world) magazine World)
- Yasuyoshi Komizo (Peace Storyteller)
- Kunihiro Sakuma (President, Hiroshima Prefecture Council of Atomic Bomb Sufferers Organizations)*
- Kazue Sadamori (Convener, "No More Hibakusha, No More Nuclear Weapons")
- Sayo Saruta (President, New Diplomacy Initiative (ND), Attorney at Law)
- Osamu Shiohama (Executive Director, World Federation Movement Association)
- Motoko Shuto (Professor Emeritus, University of Tsukuba)
- Tatsuo Sekiguchi (Former reporter, Nagasaki Broadcasting System)
- Hiroko Takahashi (Nara University, Faculty Member)
- Yuta Takahashi (Co-Chairman, KNOW NUKES TOKYO)
- Masafumi Takubo (Operator of the website Kakujoho (Nuclear Information))
- Kyoko Tanaka (Secretariat, Japan Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms)
- Hiromitsu TOYOSAKI (Photojournalist)
- Masayoshi Naito (Lawyer)
- Koichi Hasegawa (Specially Appointed Professor, Shokei Gakuin University; Professor Emeritus, Tohoku University)
- Katsumi Furitsu (Doctor)
- Jun Hoshikawa (Writer, Translator)
- Tetsuo Maeda (Journalist)

- Toshiaki Mashimo (French nuclear policy researcher)
- Kazumi Mizumoto (Professor, Hiroshima Peace Institute, Hiroshima City University)
- Kanna Mitsuta (Acting Chairperson of the Atomic Energy Citizens Commission)
- Yuki Miyamoto (DePaul University)
- Kazuyo YAMANE (Senior Advisor, International Network of Museums for Peace)
- Midori WATANABE (Education Assistant, International Peace Research Institute, Meiji Gakuin University)