

# WIN WITHOUT WAR



## Progressive Foreign Policy Debrief

*Intel for Advocacy*

DATE: 8/5/2020

SL: 75 years later, nuclear survivors are #StillHere

### The Takeaway:

- 75 years ago this week, the U.S. used nuclear weapons on the populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, killing hundreds of thousands, and leaving many more to suffer.
- Many of the survivors of these atrocities – and of the long, devastating history of nuclear weapons, both before and after the bombings – are #StillHere.
- We join them in their urgent appeal: “Never again do we want such tragedies to be repeated.” We demand a nuclear weapon-free world.

## 75 Years On, Nuclear Survivors Are #StillHere and Fighting for a Nuclear Weapon-Free World



75 years ago this week, at 8:16 am local time on August 6, the United States dropped a nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. An estimated 70,000 people were instantly killed. Three days later,

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40,000 more were added to that nightmarish toll when the United States dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki. All told, hundreds of thousands of lives were lost.

## **These Are the Survivors**

Many who survived the bombings — known as the *hibakusha* — have endured a lifetime of trauma and suffering. They were not the first to bear the deadly costs of nuclear weapons, nor would they be the last. From the Downwinders who lived near testing and production sites in Utah, New Mexico, and Washington, to the people of the Marshall Islands who endured 12 years of U.S. nuclear testing, to the military veterans sent to clean nuclear waste, to the workers made to mine Uranium, often on Indigenous land, with little knowledge of the risks, the survivors of nuclear weapons are many. They are [#StillHere](#). They are fighting. And they have stories to tell.

## **These Are Their Stories** (*Trigger warning for descriptions of violence*)

### [Reiko Yamada – Hibakusha](#)

“Even 64 years after the bombing, we survivors still vividly remember those who desperately cried for help: their cries and memories are not gone; we are still tormented with remorse that we could not help them. Many of us also are suffering from the after-effects of radiation and from the fear of death. I sincerely hope that people all over the world understand how a single atomic bomb could destroy a city and kill a large number of people indiscriminately and cruelly. We Hibakusha call the atomic bombs ‘weapons of the devil’. We cannot allow even a single bomb to exist on this planet.”

### [Michimasa \(Michi\) Hirata - Hibakusha](#)

“August 6, 1945 is a special day for me as if it were my second birthday. On that day at the age of nine, I was A-bombed in the living room of my house located about 1.2 miles away from the epicenter in Hiroshima. All of sudden brilliant flash hit above my head. It changed the city of Hiroshima thoroughly. The scene that developed afterwards was beyond description and just like a hell on the earth... nuclear weapons are inhuman and indiscriminate weapons quite different from the ordinary weapons. I dedicate my life and time appealing for nuclear abolition to those who do not know about the A-bomb, especially to the young generation.”

### [Unnamed Trinity Test Downwinder](#)

“On the morning of July 16, 1945... at the age of 11, I was helping my father fill the radiator of his truck with water... I heard a very large blast and saw a very big flash of light... I watched this cloud of dirt, smoke, debris for many hours... This filth landed all over our town, covered our village with radiation. It was on our roofs, our gardens, milk cows, pigs, turkeys, and chickens. Our water was contaminated... everything we consumed was filled with radiation. At the age of 63, I became ill with cancer. I’ve lost my brother, my nephew, and a niece to cancer. Two sisters were cancer survivors.”

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## [Lani Kramer – Marshall Islander](#)

“In February of 1946, the US military asked the people of Bikini if they could use their land ‘for the good of mankind.’ The people of Bikini didn’t know what that meant, but they were scared of these powerful people... So on March 7, 1946, the 167 islanders, including my grandmother, took all their belongings and their houses and canoes, and boarded the big navy ship to settle on Rongerik... within 2 months the people were starving... On March 1st, 1954, on Bikini Atoll, the Bravo test, was the largest hydrogen bomb ever exploded by the United States. It was 1000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima... 4 hours after the blast, white powder came down on the people of Rongelap, the children played in it, the island was covered in 2 inches of fallout. Soon, the people became sick, their hair fell out, their skin was burned, they were itchy, nauseas, throwing up... To this day, the people have not returned to Bikini as the land is still not safe to live on, the food not safe to eat... My grandmother passed away on January 3rd, 2018... Her dream of going back to Bikini was only a dream.”

## [Beata Tsosie-Peña - Los Alamos National Laboratory Downwinder](#)

“This holy place, that carries countless generations of prayers and memory for life, has been existing with the forced occupation of Los Alamos National Laboratories in the western portion of our Tewa Heaven since the beginning of the Manhattan Project in 1943... The Indigenous and land-based Peoples of NM were the first ‘unwilling and unknowing’ victims of a nuclear blast, followed by the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This act of violence, and the thousands of nuclear tests that followed, is now recorded in the spiral of time of humanity, in the very mountains and stone that bear witness to the ongoing harm that we know is happening, but is not prioritized due to scientific and systemic racism. I mourn daily, even while rejoicing in the life I am given each day, for the many impacts from the nuclear age.”

[Read these stories in full, and more nuclear weapon survivor stories, here](#)

## **We Can Choose a Nuclear Weapon-Free World**

Producing nuclear weapons at the cost of Downwinders’ lives was a choice. Testing them on the people of the Marshall Islands was a choice. Dropping them on Japanese civilians, in a gross and [unnecessary](#) crime of war, was a choice. Maintaining one of the world’s largest nuclear arsenals, and systematically tearing down the protections against their use, are choices.

We can choose another path. As we remember the mass suffering caused by nuclear weapons – suffering that reached a horrific new scale 75 years ago, but didn’t begin or end then – we urge you to imagine a nuclear weapon-free world, and to join the survivors that are #StillHere in fighting for it. [Add your name](#) to the “Hibakusha Appeal” for a nuclear weapon-free world here.

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**More Senseless Loss in Beirut**

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Despite much baseless speculation, the explosion that wracked Beirut earlier this week was not nuclear. Nor, it seems, was it intentional. But it does appear to have been the result of gross government incompetence and criminal [negligence](#). The resulting mushroom cloud and human devastation are an echo of past bombings the world over and a somber reminder of systems that too often treat the lives of everyday people as expendable. As we keep Beirut in our thoughts, consider [donating](#) to Impact Lebanon. You can also find more resources and fundraisers [here](#).

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## Steps Toward a Nuclear Weapon-Free World

We may yet be far from a nuclear weapon-free world, but there are policies we can change *right now* that can bring us closer to it.

- **No New Nuclear Testing** – Last month, the House [passed](#) its version of the FY 2021 NDAA, including an amendment by Rep. McAdams that would block funding for nuclear weapons testing, which Trump has dangerously vowed to restart. Now, the House and Senate are reconciling their versions in committee. Will the testing ban make the cut?
  - **New START** – New START – a U.S.-Russia agreement limiting nuclear warhead stockpiles – is set to expire this year. Already, Trump has [shown](#) an unwillingness to extend the critical treaty. We must fight to ensure these protections remain.
  - **Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the JCPOA** – Our best chance at creating a nuclear weapon-free world is through diplomacy. It was diplomacy that brought us the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or Iran nuclear deal, until Trump unilaterally abrogated it. It is diplomacy that will bring us back in. And it is diplomacy that will contain what may be Saudi Arabian [steps](#) toward nuclear weapon capabilities.
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## BURIED LEDES

New reporting indicates that **Elliott Abrams has been [selected](#) to succeed Brian Hook as the State Department's special envoy to Iran... yes, [THAT](#), Elliott Abrams. Help us all.**

**This year's monsoon season has left up to a third of Bangladesh [under water](#).** Your weekly reminder that the climate crisis is already here, and it is hitting the most vulnerable hardest.

Curious how attacks on democracy seem to pass under the radar when they benefit the right wing: **Ecuador's [IMF-aligned](#) Moreno government has [suspended](#) the party of popular Left-wing former President Rafael Correa...**

... meanwhile, **thousands of Bolivians have [taken to the streets](#) in protests of the coup government's decision to postpone elections.**

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**"Nostalgia for the Bush years dismisses the trauma the Muslim community has experienced since 9/11" [writes](#) Women's Action for New Directions Scoville Fellow Sumaya Malas.**

**Make no mistake: apartheid kills. COVID-19 cases are [surging](#) in the occupied West Bank.**

**Tired of only hearing about Afghanistan from the perspective of "experts" in the United States? This [series](#) from South Asian Voices gives a platform for Afghans to speak about their future for themselves.**

**We continue to #StandWithKashmir: Indian authorities [deployed](#) a police and military to the streets of Kashmir, hoping to preempt protests on the anniversary of the revocation of the region's semi-autonomy.**

**And finally, microbes found buried on the ocean's surface are [reported](#) to have come back to life after lying dormant for almost 101.5 million years. 101.5 million years to choose from and you wake up in 2020?**