

# Remarks

by

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Remarks at *Hibakusha Stories* Reception and Concert:  
Passing the Legacy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Future Generations

United Nations  
3 May 2010

Ambassador Suda [H.E. Mr. Akio Suda, Ambassador of Japan to the CD], distinguished visitors and guests—welcome all of you to the United Nations.

We are here this evening for a very special event. We are here to recognize an enlightened initiative called *Hibakusha Stories*, to educate young students of New York City about both the tragic effects of nuclear weapons and the opportunities that exist for building a world free of such weapons—opportunities that provide a basis for hope for a better future, a safer world for ourselves and for future generations.

Writing in his *Outline of History*—which was published in 1920—H. G. Wells once warned that “Human history become more and more a race between education and catastrophe.” The *Hibakusha Stories* initiative offers an approach for winning this race, by studying—in a unique way—the nuclear attacks at Hiroshima and Nagasaki so that we can find ways to ensure that no such attack will ever again occur.

While volumes upon volumes have been written about the medical and environmental effects of nuclear weapons, who can better comment on what it was like to survive a nuclear attack than an actual survivor of such an attack? Without doubt, the words of the *hibakusha* help us not only to understand the past—they can also inspire us in charting our common future.

As time goes by, memories will fade about the horrors endured by the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from those attacks. The population of *hibakusha* is also declining, as some continue to perish as a result of the long-term effects of the injuries suffered 65 years ago.

It is therefore especially important for young people to hear the words of the *hibakusha*. They put a very human face on a problem that may seem quite remote from the concerns of everyday life in our current age—an age in which various media have even sought to exploit nuclear warfare as a fitting subject of entertainment, rather than for enlightenment and reform.

On 6 August this year, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will be first Secretary-General in UN history to participate personally in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony. He will do so in a world environment that is witnessing an outpouring of support for new efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament—efforts by national leaders, former statesmen, international commissions, and countless non-governmental organizations worldwide.

I very much welcome the contribution that *Hibakusha Stories* is making to this global common effort. This is truly an enlightened initiative and I am proud to recognize it this evening at the UN, where it is surely at home in the family of nations.