

Nur Moghbel Follow-up Report on Hiroshima Youth Exchange Program

What I learned from this exchange program was that until visiting the city of Hiroshima and listening to some of the living survivors, understanding the tragedy that occurred to its fullest extent would be nearly impossible. I was overwhelmed by the artifacts kept in the Peace Museum, especially the shadow of a person left on a sidewalk. My personal view of how possessing nuclear weapons is dangerous has intensified as a result of all the experiences that the program provided to the youth.

I think the topic of nuclear disarmament should become an ethical issue to discuss internationally. Should nuclear weapons be used as a defense mechanism in the case of an unforeseen attack? Is it possible to keep track of all the weapons in the entire world, or is non-proliferation the only reasonable option for now? Most of the world has seen how nuclear bombs damaged the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki almost 70 years ago, and yet, some countries believe that having these kinds of weapons is necessary for their own security. Soon enough, neighboring countries may be threatened by the other having nuclear weapons, which would lead to production of even more weapons. Nuclear non-proliferation would be a safe option for the future, but there may again be a threat from the countries holding weapons and defense would be limited. The pros and cons of nuclear weapon usage need to be discussed, and hopefully a unanimous answer will be found.

Since it is very difficult to start the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in such a short time, the best decision for now is providing education to younger generations. History classes are usually taught at middle school or high school levels, and are sometimes subjective in the course topics, and may intentionally leave out certain parts of important history. There are millions of children around the globe that have not learned about the World Wars, meaning that they do not know how much harm is caused by all weapons. If these children are taught these lessons at an earlier age, a change in conduct of the use of nuclear weapons may happen in the next few decades to come. Older children can form groups specifically for discussing the topic of nuclear use, such as in Model United Nations. They can also help in speeding up the change with their own knowledge and experience. Having patience and hope is the key to a more peaceful future.