

President Obama Visits Hiroshima

NYT WORLD

President [Obama visited Hiroshima](#), Japan, on Friday, making a brief but historic visit that he hopes will bolster an important ally and remind the world of the dangers of nuclear weapons.

He visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and signed the guest book. He also laid a wreath at the cenotaph in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, which commemorates the victims of the atomic bomb the United States dropped there in 1945.

7:35 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 16:35:59 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Motoko Rich

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN



Tears and Memories: A View From the Crowd



Tomoko Miyoshi, who said she lost 10 relatives in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, watched President Obama's speech on her phone. Credit Motoko Rich/The New York Times Alongside President Obama's motorcade route as he concluded his remarks inside the peace park, thousands of people waited in the hope they would see him, many watching the ceremony on their cellphones.

Tomoko Miyoshi, 50, wept as she watched the president's speech on her phone.

"I am simply grateful for his visit," said Ms. Miyoshi, who lost 10 relatives in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

On Thursday, she visited the graves of her great-grandmother and great-grandfather, both of whom died within a week of the bombing. "I told them, President Obama is coming to visit," she said.

As Mr. Obama laid the wreath at the cenotaph, Ms. Miyoshi put her hands together in prayer and bowed.

Nearby, Rio Monzen, 20, a college junior majoring in international relations, said his grandfather was a bomb survivor.

“He always kept saying, ‘I hate that the United States has done such an awful thing,’ ” Mr. Monzen said.

He said that he was disappointed the president would not be offering an apology for the bombing but that he was still grateful for the visit.

He said he hoped that the occasion would prompt Americans who thought dropping the atomic bomb was justified to reconsider. “I hope that sometime in the future, they will start to realize that this was not the right thing,” he said.

7:25 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 16:25:05 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

South Korean Survivors Hail Small Breakthrough

Photo



South Korean survivors of the atomic bombing and their supporters offering prayers at the monument for Korean victims at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park ahead of President’s Obama’s visit on Friday. Credit Shuji Kajiyama/Associated Press

South Korean survivors who traveled to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park for President Obama’s visit said they were pleased that he recognized [their suffering](#) in his speech and hailed it as a minor breakthrough.

Shim Jin-tae, who led a small group of South Korean survivors to Hiroshima, said by telephone that they were disappointed that Mr. Obama did not issue an apology but that they felt their trip had not been wasted.

“In his speech, President Obama at least recognized that Koreans were killed in the bombing,” Mr. Shim said. “Now, the world knows that Koreans, too, were killed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”

The South Korean survivors visited the memorial park on Friday to pay tribute at a monument dedicated to an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Koreans killed when the atomic bombs fell on the two Japanese cities in 1945. None were invited to attend Mr. Obama’s speech or meet him afterward.

But Mr. Shim said the president’s decision to publicly acknowledge Korean deaths in the atomic bombings was a step forward for the families of South Korean victims and survivors who have campaigned for decades for recognition and aid.

At the beginning of his remarks, Mr. Obama said, “We come to mourn the dead, including over 100,000 Japanese men, women and children, thousands of Koreans, a dozen Americans held prisoner.”

In South Korea, the news media highlighted the statement as well as Mr. Obama’s decision not to pay tribute at the monument for the Korean victims.

The Foreign Ministry here said in a statement that it was “significant” that Mr. Obama recognized Korean victims in his “historic speech.”

“We appreciate the fact that the sitting president of the United States for the first time mentioned the Korean victims and offered condolences for them at the site of the Hiroshima atomic bombing,” the statement said.

Mr. Shim said that he found it “regrettable” that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan did not mention the Korean victims in his remarks. “It says a lot about his attitude about Japan’s wartime history,” Mr. Shim said.

7:10 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 16:10:37 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

‘Hiroshima Teaches This Truth’

PLAY VIDEO 2:09

Photo: Carlos Barria/Reuters; Video: By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial on Friday, President Obama called for a nuclear “moral revolution.” Here are excerpts from [his speech](#).

Science allows us to communicate across the seas and fly above the clouds, to cure disease and understand the cosmos, but those same discoveries can be turned into ever more efficient killing machines.

The wars of the modern age teach us this truth. Hiroshima teaches this truth. Technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us. The scientific revolution that led to the splitting of an atom requires a moral revolution as well.

That is why we come to this place. We stand here in the middle of this city and force ourselves to imagine the moment the bomb fell. We force ourselves to feel the dread of children confused by what they see. We listen to a silent cry. We remember all the innocents killed across the arc of that terrible war and the wars that came before and the wars that would follow.

Mere words cannot give voice to such suffering. But we have a shared responsibility to look directly into the eye of history and ask what we must do differently to curb such suffering again.

Someday, the voices of the hibakusha will no longer be with us to bear witness. But the memory of the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, must never fade. That memory allows us to fight complacency. It fuels our moral imagination. It allows us to change.

He concluded his remarks:

Those who died, they are like us. Ordinary people understand this, I think. They do not want more war. They would rather that the wonder of science be focused on improving life and not eliminating it. When the choices made by nations, when the choices made by leaders, reflect this simple wisdom, then the lesson of Hiroshima is done.

The world was forever changed here, but today the children of this city will go through their day in peace. What a precious thing that is. It is worth protecting, and then extending to every child. That is a future we can choose, a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are known not as the dawn of atomic warfare but as the start of our own moral awakening.

6:58 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 15:58:12 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Motoko Rich

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

‘They Will All Be Moved’



Terumi Tanaka, secretary general of a survivors' group, said that President Obama had given a "wonderful" speech. "I think if the survivors read the text of his speech they will all be moved," he said. [Credit Eugene Hoshiko/Associated Press](#)

President Obama's [speech in Hiroshima](#) is getting positive reviews from some of the survivors of the atomic blasts.

Terumi Tanaka, 84, secretary general of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations, which represents survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, said that he wished the president had spent more time touring the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and speaking with survivors.

But he said that Mr. Obama gave a "wonderful" speech. "I think if the survivors read the text of his speech they will all be moved," he said.

Mr. Tanaka said he regretted that Mr. Obama had not been able to make more progress toward a nuclear-free world.

"He hasn't been able to realize the speech he made in Prague, so I wonder how much he will be able to realize what he said here in Hiroshima in the future," he said. "We want to support and encourage him with what he said he was going to do today."

6:47 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 15:47:49 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Jonathan Soble

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

Hug From a President for Survivor Who Unearthed Fate of American P.O.W.s



Shigeaki Mori, a survivor. According to his research, 12 American prisoners of war perished in the attack. [Credit Johannes Eisele/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images](#)

After his speech here, President Obama exchanged an emotional embrace with Shigeaki Mori, 79, a bomb survivor who spent decades after the war researching the fates of American prisoners of war who were killed when the city was bombed.

I interviewed Mr. Mori this week at his home in Hiroshima. He told me how he was walking to school when the bomb exploded, knocking him off a bridge and into a small, shallow river. He was lucky: The river protected him from the firestorm that followed. He remembered searching for food and water in the ensuing days but finding piles of charred bodies instead.

“Their mouths were open, because people had tried to identify them by their tooth fillings,” he said.

When he grew up, Mr. Mori worked at a brokerage house and, later, a piano manufacturer. “But I’d always wanted to be a historian,” he said.

He spent his weekends researching the aftermath of the bombing, double-checking official histories with contemporary newspaper reports and his own interviews with survivors.

“There were so many mistakes in the histories,” he said.

One day, a university professor gave him a list of a names he had found in a government archive. They were Americans, airmen who had been shot down in raids over the area and had been held in a detention center in the city. Their deaths had gone unrecognized: Both governments kept their presence in Hiroshima quiet after the war.

Mr. Mori interviewed residents who had seen the downed planes. He scoured American phone books he found at libraries, looking for people who might have been family members of the crewmen. “I made calls for three years before I found anyone,” he said.

Eventually, in the 1970s, declassified American documents backed up his findings. The name of the first airman was added to the peace memorial in Hiroshima in 2004; an additional 11 were added five years later.

On Friday, Mr. Mori was one of two bomb survivors who spoke briefly with Mr. Obama after his speech. The men shook hands. Mr. Mori had tears in his eyes. The president gave him a hug, which Mr. Mori returned.

“It was emotional,” Mr. Mori told television reporters afterward. “I don’t even remember what I said.”

6:05 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 15:05:24 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

... And He’s Gone



President Obama boarding Air Force One at the Marine Corps air station in Iwakuni, Japan, after visiting Hiroshima. Credit Carolyn Kaster/Associated Press

About 6:38 p.m. local time, Mr. Obama boarded the presidential helicopter, Marine One, and left Hiroshima.

The entire history-making visit lasted about an hour and 45 minutes.

Mr. Obama then flew back to the Marine air station at Iwakuni, where he changed to Air Force One for the trip to Washington.

5:58 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:58:44 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Javier Hernandez

And Patrick Boehler

China Presses for Commemoration of Nanjing Massacre

The Chinese government suggested on Friday that the atrocities committed by Japan on Chinese soil during World War II deserved more attention than the bombing of Hiroshima.

Chinese scholars estimate that Japanese troops killed up to 300,000 people when they occupied the city of Nanjing in 1937. Japanese historians generally give a lower toll, but all sources acknowledge it to have been at least tens of thousands.

“Hiroshima deserves attention, but even more so, we shouldn’t forget Nanjing,” said Wang Yi, the foreign minister. “Victims deserve sympathy, but inflictors should never shirk their responsibilities.”

PLAY VIDEO 00:16

Photo: CCTV, via Reuters; Video: By REUTERS

Chinese leaders have long pressed Japan to apologize for its actions during World War II, which has caused tensions between the two countries for decades.

In a major speech last year, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe offered “eternal, sincere condolences” for the dead, but Chinese commentators said his remarks were insincere and insufficient.

Mr. Wang, who once served as China's ambassador to Japan, made the statement when asked for comment on President Obama's visit, according to Chinese state television.

The state news agency Xinhua [wrote](#) on Friday that Japan had a "covert agenda" in hosting President Obama in Hiroshima. "The Japanese government is trying to use the historic visit to highlight Japan's image of a 'war victim' while downplaying its role as an aggressor in WWII," Xinhua wrote.

"No matter what wishful thinking Washington and Tokyo are engaging in, Obama's Hiroshima visit should not be used as an occasion to whitewash Japan's atrocities," it concluded.

5:51 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:51:15 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

'We Have Known the Agony of War'

President Obama signed the guest book at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. According to his aides, he wrote:

"We have known the agony of war. Let us now find the courage, together, to spread peace, and pursue a world without nuclear weapons."

5:50 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:50:30 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Gardiner Harris

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

Obama Calls for 'Courage' to Pursue World Without Nuclear Weapons



President Obama in Hiroshima. "Technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us," he said in his speech on Friday. Credit Doug Mills/The New York Times

President Obama told an audience including survivors of the atomic bombing 71 years ago here that technology often outruns the human ability to manage that progress.

“Technological progress without an equivalent progress in human institutions can doom us,” he said, adding that such technology “requires a moral revolution as well.”

In an emotional moment after his speech, Mr. Obama shook hands and embraced the survivors of an attack that ushered in the nuclear age and exposed humanity to risks that Mr. Obama says the world must do far more to resolve.

The first of those survivors, Sunao Tsuboi, a chairman of the Hiroshima branch of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations, gripped Mr. Obama’s hand and would not let the president go until he had spoken to him for some time.

For weeks, the White House would not say whether Mr. Obama would meet survivors. Many survivors want an apology for an event that destroyed just about everyone and everything they knew. Mr. Obama said that he would not apologize for the attack and did not in his brief speech at the Peace Memorial Park here.

In his speech, Mr. Obama said that the bombing of Hiroshima demonstrated that “mankind possessed the means to destroy itself.”

But he said that in the decades since the bombing, world institutions had grown up to help prevent a recurrence. Still, nations like the United States continue to possess thousands of nuclear weapons. And that must change, he said.

“We must have the courage to escape the logic of fear and pursue a world without them,” he said. He added: “We may not realize this goal in my lifetime. But persistent effort can roll back the possibility of catastrophe.”

Mr. Obama said that he would not apologize for the bombing of Hiroshima by the United States in 1945, and those in countries that were brutalized by imperial Japan warned that such an apology would be inappropriate. He not only did not apologize, but he also made clear that Japan, despite a highly advanced culture, was to blame for the war, which “grew out of the same base instinct for domination or conquest that had caused conflicts among the simplest tribes.”

Speaking after Mr. Obama, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan said, “This tragedy must not be allowed to occur again.”

“We are determined to realize a world free of nuclear weapons,” he said.

Mr. Obama’s visit had all the pomp, ceremony and planned choreography of a state visit. With thousands in attendance and much of Japan watching on TV, Mr. Obama, alone, walked forward at the park and laid a wreath on a white pyramid. He paused before the memorial’s cenotaph, his head bowed.

A moment later, Mr. Abe approached with his own wreath, which he put beside Mr. Obama's on another pyramid. After a moment of reflection, the leaders shook hands, a signal of the extraordinary alliance their nations had forged from the ashes of war.

Mr. Obama's decision to visit Hiroshima was in part intended to reward Mr. Abe for Mr. Abe's efforts to improve ties and forge a closer military relationship between their countries. Mr. Obama also saw the visit as a testament to mankind's ability to move past even the most intense of enmities.

The visit, under consideration since the first days of Mr. Obama's presidency, could send ripples across Asia, a region still grappling with the echoes of World War II. Leaders in China and South Korea worry that Mr. Obama's visit to Japan's deepest wound could be taken by the Japanese as an endpoint to their country's fitful efforts to come to grips with their own wartime atrocities.

But with a reclusive government in North Korea furiously building more nuclear weapons and trying to perfect the missiles to deliver them, Mr. Obama decided that reminding the world why North Korea must be stopped was worth any hurt feelings among other countries.

A short inscription on the park's memorial arch reads, in part, "We shall not repeat the evil." Which evil — the bombing or the conflict itself — and who is to blame are left unsaid.

5:41 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:41:08 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Nuclear Arms Cuts Slowed Under Obama, Report Says

A new census of the American nuclear arsenal shows that the Obama administration dismantled fewer warheads last year than in any year since taking office and that it has reduced the nuclear stockpile less than any other post-Cold War presidency.

The numbers, released by the Pentagon, did not appear to be linked to President Obama's visit to Hiroshima. But the new figures underlined the striking gap between Mr. Obama's soaring vision of a world without nuclear arms and the tough geopolitical and bureaucratic realities of actually getting rid of those weapons.

Read the full article [here](#).

5:27 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:27:37 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

President Greet Survivors at Ceremony



President Obama greeting survivors of the Hiroshima attack after his speech on Friday. Credit Doug Mills/The New York Times

After his speech, President Obama spoke and shook hands with several survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

He first shook hands with Sunao Tsuboi, who was a 20-year-old student at the Hiroshima Vocational School when the bomb fell. He was on his way to college the morning of the bombing.

Mr. Tsuboi, a chairman of the Hiroshima branch of the Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations, gripped Mr. Obama's hand and would not let go until he had spoken to him for some time.

(Before the visit, Mr. Tsuboi spoke with Motoko Rich, the Tokyo bureau chief of The Times. You can watch the interview [here](#).)

Mr. Obama then spoke with Shigeaki Mori, 79, who spent decades working to ensure the recognition of 12 American prisoners of war who were killed in the attack. Mr. Obama gave him a hug.

Among the other survivors attending the ceremony were Tsugio Ito, 81, who survived the Hiroshima bombing, married and raised two children only to see his oldest son, Kazushige, die at the World Trade Center during the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Mr. Ito is a peace activist who has participated in several 9/11 commemorations at the United States Embassy in Tokyo.

Another was Yorie Kano, 73, who was 2 when the bomb struck. Her parents were Japanese-Americans who had moved back to Japan before the war. Ms. Kano, an American citizen, now lives in California.

5:07 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:07:27 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Obama Calls for ‘Moral Awakening’ in Nuclear Warfare



[The White House](#)

"We are not bound ... to repeat the mistakes of the past. We can learn. We can choose." —@POTUS speaks at Hiroshima.

[6:04 PM - 27 May 2016](#)

President Obama has just finished speaking at the memorial, concluding his remarks with a call for “a future in which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not known as the dawn of atomic warfare, but as the start of our own moral awakening.”

We will publish a full transcript of his speech here shortly.

5:06 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 14:06:43 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

At Peace Park, Korean Survivors Call for Apology

At Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, a small group of South Korean survivors paid tribute at a monument dedicated to Korean victims of the 1945 atomic bombings, as seen below in footage posted on YouTube by Yonhap News TV, a South Korean outlet.

In a news conference, they called on President Obama to offer an apology to the Korean victims, and they distributed to reporters a letter addressed to the president. Some 40,000 to 50,000 Koreans were killed in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, most of them forced laborers or people who had fled deprivation in Korea, then a colony of Japan.

“As the whole world knows, the United States, fully aware of the horrific crime it was about to commit against humanity, developed the first nuclear bomb and dropped it on innocent people,” the letter to Mr. Obama said. “Even now, we cannot suppress our outrage at the inhumane nature of the United States’ action, not just aimed at soldiers or military facilities but an indiscriminate decimation of civilians, men and women, young and old, on their way to work.”



4:55 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:55:52 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Memories of the Atomic Survivors



Shigemitsu Tanaka, the director of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors' Council, at his home in Nagasaki, Japan, this month. Credit Adam Dean for The New York Times

Shigemitsu Tanaka was almost 5 and playing under a persimmon tree when the bomb fell on Nagasaki, Japan, on Aug. 9, 1945. He heard a huge thunderclap, and the sky went completely white. All the windows in his family's home were blown out.

Mr. Tanaka's parents suffered from repeated illnesses throughout their lives. His father died from liver cancer 12 years after the bombing.

"Of course we have a feeling of wanting an apology," said Mr. Tanaka, 75, director of the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Survivors' Council. "But the most important thing is to abolish nuclear weapons."

He said he hoped President Obama would sit down and listen to the aging survivors. "If he does not listen to them now, in 10 years, he can never listen to them," Mr. Tanaka said.

The New York Times interviewed and photographed several of the remaining survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki [here](#).

4:49 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:49:22 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

North Korea Condemns U.S. and Japanese Motives in Visit

North Korea has denounced President Obama's visit to Hiroshima, calling it "the height of hypocrisy and impudence."

In a commentary dated on Thursday, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said that the visit was driven by Washington's desire to draw Japan into its strategy of pivoting to Asia and by Japan's own efforts to bolster its image as a victim in World War II, rather than an aggressor.

The commentary said that the United States and Japan were pursuing "different purposes" in Mr. Obama's visit, "prompted by their mean political calculation."

It also accused the United States of modernizing its nuclear weapons "under the spurious mask of building a 'world without nuclear weapons,'" while highlighting the nuclear threat from North Korea.

"This is the height of hypocrisy and impudence," it said. "Obama's trip to the A-bombed city would not help hide the true colors of the U.S. as a country of nuclear war maniacs."

4:46 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:46:37 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Obama Signs Guest Book and Lays Wreath at Peace Memorial



President Obama and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan took part in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial on Friday. Credit Doug Mills/The New York Times

President Obama visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, a somewhat controversial site because of its emphasis on Japanese victimhood with little reference to its role as a wartime aggressor.

He also signed the guest book and laid a wreath at the cenotaph in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The monument commemorates the victims of the atomic bomb the United States dropped there in 1945.

4:34 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:34:48 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Patrick Boehler

From the Archives: No Regrets From Enola Gay's Crew



Paul W. Tibbets Jr., second from left, piloted the Enola Gay. Theodore J. van Kirk, third from left, was the navigator. Credit Sygma

In interviews with The New York Times in 1995 for the [50th anniversary of the bombing](#) of Hiroshima, crew members of the Enola Gay, which carried out the mission, were unapologetic.

“No. 1, there is no morality in warfare — forget it,” said Paul W. Tibbets Jr., the commander and pilot of the Enola Gay. “No. 2, when you’re fighting a war to win, you use every means at your disposal to do it.”

4:21 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:21:55 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

Unsung Heroes of the Korean Survivors



Kim Il-jo, 88, a South Korean survivor, showing a photograph of herself wearing a bus attendant's uniform at a studio in Hiroshima in 1944. Credit: Jean Chung for The New York Times

I spent the past week interviewing [Korean survivors of the atomic blast in Hiroshima](#) who have been fighting for recognition and support. In our conversations, they often mentioned three remarkable South Koreans as unsung heroes.

In 1970, a time when it was difficult for South Koreans to get a passport, **Sohn Jin-du** stowed away on a ship bound for Japan. Once there, Mr. Sohn declared that he was a survivor of the atomic bombing in Hiroshima and demanded the medical care and other benefits that Japan at the time reserved only for Japanese survivors. He was the first South Korean survivor to do so.

After an eight-year legal battle, backed by some Japanese civic groups, Mr. Sohn won a court ruling in 1978 that the medical benefits should be given to all survivors regardless of nationality. But Japan insisted that it would provide benefits to foreign survivors on its soil.

It took an additional 20 years before another Hiroshima survivor named **Kwak Gui-hoon** began a new legal battle in Japan in 1998. Four years later, he won a ruling that said that Japan must provide relief to all survivors no matter where they lived.

Many survivors worry that their exposure to radiation caused genetic defects that they passed down to their children. But these children, known here as second-generation survivors, were not eligible for medical benefits. Instead, they usually concealed their family background because of the stigma in Korean society, while the illnesses they believed they inherited often left them jobless and poor.

That began to change in 2002 when a man named **Kim Hyong-ryul** held a news conference. Mr. Kim, whose mother was a Hiroshima survivor, was born with a rare disease and campaigned for benefits for the second generation until he died in 2005 at 34. The advocacy group he established now counts 1,300 second-generation survivors as members.

4:21 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:21:22 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

Motoko Rich

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

Lining the Streets, Waiting for the President



People waited for the motorcade carrying President Obama to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park on Friday. Credit Doug Mills/The New York Times

Hundreds of people lined Peace Boulevard in front of the entrance to the peace park where President Obama will arrive shortly. Families, schoolchildren, bomb survivors, a Buddhist monk and office workers have been standing in the 80-plus-degree weather, some for hours, in the hopes of getting a glimpse of Mr. Obama. Some expressed gratitude to the president for being the first to visit their city while in office, and many people were following the broadcast of the visit on their cellphones.

“Even if all he does is come here, that is enough,” said Jitsuo Mizuta, 84, a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing. “I am so happy. I don’t need any apology or anything.”

Three high school seniors stopped on their way home from school to watch for Mr. Obama. “Some people say he has to apologize, but I don’t think he has to apologize,” said Tamami Kato, 17. “Japan was an aggressor, too. The U.S. is the one that stopped Japan from killing more people from other countries.”

Her friend Yukio Fujihara, 18, said she was concerned that the pacifism that has been in place since the end of the war may be eroding. “I am worried that it will become like the prewar period,” she said.

Gyoshin Izumi, a Buddhist monk from a temple on Futabaya Mountain, said he had come to pray for the safety of the president and the security officers guarding him. He stood by the side of the boulevard, reciting prayers and banging on a hand drum.

4:15 AM ET May 27, 2016 Fri May 27 2016 13:15:30 GMT+0900 (東京 (標準時))

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN

A Message From the Granddaughter of a Hiroshima Survivor

In response to [our request](#) that readers share their suggestions for President Obama's speech on Friday, we received this note from a young reader in Japan. It has been lightly edited.

I am 16 years old, live in Hiroshima and am third-generation *hibakusha*.

I think President Obama should say and promise that all nuclear weapons in the world should be abolished. I know he wants to make a nuclear-free world, but sadly he decided to spend \$1 trillion on the modernization of nuclear weapons.

On Aug. 6, 1945, 80,000 people were killed instantly. And now, it is said that if one nuclear weapon is used, two billion people will be affected by the bombing, even if it was a mistake.

We live in different countries, but on the same tiny planet named Earth. We must not destroy it or each other. As we are all citizens on this tiny planet, we need to work together, hand in hand, to make a peaceful world, without nuclear weapons.

Thank you. From a Hiroshima high school student.

Runa Imamur