

Address by Ms. Socorro Gomes, chair of the World Peace Council, pronounced at Nagasaki on the occasion of the passage of the 65th anniversary of the nuclear bombings by the United States of America (USA) against the Japanese people.

*Ladies and gentlemen,
Sisters and brothers,*

65 years ago an unforgettable landmark tragedy befell the city of Nagasaki and the people of Japan – similarly affecting the whole of humanity–, when a genocide nuclear blast was conducted by the United States. It was the first and only time that a country ever used a nuclear weapon to attack another country. This dreadful event, an unspeakable crime against humanity, which took place just as the peoples had defeated fascism and nurtured legitimate and well-founded hopes in a world of peace, a new historic era would ensue– that of the cold war, nuclear blackmail and the arms race.

The horror awakened by the criminal action of the United States imperialism by exploding the atomic bomb over Japan transformed itself into protest, inconformity, consciousness and struggle. In response to the criminal action clamor for peace and nuclear disarmament grew across the world. The broad and far-reaching movement for peace that ensued originated the World Peace Council, in 1949-1950. The World Peace Council (WPC) first appeared waving the banner of nuclear disarmament. At the very moment of its creation, the WPC launched the Stockholm Appeal, which is still impressively up to date. That document, which famously traveled the world collecting the signatures of 600 million people, stated clearly and simply:

“We demand an absolute ban on nuclear weapons, which are aimed at aggression and the mass extermination of people.

We demand the establishment of rigorous international control to ensure the application of such ban.

We believe that the first government to make use of the nuclear weapon, no matter against which country, would commit a crime against humankind and should be treated as a war criminal.

We call on all people of goodwill in the world to sign this appeal.”

Even today, 60 years later, the Appeal inspires the World Peace Council and resonates in our actions. We deem it of the utmost importance that hundreds of social organizations engaged in the movement for peace and international solidarity around the world mobilized in the struggle *against militarization, military bases, imperialism, and aggressive alliances by imperialist powers, such as NATO, and nuclear weapons. Last year and in the current year, many were the activities organized by the World Peace Council and other solidarity movements, organizations and networks.*

In May this year the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was held. Once more the United States imperialism

and other nuclear powers took advantage of the occasion to further press the denuclearized countries in an attempt to make the additional protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty mandatory and to obstruct efforts towards disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. At the same time, these same powers, in violation of aspects of the Treaty they claim to stand for, exert an intolerable veto against other countries' access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

This year the United States and Russia announced a bilateral strategic arms reduction agreement, arguably the most significant in the past 20 years, whereby they pledge to reduce over a seven-year timeline the number of strategic warheads to 1,550. Yet what is observed is that the agreement is of a merely symbolic value, linked to the role of these two countries' bilateral relations in the geopolitical setting and means nothing in terms of reducing the threat of world destruction.

As a demonstration that the announced reduction of warheads is not by any means connected with peace efforts, an announcement was made over the last days regarding the development of project "Conventional Prompt Global Strike", a new weapon to be mounted on a long-range missile capable of crossing the atmosphere at a speed several times higher than the speed of sound and capable thus of striking any place in the planet, launched from US ground, in less than an hour. The justification is the maintenance of the so-called dissuasion power, even with a reduced nuclear arsenal.

The planet's greatest nuclear power has just announced its new defense strategy and a few weeks ago the US organized an international conference on nuclear security in Washington with the purpose of fighting "nuclear terrorism" and keeping terrorist networks from acquiring atomic bomb production and handling capacity.

Amid the disarmament rhetoric, the United States once again proclaims its right to use nuclear weapons in circumstances it shall classify as "extreme", to "defend vital American interests or those of its allies". And yet again the superpower refused to declare that it will not be the first to use nuclear armament.

Sisters and brothers, ladies and gentlemen,

As we hold these events in Japan, 65 years from the explosion of the nuclear arms in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the world is neither more safe, nor more peaceful, stable and democratic.

The military and nuclear power of our times, the United States of America, undergoing an unheard-of process of economic decadence, social crisis and disputed hegemony, renews and intensifies strategic plans of world domination to whose execution it has already made it clear it will not relinquish the use of force.

Since the inauguration of the new Administration run by Mr. Barack Obama, a new rhetoric is disseminated. The White House and the Department of State

have adopted for propaganda purposes a rhetoric including such terms as peace, multilateralism and international law.

But practice gradually reveals that such words in the American discourse are empty and keep no relation with the concepts of relations between sovereign countries and international law that inspired the creation of the United Nations system in the immediate post- Second World War period..

In addition to moving forward with the wars against Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States is conducting a policy hinged on blackmail and threats against Iran and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, with the adoption of sanctions and the concrete preparation of an environment conducive to a military intervention.

The militarization of the planet continues with increased military spending, the adoption by NATO of a new strategic concept, the construction of bases in every continent, sea and ocean.

In the Middle East, US imperialism continues to give the upper hand to Israel, which has taken its expansionist and extermination policy against the Palestinian people to extremes.

In Latin America, where a wealth of experiences in democratic, popular and patriotic mobilization is taking place, with many electoral wins by the progressive forces and advances in revolutionary and anti-imperialist processes, US imperialism intensifies its interventionist policy, by setting up military bases, conducting maneuvers, reactivating the 4th Fleet, backing coups d'état and now by sponsoring provocations by Colombia, a country ruled by a reactionary regime, against Bolivarian Venezuela.

Sisters and brothers, ladies and gentlemen,

65 years from the nuclear genocide promoted by the United States imperialism in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, an occasion on which we honor the martyrs with deeply felt respect, it is our duty, on behalf of life, so neglected by an imperialist superpower that does not stop at any crime when it comes to imposing its petty interests, we wave the great banner of unity of the peoples, solidarity struggle against aggressions, defense of national sovereignty and the rights of the peoples, so that imperialist wars and nuclear genocides do not happen again, peace may prevail and humanity may reach higher stages of civilization.