

Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War Initial Report

May 6, 2006

“Global Article 9 Conference” Organising Committee Secretariat

The “Global Article 9 Conference to Abolish War” was held at Makuhari Messe over 4-6 May 2008. Participants numbered 12,000 for the Day 1 Plenary Session, and 6,500 for the symposiums and workshops on Day 2. Furthermore, due to a full house there were 3,000 people unable to enter on Day 1, and 500 on Day 2. Amongst these were over 150 international participants from over 31 countries around the world.

The summary of discussions held during the second day's symposiums and workshops are as follows. These are initial reports by the coordinators and groups organising each event, and the secretariat holds responsibility for all text.

Reports in further detail will be publicised through the official Global Article 9 Conference website, <<http://whynot9.jp>>.

Symposium 1: “World Conflicts and Nonviolence: Mainstreaming the Nonviolent Approach”

Nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution through direct experiences in the field in conflict areas were studied in this session, highlighting both the potential and challenges of nonviolence. Prevention was affirmed as the most important factor in this approach. For prevention and to eradicate the causes of conflict, the international community's intervention before hostility escalates into conflict, for example through directing international funds towards human security, implementing peace education including teaching about the mechanisms of conflict and war, and early warning and response. Furthermore, the nonviolent approach has an even more decisive role when a conflict erupts. The citizens of Kenya and particularly women, were able to calm the conflict after a year's election through actions such as creating a space for dialogue amongst the critical situation, include mediators from the international community, and spreading messages of dialogue and peace through the media. In all aspects of these nonviolent approaches, Article 9 provides a moral and a vision. That Article 9 is not only for Japan and that it must not be changed, was asserted.

Symposium 2: “Realising the Spirit of Article 9 in Asia”

This symposium debated what is necessary to utilise the pacifism of Japan's Constitution for the future peace of the Asia Pacific region. In order to realise the principles raised by Article 9, a recognition must be shared with the surrounding region. It is particularly important to understand Article 9 in relation to issues of historical recognition and the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. For example, mainland Japan has enjoyed the benefits of “peace” while imposing 75% of US military bases upon Okinawa. The relationship of Korea and Japan is also asymmetric in regards to US bases. If such contradictions can be overcome, then Article 9 could become the foundation for shared security in the Asia Pacific region. When the EU was integrated, “the rule of law”, “democracy” and “human rights” became common values. To create a framework such as the EU for the Asia Pacific region, we would like to make the value of peace as a human right, as in Japan's Constitution, a value shared by the entire region.

Symposium 3: Women's Power of Building Peace”

At the opening, Cora Weiss emphasised the meaning of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. 8 women from 5 different countries reported about the influence of conflict and militarisation on women, and the contribution of women to peacebuilding; coordinated by Akibayashi Kozue. Ann Wright (US) spoke of the US military and sexual violence, Ellen Woodsworth (Canada) of the women's peace

movement in Canada, Florence Mpaayei (Kenya) of the influence of armed conflict on women in Africa and the peacebuilding efforts of women, Jung Gyong-lan (Korea) of the Korean women's movement in opposition to conflict in both Northeast Asia and the world, Takasato Suzuyo (Okinawa/Japan) of US military violence against Okinawan women, Nishino Rumiko regarding the international women's movement towards the resolution of the "comfort women" issue, Takada Kimiko (Japan) of women's activities opposing Japan becoming a country which wages war. Finally, each woman gave a comment regarding what women can do to create peace, and proposed for a cease to war and all forms of violence.

Symposium 4: "Linking Environment and Peace"

Two moderators with gender balance facilitated very lively and diverse discussions with three guest speakers from Ecuador, US and Japan on the premise of questioning not only Pax Americana, but also Pax Economica. Unless we break free from the mindset that assumes "development" as panacea bringing wealth and happiness, problems of the next phase will not be solved. Renewable energies including solar, wind and geothermal can provide all the world energy demand tens of times over, and world-wide greenhouse gas emission cut by 50% by 2010 without nuclear power is achievable. Japan with Article 9 must withdraw from nuclear power generation and Plutonium recycling which have no inherent safeguard against nuclear weapons application. Because issues of environment and energy are basically questions of democracy and self-governance, we can learn a lot from Native American democratic tradition of Iroquois Confederacy and on-going practice of grass-roots democracy in Cotakachi, Ecuador. Article 9 will only be put to full use when abnormal condition that US-Japan Security Treaty actually stands superior to Japanese Constitution is normalized. Let us step forward to a new age of "Pax Ecologica" by radically reviewing the US-Japan Security Treaty in 2010!

Symposium 5: "The Nuclear Age and Article 9"

63 years have passed since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the world is still burdened with 27,000 nuclear arsenals. In this symposium pioneers in the nuclear disarmament field, including a *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivor), came together as panelists and discussed the connection between the nuclear issue and Article 9.

The panel started with Mr Asai's speech, where he insisted that the 21st Century is not the nuclear age, but rather, the age of denuclearization. That one of the main keys to escape from nuclear dependency lies not only in focusing on nuclear weapons, but also on nuclear energy, and to seek for alternatives resources such as sustainable energy, was also discussed. Active learning through audio and visual materials such as using the bee bee pellets and the screening of a short film stimulated people's imaginations regarding the threat nuclear weapons pose to the world today. A statement made by *hibakusha* Mr Yoshida that "Article 9 is a sign of the strong will not to seek revenge" was positively received by the audience.

Article 9 itself is based on the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, the issues of Article 9 and nuclear abolition cannot be separated. Japan is the only country which has experienced nuclear bombing during wartime, and possesses the unique Article 9. Therefore, it is extremely important that Japan becomes a pioneer of nuclear abolition. Spreading Article 9 will contribute to nuclear nonproliferation, and encourage the nuclear weapon states to give up their nuclear arsenals.

Symposium 6: "The Crisis and Future of Article 9"

Who is trying to get rid of Article 9? It is the US, it is Japanese politicians protected by the influence and power of the US, and economists who have only eyes for the fruits of capitalism. As Japan now becomes weaker and loses its confidence, the authorities are calling for constitutional amendment. The inflammatory media is practicing self-censorship, and a weak civil society ingratiate itself to whatever is stronger. The argument for amendment, based upon the "logic of power"= masculinity where whatever is stronger wins, is like Viagra increasing the weakening, fading power of the state. The

current reality of Japan, including growing economic disparity and the high suicide rate, demonstrates that this was a wrong prescription.

What is necessary is the consciousness that sovereignty lies with ourselves. A shift of values to realise that “strong/big = happiness” is not true. Creativity, and making use of this creativity. Peace education (of course in schools, and also community education led by NGOs etc).

If you go one step outside this Global Conference, the majority of people are still cold towards the movement to protect the constitution. It is important to spread the movement. If Article 9 were lost, Japan could become the killing side in a conflict area; and for a world embroiled in conflict Article 9 is something we must subscribe to. We must use the confidence that has been built for a new “power”, and create a world with the goal of Article 9.

Panel Discussion: “Globalization: Towards Development or More Wars?”

Economic globalization increases disparities and inequities among the people of the world and speeds up the degradation of our environment. Sustained by the international financial system and institutions such as (World Bank and the IMF), globalization benefits the powerful corporations that plunder developing countries of their resources and make money without any respecting for human rights. Military forces are used to maintain this situation of social injustice. Foreign (mostly US) military bases, as well as, mobile armed forces presence throughout the globe prevent peoples to voice and act for their rights and freedom. Rich countries still spend far more for their defence than they do to promote 'human security' in the world. A shift in our spending priorities and security policies is necessary.

There is an urgent need to counterbalance the rule the United States and their allies impose on our world. Therefore, civil society needs to strengthen its mobilization and to channel its efforts in the same direction, which is the building of a peaceful world.

The call for an immediate moratorium on the trade and production of all small arms and light weapons should be reiterated. Increased pressure should be made as well on our governments towards the adoption of the Model nuclear weapons convention.

Special Forum 1: GPPAC Asia Pacific Conflict Prevention Forum

Delegates from the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), the world-wide civil society network that works on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, representing South Asia, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and West Africa, reported on challenges and solutions of their work in their respective regions. A particular focus was places on the role and potential of Article 9 further then the Japanese borders, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and civil society.

Historical and regional contexts were detailed in each regional report, however all delegates underlined the importance of transforming the emphasis from reaction to prevention; instead of responding to conflict to preventing them to become violent. The importance of building and utilizing on international individuals, civil society organizations and networks to achieve national and regional peacebuilding goals were highlighted.

Concrete proposals were drafted, including ensuring the participation of civil society organizations in the activities and process of the PBC, and obliging PBC focus countries to incorporate an “Article 9” in their constitutions, especially while Japan still is the Chair of the commission. It was also noted that Japan, instead of amending Article 9 to be able to join in peacekeeping missions, should take a leading role in advancing peacebuilding activities.

Special Forum 2 International Lawyers Panel

Article 9 is based upon the promise since the end of World War II not to wage war ever again. Amending Article 9 would affect the whole of Asia, and the entire world. Ensuring world peace and people's rights to live peacefully cannot be done with only efforts for one's own country. It is thus necessary to internationalize Article 9, and to spread its principles to all parts of the world. Realizing this goal requires lawyers from various countries to cooperate in order to realize the principles of Article 9 in each country, in the fields of law, policy and judicature.

In this session, panelists from Korea, USA, France, Syria, Cameroon, Costa Rica and Japan reported on the war and peace situations of each country, and emphasized the importance of the role of lawyers in creating peace. Peace is the foundation for life. It is a precondition for ensuring human rights and democracy, which are deeply interconnected- a fact confirmed by reports from the panelists and comments from the floor. It was also demonstrated that even if Japan has this wonderful clause, it will remain meaningless unless lawyers interpret and utilize it appropriately. When the principles of Article 9 are met by lawyers from all around the world and are utilized appropriately, Article 9 will then turn into a reality.

Self-Organised Events

■Popoki Peace Project / “Popoki, What Color is Peace?”

In this workshop, participants first considered the meaning of peace through using picture books of a cat called Popoki. Then several group activities were held in which they imagined peace through creating mobiles and picture story books.

■The Article 9 Association of Grass Roots Media

As a concrete action plan, it was proposed to hold the Second Global Article 9 Conference at the Tokyo Dome in 5 years time, with the assumption that Article 9 will not be amended at the national referendum planned to be held in three years from now.

■The Role of the Media in Peacebuilding

Journalists from Japan and Korea including the former president of the Journalists Association of Korea participated as panelists in this program, opening up a lively discussion with the 200 participants. The Korean participants were so touched by the whole conference that they promised the audience that they would take the excitement home to Korea with them. President Kim, who is planning to hold a meeting with journalists from North Korea, emphasized the necessity of peace and the importance of Article 9.

■Practical Use of Japan's Article 9 in Conflict Areas

Many youths gathered at the session organized by the Nonviolent Peaceforce, including many sitting on the floor after seats were all filled. There are commonalities between challenges for peace through nonviolence and demilitarization, and challenges through “utilizing Article 9.” The session was a good opportunity for all participants to consider the issue in further depth.

■Article 9, Yasukuni, Historical “Reconciliation”

Covering up violence during the colonial rule, concealing the aggression by the Japanese military... This symposium clarified the reality that Yasukuni Shrine justifies the Japanese wars in recent history, as well as those of the current age through “enshrinement.” Overcoming the Yasukuni issue is a big challenge in protecting Article 9.

※Many other self-organized sessions were held other than those mentioned above. All rooms were full and people enjoyed lively discussions in each of the sessions.