

Topic 1 : International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

September 26 marks the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, an observance established in 2013.

On September 26, 2013, the UN General Assembly held its first-ever high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament. The resolution convening the meeting stated the UN's conviction that "nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons are essential to remove the danger of nuclear war." Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted a resolution acknowledging the high-level meeting's endorsement of nuclear weapon elimination and establishing an annual international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons to commemorate the event.

On the 2019 observance, a ceremony was held at UN Headquarters where 12 nations signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons and five ratified it. This treaty had been finalized in 2017 and entered into force in 2021.

On the same day in 2023, UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated that "geopolitical mistrust and competition" had raised the risk of nuclear conflict to Cold War levels. He once again reaffirmed the UN's commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons.

In 2025, Mr. Satoshi Tanaka—a hibakusha (atomic bomb survivor) from Hiroshima and a representative director of Nihon Hidankyo—delivered a speech at a high-level meeting at the United Nations headquarters in New York. On that same day, two additional nations joined the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, bringing the total number of participating states to a majority of the world's countries. These developments are the result of advocacy efforts by ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons).

Key Takeaways from Mr. Satoshi Tanaka's Address:

- A warning regarding the global proliferation of nuclear weapons and victims of nuclear harm ("Global Hibakusha"), noting that the risk of nuclear war has reached a critical peak.
- The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Nihon Hidankyo serves as a message to the world to "listen to the voices of the hibakusha" and acts as a wake-up call regarding the lack of sufficient alarm concerning the nuclear threat.
- Acknowledging the current reality in which leaders of nuclear-armed states refuse to listen, he expressed his determination to continue advocating—for as long as he lives—the conviction that "humanity cannot coexist with nuclear weapons."



Topic 2 : Introduction to ICAN Australia

ICAN Australia (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Australia) is the organization where "ICAN"—the international coalition of NGOs that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017—originated, and it currently serves as the hub for the campaign's activities within Australia. Its key characteristics and activities are as follows:

1. Historical Significance

ICAN was originally founded in Melbourne, Australia, in 2007. Drawing on the successful model of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, the movement was launched by local doctors and civic groups and subsequently expanded globally. While the international secretariat is now based in Geneva, Switzerland, the Australian branch holds a special historical significance.

2. Primary Objectives

The ultimate goal is to persuade the Australian government to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Like Japan, Australia relies on the U.S. "nuclear umbrella" (extended nuclear deterrence), and the government has maintained a cautious stance regarding participation in the treaty. To change this situation, ICAN Australia continues to engage with the political sphere and public opinion.

3. Specific Initiatives in Australia

Coordinating the domestic network—Managing over 80 partner organizations across the country, including environmental groups, labor unions, Indigenous groups, and student organizations.

3-1. Lobbying Lawmakers

Urging federal parliamentarians to sign the "Parliamentary Pledge," which signifies support for the TPNW; many lawmakers (particularly from the Labor Party and the Greens) have already pledged their support.

3-2. Engaging Local Governments

Encouraging cities and local councils to call on the national government to join the treaty; over 50 local governments, including major cities, have endorsed this initiative.

3-3. Addressing Nuclear Testing Impacts

Advocating for humanitarian aid and environmental remediation for victims (such as Indigenous communities) of nuclear tests conducted in Australia and the Pacific region in the past.

3-4. Promoting Ethical Investment

Conduct research and call for divestment to prevent entities such as universities and government funds (sovereign wealth funds) from investing in companies that manufacture nuclear weapons.



Topic 3 : International Day of Democracy

Observed on September 15, this international day was established by a 2007 United Nations General Assembly resolution—following a 1997 Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting—with the aim of promoting and upholding the principles of democracy.

The resolution called upon all UN member states and organizations to commemorate the day through appropriate means, such as contributing to fundraising efforts.

Preamble to the Resolution:

"While democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy, and democracy does not belong to any specific country or region. Democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social, and cultural systems, as well as their full participation in all aspects of life."

Thank you for reading the newsletter!

(September 21, 2026; Editor, ACHRE Intern: Yotaro Inoue)