



Religions for Peace
Australia

Asian Conference of Religions for Peace

Religions for Peace

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DROPPING OF THE ATOMIC BOMBS, THE END OF WORLD WAR II, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UN

In partnership with RfP Japan, RfP Australia and RfP New Zealand, under the auspice of RfP Asia (ACRP), we are inviting you to join us to remember the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the end of the Second World War, and the establishment of the UN and a rules-based multilateral order.

The format will be meetings of two sessions, on two days, a week apart, by Zoom. These meetings are to remember and acknowledge the past and its continuing legacies, to raise awareness of the escalating dangers of future nuclear threats, and to initiate and promote religious, spiritual, and moral responses in the ACRP chapters of the participating countries.

CO-ORGANIZED BY:

Religions for Peace Japan/ Australia/ New Zealand/ Asia

DATES AND THEMES:

August 3 DAY1 The Victims of Nuclear Weapons
(SUN) 2025 and Testing

August 10 DAY2 Religions responding to
(SUN) 2025 escalating threats of nuclear war

11:30-14:30 New Delhi | 11:00-14:00 Islamabad | 16:00-19:00 Sydney
15:00-18:00 Tokyo and Seoul | 1800-21:00 Wellington and Suva

*same time for both days

LANGUAGE:

English

(Japanese simultaneous interpretation will be available on Aug. 3)

ZOOM REGISTRATION:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/9wo10mYFRLaPU-DBMNbihw>



AUG 3 THE VICTIMS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TESTING

**The times indicated here are in Japan Standard Time (JST).

15:00-15:15 Opening Prayers, Introduction and Welcome

- Prof. Paul Morris (Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at Victoria University of Wellington)

- Rev. Dr. Yoshinori Shinohara (Secretary General, Religions for Peace Asia)

- Rev. Masafumi Nakanishi (Shintoist, Japan)

15:15-16:10 **Panel 1: *Victims of nuclear weapons and testing: Japan, Australia, and the Pacific***

This initial session will introduce the atomic bombings of August 1945, and the devastating impacts on life and environment in Japan. Drawing on the experiences of those affected the session will also explore nuclear testing in Australia and the Pacific islands. We will look at context of the bombings and tests, in terms of the longer-term implications of radiation poisoning, starting in Japan, and then the wider Asia Pacific region. Focussing on the growth of the nuclear arsenals in humanity's new atomic age, alongside the UN, we will discuss the hopes for, and steps towards, lasting peace in the aftermath of the twentieth century's world wars.

Speakers:

- Ms. Sueko Hata (Hiroshima A-Bomb survivor)

- Aunty Sue Coleman Haseldine (Senior Gogatha Elder, peace and environmental activist)

- Ms. Olivia Shimasaki (Peace Foundation of Aotearoa)

- Mr. Tamatoa Edgard Tepuhiarii (Hamburg University, Germany)

Coordinator:

- Rev. Masamichi Kamiya (Senior Advisor, Religions for Peace Asia)

16:10-16:30 Reflection time, Q&A, and breakout sessions

AUG 3 THE VICTIMS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND TESTING

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16:30-17:30 **Panel 2: *Intergenerational legacies of the victims***

We will explore the generational impacts in Japan, the Pacific, and across the Asia Pacific region.

A panel of younger participants will discuss the concerns raised by the economic, political, social, and moral dimensions of the development of the nuclear weapons.

Speakers:

- Ms. Vienna Serpa (Sacred Heart College, New Zealand)

- Ms. Yu Hatano (Kosei Girls High School, Japan)

- Mr. Shayan Rasaratnam (Perth, Australia)

Coordinator:

- Dr. Renz Argao
(Moderator, Asia and Pacific Interfaith Youth Network [APIYN])

17:30-18:00 Reflection time, Q&A, and breakout sessions

Prayers

- Prof. Anne Pattel Gray (Prominent Australian Indigenous theologian)

AUG 10 RELIGIONS RESPONDING TO ESCALATING THREATS OF NUCLEAR WAR

**The times indicated here are in Japan Standard Time (JST).

15:00-15:15 Opening Prayers, Introduction and Welcome

- Mrs. Philippa Rowland
(Co-chair, Religions for Peace Australia)

- Prof. Paul Morris (Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at Victoria University of Wellington)

- Rabbi Ralph Genende (Senior Rabbi, Jewish Care Victoria)

15:15-16:25 **Panel 3: *Rising contemporary nuclear escalation and threat in the Asia Pacific***

Following the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Doomsday Clock was originally set as 7 minutes to midnight at the end in 1947. After escalating forward 18 times and being set back 8 times, we are now the closest to midnight since the dawn of the atomic/nuclear age, with the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists in January 2025, announcing humanity's total destruction as a mere 89 seconds away!

The focus in this session is on the four nations with nuclear weapons in the Asia-Pacific region, in the context of the escalating threat of the use of nuclear weapons among the seven nations with nuclear arsenals. A panel of political and strategic experts will analyse this rising threat, exploring the rising tensions among the nuclear-armed nations, including the two current active theatres of war.

Speakers:

- Prof. Tatsujiro Suzuki (Visiting Professor, Nagasaki University, Representative of NPO "Peace Depot")

- Dr. Jiang Tianjiao (Associate Professor, Fudan University)

- Professor Rabia Akhtar (Dean Faculty of Social Sciences at University of Lahore, Pakistan)

- Prof. Byun Jin Heung (Researcher of Catholic Institute of Northeast Asia Peace)

- Ms. Angela Woodward (Deputy Director, Verification Research, Training and Information Centre [VERTIC])

16:25-16:40 Q&A

AUG 10

RELIGIONS RESPONDING TO ESCALATING THREATS OF NUCLEAR WAR

**The times indicated here are in Japan Standard Time (JST).

16:45–17:45 **Panel 4: Religions responding to escalating threats of nuclear war**

The panellists in this final session will consider the role of religious leaders and communities in responding to the rising threats of war, in particular nuclear conflagration. The significant part that religions and Indigenous communities have played in peace movements, including a focus on the calls for de-escalation and disarmament. Again, the emphasis will be on India and Pakistan, China, and North Korea in the Asia-Pacific. Attention will explore the mobilisation of religious communities across the region.

Speakers:

- Rev. Prof. Upolu Lumā Vaai
(Vice-Chancellor of Pasifika Communities University in Suva, Fiji)
- Swami Shantatmananda /Hindu
- Ms. Huma Iklamullah / Muslim
- Rev. Yoshiharu Tomatsu / Buddhist
(Chairperson, Religions for Peace Japan)
- Rev. James Bhagwan / Christian
(General Secretary, Pacific Conference of Churches, Suva, Fiji)

17:45–18:00 **Presentation of draft statement on de-escalation and disarmament**

- Prof. Desmond Cahill O.A.M. (Moderator, Religions for Peace Asia)
- Rev. Elga Sarapung
(Chair, Asia Pacific Women of Faith Network [APWoFN])

Prayers

- Rev. Kenichiro Nakamura (Buddhist, Japan)