

Joseph Hodgkin, MD
Speaking Remarks
October 5, 2019 — Longwood Symphony Orchestra Benefit Concert

Good evening and thank you all for being here tonight. My name is Joe Hodgkin and I am a resident physician in internal medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, a board member of Greater Boston Physicians for Social Responsibility, and member of our partner organization International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. We are so grateful for the partnership of the Longwood Symphony Orchestra and all of your donations to support our advocacy, lobbying and education efforts on the twin threats of nuclear weapons and climate change. It is my honor to introduce our guest and honoree this evening.

Ms. Setsuko Thurlow was 13-year-old schoolgirl in Hiroshima in 1945. Nine members of her family and close relatives, and most of her classmates, were among the 70,000 people who were killed within the first minute after the atomic weapon was exploded over her city. Many more would die in the coming days, including from radiation poisoning.

Ms. Thurlow has spent her adult life speaking out about the horrors of nuclear war in an effort to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again. She is one of the remaining *hibakusha*—the survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—who bear witness to the catastrophic humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons.

Ms. Thurlow was an early advocate in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which IPPNW founded in 2007. Her powerful testimony played a critical role in the campaign's successful effort to persuade United Nations to negotiate and approve the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017. Later that year, Ms. Thurlow moved the world again with her testimony in Oslo when ICAN was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a replica of which I have here.

Through their personal stories and great courage, Ms. Thurlow and the *hibakusha* have inspired us to join them. They teach us that it is critical to remember and to bear witness, but it is not enough. We must also take action, as the weapons on hair-trigger alert today are hundreds of times more powerful than those that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Ms. Thurlow: You have inspired us to take up this cause, and to see it through – until nuclear weapons are banned and eliminated under international law.

Please join me in welcoming Ms. Setsuko Thurlow.