

Nagasaki Region International Student Exchange Promotion Committee

Activity Name	Nagasaki Peace University (Bus tour and hike to learn about peace and the history of Nagasaki)			
Dates	June 13, 2009 and November 14, 2009			
Location	Nakabe Hall at Nagasaki University, Nagasaki Peace Park, ground zero of the atomic bomb, Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum, Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporation	Other	Total
	693	24	95	812

<Activity Details>

(Background)

The prefecture of Nagasaki started the Peace University in 2005 as part of its peace initiative to engage the general public in Nagasaki—where an atomic bomb was dropped—in considering the horrors of war and the preciousness of peace. In 2008, the idea to solicit participation from international students was proposed to and accepted by the Nagasaki Region International Student Exchange Promotion Committee as an international exchange initiative that could only be offered by a region that had suffered the dropping of an atomic bomb. The program was established with support from the prefectural and city governments after pilot events were held by two universities in Nagasaki City in November 2008.



International students visiting Nagasaki Peace Park

(Purpose)

The Nagasaki Peace University aims to help newly arrived international students to learn about peace and the history of Nagasaki, and to better understand their host city Nagasaki, by providing opportunities to listen to lectures by atomic bomb survivors and visit locations such as the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum and the Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture.

(Itinerary)

Lecture on atomic bomb experiences/Q&A (location: Nakabe Hall at Nagasaki University) →Tour of Nagasaki Peace Park led by peace guides (Nagasaki residents) →Visit to the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum →Visit to the Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture

*** Lecture by Atomic Bomb Survivor ***

The lecture given by an atomic bomb survivor really drew the international students in. There was a Q&A session after the lecture in which a student asked, "After surviving the bombing, where did you find the courage to continue living?" To this, the lecturer responded, "As an atomic bomb survivor, I was determined to help eliminate nuclear weapons and contribute to world peace. That drove me to continue on."

He also showed a picture of himself with his back severely burned by the atomic bomb that was dropped 1.8km from where he was, and pleaded, "We don't want anybody else to have to suffer like this. Please join us and raise your voices to eliminate nuclear weapons. Make Nagasaki the last bombed city." The international students listened diligently to his words. Since this was an event geared toward newly arrived international students, a consecutive interpreter translated the lecture into Chinese, and English subtitles were displayed on an overhead screen. These arrangements accommodated those with insufficient Japanese comprehension, ensuring that they understood.



International students standing on ground zero



International students listening attentively to the peace guide's explanation

*** Visit to Nagasaki Peace Park and the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum ***

In groups of 10 or so, participants followed a peace guide (Nagasaki resident) on a tour of Nagasaki Peace Park and ground zero of the atomic bombing. After the tour, participants visited the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum on their own. Having just heard a lecture by an atomic bomb survivor, each student found the visit even more inspiring, and renewed his or her pledge for peace. Because the peace guides were capable of leading tours in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean, international students were able to understand the tour well. It also facilitated quality interaction not only among international students, but also between the guide and the students.

*** Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture ***

The Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture was established when the Nagasaki *bugyo* office—a magistrate's office responsible of a wide range of functions including regional public administration, justice, and foreign diplomacy during the Edo Period—was restored as a museum. The international students learned about the history of Nagasaki, which flourished as the only port opened to overseas trade and exchange during Japan's period of national isolation. This allowed them to gain a better understanding of their host city and renew their determination as they began their study abroad in Nagasaki.

< Comments from The Participants >

Chen Chih-Yu (Taiwan)

"As globalization continues, world peace is one of the most important challenges that we face. While visiting the Nagasaki Peace Park, I felt the endless sorrow, despair, and pain that victims of the World War II atomic bomb must have suffered. If we want a bright future, we must learn from that tragedy so that we never repeat it. The Nagasaki Peace University gave us, international students, a wonderful opportunity to learn from the history. They should keep this program and continue teaching young people how foolish war is. We participants explored the history together to understand different cultures, share our views, and become friends. In the end, we realized that people shouldn't fight. The Nagasaki Peace University makes its contribution by continuing to teach the importance of peace to students all over the world."

Ouyang Huiling (China)

"I learned how terrifying a nuclear bomb is when I saw the video about the bombing during the lecture given by a survivor. I was deeply moved by his story. I also learned a lot from the peace guide at the Peace Park who explained the Peace Statue and other monuments from various countries. Finally, I gained more knowledge about the nuclear bomb at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum through its elaborate miniature models and photos taken after the bombing. Through this learning experience, I was able to truly recognize the importance of peace. I think what the Nagasaki Peace University offers is very meaningful."

Huang Shuying (China)

"I have made many friends from all over the world since I came to Japan to study, but this was the first time for me to take a trip with a group of people, going out and taking pictures together. I enjoyed it. I became deeply aware of the importance of peace after listening to the sad stories by atomic bomb victims. The Nagasaki Peace University was a great experience for me to really think about peace and cultivate relationships with other participants."



International students listening diligently to the lecture by an atomic bomb survivor



International students visiting the Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture