

# Obama uses Hiroshima visit to urge no nukes

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Associated Press

HIROSHIMA, Japan — With an unflinching look back at a painful history, President Barack Obama stood on the hallowed ground of Hiroshima on Friday and declared it a fitting place to summon people everywhere to embrace the vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

As the first American president to visit the city where the U.S. dropped the first atomic bomb, Obama came to acknowledge — but not apologize for — an act many Americans see as a justified end to a brutal war that Japan started with a sneak attack at Pearl Harbor.

Some 140,000 people died after a U.S. warplane targeted wartime Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945, and 70,000 more perished in Nagasaki, where a second bomb was dropped three days later. Japan soon surrendered.

“Their souls speak to us,” Obama said of the dead. “They ask us to look inward, to take stock of who we are and who we might become.”

With a lofty speech and a warm embrace for an elderly survivor, Obama renewed the call for a nuclear-free future that he had first laid out in a 2009 speech in Prague.

This time, Obama spoke as a far more experienced president than the one who had employed his upbeat “Yes, we can” campaign slogan on the first go-round.

The president, who has made uneven progress on his nuclear agenda over the past seven years, spoke of “the courage to escape the logic of fear” as he held out hope for diligent, incremental steps to reduce nuclear stockpiles.



Kimimasa Mayama/Pool Photo via AP

**U.S. President Barack Obama, left, shakes hands and chats with Sunao Tsuboi, second right, a survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing and chairman of the Hiroshima Prefectural Confederation of A-bomb Sufferers Organization, as Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe watches them during his visit to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, western Japan, Friday.**

“We may not realize this goal in my lifetime, but persistent effort can roll back the possibility of catastrophe,” he said.

Obama spent less than two hours in Hiroshima but seemed to accomplish what he came for. It was a choreographed performance meant to close old wounds without inflaming new passions on a subject still fraught after all these years.

In a solemn ceremony on a sunwashed afternoon, Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe placed wreaths before the cenotaph, a simple arched stone monument at Hiroshima’s Peace Memorial Park. Only the clicking of camera shutters intruded on the moment as Obama closed his eyes and briefly bowed his head.

Then, after each leader gave brief remark, Obama approached two aging survivors of the bombing who were seated in the front row, standing in for the thousands still seared by memories of that day.

Ninety-one-year-old Sunao Tsuboi, the head of a survivors group, energetically engaged the

president in conversation, telling Obama he would be remembered as someone who listened to the voice of a few survivors. He urged him to come back and meet more.

“He was holding my hands until the end,” Tsuboi said. “I was almost about to ask him to stop holding my hands, but he wouldn’t.”

Obama stepped over to meet historian Shigeaki Mori. Just 8 when the bomb hit, Mori had to hold back tears at the emotion of the moment.

Obama patted him on the back and wrapped him in a warm embrace. From there, Obama and Abe walked along a tree-lined path toward a river that flows by the iconic A-bomb dome, the skeletal remains of an exhibition hall that stands as silent testimony to the awful power of the bomb blast 71 years ago and as a symbol for international peace.

Abe welcomed the president’s message and offered his own determination “to realize a world free of nuclear weapons, no matter how long or how difficult the road will be.”

# Health experts urge WHO to consider moving Rio Olympics

LONDON (AP) — Health experts on Friday urged the World Health Organization to consider whether the Rio de Janeiro Olympics should be postponed or moved because of the Zika outbreak.

The 150 experts — including former White House science adviser Dr. Philip Rubin — issued an open letter to the U.N. health agency, calling for the games to be delayed or relocated “in the name of public health.”

The letter cited recent scientific evidence that the Zika virus causes severe birth defects, most notably babies born with abnormally small heads. In adults, it can cause neurological problems, including a rare syndrome that can be fatal or result in temporary paralysis. The authors also noted that despite increased efforts to wipe out the mosquitoes that spread Zika, infections in Rio have gone up rather than down.

Several public health academics have previously warned that having hundreds of thousands of people head to the Aug. 5-21 games in Brazil will inevitably lead to the births of more brain-damaged babies and speed up the virus’ global spread. Most people infected by Zika suffer only minor symptoms including fever, a rash and muscle or joint pain.

WHO declared the Zika epidemic to be a global emergency in February and in its latest assessment this week, said it “does not see an overall decline in the outbreak.”

“The fire is already burning, but that is not a rationale not to do anything about the Olympics,” said Amir Attaran, a professor at the University of Ottawa and one of the letter’s authors. “It is not the time now to throw more gasoline onto the fire.”

WHO has already advised pregnant women not to go to Rio and says other travelers should avoid



AP Photo/Andre Penner

**A man walking his dog, stops to examine an Aedes aegypti mosquito sculpture created by street artist Andre Farkas, on a Paulista Ave. sidewalk, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Friday. According to Farkas, the sculpture is intended to bring awareness to the spread of the Zika virus in Brazil.**

poor and overcrowded parts of the city. The U.N. agency also predicted the Zika risk in August would drop since it will be the south American winter and there should be fewer mosquitoes.

Zika can also be spread via sex in some cases; WHO recommends that pregnant women abstain or practice safe sex with partners returning from Zika-affected areas.

WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan said earlier this month that the U.N. health agency is increasingly worried about Zika but stopped short of recommending the Rio Olympics be moved or postponed. Chan, who is not of child-bearing age, noted that she herself would be attending the games.

Among the letter’s signatories are experts from more than two dozen countries in fields including public health, bioethics and pediatrics. The letter also noted a potential conflict of interest, highlighting the decades-long collaboration between WHO and the International Olympic Committee.

The authors said the “overly close” relationship “was last affirmed in 2010 at an event where the Director-General of WHO and president of the IOC

signed a memorandum of understanding, which is secret because neither has disclosed it.”

They also pointed to a group that WHO established to help cities not only with health advice, but to potentially help them bid for major events including the Olympics.

“WHO cannot credibly assess the public health risks of Zika and the Olympics when it sets neutrality aside,” the letter stated.

WHO did not immediately respond to a request for comment Friday.

In an email to the AP, the IOC said it would “always consult the WHO for guidance and advice on health matters.”

Concerns over Zika have prompted USA Swimming to move its pre-Olympic training camp from Puerto Rico to Atlanta and Major League Baseball also scrapped a series of games that were going to be held in San Juan.

No Olympic Games have ever been moved from their host city due to medical concerns, but in 2003, FIFA decided to switch the Women’s World Cup soccer tournament from China to the United States on short notice due to the threat posed by the respiratory virus SARS.

## First U.S. case of ‘superbug’ resistant to last resort drug

NEW YORK (AP) — For the first time, a U.S. patient has been infected with bacteria resistant to an antibiotic used as a last resort treatment, scientists said Thursday.

The patient — a 49-year-old woman in Pennsylvania — has recovered. But health officials fear that if the resistance spreads to other bacteria, the country may soon see supergerms impervious to all known antibiotics.

“It is the end of the road for antibiotics unless we act urgently,” Dr. Tom Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said during an appearance in Washington.

Other countries have already seen multi-drug resistant superbugs that no antibiotic can fight. So far, the United States has not. But this sets the stage for that development, CDC officials said.

The woman had gone to a military clinic in Pennsylvania last month and was treated for a urinary tract infection. Initial tests found she was infected with E. coli bacteria, a common variety of germ seen in the gut that often makes its way to the bladder.

But the tests showed this E. coli was resistant to antibiotics commonly used first for such infections. She was successfully treated with another kind of antibiotic.

But while she has recovered, further testing completed in the last week confirmed that the E. coli was carrying a gene for resistance against the drug colistin.

Colistin is an old antibiotic. By the 1970s, doctors had mostly stopped using it because of its harsh side effects. But it was brought back as other antibiotics began losing their effectiveness.

It’s used against hard-to-treat bacteria that resist one of the last lines of defense, antibiotics called carbapenems. If those germs pick up the colistin-resistance gene, doctors may be out of treatment options, health officials say.

a really nasty puzzle that we didn’t want to see here,” said Dr. Beth Bell, who oversees CDC’s emerging infectious diseases programs.

The CDC is working with Pennsylvania health officials to interview the woman and her family to try to figure out how she might have picked up the strain. The woman had not traveled outside of the country recently, officials said.

The colistin-resistant gene has been seen in animals and

people in China, Europe and Canada. Federal officials said Thursday that colistin-resistant E. coli has also been found in a pig in the United States, but there was nothing to link the finding to the Pennsylvania case.

Researchers at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, who did the confirmatory tests, reported on the Pennsylvania case Thursday in a journal of the American Society of Microbiology.

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