

The ASEACCU student conference was held in Hiroshima this year and I had an amazing time there with wonderful students. I have thought about peace occasionally in the past. During the ASEACCU I had many experiences that made me think further about peace.

One of the most impressive experiences I had was watching the cultural performance by Taiwanese students. They were just singing a Taiwanese song around the Taiwanese flag. I realized that there was once a time when Taiwanese people were unable to have their own flag or to sing a Taiwanese song. Japan caused this.

I felt a kind of pain in my mind and this made me somehow want to cry. I could not imagine how their grandparents would have felt if they were to see their grandchildren singing this song around their national flag.

I felt like that the wishes of grandparents who were never able to realize their dream of becoming people in their own nation were flowing from the song of the Taiwanese students just in front of me. I do not know what should I do or be in future, but I do know that I have got so many things to think about. This is what I promised myself during the conference.

Students singing their country's song around the flag so naturally and other students respectfully listening - I wished that this peaceful and happy scene might always be occurring somewhere in the world. I wished it very silently, so as not to break this fragile moment of happiness. But we should not forget the lingering pain and lasting sorrow that exists in the shadows of this peace and happiness. If we do, the peace and

happiness would turn into dissatisfaction and illusion and people would be unable to see what peace is.

I think that peace is not something that occurs naturally but that it is born from the tears and wishes of people just like us. I strongly think that these tears and people's earnest desires should never be forgotten.

Another significant experience for me was a discussion I had with a Korean student. We talked about history between Korea and Japan. There are so many historical problems between us and we are always curious about what people of the other country think about them, especially people of the same generation.

I felt hope and warm feelings in the weakness and strength of human beings feeling so emotional about things that happened several generations ago. Not only towards Korea, but towards all Asian countries that had their homeland, names, dignity and lives taken off them by Japan. I feel apologetic towards them and annoyed with myself for knowing nothing. We have very few chances to have friends from other countries with whom we talk about such complicated topics, so I was very glad to meet her during the ASEACCU. I actually met her again a few weeks later when I visited Korea. I hope that such a nice relationship will be long-lasting and I am always searching for new relationships like this.