

Yuki Mayuzumi

What I'm going to write here is not complaints nor mere hopes.

Recently I turned twelve. There are many twelve-year-olds in other countries. My birthday is a happy day for me. But there are children whose birthdays are not happy days. I enjoy my birthday as I enjoy wonderful food and receive birthday presents. Apart from my birthday I can usually eat good sweets and buy toys. I throw away what I don't need anymore. I live such a free and untroubled life. But what about people in poor countries? Even on their birthdays, they can't enjoy delicious food or ask their parents to buy presents. Food supply is usually unstable.

Why is there such a big gap between us in the world? The world lacks the idea of equality. What is causing this inequality? I believe environmental issues and wars are the cause. Environmental issues, i.e., environmental destruction is getting worse because of us, human beings. You, living in rich countries buy a lot of things. You see a new product on TV ads and feel like having it even though you haven't really used the one you bought before. The one you were using before will be thrown away. This is a waste of resource causing extra air pollution.

Why do people in rich countries keep on buying without thinking of those in poor countries? It's because of their greed. Why don't they turn their greed for decreasing waste? It would make those in poor countries so happy. Thinking of their greed disappoints me.

I would not say greed is bad in itself. Greed is essential to create something new and become happy. What is important is moderation. Bad greed is different from moderated greed. Commercial companies cannot go without money. Even though they are already consuming a lot of resources, they keep on making breakable products with slight changes. Resource consumption is just one of many aspects of environmental destruction caused by business companies. They emit toxic stuff causing global warming, acid rain and desertification. Each one of our human behaviour is tormenting ourselves, depriving children of their future possibility. I hate it. You grown-ups should stop troubling the poor and the troubled.

When do we human beings get ready to face environmental issues? We will do so when we all die away. Why don't we face the issues before we are extinct? We should stop depriving people of their freedom.

Now let's think about war. People kill each other in war, which is so ironic. People fight for their countries without a break. War creates winners and losers and a winning country will exploit a loser's resources irresponsibly. The losers become poorer and

poorer and there are more and more refugees and orphans. These problems take place not only after war but also during war. It takes a lot of money and material to build a tank. In a tank is a human driver who shoots his enemy to death and wastes resource. In the end he dies as well. Why don't we stop making weapons? Why don't we get rid of weapons that give only sorrow and pain? Why don't stop wars that turn everybody cynical? Children bear future on their shoulders. Children today create new future but wars and environmental destruction are destroying places for them to live, think and stay happy. Children may look so small and insignificant in the eye of grown-ups but they have possibilities. You may think stopping environmental destruction does not make any difference. That may be true. There is no "reset" button in environmental issues but I still believe just a little care for future brings about big changes.

I hope that everybody lives with equal opportunities helping each other. That's the future I hope for.