

## **1<sup>st</sup> Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest**

### **Explosion Affected Reflection**

Blasted into a wasteland,  
behind an old torn photo  
Father silently weeps  
for what were once his people  
their voices and love forsaken  
while Mother has grown old  
torn in recollection with grief  
her children’s young kisses  
still innocent upon her cheek;  
memorizing, unborn babies  
hear exploding bombs  
as yet she stares, despondent,  
out the broken window,  
in remembrance for peace.

— **Helle van Aardeberg (Ms.)**  
(submitted from the Netherlands)

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest**

### **How can I forget?**

How can I forget  
That exploding sound  
Which stole my family from me  
Leaving me, with no one around?

How can I forget  
Looking into mother's eyes?  
Desperately, she called for my help  
Hopelessly, I watched her die

How can I forget  
The burnt bodies on the floor?  
Whether my family was amongst them  
Even today, I am unsure

How can I forget  
Those piercing screams  
Which haunt me daily  
When appearing in my dreams?

How can I forget  
How some are so unkind?  
Peace on Earth is something  
We urgently need to find

— **Hashela Kumarawansa (Ms.)**  
(submitted from Australia)

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem for the “Poetry for Peace” Contest**

#### **Until**

Time paused  
a moment imploded,  
the shuddering tremor,  
rippled in dramatic light  
silence came with pain,  
fallen boughs  
new sown seeds,  
growth blemished in bark  
reaching skyward  
with gentle leaves,  
the tree had not forgotten  
yet learned from it's birth  
never to touch  
that light  
or feel that moment  
again.

#### **Kyochikuto/Oleander**

from chugoku to the ota  
nothing remained  
upon the debris strewn  
red earth,  
in the silence  
that came with time,  
shoots with elliptic leaves  
to five bright petals,  
vivid signal that,  
survival is the future  
that through resilience  
we find a peace  
and learn that for  
no other reason  
it should never  
happen again.

— **Chris Lawrence (Mr.)**  
(submitted from the United Kingdom)