

## **Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima**

It is an honor and a pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the 26<sup>th</sup> Hiroshima WPPC Flag Ceremony.

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, absolute evil, an atomic bomb, was unleashed in the sky over Hiroshima. Under the roiling mushroom cloud, the city of Hiroshima became hell in an instant. The atomic bomb brought gruesome death to vast numbers of innocent civilians and left those it did not kill with deep physical and emotional scars, including the aftereffects of radiation and endless health fears. Giving rise to social discrimination and prejudice, it devastated even the lives of those who managed to survive.

This hell is not a thing of the past. As long as nuclear weapons exist and policymakers threaten their use, we are in the perilous situation where their horror could leap into our present at any moment. This is why we have to learn what happened under the mushroom cloud 73 years ago. We have to spread throughout the world our *hibakusha*'s ardent wish for nuclear abolition, symbolized in their message that no one should ever suffer as they have, and pass it on to the next generation.

In July 2017, 122 United Nations members, not including the nuclear-weapon and nuclear-umbrella states, adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to ban, among others, the use, possession, deployment, and threat of use of nuclear weapons. They demonstrated their unequivocal determination to achieve abolition. The governments of all countries are expected to transcend national boundaries and advance further toward a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In this context, it is essential for civil society to help create an environment that allows policymakers to move beyond national borders to act in good faith and conscience for the elimination of nuclear weapons. Hence, it is truly significant that, in the name of a world free from nuclear weapons, you have organized this ceremony again this year, through which you will spread the wish for peace to the world. I extend to you my deepest respect.

Within civil society, Mayors for Peace, an organization which the City of Hiroshima presides over and whose membership now exceeds 7,600 cities in 163 countries and regions, will also strive to strengthen the international trend towards nuclear abolition.

I would like to ask all of you to continue to do your utmost to eradicate the absolute evil of nuclear weapons and to realize a peaceful world together with us.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the great success of this event as well as the good health and happiness of all in attendance.

August 6, 2018

MATSUI Kazumi  
Mayor  
The City of Hiroshima