

## Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima

It is an honor and a pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the Floating Lantern Peace Ceremony.

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, absolute evil, an atomic bomb, exploded in the sky over Hiroshima. Under the roiling mushroom cloud, the lives of many innocent civilians were taken, and the city of Hiroshima was reduced to ashes. The scenes of hell burnt into their memory and the radiation eating away at their minds and bodies are even now sources of pain for those who managed to survive.

After 74 years, there remains around 14,000 nuclear warheads in the world, and the likelihood is growing that what we saw in Hiroshima after the explosion that day will return, by intent or accident, plunging people into agony. Furthermore, certain countries are blatantly proclaiming self-centered nationalism and modernizing their nuclear arsenals, rekindling tensions that had eased with the end of the Cold War. If the human family forgets history or stops confronting it, we could again commit a terrible error. That is precisely why we must continue talking about *Hiroshima*, and efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons must continue based on intelligent actions by leaders around the world.

In 2017 the Nobel Peace Prize went to ICAN, an organization that contributed to the formation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Thus, the spirit of the *hibakusha* is spreading throughout the world. With the importance of learning the reality of the atomic bombings and working for a world without nuclear weapons having been recognized once again, world leaders must negotiate in good faith the elimination of nuclear arsenals, which is a legal obligation under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Furthermore, they must strive to make the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons a milestone along the path to a nuclear-weapon-free world.

For leaders to focus their reason and insight on abolishing nuclear weapons, civil society must respect diversity, build mutual trust, and make nuclear abolition a value shared by all humankind. In this context, it is truly significant that you have organized this event together with the Child Diplomats and many young people to call for a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons and I extend to you my deepest respect.

The City of Hiroshima, together with Calgary and over 7,700 Mayors for Peace member cities from 163 countries and regions, intends to create an environment to encourage world leaders to take such actions. I would like to ask all of you to continue to strive with us to eliminate the absolute evil that is nuclear weapons and to realize a peaceful world.

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 3, 2019

MATSUI Kazumi  
Mayor  
The City of Hiroshima