



The City of Hiroshima

PEACE DECLARATION

August 6, 2026

Even now, 81 years after the atomic bombings, right here on Earth where we live, we still see military invasions using nuclear weapons as tools of intimidation as well as other imperious actions by major powers in violation of international law. This year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference failed for the third consecutive time to adopt a final document. The responsibility for this failure lies with political leaders who place blame on others to justify their own behavior. The words and actions of such leaders shake the foundations of global peace and stability while ignoring the obligations set forth by the NPT.

If this continues, mistrust will deepen around the world, driving us back toward the rampant greed of the World War II era. Downplaying the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and accepting the use of force to pursue one's own prosperity risk cycles of violent retaliation that could ultimately result in another Hiroshima or Nagasaki.

Please, take a moment to listen once again to the experiences of *hibakusha* who lived through the devastation. A woman who was 16 at the time recalls her kind older sister. She sees her sister's face, skin rotting away from her skull, teeth exposed in a lipless mouth. It was such a nightmare she couldn't believe what she saw. Another woman, exposed to the bomb at age three, suffered through the years from a series of illnesses, then leukemia at age 55. Having been diagnosed with A-bomb disease, she lived in constant fear. Where would it strike next? A man who was nine, in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which has claimed the lives of many civilians, begs us to overcome our internal conflicts and embrace each other's perspectives to build a world without violent conflict. He urges our youth, in particular, to begin by thinking deeply about their daily lives.

Inspired by the voices of our *hibakusha* and by actions to convey their will, civil society has continued its activism for peace and nuclear weapons abolition across generations and national borders. However, too many political leaders, still considering nuclear deterrence a realistic approach, accept the international community's legitimization of violence, which simply pushes a world without nuclear weapons further into the distance. In a time when fading memories of war could lead to the use of nuclear weapons, we must learn again the lessons of the past, lessons that led to the founding of the United Nations and the drive to abolish nuclear weapons. Each and every one of us must reject all forms of violence and take action to build an international society determined to make the ideal of nuclear abolition a reality.

To this end, I make the following request of our youth. Please build deeper connections with people of differing values across national borders, and in that process, share joy, fun, dreams, and hopes. Many young people around the world are deepening their relationships by learning, here in Hiroshima and elsewhere, about the atomic bombings. I urge you to communicate your thoughts, get involved in your wider communities, and do, in your daily lives, whatever you can for peace. Such efforts will help cultivate a global culture of peace based on mutual respect. By making the abolition of nuclear weapons common sense in the international community, you will help create an environment that does not allow policymakers to rely on nuclear deterrence. The City of Hiroshima will work with our 8,589 member cities of Mayors for Peace to promote the culture of peace worldwide and strengthen efforts to pass it on to future generations. We will continue campaigning to spread the Spirit of Hiroshima.

Policymakers of the world, civil society demands the immediate abolition of nuclear weapons. How much longer do you intend to disappoint us? Surely you understand that any use of nuclear weapons would inflict catastrophic damage on humanity, and that nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament can only be addressed through multilateral efforts. Leaders of nuclear-weapon states, you bear primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. You must surely recognize the imperative to lead by example. World policymakers, please come in person to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Please confront our tragedies directly and heed our *hibakusha*'s aspirations for peace. Civil society fervently hopes that, during your visits, you will send messages to the world expressing your determination to abolish nuclear weapons, then implement policies to achieve that goal.

We urge the Japanese government to remain deeply conscious of the high ideals enshrined in the Constitution of Japan and continue to occupy a place of honor in international society. Precisely because we face a challenging security environment that could lead to division and even conflict with other nations, we request tenacious, persistent diplomacy without imposing sacrifices on the people. Japan must manifest and implement continuous contributions to international peace and stability. To that end, we urge Japan to begin by participating as an observer in this November's Review Conference of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, then ratify the treaty without delay. Furthermore, we strongly urge that measures supporting the *hibakusha*, whose average age has exceeded 86 years, be enhanced in a manner that addresses their ongoing hardships and struggles, based on frameworks appropriate to supporting all *hibakusha*, including those living abroad.

Today, marking 81 years since the atomic bombing, we offer our heartfelt condolences to the souls of the victims and pledge to do our utmost to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons, leading to lasting world peace. Once again, we issue our call to civil society as a whole. Guided by the *hibakusha*-inspired Spirit of Hiroshima, let us work together in heartfelt unity to change the world.

MATSUI Kazumi
Mayor
The City of Hiroshima