

Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima

It is an honor and pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the 30th Annual Peace Lantern Floating Ceremony.

On August 6, 1945, a single atomic bomb rendered Hiroshima a burnt plain. From infants to the elderly, tens of thousands of innocent civilians lost their lives in a single day. By the end of the year, 140,000 had died. Nuclear weapons are an “absolute evil” that not only take away a great number of precious human lives but rob people of loving families and dreams for the future, plunging their lives into turmoil.

The “absolute evil” is not susceptible to threats and counter-threats, killing and being killed. Military force just gives rise to new cycles of hatred. To eliminate the evil, we must transcend nationality, race, religion, and other differences, value person-to-person relationships, and build a world that allows forward-looking dialogue.

Toward this end, Hiroshima hopes for everyone throughout the world to share the experiences and peaceful wish of our *hibakusha* and walk with them the path to nuclear weapons abolition and world peace. Mayors for Peace, an organization whose membership now exceeds 6,700 cities and which the City of Hiroshima presides over, will steadfastly promote the movement stressing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and seeking to outlaw them. We will help strengthen international public demand for the start of negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention with the goal of total abolition by 2020. I offer my deepest gratitude to the city of Rochester for working with us as one of our important members.

Each one of us will help determine the future of the human family. Please put yourself in the place of the *hibakusha*. Imagine their experiences, including that day from the depths of hell, actually happening to you or someone in your family. To make sure the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki never happen a third time, we hope that as many people as possible will communicate, think and act together with the *hibakusha* for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons and without war.

In this regard, it is profoundly significant that the Annual Peace Lantern Floating Ceremony has been held for the past 30 years, with the participation of peace-loving people, in order to pay tribute to the A-bomb survivors and call for the abolition of nuclear weapons. I would like to express my deep respect to your commitment. I understand that this milestone ceremony of the 30th anniversary will include a children’s choir concert for peace. I believe that your fervent wish will reach the hearts of the people around the world and surely contribute to the realization of a peaceful world free from nuclear weapons.

I would like to ask all of you, in response to the *hibakusha*’s desire, to continue to strive with us to eliminate the absolute evil of nuclear weapons and achieve a peaceful world.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the good health and happiness of all in attendance.

August 6, 2015

MATSUI Kazumi
Mayor
The City of Hiroshima