

November 15, 2017

His Holiness Pope Francis

Request for a Papal Visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Your Holiness:

We trust you are well and enjoying a beautiful transition to fall.

We have watched you strive consistently to spread the ethic of brotherhood and climate of peaceful coexistence among peoples throughout the world. You continually pray and work toward genuine and lasting global peace, and we hereby offer our profound admiration and gratitude.

We are especially grateful that two years ago, as we marked the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings, you spoke out about the hell that Hiroshima and Nagasaki suffered under those mushroom clouds and issued a clarion call that a single voice be raised from every land for a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction.

With the dropping of the atomic bombs in August 1945, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were instantly reduced to rubble. By the end of that year, the bombs had taken some 210,000 precious lives in our cities. Our *hibakusha*, whose average age has exceeded 81, overcame their hatred and rage to tell us of their suffering. They demand that no one else ever suffer as they have, and they continually appeal for the abolition of nuclear weapons. This appeal by our *hibakusha* is entirely consistent with your own appeals to respect our “deepest dignity” to “make active nonviolence our way of life.”

Today, given the great progress toward the abolition of nuclear weapons manifest in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), we implore you to visit the A-bombed cities. Here, you will see with your own eyes what happened to the *hibakusha* and understand more profoundly their intense desire for peace. Then, if you were to issue a call for nuclear weapons abolition from the A-bombed cities, you could rise above the fray and strengthen bonds among people everywhere. At the same time, you would greatly encourage and strengthen the citizens and civil society partners associated with Mayors for Peace, our global network of now more than 7,400 city members in 162 countries and regions.

The *hibakusha*, other residents of the A-bombed cities, and people around the world praying for a world without nuclear weapons are all eager for Your Holiness to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

We close with our heartfelt best wishes for your continued good health.

Very Respectfully,



MATSUI Kazumi
Mayor
The City of Hiroshima



TAUE Tomihisa
Mayor
The City of Nagasaki