

The 6th General Conference of Mayors for Peace
Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings

Opening Ceremony

13:00-14:30, Thursday, August 4, 2005
Phoenix Hall
International Conference Center Hiroshima

Opening Speech

Tadatoshi Akiba
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor, Hiroshima, Japan

Greetings

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of United Nations
*delivered by Nobuyasu Abe, UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs
of the United Nations*

Yuzan Fujita
Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture
delivered by Tadaomi Saito, Chairman, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation

Commemorative Speech for the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombing

Douglas Roche, O.C.
Chair of Middle Power Initiative
Former Canadian Senator and Ambassador for Disarmament to the UN

Tadatoshi Akiba, President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor, Hiroshima, Japan:
UN Deputy-Secretary-General Abe, Middle Powers Initiative Chairman Roche, International Christian University Professor Mogami, ambassadors, honored guests, representatives from cities around the world, ladies and gentlemen, today at the opening of the 6th General Conference of Mayors for Peace, I am filled with gratitude to see that so many of you have come and honored us with your presence. I welcome you all from the bottom of my heart. Before we get down to business, I'd like to introduce to you some of the key Mayors for Peace and allies who have been so important to our organization, and in particular, to our campaign during the past year.

First, it is a great honor to introduce UN Deputy-Secretary-General Nobuyasu Abe. He has been a tremendous support, especially since the NPT Preparatory Committee Meeting in 2004. In fact, it was through his good offices that we were able to hold two very important events at the UN this past May, one of which was honored by an address by Secretary-General Annan.

Next, I am extremely honored to present Honorable Gisela Kallenbach who is a member of the European Parliament and is here representing that body. The European Parliament has adopted two resolutions endorsing our *2020 Vision* which greatly encouraged us in our belief that we represent a global majority and gave us a tremendous boost in prestige among the European activists.

Mayor Daniel Fontaine, representing the French national chapter of Mayors for Peace – in French it is L'Association Française des Communes Départements et Régions pour la Paix – is Mayor of Aubagne, France, a city that has long given Mayors for Peace extremely valuable support. Aubagne has recently hosted an A-bomb exhibition and has helped to make France a model for Mayors for Peace organizing.

Honorable George Regan is here representing the UK Association of Nuclear Free Local Authorities. This association can rightly take pride in having launched the Nuclear Free Local Authorities movement and their cooperation has long facilitated Mayors for Peace activities, especially in Europe. More specifically, he was one of the key people present in the Manchester Executive Committee where our *2020 Vision* was born.

Mr. Alfred Marder is here representing the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities. This association has been a strong ally, and Mr. Marder has personally devoted considerable time and energy to the design and implementation of our emergency campaign. He was present at this birth at our Executive Committee Meeting in Manchester.

Let me also mention here that Mayor Beverly O'Neill of Long Beach, California, who is the current president of the US Conference of Mayors, will arrive at 8 p.m. tonight and will be participating in the conference. I should mention in passing that the US Conference of Mayors, consisting of 1,083 cities with populations larger than 30,000 in the United States, has endorsed the *2020 Vision* in its general assembly in June last year.

Now let me now introduce our Vice-President City. Mayor Itoh of Nagasaki needs no introduction, but some may not be aware of his great contributions to encouraging

NGO activities and youth involvement in peace activities, especially in Japan. He is also the president of the National Council of Japan, Nuclear-Free Local Authorities, which has more than 300 members.

Lord Mayor Schmalstieg of Hannover, Germany, is among our longest-serving and most effective vice-presidents. Germany is a leader in the anti-nuclear movement and much of our success there can be traced in one way or another to Mayor Schmalstieg.

In France, we are extremely lucky to have a remarkably effective team that includes Mayor Catherine Margate of Malakoff and her dynamic deputies Michel and Miho Cibot . They have built a French national chapter of Mayors for Peace and have helped Hiroshima in too many other ways to mention, though one of the most spectacular is Miho's animated film on the paper crane which you may have seen already.

I am pleased also to welcome Mayor Afzal Khan who is now Lord Mayor of Manchester , our Executive City in the United Kingdom. He is new to our organization but Manchester has long been a leading player thanks to the commitment and competence of Stewart Kemp, who is our contact and advisor there.

Mayor Evgeny Petrovich Ischenko and the City of Volgograd , and the City of Volgograd have participated in the mayoral delegations in New York and have consistently supported Mayors for Peace projects. We expect him and the city to be leading our movement strongly, especially in Russia.

Councilor Raul Corro is representing Muntinlupa which has consistently attended conferences and offered valuable support. I expect Muntinlupa's role to grow as we gradually turn the focus of our campaign from the US and Europe to Asia.

Last, but far from least, allow me to introduce Councilor Susanna Agostini of Florence, Italy. Leonardo Dominici, the Mayor of Florence, is President of the National Association of Italian Municipalities. He called me personally to assure us that he intends to commit the entire association to supporting Mayors for Peace. Thus, we may soon have what is essentially an enormous national chapter in Italy. This would be wonderful.

Let me repeat that I'm filled with gratitude to all of these people and the cities and organizations they represent. I am also grateful to all of you who are taking the time to be with us today. I welcome you all from the bottom of my heart.

Mayors for Peace was formed in 1982, originally by the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to foster solidarity among cities in the effort to raise consciousness and arouse international demand for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In August 1985, we held our 1st General Conference. Four years ago, when we held our Fifth General Conference, our membership stood at 508 cities. In the past four years, we have recruited 572 cities, bringing our total membership to 1,083 cities in 112 countries and regions. [*applause*] And this is the result of *your* efforts in each of your countries. Thus, we have become a truly global NGO representing literally hundreds of millions of people.

We have been surprised to learn that when peace activists in a given country are determined to do so, they can recruit new Mayors for Peace extremely rapidly. ITPNW in Germany and Norway, for Mother Earth in Belgium, and CND in England have recruited literally hundreds of mayors. In fact, approximately half of the mayors in Belgium are now members.

We have also found that when our member mayors are aware of and supportive of peace activities, the results far surpass expectations. We are more convinced than ever that the key to eliminating nuclear weapons is close cooperation between our mayors and the peace activists in their cities.

The reason Mayors for Peace has grown so rapidly in the past four years is because we are working from a sense of crisis. We have seen the United States move away from disarmament and toward the development of nuclear weapons, even threatening to put nuclear weapons in space. We have seen Russia respond by increasing its reliance on nuclear weapons. We have seen India and Pakistan come to the brink of war that could have easily escalated to a nuclear exchange. We have seen North Korea abandon the NPT and turn to nuclear weapons for security. We have seen the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, followed by US attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq. In the case of Iraq, the attack was based on what turned out to be a non-existent threat from weapons of mass destruction.

Most frighteningly of all, we have seen the emergence of a so-called "war on terror" that is likely to perpetrate and escalate cycles of hatred, violence and retaliation that could lead to nuclear terrorism or nuclear attack on terrorists.

To confront this crisis, the Mayors for Peace Executive Meeting in Manchester in 2003 approved an emergency campaign to ban nuclear weapons. This campaign, which was launched in Nagasaki in November that year, is promoting our 2020 Vision, a program for a nuclear weapons-free world by the year 2020, the 58th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings. However, the NPT Review Conference held at UN headquarters this past May was quite disappointing. Resistance from nuclear weapons states refusing to work seriously towards nuclear disarmament prevented any meaningful progress. It is no exaggeration to say that the NPT, the only international agreement for the control of nuclear weapons, is on the brink of collapse.

In this context, our meeting here in Hiroshima, just prior to the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings, is extremely important. The fact that we have come from so many cities and countries reflects growing international public demand for genuine world peace, and as a sponsor of this conference nothing could be more encouraging than your presence.

Mayors for Peace is a gathering of mayors and cities. Mayors have a responsibility to protect the lives of their citizens. However, if nuclear weapons are used, no amount of planning or training will allow us to protect the tremendous numbers of people who will be killed and injured. To protect our people, our only option is to make sure nuclear weapons are never used, and the only way to do that is to physically eliminate them. The voices calling for an end to nuclear weapons represent the overwhelming majority of the world's population. Only a handful few actively seek to retain nuclear weapons, and yet the people elect or polarize those few. In other words, all we have

to do is to make nuclear weapons a salient issue in the election of our leaders. And with our power as the majority, we can actually abolish nuclear weapons.

At this General Conference we will examine the results of the NPT Review Conference and explore the next steps for Mayors for Peace from various perspectives. We will refer to the international ban on anti-personnel landmines as an example of transcending the normal frameworks of diplomacy to achieve popular results. That campaign mobilized nations and NGOs around the world to generate an enormous movement that led to a highly effective international treaty.

As I have said many times, the great majority of people on this planet want the human race to survive, and we need to make sure that the will of this majority is reflected in international decision-making. We need to find the most effective ways to bring the nuclear threat to the attention of the international public, then we need to offer the public opportunities to express their demand in ways that will influence their leaders. For three days, from August 4, that's today, to the 6th, we will cross national and ethnic barriers and overcome differences of religion and ideology to deliberate and adopt a plan to do exactly that. I hope you will all help us understand the most effective means of reaching and arousing the peace-loving public in your cities and nations.

Let me again thank our mayors and other representatives for traveling to Hiroshima for the 60th anniversary. I do hope you will come to a deeper understanding of the atomic bombings and the Mayors for Peace campaign, and that you will help us by mobilizing the people of your respective cities to demand complete and permanent liberation from the threat of nuclear annihilation. Thank you very much. [*applause*]

Now let us introduce at this point a message from Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations. On behalf of Secretary-General Annan, his message will be read by Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations. Mr. Abe.

Nobuyasu Abe, UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations: Mayors for Peace participating in this conference, distinguished guests, let me read the statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

Please accept my best wishes for this Conference of Mayors for Peace commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings.

When the atom was split over Hiroshima and Nagasaki 60 years ago, a dark shadow was cast over our human future. Untold destruction and human suffering were unleashed; more than 100,000 men, women and children were killed instantly, and more than 200,000 more were condemned to horrific and lethal sickness. Global politics were transformed forever. We entered a new and terrifying era in which the annihilation of humankind suddenly loomed as a real possibility. Our mutual vulnerability became inescapable.

And yet, from that shadow a new hope emerged. Recognition of our interdependence ushered in the United Nations and the concept of our

collective security. The link between the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the founding aspirations of the United Nations was quickly manifest: the UN General Assembly, in its very first resolution, declared that our common goal must be the elimination of all weapons 'adaptable to mass destruction.'

Six decades later, the world has been reawakened to nuclear dangers. Nuclear proliferation remains one of the most pressing problems confronting our world. Tens of thousands of nuclear weapons remain, many of them on 'hair-trigger' alert. The emergence of a nuclear black market and attempts by terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons and materials have compounded the nuclear threat.

Today, our challenge -- as it was for the founders of the United Nations - - is to pass on to our children a brighter legacy than that bequeathed to us. We must build a future as envisioned in the UN Charter -- a future 'in larger freedom.' That requires us to continue to work towards a world free of nuclear dangers, and ultimately, free of nuclear weapons. All States must do everything in their power to ensure that the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are not visited on any peoples, anywhere, every again.

I am heartened, therefore, that you, Mayors for Peace, are promoting your vision of a global ban on nuclear weapons by 2020. As representatives of the aspirations of peoples and communities around the world, as a link between the local and the global, you have a crucial role to play.

I hope that in September, when Heads of State and Government convene at the United Nations for one of the largest gatherings of the world leaders ever, they will use the occasion to take bold steps towards realizing your vision. For the sake of succeeding generations, for your communities today, and to honour the memory of the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they must do no less. Thank you.

Akiba: Thank you very much, Ambassador Abe. Now I would like to invite Mr. Tadaomi Saitoh who is the Chairman of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation to read the message we have received from the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture, Yuzan Fujita-san. Mr. Saitoh, please.

Tadaomi Saito, Chairman, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, Hiroshima, Japan:

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the 6th General Conference of Mayors for Peace Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings. I deeply respect the distinguished participants' efforts toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. Since the first atomic bombing in human history on August 6, 1945, we, the citizens of Hiroshima Prefecture, have strongly appealed for the

elimination of nuclear weapons and the realization of lasting world peace.

Although this year marks the 60th anniversary since the end of the Second World War, when we look at the situation in the international community, the road to a nuclear-free world is still rough due to rise of new countries wishing to hold nuclear arsenals and the fact that no concrete measures were produced at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in May of this year.

In addition, various problems arising from a combination of ethnic and religious differences and poverty has made the international situation more complicated and difficult with regional conflicts and rampant terrorism.

To cope with this situation, aside from the efforts towards the abolition of nuclear weapons, Hiroshima Prefecture is promoting peace contribution activities based on “Hiroshima Peace Contribution Plan” under the principle of creating peace, including reconstruction assistance and development of human resources in post-conflict regions, utilizing the knowledge, human resources and facilities accumulated in Hiroshima.

We believe that local authorities can play an important role in establishing peace and stability in the international community by working together with international organizations, national government and NGOs. We will continue to work more actively towards that end.

It is also significant for Hiroshima Prefecture that representatives of cities and NGOs around the world gather here today to engage in wide-ranging discussions, strengthening their solidarity towards the realization of nuclear-free world and lasting world peace. I believe this will be a significant contribution for lasting world peace.

I close my congratulatory remarks with best wishes that this conference will produce most fruitful results for all the participants, as well as the whole global community.

Signed August 4, 2005, Yuzan Fujita, Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture.

We also received many other messages expressing wishes for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and success of the 6th General Conference of Mayors for Peace commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings from Mr. Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, and other mayors who could not attend the conference today.

Akiba: Thank you, Mr. Saitoh. And now it is my pleasure to introduce the speaker of the 60th commemorative address.

The occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings is a solemn one for the City of Hiroshima and on August 9 that of Nagasaki. And we are honored to welcome Senator Douglas Roche to look at the 60 years and outline for us the paths we could take for the coming 60 years.

Douglas Roche or Senator Douglas Roche or Ambassador Douglas Roche, in many different ways he's called, he is now the Chair of the Middle Powers Initiative. Senator Roche served as a member of the Canadian Parliament from 1972 to 1984. He was appointed Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament from 1984 to 1989, and elected Chairman of the United Nations Political and Security, that deals with disarmament, Committee in 1988. He was a Canadian senator from 1998 to 2004. He has also served as Chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative from 1998 to the present. So there is no wonder that many of us who have been associated with disarmament issues consider Senator Roche, Ambassador Roche, as the leading figure in the areas of international disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. In a sense, some people call him "Godfather of Disarmament," and he certainly deserves it. And today he will deliver a speech titled, "Overcoming the Obstacles to a Nuclear Weapons-free World."

Incidentally, let me mention something which I'd like to bring to your attention, that is, we have planned to have three feature speakers during this conference: Senator Roche, Prof. Inoguchi and Miss Walker. All these people actually have played a vital important role in transforming the United Nations for a more effectively democratic body from their own different perspectives, and that, I hope, will become clear as you listen to the speeches of these people.

So with that, I'd like to invite Senator Roche up to the stage. Thank you very much.

Senator Douglas Roche, OC., Chair of Middle Power Initiative, Former Canadian Senator and Ambassador for Disarmament to the UN: Thank you, Mayor Akiba. Mr. Under-Secretary-General Abe, Prof. Mogami, Chairman of this Conference, distinguished mayors and representatives of cities, and dear friends in Hiroshima, as we gather in this historic location to observe the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and then Nagasaki, my first thoughts turn to the hibakusha. I pay my respects to these brave people who have suffered so much and who have taught the world. The stories of the hibakusha must never be lost. Future generations must understand the reality of nuclear weapons. They must continue to learn from these brave people who overcame Armageddon and chose the path of life. The hibakusha rejected retaliation and embraced reconciliation as their guiding force. That is a lesson for the ages.

I also wish to pay my respects, my deepest respects, to Mayor Akiba for his worldwide leadership in building Mayors for Peace into a vibrant organization in the campaign to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The 2020 Vision campaign, articulated so brilliantly by Mayor Akiba, has provided new hope for all those who desire to live in a nuclear weapons-free world. I congratulate the people of Hiroshima for having selected such an outstanding world figure to represent their interests, and I pledge today the continuing support of the Middle Powers Initiative for Mayor Akiba and the Mayors for Peace campaign.

The framework for a nuclear weapons-free world is coming into view, even as the daily news seems discouraging. It is perhaps paradoxical that a light can be seen, by those with vision, even in the darkness of the moment.

My experience tells me that it is reasonable to hope for, and to work for, a world beyond the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As a parliamentarian, a diplomat and an educator, I have worked on nuclear disarmament issues for the past 30 years. I understand the obstinacy and the lassitude of governments all too well. But I have also seen the developments taking place in civil society where increasing numbers of highly informed and deeply committed activists are cooperating with like-minded governments to get things done to improve human security. The Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty, the International Criminal Court and the new surge of government commitment to Official Development Assistance have come about because of civil society's input into the government machinery.

We stand on the threshold of the construction of a viable plan for a nuclear weapons-free world resulting from the active cooperation of knowledgeable leaders of civil society working with those politicians and officials of like-minded governments who truly want to move forward.

The day will arrive when either nuclear weapons abolition takes effect or the world will be devastated by a nuclear attack. *One or the other will take place.* And no person, informed on the gravity of the situation, can deny this.

Dear friends, the eyes of the world are on Hiroshima today. It is our task to ensure that political decision-makers stay focused on solving the problems at the epicenter of Hiroshima. We must have national policies that ban the production, deployment and use of nuclear weapons by all countries in all circumstances for all time. There can be no more equivocation. We must project our message for all to hear: nuclear weapons are immoral, they are illegal and they are the ultimate evil. No civilized person can any longer defend the possession of nuclear weapons. They must be banished from the face of the earth.

We who are assembled here today must gather new energy for our struggle. It is not yet too late to prevent a nuclear catastrophe, which would be the third use of nuclear weapons. But the hour is late. The nuclear weapons States refuse to negotiate the elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Proliferation of nuclear weapons is occurring. Nuclear weapons have become part of war-fighting strategies. Terrorists seek nuclear weapons. The Second Nuclear Age has already begun. This is a message that we must get out to all those who think that the nuclear weapons problems went away with the end of the Cold War.

Let us take heart as we renew our work today. We who stand for the abolition of nuclear weapons are not some isolated minority. Unthinking politicians may try to marginalize us. But we are a part of a growing majority. This is the majority just referred to by Mayor Akiba. An international poll of citizens in 11 countries showed that 86 per cent of people either strongly agree or agree to some extent that all nations should sign a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. In Japan, the figure is 97 per cent of people. The people of Japan want the abolition of nuclear weapons. We must tell the

government of Japan to work harder to obtain what the Japanese people so ardently desire.

In the United States, 76 per cent of people favor a treaty to ban all nuclear weapons. Yet the government of the United States stands today as the biggest obstacle to nuclear disarmament. I make that statement as a Canadian and next-door neighbor to the United States, one who has lived among and loves the American people. Three of my children were born in the United States. But my parliamentary and diplomatic experience has shown me how the present administration of the United States is undermining the rule of law. By refusing to accept today the commitments made in 1995 and 2000 to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the government of the US is weakening the non-proliferation regime. They have the ill-conceived idea that they can reserve to themselves the right to continued possession of nuclear weapons while proscribing their acquisition by other countries.

We must say clearly to the United States: you cannot have a two-class world. You owe it to humanity to work with other countries in a constructive manner to negotiate the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. As Chairman of the Middle Powers Initiative, I approach this work in a positive and a constructive spirit, not one of recrimination. I want to help the US, and the people of the US, understand that together the world community can build the architecture to provide security in a nuclear weapons-free world.

I am announcing today that the Middle Powers Initiative will sponsor an "Article VI Forum" – Article VI, the key article of the Non-Proliferation Treaty calling for nuclear disarmament. We will sponsor this forum for like-minded States to start working on identifying the legal, political and technical requirements for the elimination for nuclear weapons. We will invite the senior representatives of some 30 countries to a special meeting in early October at the United Nations in New York to specify steps that could be taken unilaterally, bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally, to enhance security without relying on nuclear weapons. This process may well produce the outline of how negotiations, as called for in Article VI of the NPT and reinforced by the International Court of Justice, can proceed. A framework for negotiations could be started. The Article VI Forum, with its ongoing work, will, of course, pay attention to non-proliferation issues, but the focus will be principally on nuclear disarmament issues, which are at the true center of the nuclear weapons crisis.

The Middle Powers Initiative cordially invites the government of Japan to join the Article VI Forum. Membership in the Forum, in the opening stages, will be confined to like-minded non-nuclear weapons States. They need to spend some time working together to allow their creativity and commitment to surface in a non-confrontational atmosphere. At some point in the new deliberations, those nuclear weapons States interested in joining a new process to fulfill their Article VI commitments could be invited to join in. I don't know how long this process will take. I only know it must begin.

My dear friends, it is much better to light a candle and show some hope for the world than to curse the darkness. .

All of this work is intended to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty so that negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons will not only be pursued but concluded. I see this work as a direct contribution to the Mayors for Peace campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Convention to come fully into effect by the year 2020. The immediate steps of Mayors for Peace to stimulate productive work at the United Nations First Committee this fall and to get talks started by the year 2006, next year, is highly commendable. I support it. Governments must begin to work together on specific issues leading to nuclear disarmament, as Mayors for Peace has stated. It is the duty of middle power states to lead the way and the Article VI Forum would help them to fulfill this function.

The Middle Powers Initiative work in building some momentum through having like-minded States concentrate on preparing for a nuclear weapons-free world and the Mayors for Peace work in driving the First Committee work forward this fall, go hand in hand. Together, the Middle Powers Initiative and Mayors for Peace can contribute to progress. We can show all the nuclear weapons States that the world can work together in addressing this greatest-of-all security problems. However, the Middle Powers Initiative and Mayors for Peace cannot do this alone. Much will depend on public backing and the political support needed for these new initiatives. A rising public demand for nations to get on with negotiating and implementing a Nuclear Weapons Convention to ban the production and deployment of all nuclear weapons must take hold in the future. The work of Mayors for Peace, with its growing and extensive network around the world, now more than 1,080 mayors, I'm sure that number will double over the next year as a result of the immense energy that the mayors here representing other cities today, along with the leadership here in Japan and Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I'm sure that that is going to be productive. There will be a rolling effect across the world over the next year or two, and this conference marking the 60th anniversary, for the next three days, can build that energy to roll out from this auditorium and this place, to reach communities around the world. That is our challenge, our mission, and that is what we must do in the next three days.

Now it can be expected that one or more of the nuclear weapons States will resist and continue to claim that it still needs nuclear weapons. But such claims will have less and less credibility in a world where the architecture for security without nuclear weapons becomes better understood and where the universal norm against the possession of nuclear weapons is growing in stature.

Dear friends in Hiroshima, let us always remember: we have the historical momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons on our side. The Non-Proliferation Treaty, the International Court of Justice, the votes of the majority of nations are all calling for an "unequivocal undertaking" and systematic progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. The proponents of nuclear weapons have been reduced to the most ridiculous arguments to justify nuclear retention. You know, not only are nuclear weapons immoral and illegal, they are now devoid of any intellectual understanding. Those who defend nuclear weapons should be laughed at, as one day they will be when humanity discovers it has the strength to overcome some merchants of evil. Future generations will look back to our time and say without hesitation that nuclear weapons were an anachronism, the obsession of old men trapped in the past. It will be a source of wonder to future generations how humanity ever tolerated the means to its own mass destruction. We can take power from that thought.

It's our job to work toward this future of enlightenment. The people of the world want us to succeed in building true human security. We must feel confident that we can do the job. We must know that we can respond to our historical calling. We must be forever determined to build a nuclear weapons-free world. Hiroshima gives me that strength and hope.

Thank you.

Akiba: Thank you very much, Senator Roche, for the wonderful, inspiring and invigorating speech, which outlined the path that we should take, the path that will lead us to a nuclear-free world. And I thank you for making it so concise, understandable, and also giving us confidence, and again, with deepest gratitude, with a place that will follow the path, I'd like to ask you to join me in applauding Senator Roche again. Thank you very much. [*applause*]