

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

A-bomb Survivor Testimony

13:00-14:00, Saturday, August 6, 2005

Himawaril

International Conference Center Hiroshima

A-bomb Survivor: **Akihiro Takahashi**

Former Director of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

Minoru Hataguchi, Director, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Hiroshima, Japan: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to Hiroshima. I appreciate your being with us. I am Director of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. My name is Minoru Hataguchi. Sixty years ago, on this day of August 6, Hiroshima was the first citizens and the city to be bombed by the A-bomb. And sixty years ago the city was totally on fire and was totally destroyed. Sixty years ago, my father was also killed by the atomic bombing.

The A-bomb survivors that survived the bombing have been living up until today with great suffering. Mr. Akihiro Takahashi, who will be speaking to you as a testifier, is also one such A-bomb survivor.

Mr. Takahashi experienced the atomic bombing when he was 14 years old, in the courtyard of his junior high school. And from 1954, he has been testifying as an A-bomb survivor, speaking to children visiting Hiroshima, also speaking to many people both in and out of Japan of his experience. In 1979, he became Director of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. He has also received visitors from overseas and has talked about his experience. And in 1991, he received the broadcasters award of NHK. And also, in 2003 he had a dialogue with a pilot of Enola Gay, and this has been also awarded by the Japanese Association of Literature, an essay.

So I hope that you will listen attentively to the testimony by Mr. Akihiro Takahashi now.

Akihiro Takahashi, Former Director of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum: First of all, I'd like to extend a heartfelt welcome to all of you, mayors from all over the world who are participating in the 6th General Conference of Mayors for Peace Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings. My name is Akihiro Takahashi. It is my honor to be introduced to you.

Now, it is only 60 years since the end of World War II, therefore, I would like to vigorously appeal to you for the abolition of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible date. Though 60 years have already passed since the end of World War II, I still feel the need to petition to you to achieve lasting world peace without further delay. No matter how fast time has passed, no matter how many other important things have occurred, the devastation wrought by the Atomic bombing has remained on my mind. Even to this day, the gravity of the day of Atomic bombing remains deep in my memories.

On August 6th, 1945 at 8.15 am, the world's first atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima.

I was 14 years old then and a second year student in junior high school. I was in a playground about 1.4 kilometers away from the hypocenter when the bomb exploded.

At the instant of the explosion, a fireball with a temperature of several million degrees Celsius rose into the sky. The center of the explosion - around the A-bomb dome - was filled with extremely high heat of 3,000 to 4,000 degrees Celsius.

And a shock wave with the pressure of several hundred thousand atmospheres spread in all directions. Following the shockwave was an extremely strong wind. Its maximum instantaneous wind velocity peaked at 440 meters per second.

It is said that those who were 100 to 200 meters from the hypocenter were exposed to radiation of 17 Sieverts, which is 17,000 times as high as the level harmless to the human body.

The compound effects of heat rays, blast and radiation caused A-bomb damage beyond our imagination. Almost the entire city was burnt down to scorched earth and most people within were massacred. I can only say that such an indiscriminate bombing was nothing but a diabolical atrocity, unethical and immoral. According to those that dropped the A-bomb, to win the war, the complete destruction of cities and the massacre of innocent unarmed civilians was justified.

About 350,000 people, including Korean workers brought in forcibly from the Korean Peninsula, U.S. POWs, and students from China and Southeast Asia, encountered the Hiroshima bombing. About 140,000 were dead by the end of 1945. The death toll increased to about 200,000 by the year 1950. As of the end of March 2004, a total of 273,918 atomic bomb survivors still live in Japan. Of these, 83,732 live in Hiroshima City, and 48,749 live in Nagasaki City. In lesser numbers, A-bomb survivors dwell in every prefecture from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south. I am one of these survivors.

Here I would like to show you some slides. There are 44 slides containing pictures and photographs.

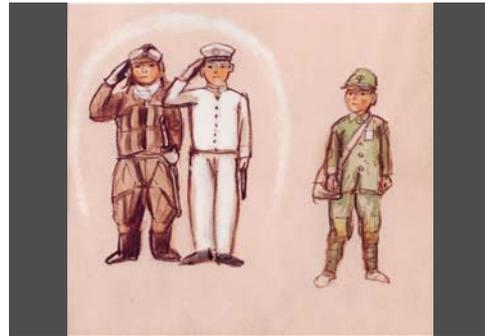
Japan was at war for 15 years. On September 18th, 1931, the Manchurian Incident occurred. This incident is also known as the preliminary skirmish of the Japanese-Chinese war as it led to the Japanese-Chinese War on July 7th, 1937. This series of wars expanded to the Pacific War, which began with Pearl Harbor on December 8th, 1941.



Japan went ahead with a war of aggression against Asian nations such as China, and colonized the Korean Peninsula for 36 years. Japan made a big mistake.

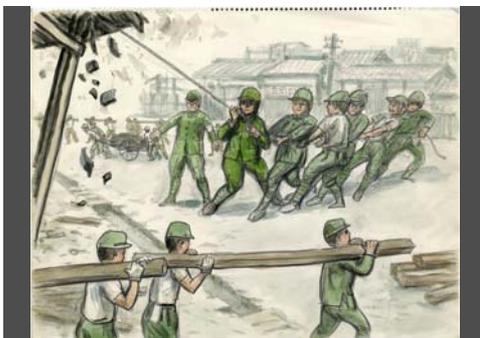
'Go, go, go soldiers!' This is a passage used in a textbook when I was an elementary school child. We received militaristic education using such a textbook during the war.

Most junior high school boys then thought that they would become servicemen when they grew up. I myself really wanted to enlist in the boys' naval air force headquartered in Kasumigaura in Ibaraki Prefecture.



At the center of this slide is the summer uniform consisting of white cap, white jacket with seven buttons, and white trousers. On the left is a uniform for piloting an airplane. They looked very sharp to us at the time. Our school teachers told us that becoming admirable airmen of the naval air force and marching into the enemy's territory to kill as many enemy soldiers as possible were right and necessary things for Japan to win the war - and we believed so, as well.

However, Japan lost the war, and we realized the faults of militarism. Moreover, we learned that Japan caused our Asian neighbors great distress and sorrow. I therefore believe that the basic responsibility of war lies with the Japanese government. Because the Japanese Government started the war... At the same time, however, I, myself, should deeply repent the war fought by Japan as a Japanese who lived through the war, even though I was only a boy at the time. I was taught that killing people was the right thing to do and I believed it. I think having such an idea was totally wrong even though I was taught so, and I now deeply repent this.



During the war, junior high school students and girls in girls' schools were mobilized - rather than studying - to perform demolition work of houses of ordinary citizens by order of the government. This demolition work was continued to prepare vacant lots as evacuation areas in anticipation of air raids by the United States. Residents of the demolished houses had no choice but to give up their houses and

evacuate to the countryside where relatives or acquaintances lived. They were forcibly evicted by government orders.

Just before the A-bomb was dropped on August 6th, an air raid warning and a precautionary warning had been cleared earlier. Feeling safe, we went out onto the playground and waited for the morning assembly to begin. There were about 150 students on the playground, including about 60 classmates of my own. We then saw the US model B-29 airplane approaching, even though the warnings had been already cleared. We never dreamt that this airplane was carrying the A-bomb.



In Hiroshima, the sky was clear in that morning. The B-29 airplane approached just above us leaving a beautiful vapor trail. Believing we were secure and safe, we looked up at the flying airplane while pointing at the sky. Then our teacher came out of the staff room and our class president called out, 'Gather around! Fall in!' At that particular instant, the tragedy happened.



With an incredible noise, complete darkness covered my eyes for a second. Without being able to see an inch ahead of me, I had no idea what had happened. They say there was a flash but I do not remember it. From what I have heard, it was a pale blue light bursting out in all directions, followed by a powerful booming blast.

We were blown away without the least resistance



After a while, I recovered consciousness when the smoke that had covered the playground disappeared and it became light. I had been blown about 10 meters away from where I had been before the explosion, and had fallen hard on the ground. The blast had thrown me there.

I then found that some 150 other students had also been blown in all directions and lay everywhere in the playground. The schoolhouse was flattened to the ground as it was built of wood. Every house and building that had once stood around the school had collapsed because of the blast.



I gazed into the distance but saw no houses - all had disappeared except for a few buildings. Oh, Hiroshima has disappeared, I thought for a moment. Then I looked at my own body. My school uniform had been burned and torn to tatters by the heat rays. At the moment of the A-bomb flash in the sky, my uniform had spontaneously caught fire and burnt down to tatters. That blast peeled the skin right off the back of my head and down to my back, arms, hands, and legs. I could see my own red flesh exposed between tatters of skin burned by the heat ray. Recognizing that I must be in a state similar to the many other students lying around me, I was seized momentarily by panic.



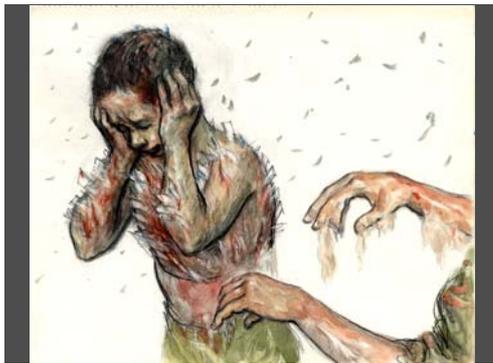
Fleeing to a river at the time of an air raid was what I remember being told during evacuation drills by the teacher. I promptly left the playground to flee to the river.

On my way to the river I heard somebody calling my name from behind. 'Hey, Takahashi, Takahashi, wait for me, wait for me.' I turned around and saw my friend. Tatsuya Yamamoto, calling me -he was my classmate. I used to go to with him every day.



He was just crying, 'Mom, help me, help'. He just kept crying. I told him, 'Don't cry anymore -crying is no use. Get moving instead of crying or we may be in great trouble. We must leave here now.' I scolded him some times and encouraged him at other times. I stayed with him and pulled him along. During the war we wore a cap called a 'combat cap'. My hair remained in the part covered by the cap but heat waves burnt away the hair that was not covered by the cap. Bald spots were left on these spots. The cap was, of course, blown off.

A great number of bombed people were fleeing in procession. Everyone held out their arms with tattered skin dangling from the fingertips. Their clothes were all tattered. Some were almost naked - their skin had peeled off and red flesh was exposed. Everyone was fleeing and they were dragging their feet and staggering barefoot - the sight looked as if it were ghosts walking in procession.



I saw many people in the procession who had been hideously damaged. One was covered with broken glass pieces from the waist up - these glass pieces were window glass, for instance, that had been broken into fragments and scattered by the blast, piercing human bodies. I could see such glass fragments had struck my own body in several places such as my waist and both arms.

One woman was covered in blood with one of her eyeballs hanging out. This had been caused by the blast. A man on the left had been so badly burned above the waist that his skin was peeling from his entire back and burned red flesh was exposed.



There were several dead bodies. Among them I saw a hideously damaged woman's dead body. Her ruptured internal organs were bulging out onto the ground - this had also been caused by the blast.

I also saw a baby lying beside a woman who was apparently the baby's mother. Both were seriously burned - almost their entire skin had peeled off with red flesh exposed. The baby was shrieking. He was still alive. However, we couldn't do anything for the baby as we were just boys.



A horse was dead with its neck in a trough and its skin peeled from its entire body, exposing red flesh. This entire scene was horrible. Words can never describe such a horrible sight.

With such a dreadful sight in front of us, we ran for our lives towards the river. The wreckage of houses destroyed by the blast, however, blocked every lane from the main street to the riverbank. It was impossible to walk there. We therefore desperately climbed over the wreckage of the houses - down on all fours - and finally, reached the riverside.



As soon as we reached the riverside, a fire suddenly broke out all at once in the wreckage of the houses. The fire was spreading rapidly and a tall column of fire rose to the sky with a loud sound and force - just like a volcano erupting. Even now, I can clearly remember how frightened I was. It was very fortunate that we were able to escape the fire. The fire was caused by the

wreckage of houses destroyed by the bomb blast spontaneously catching fire due to the heat rays that flashed for a second up in the sky. Fire being used for cooking breakfasts also combined with this fire. That fire is called a 'super high temperature fire.' Many were trapped beneath destroyed houses with no hope of help reaching them. Since only one or two people could not do anything to save those people. Shortly, the spreading fire quickly reached them and many people had no choice but to leave beloved family members beneath the wreckage to flee the fire. Within two

kilometers from the hypocenter, the fire burned everything combustible including wooden houses.

When crawling down to the riverside, we saw a small bridge that had miraculously remained intact after the blast. That bridge saved our lives.

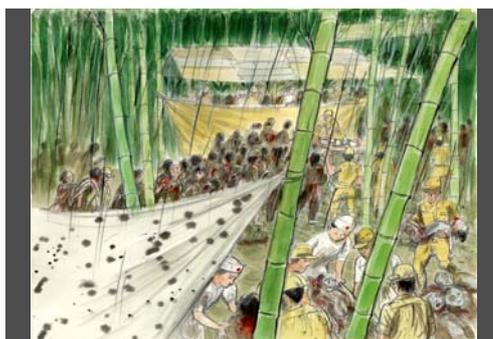


I crossed the bridge to the other side and found that my friend Yamamoto was no longer with me. Later, after I recovered, I heard from his mother that he had been taken to his home by a kind stranger, but died six weeks later on September 16 from acute radiation poisoning. So I crossed the bridge and got to the other side alone.

The opposite bank was 3 kilometers away from the hypocenter, so luckily there was no fire over there. "Oh, I am alive," I thought to myself. And then, I let go. Tears welled up in my eyes for the first time and I couldn't hold them back. At the same time, I felt that my body was getting hot - unbearably hot - so I entered the river and soaked in the water. The cold water felt so good on my burning hot body that it was like a treasure. In reality, however, dead bodies were floating in the river and it looked as if it was hell on earth.



Thousands of people were soaking their bodies in the water like I was, and many of them drank river water, then, were carried away to their deaths.



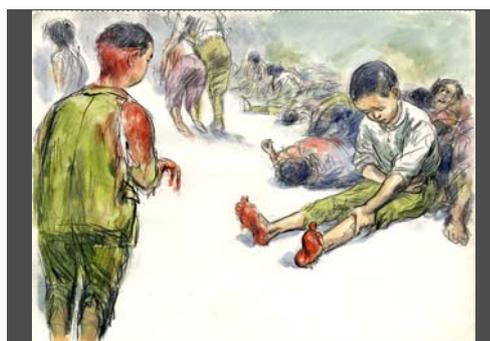
Shortly after, I came out of the river and went to a makeshift relief station made of bamboo taken from the mountains. I received simple treatment and rested there. A number of bombed people were waiting in line for treatment. Suddenly, large black drops of rain began falling. This is what is called 'black rain'.

Black rain is formed when the dust sent to the sky by the blast mixes with the rain. This black rain contains radiation. Some people who were directly exposed to that rain later suffered from radiation sickness. Luckily, I was in a tent at that time so I was not exposed to the rain. Looking at the black rain for the first time in my life, I felt so strange. I gazed at the rain for a moment and wondered if black rain had ever existed on this earth.



I waited until it had stopped raining and then started walking back home by myself. I was anxious, however, whether I could walk more than 6 kilometers to my house by myself after suffering such severe burns.

After walking for a while, I heard somebody calling my name again. 'Takahashi, Takahashi, take me home with you'. It was the moan asking for help. I looked in the direction of the moan and found my classmate, Tokujiro Hatta, crouching at the roadside. We were from the same town and went to the same school together everyday. I looked at his body. The skin had peeled off from the soles of both his feet and the red flesh inside was burned and exposed. It was impossible for Hatta to walk. I said, 'how did you come here?' He said that a kind stranger had carried him on a bicycle and left him there. After a while, I had come by. I was worried about whether I could find a way to help him. He was my classmate from the same town, so I did not want to go home by myself and leave him behind. I wanted to help him some way or another but couldn't find any means. In the midst of misfortune, fortunately he had suffered no severe gashes or burns except for the soles of his feet, so I finally thought of two ideas to help him.



One was for him to crawl on his hands and knees like a cat or dog. This way his feet did not touch the ground.

The other idea was for him to walk on his heels with me supporting his body. By traveling in these two ways alternatively, we traveled towards home very slowly - much slower than a snail's pace while helping each other. It now came as a surprise that I could think of such ideas.



Walking in such a unique manner made us exhausted, so we rested by the roadside. When I happened to turn around, I saw my granduncle and grandaunt approaching. I was overjoyed to see them and called to them at the top of my voice. They were very surprised. They never had the slightest idea that they would meet us in such a place.

They were on their way home from the country where they had been attending a memorial service for their relatives. It was very fortunate that I saw them there by chance.

My granduncle carried me on his back, my grandaunt carried my friend Hatta, and that is how we were finally able to get home. Without their help both of us would have died along the way and I would have had no chance of talking like I am now, before all of you, mayors from different countries.



My friend and I finally reached home on a stretcher that my grandfather brought.

After I got home, my mother cut off my clothes with scissors in order to undress me without the pain I would have experienced if my clothes had brushed against my hands and legs where red flesh was exposed. She dressed me in a new yukata - or summer cotton kimono. I later heard that my friend Hatta had died from acute radiation disorder on August 8th - two days after the bombing.



For one and a half years after that, I received treatment for my burns. Fortunately, one of our acquaintances was a doctor and he visited my house twice a day - in the morning and evening. This doctor, however, was an 'ENT' doctor - an ear, nose and throat doctor. Such doctors could not treat burns – that should be, of course, a surgeon or dermatologist. However, we couldn't ask for much because, with the city area virtually

destroyed, we had neither doctors, nurses, medicines nor food available to us. It is estimated that there were about 300 doctors and about 1,800 nurses in Hiroshima City before the atomic bombing, of whom more than 70 percent were killed by the bombing. I was very lucky to receive treatment from a doctor, regardless of his specialty, because a great number of victims never got any treatment. In this way, I managed to survive - I was really fortunate.

However, treatment was a painful ordeal. The burned area was covered with gauze bandages smeared with medicine. The following day, the doctor came to remove the bandages. Since the summer heat completely dried the gauze, it stuck to the wound. I couldn't stand the extreme pain I felt when it was pulled off. Blood and pus spouted from the affected area. I clearly remember wailing, "Ow! Ow! It hurts! Stop!" My grandfather washed the blood and pus from the gauze just removed, sterilized it by boiling, dried it, and used it the next day. No better treatment was available in postwar Japan due to the scarcity of goods.

Although I have survived, since 1971 I have suffered from chronic hepatitis thought to have been caused by radiation. I have been hospitalized 14 times, and currently I receive shots - injections -three or four times a week. I also suffer from many other diseases. I now receive every kind of treatment except those related to obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, and psychiatry. Every day I'm



anxious and painfully aware of my difficulties and the pains involved with living. In despair, I sometimes wonder why I have to continue to live while suffering this much.

Whenever I yield to despair, however, I encourage myself by saying that I have managed to survive so I should continue to live. And so I have lived thus far.

Scars from burns received at the time remain on many parts of my body. Among them, burns on my right hand and arm were so severe from the right elbow to the fingertips that the skin peeled off and the red flesh inside was exposed and burned. My right elbow has been locked at an angle of 120 degrees since then and I can't move it. My fingers - except for the thumb - remain bent and I cannot move them either.



I have a very hard life because of this. I have keloids on my wrist. Usually a burn heals within a month at the earliest. After this, large lumps of flesh swell on the healed part. That slide shows the state after the keloids were removed from my wrist by a surgical operation.

I have a peculiar black-brown fingernail on my right index finger. A glass fragment propelled by the blast pierced the root of this nail. According to a dermatologist, the glass fragment destroyed the cells that produce the nail. He correctly predicted that this right fingernail would never heal and become a normal fingernail.



The fingernail grows naturally, and it grows so thick and hard that it can't be cut with ordinary nail clippers. I leave it for 2 to 3 years to grow.

Then a crack appears at the root of the nail and it falls off naturally. I have donated those nails to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, where two of my nails are exhibited in a showcase in the bomb blast section.



were damaged in this way.

This slide shows only one of my ears, but both of my ears were crushed. Blood and pus accumulated in both ears and they swelled large with a purple color. The doctor squeezed the blood and pus out of my ears. The blood and pus had rotted the cartilage or soft bones forming the ears. The rotted cartilage was crushed when the blood and pus was squeezed out, so that my ears

These clothes were worn by my friend, Yamamoto, with whom I fled immediately after the bombing. His mother always treasured them as his “remains.” His siblings donated them to the A-bomb museum in June 2003.



The chest of the jacket is burned out, and the front of his pants is burned to shreds. You can see the cloth in of the back. I encountered my friend’s clothes again on August 2, 2004, after 59 years. I was unable to look at them without tears. Why did the US have to mercilessly kill 7,200 innocent mobilized students? Again, I felt a twinge of hatred for the US. However, hatred never destroys

hatred. Where there is hatred, we cannot have peace. However painful, we must overcome our hatred.

This ends the slide presentation.

Out of about 60 classmates of mine at the time, only 14 are still alive. I am one of the few survivors. Nearly 50 of my classmates including Yamamoto and Hatta were cruelly killed by the atomic bomb.

Ever since the war, I have lived thus far pledging that I should never waste their deaths.

I have lived with the conviction that it is the duty and responsibility of those who survived to convey the unheard voices and will of the tremendous number of dead. I live and work on behalf of my dead friends.

Even under the harshest of circumstances, we must never forget to open our hearts to others. We survivors have discussed this among ourselves and have lived since the war with this lesson etched in our minds.

I believe it is clear that the atomic bomb was dropped for experimental purposes. There are three reasons that support my view. First, the United States manufactured two different types of atomic bombs and wanted to compare them in terms of destructive capability. One was the 'little boy' - the uranium type which was dropped on Hiroshima. The other one is the 'fat man' or plutonium type which was dropped on Nagasaki. These two atomic bombs are different models and have different nuclear substances. Secondly, the industrial area and the center of the city where the houses were clustered were targeted by the bomb. In order to overthrow militarism, the killing of a great number of Japanese citizens was necessary. Thirdly, they selected cities that had been hardly damaged by incendiary bombs from air raids. Since then air raids on such cities were banned. These are the three reasons to prove that the atomic bomb was used to experiment with its power and destructive energy.

The US takes the view that dropping the atomic bomb was the right thing because it saved 1 million US officers and men and the Japanese citizens. But I'd like to call to the United States to stop and think. This 1 million lives is only an assumption. The atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed well over 300,000 people. How does the US regard this number of lost lives? Don't we always say that the life of a single person weighs more than the earth?

Nuclear weapons are an absolute evil - we victims of A-bombs object to all war and appeal to the world for the prompt and total abolition of nuclear weapons while overcoming all the grief and hatred we feel as A-bombs victims. Currently, it is said that there are as many as 16,000 nuclear warheads on earth. Of those, 90% are in the US or Russia. It is only the US and Russia that maintain huge arsenals of nuclear weapons. The five nuclear-weapon states, the U.S., Russia, the U.K., France and China, are protected by the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). This contradiction has been allowed by the international community. We, the A-bomb survivors, cannot help but feel strong resentment to such an obviously irrational and unjust situation.

As I expected, the NPT Review Conference in May closed without any concrete result due to the egoism of the five nuclear powers setting priority to national interests, and among others, the unilateralism of the United States.

Nevertheless, no matter how many times we are knocked down, we, the A-bomb survivors, rise again. We will tenaciously continue to appeal and act against wars and work towards the abolition of nuclear weapons up until our last breath.

I urge the five official nuclear-weapon states, especially the United States, not to cling to their national interests, and rather to think seriously about the interests of humankind and to lose no time in meeting their responsibility to international society.

The world is still dominated by a power-oriented philosophy and balance of terror – it endangers the earth towards self-destruction. At this critical moment, I would like to appeal strongly to every city and every citizen in the world to overcome the interstate confrontation and the differences in thoughts and beliefs, and in solidarity with each other, turn showdown to conversation, change distrust to friendship, and strengthen the bond of unity among us, encircle the nuclear-weapon states and press them, “Immediately eliminate nuclear weapons!”

Dear leaders of nuclear-weapon states! If you still insist on maintaining nuclear weapons, you should experience the same suffering we, the A-bomb survivors, were forced to suffer through. Perhaps only after you have experienced first-hand the atrociousness of heat rays and blast, only after you become familiar with the horror of radiation aftereffects, will you understand our honest and desperate plea. Yet, it is our primary desire to prevent another single human being from experiencing such horrors as we did, firsthand. Perhaps it would be enough if you were to merely walk a mile in our shoes, so they say, and honestly attempt to understand the unacceptability of nuclear weapons.

Dear leaders of nuclear-weapon states! Please be aware that if you hesitate today, it could lead to a catastrophe tomorrow. If the leaders of nuclear-weapon states decided to, nuclear weapons could be eliminated in a flash.

Unless we all have respect for international law and order, the world will never know peace. As we have seen in the war in Iraq, no true victory, and certainly no peace, can come from power controlling power. We must value the frameworks built so painstakingly by the nations of the world and be determined to live in peaceful coexistence with other peoples, other religions, and other cultures. I firmly believe that only on that foundation can we build a world of security and prosperity.

The human family is struggling with the negative legacy of the 20th century, including wars, nuclear weapons, terrorism, global warming, famine, refugees, violence, and violations of human rights. If people living in the 21st century fail to deal properly with this negative legacy, the present century may become the last with humans on this Earth. I, myself, now strengthen my determination to live my remaining days in full awareness of my responsibility as a crew member on 'Spaceship Earth.' I would like you to convey my view and wishes to all citizens in all parts of the world.

Thank you very much for your very kind attention. Thank you.

Tadatoshi Akiba, President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor, Hiroshima, Japan: On this occasion, actually in this morning's Peace Declaration, I declared the year beginning today until August 9 next year, the Year of Inheritance, Awakening and Commitment. And to express that in a form that's more understandable, I would like to ask Mr. Takahashi to do one more favor for all of us. Actually, it's by sheer luck that Mrs. Takahashi is extremely good at folding paper cranes, beautiful ones, and she has prepared leis consisting of paper cranes for this conference.

So I'd like to invite the Vice-President Cities representing all of us to accept Mr. and Mrs. Takahashi's gift to this conference. The colors of the lei represent the national colors of your country. So I'd like to call on some of the Vice-President Cities to come up to the podium and receive the lei.

First of all, Mayor Herbert Schmalstieg from Hannover, please. Would you come up the podium? And Mr. Takahashi will place a lei for you.

Let me explain that when Mr. Takahashi visited Hannover, the City of Hannover and Mayor Schmalstieg made a beautiful booklet, this booklet, consisting of the speech you have just heard.

Next, I'd like to invite Mayor Catherine Margate from Malakoff, please. France.

Is Mayor Khan from Manchester here? Oh, you've just come back. Wonderful.

And Councilor Corro from Muntinlupa.

I understand that Mayor Ischenko from Volgograd had to leave, so I would like to move on to the next.

Mayor Gary Moore from Christchurch, please.

And Councilor Agostini from Firenze.

And also to thank those people who gave us inspiring speeches, I'd like to invite Senator Douglas Roche from Canada.

And Ms. Susan Walker. For the speakers we have the simple colors of red and white.

Well, thank you. Thank you very much, everybody. And before Mr. Takahashi leaves us, may I ask you to again thank him for his courage, for his inspiration. Thank you very much.

Takahashi: Thank you very much. Arigato gosaimashita. Thank you very much.