

Statement by MATSUI Kazumi
President of Mayors for Peace and Mayor of Hiroshima
NGO presentations
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I welcome this opportunity to speak on behalf of Mayors for Peace and to commend the efforts made by all those involved in organizing this Preparatory Committee.

79 years ago, atomic bombs caused devastating casualties in Hiroshima and Nagasaki instantly and extensively. The experiences of these cities clearly demonstrate that the use of nuclear weapons will lead to the destruction of humanity, and this truth should be the basis for the abolition of nuclear weapons. We have continued to advocate that nuclear weapons are weapons that must never be used. Despite this, however, with the current international circumstances, we have seen the perception of nuclear weapons drastically shift from weapons that must never be used to weapons that can be used under certain conditions, a shift that we find profoundly concerning.

I ask you: can we truly say that distrusting other countries and continuing to have the upper hand over other countries will keep our own countries safe? And by strengthening nuclear capabilities to achieve this, can we really ensure the safety and security of civil society? Or will this, in fact, only serve to deprive countless innocent citizens of their lives and livelihoods?

Last fiscal year, the number of visitors to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum rose to approximately two million, the highest on record. It is an increased sense of alarm regarding the current international situation that has brought so many visitors to the atomic-bombed city. This sense drives them to once again view the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons. I believe that, moving forward, the number of peace-loving members of civil society who renounce all forms of violence, be it war, conflict, discrimination, or prejudice, will only continue to grow.

The voice of civil society, which chooses and supports its policymakers, must not be discounted. For over 40 years, Mayors for Peace has remained steadfast in our assertion to the world that nuclear weapons are inhumane and continues to call for their abolition alongside our over 8,400 member cities around the world. Honored global representatives, trust in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world. I implore you, now more than ever, to reconsider your support for arms races and for strengthening nuclear capabilities immediately and instead, adopt diplomatic efforts through dialogue and advance concrete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures. It is my sincerest hope that I will see each of you taking initiatives in good faith. Thank you.