

Mayors for Peace

(Statement by SUZUKI Shiro, Vice President of Mayors for Peace and Mayor of Nagasaki)

Chairman, distinguished delegates, and leaders of civil groups, I am SUZUKI Shiro, Mayor of Nagasaki. I would like to express my respect to everyone who has worked tirelessly to organize this meeting, as well as my gratitude for being allowed the opportunity to address you all as Vice-President of Mayors for Peace.

Hiroshima, 8:15 a.m., August 6, 1945.

Nagasaki, 11:02 a.m., August 9, 1945.

By the end of December that year, the estimated death toll from the atomic bombings of the two cities was over 210,000.

This death toll represents the extent of each and every precious life that was lost. Although it was during a time of war, people were going about their daily lives, no different than ours, with their families, friends, and colleagues until the moment the atomic bombs were dropped.

The atomic bomb instantly and indiscriminately took away the lives these civilians had, including the lives of women, children, and the elderly. The *hibakusha*, who narrowly survived, developed symptoms such as leukemia and cancer years or decades later. They continue to suffer from the effects of radiation and are worried about their health to this day.

Atomic bombs are cruel weapons that mercilessly rob people of the sanctity of living a decent life.

The *hibakusha*, who know this all too well, have continued to appeal to the world that “humans and nuclear weapons can never co-exist” by sharing their first-hand experiences.

As we approach 79 years from the atomic bombings, and amid the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine and military conflict in the Middle East, reliance on nuclear weapons is deepening and the nuclear arms race is accelerating.

Do the appeals of the *hibakusha* not seem to be in vain as the world is heading towards a more dangerous state?

Should a nuclear war break out, besides the obvious direct impact of the nuclear explosions, the blasts would scatter dust and smoke into the air, blocking sunlight from reaching the Earth's surface, which would cause global temperatures to drop, creating a "nuclear winter" that would lead to a food shortage. As a result, it is said that billions of people would die from famine, posing an existential threat to humankind.

With a strong sense of impending crisis, I would like to appeal to every nation, including the nuclear weapon states:

"Nuclear weapons must never be used. The only way for humanity to avoid the risk of nuclear weapons is to abolish them."

It is my earnest hope that during this Preparatory Committee, state parties will engage in positive discussion based on the perspective of human security and that this meeting will lead to an effective pathway towards nuclear disarmament at the upcoming NPT Review Conference in 2026.

Furthermore, I call on the United States and Russia to negotiate a new arms control framework to replace the New START Treaty that will expire in February 2026.

I would like to close my statement by sharing with the world the following common aspiration of humankind:

"Make Nagasaki the last wartime atomic bombing site."

Thank you.