



## Mayors for Peace

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### Secretariat

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### Message from the President of Mayors for Peace

It is an honor and a pleasure to send this message on the occasion of Flag Day in Bochum.

On August 6, 1945, a single atomic bomb destroyed our city, claiming countless innocent civilian lives. Having experienced the tragedy of the bombing, Hiroshima continuously appeals for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons based on the hibakusha's conviction: "No one else should suffer as we have."

However, we currently see self-centered nationalism in ascendance, promulgated by world leaders and in particular those of nuclear superpowers, and tensions heightened by international exclusivity and rivalry. These trends, which seem to trivialize our appeals for peace, are on the rise: the continued intensification of self-centered nationalism as humanity faces its newest threat, COVID-19, serves as case in point.

Despite this, the world is currently working together to tackle the pandemic; proof that we are capable of responding to such a threat. In much the same way, I believe that the people of the world will be able to overcome the threat posed to humankind by nuclear weapons through coming together under the principles common to us all and remaining steadfast in our opposition. As the number of people who can speak of the horrors of these weapons from experience declines, it becomes increasingly important to pass their earnest wish for peace on to the next generation, establish as a shared value in civil society the idea that nuclear weapons and war should not exist, and make every effort towards realizing lasting world peace.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which went into effect 50 years ago, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which entered into force this year, are both critical to eliminating nuclear weapons. They comprise a framework that we must pass on to future generations, yet their future is opaque. For world leaders to strengthen their determination to ensure this framework functions effectively, it is vital that we create an environment that steers them towards transforming policy: we must continue to raise awareness of peace in civil society to generate a groundswell towards peace and nurture international public opinion for nuclear abolition. It is therefore truly significant that you have come together and organized this event to call for a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons and I extend to you my deepest respect.

After the atomic bombing, when the Memorial Cathedral of World Peace was built in Hiroshima City as a place to mourn the victims of the bombing and to pray for the realization of world peace, four Peace Bells from Bochum were donated to the Cathedral. The bells, cast with a prayer for peace, toll in Hiroshima to this day. I would like to ask all of you in Bochum to act in solidarity with over 8,000 Mayors for Peace member cities in 165 countries and regions around the world, as we strive to eliminate the absolute evil that is nuclear weapons and realize lasting world peace.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the great success of Flag Day in Bochum as well as the good health and happiness of all in attendance.

July 8, 2021

MATSUI Kazumi  
President of Mayors for Peace  
Mayor of Hiroshima