

# Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Declarations

Saturday 13 August 2011, by [MATSUI Kazumi](#), [TAUE Tomihisha](#) (Date first published: 9 August 2011).

## Contents

- [Hiroshima: Peace Declaration](#)
- [Nagasaki Peace Declaration \(...\)](#)

## Hiroshima: Peace Declaration

### August 6, 2011

Sixty-six years ago, despite the war, the people of Hiroshima were leading fairly normal lives. Until that fateful moment, many families were enjoying life together right here in what is now Peace Memorial Park and was then one of the city's most prosperous districts. A man who was thirteen at the time shares this: "August fifth was a Sunday, and for me, a second-year student in middle school, the first full day off in a very long time. I asked a good friend from school to come with me, and we went on down to the river. Forgetting all about the time, we stayed until twilight, swimming and playing on the sandy riverbed. That hot mid-summer's day was the last time I ever saw him."

The next morning, August sixth at 8:15, a single atomic bomb ripped those normal lives out by the roots. This description is from a woman who was sixteen at the time: "My forty-kilogram body was blown seven meters by the blast, and I was knocked out. When I came to, it was pitch black and utterly silent. In that soundless world, I thought I was the only one left. I was naked except for some rags around my hips. The skin on my left arm had peeled off in five-centimeter strips that were all curled up. My right arm was sort of whitish. Putting my hands to my face, I found my right cheek quite rough while my left cheek was all slimy."

Their community and lives ravaged by an atomic bomb, the survivors were stunned and injured, and yet, they did their best to help each other: "Suddenly, I heard lots of voices crying and screaming, 'Help!' 'Mommy, help!' Turning to a voice nearby I said, 'I'll help you.' I tried to move in that direction but my body was so heavy. I did manage to move enough to save one young child, but with no skin on my hands, I was unable to help any more. ...'I'm really sorry.' ..."

Such scenes were unfolding not just here where this park is but all over Hiroshima. Wanting to help but unable to do so—many also still live with the guilt of being their family's sole survivor.

Based on their own experiences and carrying in their hearts the voices and feelings of those sacrificed to the bomb, the *hibakusha* called for a world without nuclear weapons as they struggled day by day to survive. In time, along with other Hiroshima residents, and with generous assistance from Japan and around the world, they managed to bring their city back to life.

Their average age is now over 77. Calling forth what remains of the strength that revived their city, they continue to pursue the lasting peace of a world free from nuclear weapons. Can we let it go at this? Absolutely not. The time has come for the rest of us to learn from all the *hibakusha* what they experienced and their desire for peace. Then, we must communicate what we learn to future

generations and the rest of the world.

Through this Peace Declaration, I would like to communicate the *hibakusha* experience and desire for peace to each and every person on this planet. Hiroshima will pour everything we have into working, along with Nagasaki, to expand Mayors for Peace such that all cities, those places around the world where people gather, will strive together to eliminate nuclear weapons by 2020. Moreover, we want all countries, especially the nuclear-armed states, including the United States of America, which continues its subcritical nuclear testing and related experiments, to pursue enthusiastically a process that will abolish nuclear weapons. To that end, we plan to host an international conference that will bring the world's policymakers to Hiroshima to discuss the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The Great East Japan Earthquake of March eleventh this year was so destructive it revived images of Hiroshima 66 years ago and still pains our hearts. Here in Hiroshima we sincerely pray for the souls of all who perished and strongly support the survivors, wishing them the quickest possible recovery.

The accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and the ongoing threat of radiation have generated tremendous anxiety among those in the affected areas and many others. The trust the Japanese people once had in nuclear power has been shattered. From the common admonition that "nuclear energy and humankind cannot coexist," some seek to abandon nuclear power altogether. Others advocate extremely strict control of nuclear power and increased utilization of renewable energy.

The Japanese government should humbly accept this reality, quickly review our energy policies, and institute concrete countermeasures to regain the understanding and trust of the people. In addition, with our *hibakusha* aging, we demand that the Japanese government promptly expand its "black rain areas" and offer more comprehensive and caring assistance measures to all *hibakusha* regardless of their countries of residence.

Offering our heartfelt condolences to the souls of the A-bomb victims, reaffirming our conviction that "the atomic bombing must never be repeated" and "no one else should ever have to suffer like this," we hereby pledge to do everything in our power to abolish nuclear weapons and build lasting world peace.

**MATSUI Kazumi**

Mayor

The City of Hiroshima

<http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/declaration/English/2011/index.html>

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## **Nagasaki Peace Declaration 2011**

This March, we were astounded by the severity of accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station operated by the Tokyo Electric Power Company, Inc., after the occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake and ensuing tsunami. With some of the station's reactors exposed to the open air due to explosions, no residents are now to be found in the communities surrounding the station. There is no telling when those who have been evacuated because of the radiation can return home.

As the people of a nation that has experienced nuclear devastation, we continued the plea of “No More *Hibakusha!*” How has it come that we are threatened once again by the fear of radiation?

Have we lost our awe of nature? Have we become overconfident in the control we wield as human beings? Have we turned away from our responsibility for the future? Now is the time to discuss thoroughly and choose what kind of society we will create from this point on.

No matter how long it will take, it is necessary to promote the development of renewable energies in place of nuclear power in a bid to transform ourselves into a society with a safer energy base.

Many people once believed the myth of the safety of nuclear power plants, from some moment in the past to the occurrence of the nuclear power station accident in Fukushima.

What about the more than 20,000 nuclear weapons in the world?

Do we still believe that the world is safer thanks to nuclear deterrence? Do we still take it for granted that no nuclear weapons will ever be used again? Now seeing how the radiation released by an accident at just a single nuclear power station is causing such considerable confusion in society, we can clearly understand how inhumane it is to attack people with nuclear weapons.

We call upon all people in the world to simply imagine how terrifying it would be if a nuclear weapon hundreds of times more powerful than the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombs were to be exploded in the sky above our cities.

While intense heat rays would melt human beings and anything else nearby, horrific blast winds would fling buildings through the air and crush them instantly. A countless number of charred bodies would be scattered among the ruins. Some people would hover between life and death, while others would suffer from their injuries. Even if there were survivors, the intense radioactivity would prevent any rescue efforts. Radioactive substances would be carried far away by the wind to all corners of the world, resulting in widespread contamination of the earth’s environment, and in affecting people with a plague of health effects for generations to come.

We must never allow anyone in the future to experience such agony. Nuclear weapons are never needed. No reason can ever justify human beings possessing even one nuclear weapon.

In April 2009, President Barack Obama of the United States of America stated in his speech in Prague, the Czech Republic, that the U.S. will seek “a world without nuclear weapons.” Such a concrete goal presented by the most powerful nuclear weapons state raised expectations all over the world. While some positive results have certainly been achieved, such as the conclusion of an agreement between the U.S. and Russia on the reduction of nuclear weapons, no significant progress has been observed since. In fact, there has even been a regressive trend, such as the implementation of new nuclear simulation tests.

We call for U.S. President Obama to demonstrate his leadership toward realizing “a world without nuclear weapons,” and to never disappoint the people in the atomic-bombed cities or anywhere throughout the world.

The time has come for international society, including the nuclear weapons states of the U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China, to launch efforts toward the conclusion of the Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC), which aims for complete abolishment of all nuclear weapons. As the government of the only nation to have endured atomic bombings, the Japanese government must strongly promote such efforts.

We urge once again that the Japanese government act in accordance with the ideals of peace and renunciation of war prescribed in the Japanese Constitution. The government must work on enacting the Three Non-Nuclear Principles into law and establishing the Northeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone to ensure complete denuclearization of Japan, South Korea and North Korea. The Japanese government must also enhance relief measures that correspond with the reality for aging atomic bomb survivors.

This year, at the United Nations Office in Geneva, the city of Nagasaki will exhibit materials concerning the catastrophes of the atomic bombings, in cooperation with the United Nations, the Japanese government and the city of Hiroshima. We hope that many people around the world learn about the atrocity and cruelty of the devastation by the atomic bombings.

We encourage all of you who seek “a world without nuclear weapons” to also organize an atomic bombing exhibition, even if it is a small-scale event, in your own cities in cooperation with Nagasaki. We look forward to photography panels of the atomic bombings being exhibited in streets all over the world. It is our hope that you join hands with people from the atomic-bombed cities and extend the circle of peace so all people can live a humane life.

On August 9, 1945 at 11:02 a.m., Nagasaki was destroyed by an atomic bomb. From the ruins, we have accomplished our restoration as a city of peace. We hope that people in Fukushima will never give up and that people in the affected areas of eastern Japan never forget that across the world are friends who will always be behind them. We sincerely hope that the affected areas will be restored and that the situation with the nuclear power plant accident settles down as soon as possible.

We offer our sincere condolences on the deaths of all the victims of the atomic bombings and the Great East Japan Earthquake, and together with the city of Hiroshima, pledge to continue appealing to the world for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

**Tomihisa Taue**

Mayor of Nagasaki

August 9, 2011

<http://www1.city.nagasaki.nagasaki.jp/peace/english/appeal/>

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