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Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima

It is an honor and a pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the World Peace Pageant 2017 with the theme “Messages which Kaz, an atomic bomb survivor, left for us.”

First, let me mention the late Ms. Kazue Sueishi, to whom this year’s World Peace Pageant is dedicated. As President of the American Society of Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-Bomb Survivors, Ms. Sueishi worked tirelessly over many years to support survivors living in the United States, and also contributed greatly in disseminating the reality of the bombing through offering her testimonies. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and respect for her dedication and pray for her eternal repose.

On August 6, 1945, a single atomic bomb was unleashed on Hiroshima. This “absolute evil,” instantly searing the entire city, slaughtered children, the elderly and many other innocent people regardless of nationality or creed. By the end of the year, 140,000 precious lives were taken. Those who managed to survive suffered the aftereffects of radiation, encountered discrimination and prejudice, and still carry deep scars in their minds and bodies.

Seventy-two years later, 15,000 nuclear weapons remain, individually much more destructive than the one that inflicted Hiroshima’s tragedy, collectively enough to destroy the Earth itself. Given this reality, we must take to heart the message of Hiroshima, unify in passion and take further action in order to clear the path toward a world free from that “absolute evil,” that ultimate inhumanity. We must respect diverse values and strive persistently toward a world where all people are truly “living together.”

When then President Obama visited Hiroshima last May as the first sitting U.S. president to do so, he heeded the *hibakusha*’s heartfelt plea that “no one else should ever suffer as we have.” Declaring, “... among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them,” he reaffirmed his commitment to work for nuclear abolition.

A future without nuclear weapons will be realized through passion shown by policymakers and everyone else and concrete action taken with a sense of unity based on a shared wish for peace. In this sense, it is truly significant that the World Peace Pageant is held again this year to call for a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons and I extend my deepest respect to all those involved.

The City of Hiroshima, together with over 7,400 Mayors for Peace member cities from 162 countries and regions, intends to solidify the unity of people around the world and demonstrate our passion in strengthening international momentum for nuclear abolition.

I would like to ask all of you to continue to strive with us to eliminate the absolute evil of nuclear weapons and to realize a peaceful world.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the good health and happiness of all concerned.

August 4, 2017

MATSUI Kazumi
Mayor
The City of Hiroshima