

## Message from the Mayor of Hiroshima

It is an honor and pleasure to send this message on the occasion of the Bay Area Japanese Peace Lantern Ceremony.

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was reduced to ashes by a single atomic bomb. The houses we came home to, our everyday lives, the customs we cherished—all were gone. From newborns to grandmothers, by the end of the year, 140,000 precious lives were taken from Hiroshima.

Our *hibakusha* experienced the bombing in flesh and blood. Then, they had to live with aftereffects and social prejudice. Even so, they soon began telling the world about their experience. Transcending rage and hatred, they revealed the utter inhumanity of nuclear weapons and worked tirelessly to abolish those weapons. Last summer, in order to convey their hardship, their grief, their pain, and their selfless desire throughout the whole world, Hiroshima began carefully training official *hibakusha* successors who would seek to inherit and pass on survivors' experience and desire. Determined never to let the atomic bombing fade from memory, we intend to share with ever more people the desire for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

A general conference of Mayors for Peace, whose membership exceeds 5,600 cities, is currently being held in Hiroshima. The following spring, Hiroshima will host a ministerial meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative comprising ten non-nuclear-weapon states, including Japan. Through these and other international conferences as well as a wide variety of peace events, we believe that we can communicate the *hibakusha* desire at home and abroad.

In this sense, we are deeply grateful that you are calling for peace through your commemorative event held in Berkley, a member city of Mayors for Peace. I would like to ask all of you to make Hiroshima's cause your own and strive with us toward lasting world peace for humankind.

In closing, I offer my warmest wishes for the success of the Bay Area Japanese Peace Lantern Ceremony as well as continued good health and prosperity for all involved.

August 4, 2013

MATSUI Kazumi  
Mayor  
The City of Hiroshima