

Commitment to Peace

August 6, 2024

Close your eyes and imagine:

a beautiful city of verdant green, a shopping street full of people, smiling faces across the town.
Hiroshima 79 years ago was filled with people living colorful day-to-day lives, much like today.

On 8:15 am on August 6, 1945,

there was a great, eardrum-splitting roar
and a vermillion cloud tinged with black rose into the sky.

People and plants alike were blackened in the blaze and the city was drowned in cries for help and tears of despair.

In the words of one *hibakusha*, Hiroshima on that day was hell on earth.

The atomic bomb stole the color from their lives and turned Hiroshima into a world of ash gray.

My great grandmother was a *hibakusha*, but she never spoke of that day.

Sorrowful memories, too painful to put into words, still continue to torment many of the *hibakusha* today, 79 years later.

Even now, wars continue to plague the planet.

Around the world, those who didn't want to die are dying,
and people are losing loved ones who were supposed to be there with them day after day,
much the same as it was 79 years ago.

Is there really no other way?

Peace will not come from prayers alone.

It is up to us to protect our colorful day-to-day lives and build peace.

Listening carefully to others,

viewing differences as a good thing and reconsidering your perspective,
cooperating with friends to accomplish a goal:

these are all steps that each of us can take toward peace.

Now is the time for us to learn about and experience Hiroshima together.

Visit the Peace Memorial Museum, listen to the words of the *hibakusha*,
and discuss the preciousness of peace and the importance of life with family and friends.

Here, we take one step forward to world-changing peace.

Children's representatives:

Kato Akira (6th year, Hiroshima City Gion Elementary School)

Ishimaru Yuto (6th year, Hiroshima City Yahata-Higashi Elementary School)