

Commitment to Peace

August 6, 2008

8:15 a.m., August 6, 1945.

Countless precious lives were lost in a sudden, intense flash and blast.

Sixty-three years have passed, but the children who were out demolishing buildings and working in factories that day still have not returned. Just like us, they left the house every day with “See you later!” and came back with “I’m home!” But in an instant, even this ordinary, daily routine was snatched away by the atomic bombing.

The atomic bombing also torments people who managed to survive it.

People suddenly fall ill due to the effects of radiation.

People shut their hearts, unwilling to remember that day.

People who lost their beloved family and friends are tortured by the question, “Why did *I* survive?”

But our generation lives because these people survived. We live because of the peaceful city they built us. Now, we want to say “thank you” to these survivors, from the bottom of our hearts.

We think that year by year, vital memories of the atomic bombing and anger toward nuclear weapons are fading from people’s hearts. However, war and violence that steal lives are not concepts from a distant past.

At this very moment, infants and adults and children our age alike are losing their lives to territorial struggles and religious differences.

Considering the magnitude of the lives lost, we cannot speak of peace without knowing the facts.

If nobody knows the facts, the same mistakes will be made again and again, and those who were wounded and died in war will have their wish for peace snuffed out. So, we will start by knowing, thinking about and learning from the reality of what happened in Hiroshima, and conveying this reality to many people, in order to create a peaceful world by the time we are grown up.

We want great numbers of people from around the world to come to Hiroshima, site of the Peace Memorial Ceremony and place of profound prayer. We want people to understand the message of Hiroshima and the nature of war, and experience the preciousness of peace for themselves.

Now, we want people to listen to the voice of the children who wish for peace.

Keep watching, everyone.

We will learn from the reality of atomic bombing and war.

We will transmit the spirit of Hiroshima to the next generation.

And we pledge to convey a message of peace to people throughout the world.

Children’s Representatives

Honoka Imai (sixth grade, Hiroshima City Noboricho Elementary School)

Sota Hondo (sixth grade, Hiroshima City Yoshijima-higashi Elementary School)