

## COMMITMENT TO PEACE

Hiroshima is commemorating its first Peace Memorial Day of the 21st century.

On this day in 1945, the searing flames and crushing blast of a single atomic bomb stole the smiles from children's faces and all the pleasures of happy homes. The screams of mothers clutching their babies and running blindly were ignored as Hiroshima became a hell on Earth, filled with the injured, the fallen, and the many who died crying for help.

A half-century later, we studied how the people of Hiroshima, as their charred and blackened trees put out small but determined green sprouts, arose from the rubble, overcame their pain and grief, and restored the beautiful city we live in today.

Having learned the history of Hiroshima, what must we, the children of the new age, do to build a peaceful world?

Just as Sadako Sasaki folded her paper cranes one by one with prayers for peace, we must work continually to solve our own problems, one by one. We must create small havens of peace around us, bound by strong threads of empathy and mutual understanding. We must deepen these bonds with friends throughout the world, sustaining courage and creating the desire for peace. Meeting these challenges without faltering is our duty as children of Hiroshima.

Nuclear weapons still exist. Local conflicts and environmental destruction continue. We are the ones who will determine the course of life on Earth in the 21st century.

Our beautiful, life-giving planet. To protect our Earth, we promise to study more deeply the horror of the atomic bomb and the unyielding strength of our forebears in Hiroshima who lived in the 20th century. We will learn to tell the stories and pass them on. Above all, we vow to work hard to spread the desire for peace around the world and make the 21st a century of peace.

August 6, 2001

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