**Chairperson Nagata’s Speech**

Your Excellencies and Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Masanori Nagata, Chairperson of the Hiroshima City Council. Although I am not very used to doing this, please allow me to address you in English. I hope you will kindly bear with me. First of all, I would like to thank you for inviting me to this meeting, and for sparing me your precious time.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to express my most profound gratitude to all the ambassadors and other diplomats who travel so far to Hiroshima to attend the Peace Memorial Ceremony that my city holds every year on August 6. Thank you so much for your support.

It was, in fact, on the eve of the Peace Memorial Ceremony during a welcome reception for ambassadors and other distinguished guests that I was first motivated to give this presentation. When I was conversing with our guests about peace, I was struck with the feeling that Mayors for Peace, an organization presided over by the mayor of Hiroshima and comprised of over 7,500 cities world-wide that work together towards the goal of nuclear weapons abolition and lasting world peace, would be strengthened if we were able to increase the number of member cities from African countries even just a little.

So far, I have paid visits to the Embassies of the Republic of Angola, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Zimbabwe, and the State of Eritrea, where I was warmly welcomed and afforded the time to address those ambassadors, who listened earnestly to what I had to say.

Through these conversations, I came to know about the monthly meetings of the African Block Ambassadors. And upon enquiring as to the possibility of addressing the meeting, Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Mr. Estifanos Afeworki, willingly approved.

Based on our unwavering conviction that a repetition of the unprecedented tragedy that befell Hiroshima would be unforgiveable, the Hiroshima City Council continues to appeal for Hiroshima’s wish; that of nuclear weapons abolition and lasting world peace.

Last year, when the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted at the United Nations, the Hiroshima City Council made our resolve clear to all those concerned both at home and abroad through actions such as issuing to the government a unanimously approved statement calling for the early entry-into-force of the Treaty.

Upon listening to today’s explanation, I ask for your understanding regarding Hiroshima and Mayors for Peace member cities’ wishes for nuclear abolition and lasting world peace, and ask for your support in urging cities in your own countries to join as members.

Thank you for your kind attention.