

Statement by Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui
Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference
New York, USA
May 1, 2019

As Mayor of Hiroshima, I appeal to all delegations to respect, in your proceedings, the heartfelt wishes of the *hibakusha* for a world without nuclear weapons. Carrying the burden of unbearable sorrow caused by the atomic bombing, they continue to warn us of the devastating danger of nuclear weapons expressed by their deep humanitarian conviction that “No one else shall ever again suffer as we have.” It was in this spirit that they wholeheartedly welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017. They are now anxious to see the Treaty enter into force as soon as possible and concrete progress to be achieved in nuclear disarmament. UN Secretary-General Guterres’ disarmament agenda, in this regard, is a source of encouragement.

Yet today we see disturbing trends, including the recent intention of the US and Russia to terminate the INF Treaty. Also, the global security system remains based on the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and the nuclear-armed states keep modernizing their arsenals, rather than implementing their NPT Article VI disarmament obligations.

In my role as President of Mayors for Peace, I ask you to exert all efforts to change these negative trends. Mayors for Peace is a global network of mayors working to guarantee the safety and welfare of their citizens. Inspired by the wishes of the *hibakusha*, we are working on two key objectives: “Realization of a world without nuclear weapons” and “Realization of safe and resilient cities”—the two paths that will lead us to lasting world peace. We are committed to making our cities safer and better places, where all citizens regardless of their background feel at home, and where people with diverse backgrounds respect and cooperate with each other in harmony like orchestra. We are therefore against any use of nuclear weapons, which would ruin such intensive efforts and bring about catastrophic consequences.

The current negative trends surrounding nuclear weapons are confronting the global community with the grave danger that such weapons might be used again. We must address this crisis immediately. I ask all delegations—especially those representing the nuclear-armed states—to recall that past nuclear disarmament measures were undertaken by courageous political leaders who reached out even at times of great tension. We therefore ask all delegations to agree on measures to stop nuclear arms race, seek innovative solutions, and exercise bold initiatives to turn the confrontational security environment into one of cooperative security. Increased confidence built through such joint efforts can lead to further progress in disarmament. On our part, Mayors for Peace will spare no efforts to work with our diverse partners to support those political leaders willing to pursue such goals. We are determined to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in civil society, recognizing that past disarmament achievements have rested on a solid foundation of public support.

All NPT parties are under the obligation of Article VI to pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in our view, is also in line with Article VI of the NPT. We therefore encourage all delegations now in this session to make the 2020 NPT Review Conference a success by engaging in earnest dialogue that transcends differences and to agree on innovative solutions to advance concrete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures.