

## COMMITMENT TO PEACE

When we look at Hiroshima today, we see an attractive city surrounded by water and greenery. We see a cheerful city filled with smiling faces.

On that day, a single atomic bomb turned this city into a hell on Earth, taking countless precious lives, stealing cherished relatives, destroying hopes and dreams, burning everything to ashes.

Fifty-seven years later, Hiroshima is wonderfully revived. The war and the atomic bombing took away lives, dreams, loved ones—everything. But those left behind rebuilt a beautiful city by transforming past hatred into hope and the courage to live for tomorrow.

Yet war and terrorism continue to plague our Earth. Nuclear testing continues. War and terrorism, “you hit me so I’ll hit you,” this cycle of grief and suffering gives rise to nothing but mutual hatred. Though beyond hatred we see only annihilation....

Peace means helping each other to live in true security. To create peace, we must never allow bullying in our presence. To create peace, we must seek to understand our friends. We must have the courage to stand and say that wrong is wrong. If each of us can make these small changes in ourselves, we will eventually create a truly peaceful world.

Arising from the ash and rubble, our grandfathers and grandmothers continued to carry the light, refusing to allow life in Hiroshima to be extinguished. Now, as relay runners for peace, we grasp firmly the baton of life, committing ourselves to tell the stories and pass on the knowledge about the horror of war and the atomic bombing and the sanctity of peace. We pledge ourselves to be peacemakers, creating small circles of peace around us, then linking our circles to others around the world and to future generations, leading ultimately to the great circle of world peace.

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