



## Mayors for Peace

### Secretariat

c/o Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, 1-5 Nakajima-cho, Naka-ku, Hiroshima 730-0811 JAPAN  
E-mail: [mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp](mailto:mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp) Website: [www.mayorsforpeace.org](http://www.mayorsforpeace.org)

### Message from the President of Mayors for Peace

It is both my honor and pleasure to send this message on the occasion of “Balkan Forum on Nuclear Disarmament”

Seventy-eight years ago in the summer, without warning, the first atomic bomb was dropped and detonated over humanity. It exploded over the citizens of Hiroshima just 600 meters above ground. The horrific heat rays and blast claimed countless precious and innocent lives and everyday life vanished violently into scenes from hell. To this day, the lives of the *hibakusha*, survivors, are still impaired by the adverse effects of radiation on their minds and bodies.

In the present, the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to fuel the notion that nuclear deterrence is the only way to maintain peace. To accept such a notion is to accept the status quo, abandon the ideal of peace maintained without military force, and threaten the very survival of the human race. Above all, entrusting a button of nuclear weapon to any world leader is to sanction continued threats of nuclear weapons to humanity and the potential re-creation of the hellscape of August 6, 1945. We must immediately render all buttons of nuclear weapons meaningless.

With the *hibakusha*'s will for peace at our core, Mayors for Peace will continue striving toward nuclear weapons abolition, however arduous the path, rather than treating a world without nuclear weapons like a distant dream. In this process, we must realize the ideal of a civil society in which each and every citizen shares the conviction that happy lives require an end to war, an end to armed conflict, and an end to life-threatening social discrimination. It therefore is truly meaningful that you have organized “Balkan Forum on Nuclear Disarmament,” and I extend to you my deepest respect.

The membership of Mayors for Peace, a global network of peace-seeking cities around the world, has now grown to more than 8,200 member cities. We, too, will never stop in our mission to promote the culture of peace that rejects all forms of violence and to encourage policymakers to pursue foreign policy through dialogue without relying on nuclear deterrence. To that end, I hereby invite all municipalities that are not yet members of Mayors for Peace, including Tirana, to join the network. I would also like to ask all in attendance today to act in solidarity with us as we strive to eliminate nuclear weapons and realize lasting world peace.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for the great success of this event, as well as the good health and happiness of all in attendance.

August 25, 2023

MATSUI Kazumi  
President of Mayors for Peace  
Mayor of Hiroshima