

**Summary of Speech by Hidehiko Yuzaki,
Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture**

**May 16, 2013
Grand Prince Hotel Hiroshima, Japan**

[Acknowledgment]

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Hidehiko Yuzaki, and I am the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture.

I am truly grateful to have been offered the opportunity to speak to you today. I am, moreover, extremely pleased to have the chance to talk with the members of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent from all around the world here in Hiroshima, and I really appreciate the value of this occasion.

Living here on this earth, it is our responsibility to reaffirm the dignity of our lives, as well as to make efforts to achieve lasting world peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons, as both pose a threat to global peace and the survival of the human race. I would like here to extend my deep respect to the members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for your efforts in extending a wide range of activities worldwide and in undertaking a process to eliminate nuclear weapons based on the principle of “humanitarianism.”

I would like today to talk about Hiroshima Prefecture’s initiatives for global peace. Specifically, I will be talking about how Hiroshima, the first locality to have suffered destruction by an atomic bombing and achieved recovery from its ashes, sees its mission and roles, and what kind of steps it is trying to take.

[Damage from atomic bomb]

Destruction by nuclear weapons does not stop at physical damage, such as human deaths and structural damage, but literally wipes out the entire histories of communities in which people belonged, as well as the memories of the families that lived there. In other words, nuclear destruction inflicts a “total destruction of human life” that wipes out not only societies and lives but also memories or even traces of people’s existence.

I truly hope that more and more people, including world leaders, learn of the inhumane misery that accompanies the atomic bomb.

[Three points to make]

I would like to emphasize the following three points with regards to Hiroshima. First, although Hiroshima was destroyed, it also achieved recovery. Secondly, Hiroshima bears an increasingly greater mission and role as hopes are rising for peacebuilding and a comprehensive approach to the abolition of nuclear weapons. Thirdly, Hiroshima should become a hub for peace.

While Hiroshima can give people the determination to eliminate nuclear weapons through its ability to depict the reality of destruction caused by atomic bombs, it can also offer faith that

reconstruction is feasible through its capacity to show the peace it is enjoying after recovering from its ruins.

Now is the time to create a cluster of such peace-related resources and thereby generate a greater force that could lead the world to peace. And I'm convinced that Hiroshima is the most appropriate place to become such a hub for peace because it is a place that suffered the first atomic bombing in human history, achieved recovery from its ashes, and has now forged an identity of peace.

[The “Hiroshima for Global Peace” Plan and Guidelines]

Taking this vision into consideration, we reviewed Hiroshima's mission and role from a global perspective, and Hiroshima Prefecture published the [“Hiroshima for Global Peace” Plan](#) in October 2011. In 2012, I drew up the “Guidelines for the Advancement of the ‘Hiroshima for Global Peace’ Plan” that delineate the direction to take to implement the initiatives of the Plan.

[Aims and major commitments]

I am convinced that a peaceful world without nuclear weapons cannot be realized by simply eliminating nuclear weapons from the current world. It is moreover necessary to create a stable society to reduce the very causes of conflicts and terrorism as well as to advance the initiatives for reconstruction and peacebuilding to that end.

Based on this view, I am determined to optimize Hiroshima's dual symbolism, namely the “determination to eliminate nuclear weapons” and “faith in reconstruction,” and put forth comprehensive efforts to abolish nuclear arms and create a stable and peaceful society in collaboration with relevant organizations, including the City of Hiroshima.

[Hiroshima's initiative for the abolition of nuclear weapons]

We will tirelessly communicate from Hiroshima the reality of the experience of the atomic bomb and urge the world to abolish nuclear weapons.

I hope to be able to encourage world leaders in forming a strong negative consciousness against nuclear weapons by letting them to enrich their understanding regarding the devastating and catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Hiroshima is going to stir up international opinion by arousing a sense of aversion to nuclear weapons among the general public and by encouraging people to actually take action for the cause of nuclear abolition.

As an accomplishment resulting from this commitment, [Hiroshima Report](#), the result of a research project on evaluating the performances of selected countries in the fields of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security, was published this April.

My hope is that this *Hiroshima Report* will get the global momentum rolling for the elimination of nuclear weapons. I also hope that the international community will steadily advance its process of nuclear abolition in incremental steps. A good sign of development, for example, would be for each country to launch a new nuclear disarmament initiative.

Hiroshima has various plans in addition to these initiatives. As one of them, the prefecture is preparing to hold the “Hiroshima Roundtable,” in which multilateral nuclear disarmament talks will be held at the non-governmental level. By accelerating our efforts with these projects, I am hoping to strengthen the theoretical foundation to advance the elimination of nuclear weapons.

[Human resource development and integration of research]

We are also committed to developing specialists and integrating research in the field of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

Based on such research on the reconstruction process and radiotherapy, I would like to make Hiroshima a center of excellence in research that advances peace-related studies.

[Providing a place for peace dialogue]

Next, regarding our commitment to “providing a place to hold peace negotiations,” I would like to communicate to the world the significance of promoting dialogue for peace in Hiroshima. We aim to establish a forum for dialogue in Hiroshima between disputing parties.

[Constructing sustainable mechanisms to support peace movements]

Moreover, in order to enhance sustainability in the two aims of nuclear abolition and peacebuilding, Hiroshima is striving to create the conditions to assist peace activities in their start-up and development, just as business incubators deliver their service.

As one specific project, we have decided to hold a “World Peace Concert” in Hiroshima this coming July to speak out for peace in the world.

It is my hope that by advertising Hiroshima’s initiatives to the world and fostering understanding, people, information, and capital from around the world will gather in Hiroshima, thereby enabling the Prefecture to contribute as a hub for global peace initiatives.

[Conclusion]

Sixty-eight years ago, Hiroshima underwent a harrowing experience in the atomic bombing. However, Hiroshima cannot remain content with being a “scene of tragedy” indefinitely. Hiroshima, which has so far been known to the world as a symbol of peace, wants to go beyond that, and establish its position as a hub of a network for a myriad of activities aimed at achieving peace.

Hiroshima hopes to make a contribution to the world not only as a place of destruction, but also as a hub from which we can build a peaceful society for the future.

I humbly ask for your understanding regarding our initiatives for peace. Furthermore, I would be extremely pleased and grateful if you who gathered here today could continue to provide us with your support in such a way as to approach world leaders and as many people as possible to urge them to visit Hiroshima to see the reality of the consequences of the atomic bomb, and, hopefully, to share Hiroshima’s passion for the abolition of nuclear weapons.