

## 2021 Hiroshima Appeal

### 2021 Hiroshima Business Forum for Global Peace

The predecessor of the Hiroshima Business Forum for Global Peace, the World Business Conference for World Peace in Hiroshima had been convened with the aim of creating a truly peaceful and sustainable global society through multifaceted discussions of ways to connect business with contributions to peace.

At the Forum that took place in August of 2020, which marked the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing and the end of World War II, we held in-depth discussions on the roles that businesspeople should play to achieve "positive peace," which involves eliminating peace-threatening issues, so that they can act accordingly.

The prolonged fight against COVID-19, however, is continuing to impact businesses and the socially disadvantaged, widening social disparity.

Worse, we have begun to see a conflict unfolding over some humanitarian issues, which call for global collective action. While economic security is important, if we use the economy as a weapon to the extreme, we might risk destroying the virtuous circle with peace, which the economy goes hand-in-hand with.

It is high time for us to create a system of international order from a long-term perspective that would promote the virtuous circle of peace and the economy, with the understanding that peace and the economy form a mutually complementary relationship. What we need now is to practice "true utilitarianism," that is, for one to seek personal gain, one needs to simultaneously seek to benefit others, or multi-stakeholders.

Out of this desire and idea, we shall start "building back better" in 2021 to shape a future full of hope, with businesses making whatever contribution they can offer.

#### **Our Specific Actions**

By engaging in the SDGs and actively contributing to the creation of positive peace through business activities, we will achieve a deeper level of perpetual peace among humanity based upon both material and psychological fulfillment.

#### [From a perspective of global economy and disparity issues]

- We know that it is possible to compensate for capitalism's potential weaknesses and contribute to achieving positive peace by incorporating the SDGs, such as reducing inequalities and bolstering global environmental protection, into business management, while leveraging its strengths. We have begun to see such initiatives here and there and hope to accelerate this trend. Specifically, with the recognition that poverty and disparity lead to social instability and erode business foundations, businesses should further expand activities that contribute to environmental protection, job security, and the reduction of disparities, while at the same time addressing social issues in their main business.
- To achieve sound economic growth and reduce disparity at the same time, businesses need to constantly recreate themselves. It is thus their responsibility to support training of their people of various generations, provide them with reskilling opportunities, and keep

creating new jobs over the long-term perspective. At the same time, in order to create a virtuous circle, businesses and governments must work closely together through frequent dialogue.

- In the financial capital market, there have been moves toward quantifying the social impact of businesses, and a variety of investors have begun acting accordingly. Through collaboration between the financial capital sector and businesses, we seek to achieve the prosperity of all multi-stakeholders who are not overly shortsighted and have built their own systems.
- That diversity is maintained is a prerequisite for enhancing sustainability, innovation, and resilience of businesses and society. We will thus strive to build a social system that treats diversity as a given.
- For this to happen, we will create more opportunities to recognize, become aware of, and learn about unconscious biases that lay within (e.g., equality taking precedence over impartiality, obsession over precedents, etc.). Meanwhile, businesspeople need to commit themselves to develop environments that are inclusive of diversity.

#### [From a perspective of contributions by businesses when geopolitical risks are in play]

- We must face the fact that geopolitical risks—the U.S.-China standoff being the prominent example—can affect the economy. On the other hand, we should not focus solely on conflicts as there are many topics that we all can share and empathize with, such as economy, culture, and climate change. Businesses and businesspeople in third-party countries, including Japan, can help reduce geopolitical risks by focusing on interdependent and cooperative relationships and by playing the role of interpreter between opposing parties.
- In pursuing business activities, businesses need to carefully determine the optimal locations, markets, and arrangement of sites, establish their fortés in domains where interdependent relationships are expected to deepen, such as management of overseas assets, and utilize opportunities that present themselves.

#### [From a perspective of threats to peace from excessive industrialization/urbanization and climate changes]

- From the perspective of tackling COVID-19, businesspeople are aware that discussions are taking place about the need for decentralization instead of conventional modes of centralization such as industrialization and urbanization, and that there will be a need for forms of business management and financial activity that focus on appropriate ways to promote social transformation while ensuring peace. Businesspeople will reaffirm the fact that communication between stakeholders is essential in order to address ever-increasingly complex issues and achieve total optimization, and that appropriateness of scale (e.g., the scale of Hiroshima City and Hiroshima Prefecture in the process of reconstruction after the atomic attack) is an important factor in achieving this.
- Climate change not only triggers natural disasters but poses serious security risks. As such, a revolutionary change of industrial and social structures is unavoidable. To put it another way, climate change also creates economic opportunities, as well as risks, and private-

sector-led positive responses to climate change should spearhead the development of the entire economy.

- For the achievement of carbon neutrality, we will ensure a stable and efficient supply of energy, including renewable energy, while at the same time reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs). Through dialogue with various parties, including businesses, the financial capital market, and governments, we will proactively build a system that expedites innovation on both supply and demand sides.
- Some SDGs have a trade-off relationship, and the goals are interrelated. On an individual company level, businesspeople will aim to achieve these goals while striving to create a win-win situation for the whole of society. We will organize the various initiatives taken at the individual level as part of the SDGs movement, raise further awareness of the issues, and promote the integration of the SDGs into management activity.

#### [From a perspective of the impact that technology has on peace]

- The impact that technology has on peace is rapidly expanding, as evidenced by information manipulation via networks, use of drones in armed conflicts, satellite cyberattacks, and strife in economic security in the form of procurement of semiconductors.
- To reduce technology's negative aspects while making constant innovations, it is vital that we develop a system for controlling who should use it and how, rather than blindly developing technology itself.
- In order to create and implement more effective rules, we need the following three things:
  - Creation of voluntary rules among private businesses
  - Dialogue between the private sector and governments with the aim of enhancing regulatory authorities' understanding of technology and market dynamics
  - Establishment of governance in cutting-edge fields by an expert team with members from governments, the private sector, NPOs, etc.

#### [From a perspective of the role of local governments in global society]

- In order to maintain peace, which is a prerequisite for economic activity, and achieve the SDGs, it is essential to develop globally-oriented businesspeople capable of contributing to peace. More specifically, we should incorporate perspectives such as scientific literacy, involvement in the local community, eradication of prejudice, and alleviation of social inequality. We intend to support public and private education systems designed to develop such individuals.
- Diplomacy among local governments, which is closely related to civil society and the community, complements intercountry diplomacy. Sister city relationships, among other forms of relationship-building unique to local governments, play an important role in the promotion of sustainable peace. Local governments will stay fully aware of this role and contribute to the advancement of peace.
- As inequality continues to worsen globally, we will utilize digital/online means to enhance educational effectiveness.

### [From a perspective of human security]

- It used to be the responsibility of the state and its leaders to maintain security. But times have changed, and today it has become important for each individual to play a part in ensuring human security. More recently, societies need group security. Against this backdrop, businesses, local governments, NPOs, NGOs, and individuals are required to get involved in the process of achieving positive peace.
- Ensuring access to and availability of essential medical supplies, such as COVID-19 vaccines, is a challenge for developing and developed countries alike, given the constant risk of the emergence of variant strains.
- Global health is now part of the public property of humankind. As such, everyone should have access to it. In order to make this a reality and offer further contributions in the field of global health, businesses must play roles in various fields, including public-private partnership, entry to public procurement by international organizations, and the rule-making process. The supply of public property will be a prerequisite for sustainably enriching the entire economy.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has brought preexisting issues, along with the changes in trends associated with them, to the fore at an accelerated rate. Our responses to unprecedented risks to humanity may lead to greater risks to peace. Recognizing this possibility, we will actively respond to such risks. When taking action, we will share our ethics and values with other entities and strive to achieve total optimization for all humanity.

### [From a perspective of integration between business administration and peace by way of commons]

- The traditional ecosystem of business is changing fast. For us to achieve the SDGs on a global basis and solve regional issues, we are required to put greater emphasis on the nature of things and shed new light on business administration so that we can create a "study of business administration with peace serving as its platform."
- This is tantamount to business and management of a problem-solving type underpinned by the empathy of the many, which, overcoming disintegration and division in social systems, designs the future from "common social value (value of commons)" and fosters the ability to act.
- From a vertical relationship, which is exclusive and individual, to a horizontal relationship, which is inclusive and social—"Business administration of peace" as developed by commons will seek to achieve peace that is not just for the sake of academic interest, but a state that many people can empathize with and participate in, and create businesses that implicitly strive for it.

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All participants of the 2021 Hiroshima Business Forum for Global Peace

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All Members of the 2021 Hiroshima Business Forum for Global Peace Planning and Management Committee