

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE OFFICE FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS**

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**6<sup>TH</sup> HIROSHIMA JUNIOR INTERNATIONAL FORUM**

**Message from Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu  
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs**

**February 2022**

It is my pleasure to send this message to the Sixth Hiroshima Junior International Forum – to the future peacemakers from all over the world, dedicated to our shared goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons, and a safer and more secure planet for all.

The atomic bomb that incinerated Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 changed the world forever. A single bomb produced unprecedented human suffering and ushered in a new era. An era, in which, as the United Nations Secretary-General has said, we obtained the power to bring about our own extinction.

We have taken substantial steps along the road to a world free of nuclear weapons. Yet, today more than ten thousand remain in global arsenals – enough to destroy us all many times over.

And nuclear weapons have once again risen to prominence on the global stage. Nuclear sabers are rattled as States that possess them choose competition over cooperation, all the while upgrading their arsenals. It is no exaggeration to say that at this moment, the risk of use of a nuclear weapon is the highest it has been since the darkest days of the Cold War.

This is not a time to lose hope. It is a time to redouble our efforts – to remind the world that nuclear disarmament and arms control have brought us back from the brink before and must do so again. We must work together to take urgent measures to reduce nuclear risk. But because nuclear risk can only be eliminated when nuclear weapons are, irreversible steps in disarmament must remain the priority.

As the leaders of tomorrow, you need to act today. With climate change, nuclear weapons represent one of two existential threats to the planet. Yet nuclear dangers do not receive nearly the same level of attention. This should be your starting point – to remind our fellow global citizens of the collective dangers posed by nuclear weapons and to put forward innovative policy solutions that will bring about their elimination.

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has continuously facilitated space for young people to directly contribute and participate in discussions with Member States on disarmament issues.

Upcoming opportunities include the #Leaders4Tomorrow Workshop Series, which was recently launched by UNODA's #Youth4Disarmament Initiative. Following the completion of the programme, 25 young leaders will present their ideas and recommendations during a First Committee side event in October 2022. The call for applications is open until Friday, 18 February for those who may be interested in participating.

The #Leaders4Tomorrow Workshop Series builds on previous, successful exchanges between young people and Member States on disarmament matters, facilitated by UNODA. I invite you to visit the #Youth4Disarmament website to stay informed on opportunities ranging from scholarships or fellowships to cash prizes and travel and training experiences for young leaders striving to enact change today.

I wish you the best of success!

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