

# Hiroshima business special

(Promotional content)

## Hiroshima to the world: 'Prosperity through peace'

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Many years have passed since the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, called the most tragic event in history. The bomb dropped in 1945 killed or maimed hundreds of thousands of people. Since that day, when the city lost everything and became filled with sorrow, Hiroshima has built a society that seeks peace, reconstruction and prosperity.

The first atomic bombing of a city in history destroyed Hiroshima, and although it was said that not even a blade of grass or a tree would grow on the land for the next 75 years, the city has made a remarkable recovery. Based on this experience, Hiroshima has two slogans: "the tragedy of war" and "prosperity through peace."

With Japan set to host the Group of Seven Summit in Hiroshima from May 19 to 21, Hiroshima Prefectural Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki shared some of his thoughts on the summit. In 2021, Yuzaki, Kazumi Matsui, the mayor of Hiroshima, and Koji Ikeda, the chairman of the Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, announced their bid to host the summit. In the draft plan they submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that December, they said, "There is no better place than Hiroshima for policymakers to recall and transmit the universal values of the survival and prosperity of humankind and the noble idea of peace rooted in conscience and morality."

Yuzaki said he believes Hiroshima was chosen as the venue for the summit because of its recognition as a city of "international peace and culture" and the importance it places on its ability to communicate peace and sustainable development to the world. "Nothing could be more in line with the important theme of the summit and the message Hiroshima carries," he said. "In this sense, I think it is

extremely significant that the summit will be held in Hiroshima and that a powerful message of peace will be shared with the world from here."

The area near the hypocenter of the blast was destroyed, with little left standing except for a few skeletal buildings. The blast wave and heat caused fires to break out across the city, burning out of control for days and adding to the initial destruction.

The loss of life was enormous, and many of the survivors had severe injuries or suffered radiation sickness, causing long-term health problems. The city's destruction represents the ultimate manifestation of war. And yet Hiroshima has rebuilt prosperity through peace. Should we choose the path of destruction? Or should we choose the path of peace?

Yuzaki said Hiroshima represents the path humanity should take and the summit will be unprecedented. He hopes the leaders of the G7 countries will be able to experience the symbolism of Hiroshima and become more aware of the reality of radiation exposure, and that based on this, they will be able to discuss peace and send a message for the restoration of peace.

Yuzaki also said that by sharing with the G7 leaders the experiences of the atomic bomb victims and their thoughts on peace, we will come closer to realizing the earnest wish of the citizens of the city and prefecture for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.

With Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and North Korea's repeated missile launches, the international situation has become tenser than ever, and the risk of the use of nuclear weapons has increased.

Yuzaki believes that discussing the issue of restoring and maintaining peace will be extremely important at this summit. He said, "It is our duty — and what is required by the world — to send a strong



Hiroshima Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki CITIZENS COUNCIL FOR THE HIROSHIMA SUMMIT

message of peace at the G7 Summit in Hiroshima, an event that will attract the attention of the whole world." He hopes that the unique features of Hiroshima, refined through the long history of the city, will be shared with people in Japan and abroad, providing an opportunity for people to visit or live in Hiroshima and making more people fans of the city.

One of the reasons Hiroshima was able to recover from its destruction and

prosper was its business community. Hiroshima Prefecture is one of the most industrialized prefectures in western Japan, with a concentration of diverse manufacturing industries ranging from heavy industries such as automobiles, shipbuilding and steel production to cutting-edge industries such as electrical equipment and electronic components.

In 2020, the prefecture's shipments of manufactured goods totaled ¥8.869 trillion

(\$83 billion), ranking first in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions and 11th in the nation. The prefecture has been supported by these manufacturing industries, but at the same time it competes with South Korea, China and Southeast Asia.

To increase prosperity, it is necessary to maintain existing industries and also create new growth industries that will become Hiroshima's additional strengths. To this end, the city is working to create startups, the bearers of innovation, by supporting companies with new values and new businesses, with the aim of creating new growth industries to follow manufacturing.

While previous efforts yielded some positive results, in order to accelerate the creation of innovation, last year the prefecture began supporting companies that are expanding globally and growing rapidly. With the lofty goal of creating \$1 billion "unicorns" from Hiroshima over the next 10 years, the Hiroshima Unicorn 10 Project was launched.

Yuzaki said, "We believe that by bringing unicorn-like companies that strive for rapid growth closer to the public, they will stimulate the entire industry in the prefecture, create new value, and their attractiveness will attract many companies and human resources that will serve as the igniter for the next challenge, thereby completing the innovation ecosystem."

Through these projects, the goal is to create a culture in Hiroshima where taking on challenges is a matter of course, and to make "Innovation Hub Hiroshima" a destination of choice around the world.

Another aspect of Hiroshima's appeal lies in its tourism. Hiroshima boasts two World Heritage Sites: the Atomic Bomb Dome, a symbol of the message of peace, and Itsukushima Shrine, a historical and cultural heritage site.

The Seto Inland Sea, with its serene and beautiful archipelago, and the rich nature and lifestyle of the upland *satoyama* (areas where local residents take care of natural

### Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce of Commerce

The Hiroshima Chamber of Commerce and Industry is a specially authorized corporation operating under the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Law. It is a comprehensive regional business organization established in 1891 with approximately 9,700 member companies, mainly small and midsize businesses.

In order to revitalize businesses and the community in Hiroshima, it provides comprehensive support for new business startups, develops sales channels, assists in the training of successors and recommends favorable loan programs. It also engages in a wide range of business activities, including various projects that contribute to industrial vitality, urban development and tourism promotion.

(resources) villages are all part of Hiroshima's charm. The area is a treasure trove of delicious foods, such as fish raised in the currents of the Seto Inland Sea and oysters with plump flesh and rich flavor, Hiroshima beef — which is said to be the root of all Japanese beef — and sake, which is brewed with a soft-water method that has made Hiroshima one of the top three sake-brewing regions in Japan.

Hiroshima is ready to welcome the G7 Summit with the participation of many of the prefecture's residents. Yuzaki expressed his hope that summit participants and visitors will experience the warm hospitality that only Hiroshima can offer and be happy they have come to Hiroshima.



## Hiroshima firms working for a better tomorrow

