

Good morning.

Thank you for having me here today. My name is SHIMADA Junji and I am the Consul-General of Japan in Melbourne. Before I begin, I would like to thank St Paul's Cathedral for organizing the Hiroshima Peace Day service every year.

The first atomic bomb was dropped over Hiroshima 77 years ago yesterday, and the second one over Nagasaki three days later.

I would like to extend my deepest condolences and sympathies to the families and friends of these victims and to all those who have been affected by these horrific attacks. Today less than 120,000 survivors are alive, and their average age is over 84 years old. They are probably the last generation who can talk about their own firsthand experiences to younger generations.

Last Monday, at the opening of a key nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) conference held in New York, UN head Antonio Guterres warned that the world faced "a nuclear danger not seen since the height of the Cold War." At the same conference, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida said that "the division within the international community has become only greater, in particular, the threat to use nuclear weapons by Russia in its aggression against Ukraine, has contributed to worldwide concern that yet another catastrophe by nuclear weapons use is a real possibility."

It is becoming increasingly more important to pass on the stories of the devastation caused by these nuclear weapons to people across generations and borders. Japan is the only country to have ever experienced nuclear attacks, and I hope that it will be the last country to go through such a tragedy as we continue to pass down the message of peace and harmony to the global citizens of the world.

これらの希望、夢、勇気のメッセージは、広島と長崎の悲劇を振り返るにあたり、そして次の世代に我々からの永遠の平和のメッセージを伝え続けるうえで、本日の礼拝に相通じるものがあると感じています。

I feel that these messages of hope, dreams, and courage, are very much relevant to today's service as we remember the tragedy in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and as we continue to pass down our message of eternal peace to the next generations.

また、皆さんには日本が戦後 77 年にわたり「平和」を希求する国家として歩んできたことを忘れないでいただきたいと思います。未来志向の日豪関係が続くことを祈っています。

In addition, I would like you to remember our steps as a nation seeking "peace" in the last 77 years after the war. I hope that Japan-Australia bilateral relationship will continue to be the one that looks to the future.

Once again, thank you for organising the Hiroshima Peace Day service.

ありがとうございました。