



The city of Hiroshima has many rivers and a beautiful cityscape with lush greenery. It has undergone a remarkable reconstruction since the day the atomic bomb fell and devastated the city. The Atomic Bomb Dome is in the left foreground.

G7 SUMMIT 2023

WELCOMED BY ALL HIROSHIMA

The G7 Hiroshima Summit will be held from May 19 to 21. At a time when the importance of peace is being emphasized more than ever, the gathering of the G7 leaders in Hiroshima, with its perennial appeals for peace, holds unprecedented significance. Hiroshima prefectural governor YUZAKI Hidehiko, chairman of the Citizens Council for the Hiroshima Summit, gave his thoughts on hosting the summit in Hiroshima.

As the G7 Summit in May approaches, the public and private sectors in Hiroshima are steadily preparing to welcome their guests. Taxis, trams, and other forms of public transportation, wrapped in advertisements announcing the summit, traverse the city. Local high school students have made countdown boards to place at the entrances to the airport, train stations, and seaport, while

companies and organizations in the prefecture had already taken over 1,500 summit-related initiatives by the end of February.

Governor YUZAKI Hidehiko expressed his enthusiasm for hosting the long-awaited G7

Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture YUZAKI Hidehiko has been in office for 14 years. "First and foremost, I want the summit to be held safely, securely, and smoothly. Secondly, I want not only visitors, but also local residents, to be happy that we hosted the summit in Hiroshima."

Summit, saying, "I feel the welcoming mood growing greater



by the day." The Citizens Council for the Hiroshima Summit is particularly committed to engaging young people in order to turn one of the world's most important conferences into an opportunity to connect to the future, rather than letting it pass by as a one-off event. Commenting on that aim, the governor explained, "I want them to feel that the world's problems are shared by all of us and that we are part of the process of changing global society."

However, this G7 Summit's greatest significance is that it will occur in Hiroshima. Governor Yuzaki said, "With Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine, there has never been a summit where the restoration and maintenance of international peace and security has been so important. At the same time, I think it will be a very meaningful summit in terms of connections between its theme and venue."

On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was devastated by the first attack by a nuclear weapon in human history. With the Atomic Bomb (Genbaku) Dome retaining its appearance since the attack and a museum conveying the



A tram is decorated with an announcement that the G7 Summit is approaching. The advertisement along the top was designed by local high school students and features origami paper cranes, a symbol of peace.

sheer destructive power and horror of nuclear weapons, the city of Hiroshima has now become a symbol of global peace. That is why delivering a powerful message of peace from Hiroshima at the G7 Summit, as the world watches, is "our duty in Hiroshima," claimed Governor Yuzaki, who is also a native of the city. "I believe that the current appearance of the city, which has made great progress since its devastation during the war, will also be a symbol of hope for those seeking to rebuild. I would like visitors from all over the world to feel Hiroshima in their hearts, as a symbol of both the horror of war and the prosperity that can be achieved through peace."

The G7 Summit, which attracts a heavy foreign media presence, is also a wonderful opportunity to highlight Hiroshima's appeal. In addition to two World Cultural Heritage Sites—the Hiroshima

Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) and the Itsukushima Shinto Shrine—Hiroshima's impressive scenery as a long-prosperous city, handicrafts such as Japanese paper, and the gifts of the mountains and sea unique to its rich natural surroundings. What is more, the prefecture not only boasts a wide range of agricultural products and fresh seafood caught in the Seto Inland Sea, but also produces Hiba beef—a variety related to the original *wagyu* beef popular all over the world—and is well known as one of Japan's famous sake-producing areas.

Governor Yuzaki said, "The world still doesn't know about many of the things that make Hiroshima a wonderful place to visit. I hope this G7 Summit will create lots of new fans of the city." All the people in Hiroshima who truly love the city and peace are ready to offer their welcome. ●



In anticipation of the post-summit period, the Citizens Council has been encouraging young people of the prefecture to join initiatives. The countdown boards (photo left) and official logo of the council for the summit were also created by local high school students.