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Seventy-Five Years After the War

Bishops of Japan

The Japanese bishops' conference issued a statement in advance of the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 6 and 9, 1945. In a June 23 statement, the bishops expressed concern about the development of a new Cold War between the U.S. and Russia, instability in East Asia, the nuclear threat and the global environmental climate. They said all are inextricably linked and pose a danger to all of humanity. The statement also pointed to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons approved in 2017 by a majority of member states of the United Nations as key to denuclearizing the world. The Holy See became one of the first entities to ratify and sign the treaty in September 2017. While progress toward peace

“Let us renew our determination to seek and take action for peace.”

“remains uncertain,” the bishops said that as the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings approached, they were renewing “our determination to face the past unflinchingly and continue to take responsibility for the future.” The statement follows.

On the 50th anniversary of the end of the war, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan issued the message “Resolution for Peace” in light of the situation at home and abroad.¹ To mark the 60th anniversary, the bishops' message was “The road to peace based on nonviolence — now is the time to be prophetic.”² Then for the 70th anniversary, the message was “Blessed are the peacemakers — now especially, peace must not depend upon weapons.”³

This year, which opened just after Pope Francis' visit to Japan in 2019, is the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Okinawa, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the end of World War II and the founding of the United Nations. The world is now in an uncertain situation where we face a new Cold War, an unstable situation in East Asia, the nuclear threat and the global environmental crisis.

We bishops planned to join the peace pilgrimage today on Okinawa Memorial Day but have been forced to cancel our participation due to the new coronavirus pandemic. However, our hearts are always with the people of Okinawa. With the *Konpaku no To* (Tower of Souls) in the Okinawa Battlefield

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