

Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons  
UN-sponsored online launch event on 18 December 2023  
Video messages from Prime Minister of Japan KISHIDA Fumio

Dear participants of the first cohort of “the Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons” programme,

I would like to congratulate all those who have been selected to be part of this first cohort amongst the numerous applicants from all over the world. I would also like to thank all the UN officials for their efforts in bringing the programme to fruition here today.

Under the current difficult international situation, nuclear disarmament, which is a lifelong mission for me hailing from Hiroshima, is an increasingly important issue for the future of humanity. As the starting point for all efforts towards nuclear disarmament, it is important to convey the realities of nuclear weapons use to the world. Under such firm beliefs, I announced the launch of “the Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons” at the NPT Review Conference last August, as the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend this important Conference.

No matter how difficult the path to a world without nuclear weapons may be, we should not stop our steps. Now is the time when we need the power of young people like you, the bearers of our future.

You have been selected from more than 60 countries around the world. I hope that you, as future leaders, will acquire sufficient knowledge about nuclear disarmament and also create a global network through this programme. I also hope that those who visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the future will see and feel the realities of nuclear weapons use with their own eyes and hearts, and convey this to the world.

As this programme will run for a total of eight years, I hope that you will show strong leadership as mentors for the second cohort of this programme, for subsequent cohorts and for the future, in working towards a world without nuclear weapons.