

**Speech by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Eri Arfiya
at the Seminar on the 80th Memorial of the Atomic Bombings and the Role
of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Nuclear-Weapons- Free- Zone
June 9, 2025**

Ambassador Dalton, Excellencies, Governor Yuzaki, Governor Oishi,
Distinguished guests,

I am ERI Arfiya, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. On behalf of the Government of Japan, I sincerely welcome the convening of “the Seminar on the 80th Memorial of the Atomic Bombings and the Role of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone”.

I would like to commend the efforts of all those involved in this Seminar organized by GRULAC in collaboration with HOPE, in particular, Ambassador Dalton, the President of GRULAC and the Ambassador of El Salvador to Japan.

In addition to a longstanding friendship and cooperation, Japan and Latin American and Caribbean countries share values and principles such as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law.

While the international community stands at a turning point in history, we are strengthening our dialogue and cooperation.

As leaders of major international fora, such as the Brazilian Presidency of the G20 and the Peruvian Presidency of APEC last year, the OECD Presidency of Costa Rica and COP30 hosted by Brazil this year, Latin America and the Caribbean are reliable partners of Japan in the international arena.

I myself recently visited Peru in February and have just returned from Ecuador and Belize. These visits have deepened my understanding of the profound friendship Japan has with these countries on the other side of the globe. Through these visits we reaffirmed our commitment to further strengthening our collaboration as key partners.

As the international order is currently being challenged, it is becoming increasingly important for Japan and the LAC countries to cooperate in advancing global governance for a better world.

In our “Diplomacy Initiative towards Latin America and the Caribbean,” nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is one of the areas in which Japan will deepen its partnership with the LAC countries.

This year marks the 80th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

80 years ago in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many precious lives were taken in an instant, and even those who survived the atomic bombings have had to live with indescribable suffering.

Since then, the international community has been advancing disarmament and non-proliferation efforts to ensure that such a tragedy will never be repeated.

However, looking at the current situation, with the international security environment having become more severe and complex, the international community is more divided over approaches to nuclear disarmament, and the risk of the use of nuclear weapons continues to rise.

The threat of nuclear weapons is no longer an event of the distant past, but a real and present threat to us.

However, this is precisely why it is imperative above all else to maintain the 80-year record of the non-use of nuclear weapons and to advance efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons.

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan is determined to lead international efforts in the international community in close collaboration with the LAC countries.

I spent my childhood in Kitakyushu, which was an original atomic bombing target after Hiroshima, and for this reason, a Peace Memorial Ceremony is held there every year on August 9.

It is partly because of this background, I have a strong desire to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

Japan is the only country to have ever suffered the atomic bombings during war, and Latin America and the Caribbean is the first region in the world to become a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Because of this, I am convinced that it is extremely significant for us to work together toward our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

In closing, I sincerely hope that this seminar will be a meaningful one, with lively discussions among stakeholders from both Japan and LAC countries regarding the path we should take to our shared goal, on the 80th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Thank you very much for your attention.