



## Statement on the Situation in Ukraine

WCRP/RfP Japan expresses deep concern about the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Many precious civilian lives have been lost and hurt since the military aggression started on February 24. The humanitarian crisis the attack has evoked threatens the safety of many people, drives them out of their homes, forces them to cross the border, and puts them in harsh conditions. On the other hand, in Russia, citizens protest against this military attack, but the authorities trample their voices. They are forced to be excluded from political decision-making.

Innocent citizens and vulnerable people have always been forced to pay the most significant sacrifices in every conflict. History teaches that the use of force is an outrageous act as it creates new hatred, and it is impossible to cut the chain of retaliation.

In addition, President Putin has put his nuclear forces on high alert, suggesting the use of nuclear weapons. The current situation in Ukraine affects the whole world, let alone neighboring countries, and can lead to political, economic, and social uncertainty.

As the religious leaders of a country that experienced the atrocity of the atomic bombing in August 1945, WCRP/RfP Japan has been calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. United with survivors of the atomic bombings, religious leaders, governments, and citizens worldwide, we have been praying that such tragedy will never be repeated. The Russian invasion of Ukraine and President Putin's remarks on the use of nuclear weapons will lead the world to destruction. Those acts trample the hopes for the abolition of nuclear weapons by the atomic bomb survivors who continue to talk about the misery of nuclear weapons. They also are the acts that betray the conscience of many people in the world who wish for peace. Recalling that the idea of nuclear deterrence would lead to irreparable disasters, I strongly urge "absolute opposition to the use of nuclear weapons."

Concerning the situation in Ukraine, WCRP/RfP Japan, which has been working in the spirit of absolute non-war, appeals for an immediate ceasefire and the end of any violence. We also call for the countries and organizations concerned to spare no effort for a peaceful solution through dialogue and negotiations. With RfP International, which is repeatedly working to resolve this crisis through nonviolence, I pray from deep in my mind for peace and everyone's peace of mind to be restored as soon as possible, recognizing the equal dignity of life. We will work together with like-minded people worldwide to facilitate the necessary dialogue for peace and humanitarian assistance based on respect for human rights.

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Chair of RfP Japan

The Most Rev. N. Makoto Uematsu