

## **“Devoting Ourselves to Children: A Spiritual Journey”**

### **A Message from Rev. Keishi Miyamoto for the Interfaith Service in New York on the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, 2009**

Peace and solidarity from Japan, where thousands and thousands of your brothers and sisters are joining you in celebrations of the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children.

It is a great honor for me to have this chance to share a few thoughts with you on this very special day.

First of all, on behalf of everyone at Arigatou International, let me extend my profound gratitude to each and every one of you, for coming today to observe the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children. You need only look around you to see that this event is blessed with the participation of many highly distinguished leaders from diverse religious communities, the United Nations family, and the NGO community. I hope that all of you are as encouraged as I am by this strong demonstration of shared commitment to the children of the world. Please allow me also to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone at Religions for Peace and the Secretariat for the Day of Prayer and Action for Children who worked so hard to make this event a reality.

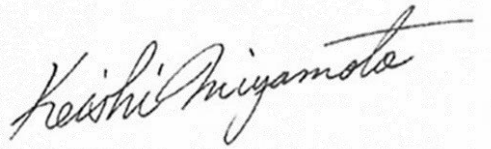
I hardly need to say this to today's esteemed assembly, but let me repeat an obvious yet spiritual truth: it is children who represent our brightest hopes for the future of the world. On this special day around the world, therefore, we have all come to celebrate the children. In places as far-reaching as Brazil, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Japan, and New York, we have come in the thousands not just to pray for them, but to pray with them. We have come not just to take action for them, but to take action with them. We have come because we envision a day when people from every religion, from every culture, from every kind of society, will participate in prayer and action to build a world that is not only “fit” for every child, but a world that is a true blessing to every child.

Vision, however, must lead to devotion. Devotion is the root of both prayer and action. Today is a day for us to rededicate ourselves to walking with children — living in daily devotion to children. Whether through prayer, or through action, or both, I can think of no more spiritual journey than this.

Let us join together as one to ensure that every child, every day, can one day joyously celebrate her or his own infinite spiritual potential — the potential to play, laugh, learn, love, and pray... the potential to change the world.

My heart swells with joy as I consider the progress we will be able to celebrate next year on the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children, thanks to the commitment you all share to protecting the inviolable dignity of children.

I am deeply honored and grateful to be your partner in this cause.



Keishi Miyamoto  
President, Arigatou International

November 18, 2009