



Sakuji Tanaka, Rotary International President
Rotary Global Peace Forum, Hiroshima
Peace Clock Acceptance Remarks
18 May, 2013, 15:15-16:00

Thank you.

It is a great honor to accept this Berlin Peace Clock.

Although this clock has been given into my hands, I do not accept it in my own name. It is an award that recognizes the achievements of Rotary International: in building peace, and in giving individuals the ability to help build peace, through their own actions.

Rotary is a unique organization. It is unique in many ways. But I believe, that the thing that is most special about Rotary, is how it can change individual lives—not only of the people we help, but of our own lives, as Rotarians.

Many people want to make a difference. Many people say, I want to change the world. But the reality is, that very few people have the ability to make a difference, on their own.

All of us are busy in our lives. We go to school, we get our first jobs, we marry and have children. We become deeply involved in our work and our families. One day follows another, and we are consumed with our own affairs—so much so, that we do not take the time to think of the affairs of others.

This was my own life, for many years.

When I was young, I thought I would lead the same life that my parents and grandparents led. And I walked the same path that they had walked. When I got older, I became more ambitious. I stepped onto a second path, one of personal success and accomplishments.

But Rotary opened the gate to a third path—not the path walked by many others before me, or the path to living only for my own achievement. Rotary taught me how to live for others, and gave me a way to do it. It has given me, and so many other people, a way to live a more meaningful life—and a way to build *Peace through Service*.

I did not imagine, when I spoke about the Peace Clock in Berlin last year, that my words then would lead to this event. But as I have considered the meaning of the Peace Clock in the last few weeks, I feel more than ever that it is a uniquely appropriate symbol. It is true that time bursts all walls asunder. But it is also true, that all of our lives are measured, and finite. Our time on earth, and our opportunities here, are limited. It is up to each one of us, to do what we can, where and when we can, to leave our mark on the world—and to make sure that the mark we leave, is a good one. This is what Rotary has allowed me to do—and this clock is a symbol of Rotary's success.

Thank you.