



Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee

information

NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 1st August 2012

NFLA members show solidarity with Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 67th anniversaries of the atomic bombings

Solemn commemorations will be taking place across the UK and Ireland next week to remember the 67th anniversary of the atomic bombing attacks on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima (6th August) and Nagasaki (9th August).

Since the early 1950s the two Japanese cities have been holding annual peace ceremonies to remember the civilian casualties of the nuclear weapon attacks and to call for a more peaceful world. 2012 is also the 30th anniversary of the Mayors for Peace (1), which was established by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to bring towns and cities from across the world together to call for a nuclear weapons free world. It now has over 5,300 members from 153 countries, representing around a billion people worldwide – one of the largest local government organisations on the planet.

The UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) work closely with the Mayors for Peace to promote their values around England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, where there are 84 Mayors for Peace members. Manchester City Council is a Vice President of Mayors for Peace and Glasgow City Council is a board member of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Association (2). In its role as Vice President Manchester City Council organises UK and Ireland meetings of both the NFLA and Mayors for Peace.

To show solidarity with Hiroshima and Nagasaki, commemoration services will be taking place around the world on August 6th and August 9th. Services are being held in many towns and cities around the UK and Ireland and the public are welcome to attend them (3).

Manchester's ceremony will be led by the Lord Mayor of Manchester and will include reading out the 2012 Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Declarations. Poetry from survivors of the attacks (known as 'hibakuska') will also be read out and there will be short presentations from representatives of Chernobyl Children's Project and the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (4).

The NFLA was initially established in November 1980 to call for the reduction of nuclear weapons at a time when the 'Cold War' was heating up. In co-operation with the Mayors for Peace, this still remains one of its key objectives and it achieves this in a very practical way through actively supporting the international lobbying of Mayors for Peace. With international concern over nuclear weapons being potentially developed by Iran and North Korea, recent nuclear weapons tests by India and Pakistan and increased spending on nuclear weapons programmes by the UK, France, USA, Russia and China taking place, the threat of a third malicious nuclear weapon attack remains a real possibility (5).

NFLA Chair Councillor Brian Goodall said:

"One of the motivating factors for why I got involved in politics was to participate in the national and international movements to abolish nuclear weapons. I believe it is imperative that we stop spending billions on weapons we never want to use and can never afford to use for the long-term safety of our planet. I am proud my Council, like many other Councils, is both a member of the NFLA and Mayors for Peace. By working closely with Hiroshima and Nagasaki for a nuclear weapons free world I earnestly believe that a nuclear weapons free future is possible. We can make it happen together."

Ends

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Further information - Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary 0161 234 3244 or 07771 930186.

Notes to editors:

- (1) Mayors for Peace website, <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org>
- (2) Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign website, <http://www.2020visioncampaign.org>
- (3) Selected list of events taking place in the UK and Ireland –

General exhibitions -

Hiroshima and Nagasaki exhibition, Tower Hamlets Town Hall, August 2nd – 10th.
Hiroshima and Nagasaki exhibition, Wells Cathedral and Wells Library, July 28th – August 10th.
Hiroshima and Nagasaki exhibition, Newcastle Central Library, August 20th – 28th.

Events prior to August 6th -

Birmingham, in the cathedral churchyard, Saturday 4th August, 11am. Hiroshima readings.
Woking, River Wey at Send, Saturday 4th August, 8pm. Candlelit service.
Oswestry, Wilfred Owen Peace Garden, 10am – 4pm, Saturday 4th August. Peace picnic.
Oxford, Donnington Bridge, Sunday 5th August, 7pm. Candle floating service on the river.

Hiroshima Day, August 6th 2012 –

London, Tavistock Square, 12pm. Speakers include Kate Hudson and Jean Lambert MEP.
Liverpool, Peace Garden, St John's Lane, 11am. Wreath laying, speeches, poetry and music.
Coventry, by the Cathedral, 6pm. Service of reflection and making paper cranes.
Glasgow, George Square, 12pm. Make peace lanterns to be launched on the River Clyde.
Edinburgh, east end of Princes Street, 6pm. Vigil with songs, poems and candles.
Dundee, Law Road, 8.30pm. Annual commemorative walk up Dundee Law.
Dublin, Memorial Cherry Tree, Merrion Park, 1pm. Full civic service including the Lord Mayor of Dublin and a member of the Japanese Embassy.
Brighton, by the lake on Queen's Park, 8.15pm. Civic event organised by Brighton WILPF.
Norwich, Peace Pillar, Chapelfield Park, 1pm. Service of commemoration.
Llandow, Cytun's Tent, Eisteddfod Maes, The Old Airfield, Vale of Glamorgan, 11am. Main Welsh service of remembrance.
Maldon, by St Mary's Church, Church Street, Essex, 8pm. Candlelit service for peace.
Milton Keynes, Nipponzan Myohoji Peace Pagoda, Willen Lake North, 7.30pm. Prayers and lantern floating.
Keighley, Town Hall Square, 8am. Commemorative service with poetry and readings.
Bridge of Allan, Peace Garden, Pullar Memorial Park, 7pm. Civic service involving the Provosts of Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils.
Aberdeen, meet by Fisherman's Hut on River Dee, 8.30pm. Candlelit vigil.
Paisley, Barshaw Park Peace Garden, 7.30pm. Candlelit vigil.

Nagasaki Day, August 9th 2012 –

Liverpool, 96 Bold Street Social Centre. 7.30pm. Documentary film showing.
Manchester, see section (4) below.
London, Westminster Cathedral Piazza, 10am – 5pm, Pax Christi Vigil.
Bradford, Centenary Square, 11am. Full civic service.
Leeds, Park Square, 9am, Friday August 10th. Full civic service led by Lord Mayor of Leeds.
Sheffield, Japanese Garden, Meresbrook Park, 2 – 5pm. Peace picnic.

- (4) Manchester City Council's Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemoration Service will be held on Thursday August 9th at 10.30am at the Abraham Lincoln Statue, Lincoln Square, Brasenose Street, Manchester City Centre. It will be led by the Lord Mayor of Manchester and includes readings, poetry and presentations by members of Chernobyl Children's Project and the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association.
- (5) 'Governments boost spending on nuclear weapons whilst cutting spending on social services', Common Dreams, July 28th 2012. <http://www.commondreams.org/headline/2012/07/28-0>

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