



## **Press Release Mayors for Peace UK**

Embargo: not for publication or broadcast before 00.01 hrs, Monday 1 March 2010

### **Mayors call for Government to support international treaty banning nuclear weapons**

A delegation of mayors and senior local councillors representing the international Mayors for Peace movement will next week meet Foreign Office minister Ivan Lewis to ask for the British government's support for an international treaty banning nuclear weapons.

The delegation will be meeting Ivan Lewis – Minister of State at the Foreign Office responsible for counter-proliferation – in advance of a major global conference reviewing the principal international treaty controlling the spread of nuclear weapons.

The delegation will also be explaining why it is in Britain's interests to support an international campaign to begin work on drafting a Nuclear Weapons Convention which would set out a road-map for global nuclear disarmament and eventually ban the manufacture and possession of nuclear weapons, in the same way that chemical and biological weapons have been successfully banned by international treaties.

Mayors for Peace is encouraging the Government to state its support for a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the forthcoming Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, which will take place in New York between 3–28 May. There is optimism that the 2010 NPT Review Conference will provide an opportunity to make a major breakthrough towards a nuclear free world, but the success or otherwise of the conference will depend very much upon the level of engagement of the world's nuclear-weapon states, including the United Kingdom.

The meeting with Ivan Lewis has been organised with the support of Tony Lloyd, MP for Manchester Central – himself a former Foreign Office minister and a strong advocate for international nuclear disarmament.

Bailie George Regan, a member of the delegation from Dundee City Council, adds: “The world needs a Nuclear Weapons Convention to ensure that current nuclear stockpiles are kept safely and securely; to prevent these terrible weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists; and to reduce the numbers of nuclear weapons worldwide as a step towards their eventual elimination.

“We want the Government to show it is serious when it talks about multilateral disarmament by supporting steps to begin work on a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the Non Proliferation Treaty Conference in New York in May. The Government must also take steps to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in its own security strategies, and give an assurance that its nuclear weapons will never be used against cities or other civilian targets.”

Mayor Greg Szanto, Mayor of Eastbourne, added: “I think it is important that Councils in the UK work with the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Mayors and councillors worldwide to show our solidarity for the reduction of nuclear weapons in our world. Nuclear weapons remain one of the greatest threats to the people of the world. We will be encouraging the UK government to be at the forefront of the international campaign to see their reduction and eventual elimination. I agree with the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that we should aim to rid the world of these weapons by 2020 and our meeting will seek to encourage that process with the UK government.”

Tony Lloyd MP said: “I am pleased to have facilitated this meeting between the Mayors for Peace and the UK Government. The need for a nuclear weapons free world remains amongst the greatest foreign policy goals and I want to see the UK Government take the lead at May's Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference.”

## PHOTO AND INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:

The meeting between the Mayors for Peace delegation and Ivan Lewis MP is scheduled for 3 pm on Monday 1 March. Members of the delegation will be available for media interviews on the morning of 1 March and will be available for interview before the meeting outside the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Main Building, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH.

For more information please contact Sean Morris on 07771 930196 or Peter Burt on 07790 409339.

### Notes for Editors:

1. Mayors for Peace is an international non-government organisation representing over 3,500 mayors and local authorities globally from 134 countries and regions. The organisation was formed by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the two Japanese cities devastated by atomic bombs in 1945. In the UK Mayors for Peace has 62 members, including the Mayors of London, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Leeds, and Bristol.
2. Members of the Mayors for Peace delegation meeting Ivan Lewis include:

Mayor Greg Szanto	Eastbourne Borough Council
Bailie George Regan	Dundee City Council (representing the Lord Provost of Dundee and the Council's UK Mayors for Peace Working Group permanent representative)
Councillor M. Afzal Khan	Manchester City Council (representing the Lord Mayor of Manchester and the Council's UK Mayors for Peace Working Group permanent representative)
Councillor Euan McLeod	Glasgow City Council (representing the Lord Provost of Glasgow and the Council's UK Mayors for Peace Working Group permanent representative)

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