

Nuclear Free Local Authorities **briefing**



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Subject: 8th Mayors for Peace Executive & General Conference and Hiroshima Peace Ceremony

1. Introduction

This report provides a full overview for NFLA members of the 8th Mayors for Peace Executive and General Conference and the 2013 Hiroshima Peace Ceremony. The Conference and the Peace Ceremony were attended by the NFLA Chair and the NFLA Secretary. Representatives from the NFLA Scotland Forum also attended. This report has been developed by the NFLA Secretary. Manchester City Council is a Vice President City of Mayors for Peace and Glasgow City Council is an Associate Member of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Association Board. For over three decades the NFLA has closely co-operated with Mayors for Peace in pursuing its shared goal of a nuclear weapons free world. However, both organisations are independent of each other.

2. Brief history of Mayors for Peace and of the Executive and General Conferences

In August 1945, atomic bombs destroyed most of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, at the cost of over 200,000 lives. Today, sixty-eight years after the bombings, thousands of citizens are still suffering the devastating after-effects of radiation. To prevent any repetition of the A-bomb tragedy, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in particular have sought to tell the world about the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons and have consistently urged that all nuclear weapons be dismantled.

On June 24, 1982, at the 2nd UN Special Session on Disarmament held at UN Headquarters in New York, Mayor Takeshi Araki of Hiroshima proposed a new 'Program to Promote the Solidarity of Cities toward the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons'. This proposal offered cities a way to transcend national borders and work together to press for nuclear weapons abolition. Subsequently, the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki called on Councils around the world to support this program.

The Mayors for Peace is composed of cities around the world that have formally expressed support for the program Mayor Araki announced in 1982. As of August 1, 2013, membership stood at 5,712 cities in 157 countries and regions. In March 1990, the Mayors for Peace was officially registered as a UN NGO related to the Department of Public Information. In May 1991, it became a Category II NGO (currently called a NGO in "Special Consultative Status"), registered with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. (See <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org> for further details.)

The Mayors for Peace Executive Conference is held every two years to bring together its leadership team of cities. These currently are Hiroshima (President, Japan), Nagasaki (Japan), Hannover (Germany), Volgograd (Russia), Malakoff (France), Mantinlupa (Philippines), Manchester (UK), Akron (USA), Ypres (Belgium), Biograd na Moru (Croatia), Granollers (Spain), Halabja (Iraq), Brussels (Belgium), Fongo-Tongo (Cameroon), Mexico City (Mexico) and Frogn (Norway).

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At four-yearly intervals the Mayors for Peace also hold concurrently an additional General Conference for its entire membership to meet and agree to major organisational decisions and a four-year action plan. These General Conferences are always held in either Hiroshima or Nagasaki, and the 2013 General and Executive Conferences were held at the Hiroshima International Conference Centre. The Conference Centre is held in a building which also includes the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Hiroshima International Concert Hall and is at the southern end of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, the hypocentre of the 1945 atomic bomb.

As a Vice President City since 1999, Manchester has attended every Executive and General Conference over the past 14 years. As the Secretariat of the NFLA, it has also shared its experience with other NFLA members. NFLA Chairs have also attended the General Conference of Mayors for Peace as part of the close co-operation between the two organisations.

3. Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace – key structural & organisational decisions made

The Mayors for Peace Executive Conference considered four main agenda items:

- Election of Executive Officials.
- Revision to the Covenant of Mayors for Peace.
- Measures for strengthening Mayors for Peace's management systems.
- Mayors for Peace Action Plan 2013 – 2017.

Election of Executive Officials:

The Executive Conference reconfirmed the 16 Executive Official Cities noted in section 2 above to continue as President and Vice Presidents of Mayors for Peace until 2017. Mexico City, Fongo-Tongo and Frogne were promoted from the position of Executive Member to that of Vice Presidents.

The Executive Conference also approved that, as part of the measures for strengthening Mayors for Peace's management systems, a number of new Executive Members would be appointed by the President from 2013 – 2017 as national chapters of Mayors for Peace are developed.

Revision to the Covenant of Mayors for Peace:

The Executive Conference agreed that the Japanese version of the Mayors for Peace Covenant – its formal constitution – would be slightly amended to take into account those Japanese member councils whose smaller populations meant that they do not have a post of Elected Mayor. The Japanese Chapter only would therefore be called 'Mayors and Municipal Leaders for Peace' to take account of this issue. This could be a helpful solution to a similar issue in the UK and Ireland.

The Executive Conference also agreed to the formal establishment of two positions to improve the management of the Hiroshima-based Mayors for Peace International Secretariat. These posts are the Secretary-General and Under Secretary-General of Mayors for Peace. The two post holders are the Chairperson and Executive Director of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. These officers will assist the President and can also attend international meetings in his place, improving the profile of the organisation at bodies such as the United Nations.

Measures for strengthening Mayors for Peace's management system:

The membership of Mayors for Peace has more than doubled since the 7th General Conference. This growth is to be very much welcomed but has led to growing gaps in activities between active members and others, and brings about a real challenge to involve as many members as possible in the work of Mayors for Peace at a local, national and international level.

At the 2011 Executive Conference in Granollers, Spain it was agreed to commence discussions on how to strengthen Mayors for Peace's management systems for full consideration by the 8th General Conference. A number of meetings were held by a sub-committee, of which the NFLA Secretary was an active member, and it led to a number of recommendations which were placed before, and confirmed by, the 2013 Executive Conference and the wider General Conference.

They are as follows:

- Promoting regionalisation and galvanizing regional activities – in order to encourage a more proactive and deeper form of membership, the development of national / cross-national chapters of Mayors for Peace will be encouraged. This will include expanding the number of lead cities who will, following discussion, be elevated to the role of Executive Cities to lead national chapters. This will be implemented in a staged manner and it is envisaged will be fully in place by fiscal year 2015/16.
- Introducing voluntary membership fees – in order to build up a system through which all members cooperate to support the organisation while maintaining membership, each Mayors for Peace member will bear a minimum voluntary annual membership of at least £25 a year. The development of national chapters will allow for this to be organised through a lead city or, in the absence of a national chapter, directly to Hiroshima. The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will continue to bear a certain amount of the running expenses of Mayors for Peace. This measure will be fully implemented by fiscal year 2015/16.
- In order to achieve these outcomes, the Hiroshima Secretariat will be improved through a membership database and increased staffing including international volunteer interns. The Hiroshima Secretariat will also work closely with the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Secretariat in Ypres – which oversees its campaigning work at the United Nations – to reduce overlap and improve both its campaigning and organisational ability.

Mayors for Peace Action Plan 2013 – 2017:

Mayors for Peace has been dedicating its efforts to the expansion of its membership in order to develop its '2020 Vision' – its Emergency Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons by 2020. Membership has grown rapidly and there have been wider positive developments towards nuclear weapon abolition, in line with its 2020 Vision, in three key areas:

- Greater awareness of the urgent imperative to abolish nuclear weapons – The International Conference on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons held in Norway in March 2013, attended by 127 countries, considered the catastrophic impact of nuclear weapons upon humanity and the global climate. A follow-up Conference will be held in Mexico in February 2014.
- 'Good faith' efforts to initiate negotiations towards achieving a nuclear weapons free world – The 2012 UN General Assembly established an 'Open-Ended Working Group' with a mandate to develop proposals for multilateral nuclear disarmament. 70 countries and many international NGOs, including Mayors for Peace, are actively taking part in it and its report will be discussed at the UN General Assembly in September, where considerable time will be given to discuss this matter.
- Holding high-level meetings at the UN on nuclear disarmament – for the first time ever, the UN General Assembly on September 26th will hold a high-level plenary meeting on nuclear disarmament. The UN resolution urges participation at the 'highest level', and Mayors for Peace has been advocating the same policy.

Mayors for Peace's Action Plan for 2013 – 2017 will seek to strengthen the voice of citizens urging concrete measures towards nuclear weapons abolition to governments worldwide, and to raise international public awareness calling for nuclear weapons abolition. The measures to improve Mayors for Peace's management systems will enhance its effectiveness to deliver both actions. It is also important for Mayors for Peace to promote the message of the 'hibakuska' (atomic bomb survivors) to the general public, national governments and the United Nations.

Set within this framework the Executive Conference approved the following main projects for the next four years:

- a) Expanding membership and strengthening Mayors for Peace management systems:
- Calling on non-member cities to join Mayors for Peace.
 - Calling on capital cities in particular to join Mayors for Peace – over half of the world's capital cities are currently members.
 - Promote regionalisation and galvanise regional activities of Mayors for Peace.
 - Increase the number of lead cities of Mayors for Peace.
 - Hold regional conferences of Mayors for Peace, such as the Mediterranean Mayors for Peace Conference taking place in Aubagne, France in September 2013.

- Solidifying the financial basis of Mayors for Peace by fundraising events and bids and voluntary membership fees.
 - Improving the Hiroshima and Ypres Secretariat functions by the receiving of an increased pool of volunteer interns and establishing the positions of Secretary-General and Under-Secretary General of Mayors for Peace.
- b) Increasing international public opinion for nuclear weapons abolition:
- Communicating and transmitting the message of Hiroshima and Nagasaki through A-bomb poster exhibitions in member cities.
 - Transmitting the message of A-bomb survivors directly and through the use of social media.
 - Promoting Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study courses at universities and colleges around the world.
 - Distributing and cultivation of seeds and seedlings of A-bombed trees will be offered by Hiroshima to Mayors for Peace members.
 - Distribution and preservation of a 'Flame of Peace' from the eternal flame at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park will be offered by Hiroshima to Mayors for Peace members.
 - Holding of exhibitions of portraits of A-bomb survivors and the screening of animated films will be made available by the Hiroshima Secretariat to members.
 - Receiving of journalists, peace activists, youth groups and students to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- c) Cooperation with like-minded groups to promote wider awareness activities:
- Encourage a resolution of support from national associations of local government associations. At present, Mayors for Peace is formally supported by national and international local government bodies such as United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), United States Conference of Mayors, Federation of Latin American and Caribbean Cities, Municipalities and Local Government Associations (FLACMA) and the Japan Association of City Mayors.
 - Strengthen collaboration with peace research institutes around the world, twinning with the Hiroshima Peace Institute of Hiroshima University and the Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition of Nagasaki University.
 - Continue to build on strong collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and national Red Cross / Red Crescent societies.
 - Building up networks and closer collaboration with international NGOs, peace NGOs, parliamentarians and prominent figures in culture, art and sports.
 - Collaborate with the Japanese 'Peace Boat's' Hibakuska World Tour Project with the theme 'I was her age', which will travel from Hiroshima to New York for the 2015 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Conference.
 - Creation and publication of a Cities World Peace Calendar to encourage members to commemorate specific peace-related anniversaries.
 - Support the centennial commemoration of the first use of weapons of mass destruction at a special conference in Ypres on 22nd April 2015. The conference will be called: 'A century of WMD – Enough! Cities are not Targets!'
- d) Promotion of the early realisation of a nuclear weapons convention:
- Attendance at all the main nuclear disarmament negotiation conferences in 2013 – 2015 such as the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on nuclear disarmament in September 2013, the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Mexico in February 2014, the third session of the NPT Preparatory Conference at the UN in May 2014 and the NPT Review Conference in May 2015.
 - Promote a petition drive calling for a nuclear weapons convention (as of August 1st, 2013 this had 774, 431 signatures).
 - Issuing protest letters against acts contrary to nuclear weapons abolition, such as nuclear weapon testing.
 - Selection of 2020 Vision Ambassadors to spread the philosophy of Mayors for Peace and assist in supporting its campaigns and fundraising activities.
 - Increasing the number of 2020 Vision Campaigners to promote and educate the work of the 2020 Vision to member and non members.

4. 8th General Conference – Toward a World Without Nuclear Weapons – Conveying the “Spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki” to the World

Opening ceremony, keynote speeches, flower ceremony and evening reception:

Following on from the Executive Conference, the wider membership of Mayors for Peace took part in a General Conference over the period August 3rd – August 6th. Over 300 participants took part in the General Conference from 157 cities and municipalities and 18 different countries.

After a lively opening ceremony by the Hiroshima Junior Marimba Ensemble the conference was formally opened by the Mayor of Hiroshima and the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture. A message of support was provided by Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary General.

(http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/activities/meeting/8th/statements/UN_Secretary_General.pdf)

A keynote speech was to have been given by the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane but unforeseen circumstances meant she was unable to attend. A copy of the speech she would have delivered has been placed on the Mayors for Peace website.

(http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/activities/8thstatements/UN_HR.pdf)

Instead, a moving personal testimony of his experience on August 6th, 1945 was provided in English by a Hiroshima A-bomb survivor. Mr Keijiro Matsushima was 15 years old at the time of the Hiroshima atomic bombing. He had just arrived to his school and was in his first lesson at time of the 8.15am bomb blast. His school was around 1800 metres from the hypocentre and a combination of good luck ensured that he initially only received minor injuries. Mr Matsushima then explained the terrible scenes of devastation, dead and badly injured people and the large fires that engulfed the city. He initially went home to see his mother who lived 2kms from the hypocentre before helping with the emergency response to the incident. Now a retired English teacher of 83, Mr Matsushima has suffered ongoing health problems due to radioactive exposure. His testimony left a deep mark on all those present.

After Mr Matsushima’s testimony, all attendees of the General Conference were invited to place flowers at the Cenotaph for the A-bomb victims in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. They were then given a tour of the Peace Memorial Park and the Peace Memorial Museum – powerful symbols of Hiroshima. Conference delegates were noticeably moved by this experience.

Conference Session 1 – endorsement of key decisions made by the Executive Conference

All the major decisions of the Executive Conference were presented to the General Conference for discussion and approval.

All the decisions, including the Mayors for Peace’s Action Plan 2013 – 2017, were unanimously approved and will now be formally adopted and disseminated to the entire Mayors for Peace membership by the Hiroshima International Secretariat.

Conference Session 2 – Future Initiatives of the 2020 Vision Campaign

The Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign is the main project used by the organisation to seek approval of a nuclear weapons convention and build the process for a nuclear weapons free world. The 2020 Vision was officially adopted at the 2003 Executive Conference in Manchester and it has proved very effectively over the past 10 years, based in its Secretariat office in the Belgian city of Ypres.

This session thoroughly provided delegates with an overview of the achievements of the 2020 Vision Campaign from 2003 – 2013. These include:

- Being instrumental in a rapid expansion of membership of the Mayors for Peace from 500 members in 2003 to 5,700 members by August 2013.
- Raising an annual budget of around 100,000 euros from voluntary donations of Mayors for Peace members.
- Transforming Mayors for Peace into an effective campaigning organisation respected across the disarmament issue.
- Developing very strong and close arrangements within the internal structures of the United Nations disarmament regime.
- Developing an effective working relationship with the Ambassadors of national delegations to the UN disarmament regime.

- Increasing the leadership team of Mayors for Peace and bringing in to the organisation committed, talented and effective staff.
- Developing close liaison and cooperation with other like-minded nuclear disarmament NGOs and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The session also considered the development of the 2020 Vision Campaign over the next two years as it gets heavily involved in the key United Nations meetings in 2013 and the NPT (Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty) Conferences in 2014 and 2015. Mention was also made of the key parts of the 2013 – 2017 Action Plan that the 2020 Vision Campaign would lead on. Specific projects include developing a film of the 'Peace Boat' tour, the Cities Peace Calendar and promoting the 2015 Ypres Conference.

Within this session, the NFLA Chair, speaking on behalf of Manchester City Council, outlined some suggestions for the future development of the 2020 Vision. These included enhancing its fund-raising strategy, developing closer links with national campaigns – such as the national debate in the UK over Trident replacement, and planning for what happens next beyond 2020. Manchester will continue to pursue these issues through meetings of the 2020 Vision Campaign Association Board.

Session 3 – Developing regional groups of Mayors for Peace

This detailed session allowed for a number of delegates to outline the development of national groups or chapters of Mayors for Peace and some of the local issues that they may wish to pursue.

There were particularly useful contributions from speakers from France, Spain, Norway and Germany about how national Mayors for Peace groups have been developed. The French Mayors for Peace group has widened its remit and now has dedicated staff and regular meetings. It has also developed a number of useful peace education tools. The German Mayors for Peace group holds an annual conference and has developed a Mayors for Peace Flag Day where each member promotes its involvement with the organisation. Prominent adverts in the media have also been published by the German, French, Spanish and Norwegian groups.

The NFLA Secretary spoke at this session about the 10 year experience of the UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Working Group. He outlined its remit and the useful liaison it has provided with a number of UK & Ireland members and national NGOs like CND. He noted the difficult issue in the UK and Ireland for wider development is that the majority of Mayors are ceremonial rather than executive in their role, unlike in most other countries. This creates real logistical challenges for future development. A questionnaire has been sent out to all members to ascertain views on developing the Working Group, and these will be pursued further after the General Conference. Voluntary invoices of £120 and 130 euros had commenced in 2012 and it was hoped to continue to develop these. Wider fund-raising would be beneficial though to build up organisational capacity. All these points were well received by delegates.

The session continued with speakers from India, Japan and from a number of Kurdish Mayors from Iraq, Iran and Turkey. All the points made in this session will be useful for future consideration by the Mayors for Peace's Executive Board.

Dialogue Sessions with like-minded groups

The General Conference also held two sessions which heard from constituencies of support that Mayors for Peace need to cooperate with.

The first session considered deepening cooperation with Atomic Bomb Survivor Groups and Citizen Groups in Japan to look at the ways the Japanese peace movement should develop in the future. Speakers included representatives from the Japan Confederation of A-Bomb and H-Bomb Sufferers Organisation, the Hiroshima Prefectural Council of A-bomb Sufferers Organisation, the Hiroshima Consumers Cooperative Union and representatives on behalf of Hiroshima Schools.

The second session considered how Mayors for Peace should develop its relationships with Government Officials and International NGOs. Speakers included representatives from the Norwegian and Mexican Governments responsible for the UN Conferences on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons, a representative from the Japanese Government's Department of Foreign Affairs, a representative from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a representative from the

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The session was concluded by a speech from the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture on its work to promote Hiroshima as a Peace City.

Both sessions were informative and useful and have helped to continue to enhance the close relationships Mayors for Peace has with these groups.

Special Message for Peace

A special message for peace was directly given to the Conference by the noted American film director Oliver Stone. Mr Stone has spent five years developing a ground-breaking series – ‘The Untold History of the United States’ – which partially concentrates on the use of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Mr Stone’s speech gave a passionate plea for a nuclear weapons free world and for the powerful role of Mayors for Peace in this campaign. During his visit to Hiroshima, Mr Stone was given a tour of the Peace Memorial Museum and met with hibakuska survivors. He was interviewed live on Japanese television on the 6th August and his visit brought considerable media attention to the conference and the wider peace ceremony.

Session 4 – Adoption of the Hiroshima Appeal

The final session of the General Conference sought to sum up the key issues and campaigns of the Mayors for Peace in a document developed by its Executive Board and called the ‘Hiroshima Appeal’. This document summarised the work and the challenges for Mayors for Peace in achieving its aim of a nuclear weapons free world. The Appeal challenges national governments around the world to move away from the sterile debate over nuclear deterrence and work more actively for a nuclear weapons convention.

The Hiroshima Appeal was unanimously endorsed by the General Conference of Mayors for Peace. It will be sent to all national governments, the United Nations, international NGOs and the international media. It is attached as Appendix 1 of this briefing.

5. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony 2013

Since 1946, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have held annual peace memorial ceremonies to remember the victims of the two bombings, call for a nuclear weapon free world and invite the wider world to join with it for this goal. These are held on August 6th in Hiroshima and August 9th in Nagasaki and 2013 is the 68th anniversary of the atomic bomb attacks. Around the world many Mayors for Peace members held their own local commemorative ceremonies as well.

The 2013 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony took place in front of the A-bomb Cenotaph (the exact location of the hypocentre for the August 6th attack) starting at 8am. In front of an audience of around 50,000 people and shown live on Japanese television and worldwide television, the Peace Ceremony is a moving hour of reflection, speeches and music. It was a great honour and privilege for the NFLA representatives to be present at it.

At the Ceremony, a Peace Bell is rung at 8.15am, the exact time of the bomb blast, followed by a minute’s silence. The Mayor of Hiroshima then read out the Hiroshima Peace Declaration which called for renewed determination to bring about a nuclear weapons free world and remembered the suffering of the hibakuska. Speeches were also given by the Prime Minister of Japan, the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture, the Chair of the United Nations General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. A ‘Commitment to Peace’ is also recited by two Hiroshima schoolchildren. The ceremony ends with a choir of children from 17 Hiroshima schools singing the Hiroshima Peace Song.

Flower wreaths placed by dignitaries are then enhanced by flower offerings of hibakuska survivors and the citizens of Hiroshima and foreign visitors. Throughout the whole day of August 6th a long line of people could be seen given their own personal gift to the cenotaph. In the evening thousands of people lined the river behind the Peace Memorial Park and in front of the A-bomb Memorial Dome to lay peace lanterns on the river.

(The Hiroshima Peace Declaration is available at:

<http://www.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/www/contents/000000000000/1317948556078/index.html>

and the Nagasaki Peace Declaration is available at:
<http://www1.city.nagasaki.nagasaki.jp/peace/english/appeal/archives.html>)

6. The next steps forward

With the formal agreement to start to develop national chapters of Mayors for Peace, Manchester –as a Vice President of Mayors for Peace – will now work closely with Hiroshima and communicate with UK and Irish members about developing its Working Group into a chapter. Further discussion with its membership will be a key part of this process and the comments made by members in a recent questionnaire and further surveys will be made. Voluntary invoices encouraging members to give a small financial commitment to Mayors for Peace will also be processed shortly.

This report will be sent to all NFLA members to encourage them to play a core part in the future development of Mayors for Peace as part of its common aim to realise a nuclear weapons free world. An adapted report will also be sent to all UK and Irish Mayors for Peace members encouraging them to get engaged further with the work of Mayors for Peace. Further correspondence will then take place with the aim of establishing a national chapter over the next 12 - 18 months. Manchester will be discussing these matters directly with Hiroshima and other members of the Mayors for Peace Executive at regular intervals.

The 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace provided inspiration to all those that attended it. As a Vice President City, Manchester (and the NFLA representatives who also participated) wishes to thank the Mayor and the staff of Hiroshima and Mayors for Peace for the extensive preparations and delivery of a complicated and wide-ranging conference programme. The key now for the organisation is, as the conference theme put forward, conveying effectively the ‘spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki’ to the wider world.

Appendix 1 – The Mayors for Peace ‘Hiroshima Appeal’

We, representatives of 5,712 cities from 157 countries/regions around the world, have met at the 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace held in Hiroshima and engaged in extensive discussions on the theme ‘Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons—Conveying the “Spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki” to the World.’

In August 1945, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were reduced to ruins, in both cases by a single atomic bomb, and more than 210,000 people from the two cities lost their precious lives. The suffering of the atomic bomb survivors—known as *hibakusha*—from the blast, heat and radiation continues to this day, 68 years later. Having lived through an experience too cruel to be put into words, the atomic bomb survivors have continued to appeal for nuclear abolition and to extend their desire for peace to the people of the world. Their dedication stems from their deep humanitarian conviction that “no one should ever again suffer as we have.”

Mayors for Peace, which feels a strong sense of responsibility to guarantee the safety and welfare of citizens everywhere, empathizes profoundly with the spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in striving for nuclear abolition and peace, and is intensifying its activities to promote the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

“Hiroshima” and “Nagasaki” are names that are now well known throughout the world. However, those states that possess nuclear weapons have turned a deaf ear to the earnest appeals of the *hibakusha*, and during the Cold War they engaged in a nuclear arms race that eventually increased their number to the current total of nine. While there has been some reduction in the number of nuclear weapons, this has been too slow and inadequate. Today, almost a quarter of a century since the Cold War ended, an estimated 17,300 nuclear weapons continue to pose an intolerable threat to humanity and the environment. With about 2,000 nuclear weapons on high alert, the threatened use of nuclear weapons, euphemistically called “deterrence,” and the unspeakable horror it implies, is still the mainstay of the international security regime. Furthermore, nuclear proliferation remains a current and dangerous threat, and we cannot deny the possibility that a sub-national terrorist group might obtain nuclear weapons.

And yet, in a time of unprecedented global economic crisis, fantastically expensive programs to use new tests to modernize nuclear weapons systems are underway in all of the states that possess nuclear arms, with no end in sight, misappropriating resources that are badly needed to fund basic human needs. The need to achieve a world without nuclear weapons that will be sustainable over the long term compels us to build a new society in which mutual distrust and threats are replaced by a shared sense of community, rooted in an awareness that we all belong to the same human family. In such a society, diversity will be treasured and disputes will be resolved through peaceful means. The road to this goal may be long and difficult, but it is certainly achievable, and we must proceed with determination. At the same time, while on this path, it is absolutely necessary to prevent the criminal act of another use of nuclear weapons, which would result in unfathomable disaster to humanity and the environment. To this end, concrete policies, frameworks and confidence-building measures to promote international and regional peace and security must be put in place—in particular, in regions such as the Middle East, North East Asia and South Asia, where nuclear tensions are on the rise.

Facing the continuing threat posed by nuclear weapons, we need to redouble our efforts to bring all states to the table to commence negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible date. This is the main goal of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign to ban nuclear weapons.

While we acknowledge the many complementary efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, we, Mayors for Peace, place our priority at this stage on promoting a nuclear weapons convention or other effective means of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons. In this context, we welcome several promising new developments that are highlighting the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and accelerating the momentum toward their becoming outlawed. The Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference referred for the first time to the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and a nuclear weapons convention. In March this year, Norway hosted a ground-breaking conference in Oslo on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, with 127 governments in attendance. A follow-on conference, hosted by Mexico, is scheduled for February 2014. In May, a new United Nations working group open to all member states began meeting in Geneva “to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.” And the first ever UN High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament will take place on September 26 in New York.

Mayors for Peace calls on all states, including those that possess nuclear weapons, to participate constructively and in good faith in the new UN working group, the UN High-Level Nuclear Disarmament Meeting, and the Mexico conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, as well as in preparations for the 2015 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Along with this immediate campaign, we will also expand our activities to advance the longer-term goal of cultivating the sense of global community as one human family that will ultimately be the basis for lasting world peace.

In order for Mayors for Peace to carry out this ambitious agenda, further expansion of our membership and the development of proactive and independent activities at the regional level are necessary. Further, we need to convince people around the world to actively support the heartfelt desire of the atomic bomb survivors for peace. To raise global awareness as widely as possible about the harsh reality of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, especially among future generations, we must strengthen our relationships with the United Nations, parliamentarians, associations of local authorities, the International Committee of the Red Cross, international peace organizations, other organizations working for peace, human rights, and protection of the environment, and prominent figures in culture, the arts, and sports. Our collaborative activities can help to mobilize widespread international public opinion for peace.

By expanding the number of our member cities and deepening the involvement of existing members, and through increased networking with diverse organizations, we will overcome the barriers of mutual distrust based on nationality, race, or religion, and create a security system rooted in a sense of global community as members of the same human family.

In light of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the gas attacks on Halabja and the upcoming commemoration of the centennial anniversary in 2015 of the first use of a weapon of mass destruction on Ypres, Mayors for

Peace will use these tragic examples of the use of other weapons of mass destruction to further our goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Mayors for Peace has been a humanitarian organization since its founding in 1982 by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Cities join first and foremost out of human solidarity with the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, especially the survivors of 1945. Membership has grown to 5,712 member cities in 157 countries/regions, and we now represent more than 1 billion people. We shall further enhance our capacity to serve member cities and support their activities, and call upon others to join our efforts to further nuclear abolition and peace. Finally, whatever the source of radiation may be, we must do everything we can to prevent any more *hibakusha* anywhere.

Mayors for Peace calls on the United Nations and all governments to take the following measures:

1. To make sure that policy makers and officials from governments and international agencies responsible for nuclear disarmament visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to deepen their understanding of the indescribable human tragedy of the atomic bombings, and disseminate the earnest wish of the atomic bomb survivors for the abolition of nuclear weapons.
2. To establish policies and frameworks for confidence-building measures among nations to make sure that nuclear weapons will never be used again.
3. To aim for the early implementation of a nuclear weapons convention, or other effective means of establishing a nuclear-weapons-free world, and to start concrete negotiations towards its conclusion.
4. To actively work on replacing the current security system of nuclear deterrence, which attempts to maintain peace through the threatened use of nuclear weapons, with one rooted in a shared sense of community as fellow members of one human family, taking into account experiences gained by regional communities such as the EU, ASEAN, and CELAC.

Addressing the above points, at its 8th General Conference, Mayors for Peace adopted a dynamic *Action Plan* for the period from 2013 to 2017. We hereby pledge to make every endeavour to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

August 5, 2013
The 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace
Hiroshima

Appendix 2 – Some photographs from the Mayors for Peace Conference
 (Source: NFLA Secretary)



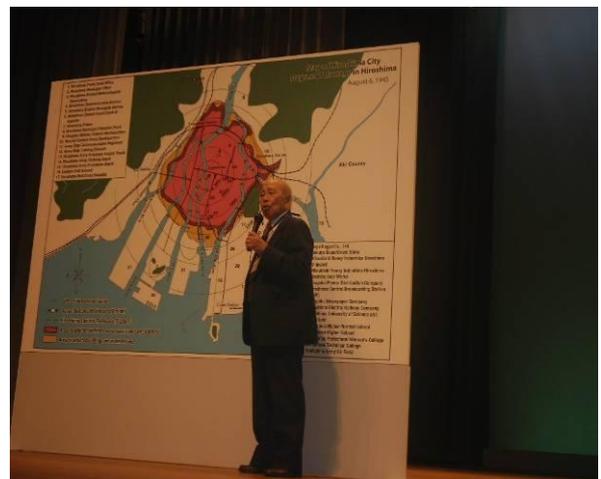
NFLA Chair Councillor Mark Hackett with the Mayors of Hiroshima (l) and Nagasaki (r)



Opening session of the Mayors for Peace Conference, Hiroshima Conference Centre



Marimba performance from Hiroshima Junior Marimba Ensemble



Hiroshima A-bomb survivor Keijiro Matsushima recounts his experience on August 6, 1945



Conference delegates offer flowers at Cenotaph for the A-bomb victims



Councillor Mark Hackett and Councillor Lawrence O'Neill (NFLA Scotland) with Kagura dancers at Conference Welcome Reception



NFLA Secretary Sean Morris speaking at General Conference



Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at Executive Cities Press Conference



Film director Oliver Stone delivers a peace message to General Conference



Hiroshima Peace Ceremony, Peace Memorial Park, 6th August 2013



Above: Hiroshima A-bomb Memorial Dome, 6th August 2013 surrounded by peace lanterns
Right: Peace Park and Peace Lanterns

