



# Briefing paper

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**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

**No.25**

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**Subject: Chapter meeting for International Peace Day and wider progress**

## **1. Introduction**

This report has been developed by the Chapter Secretary and provides members with an overview of the Chapter's recent meeting held in Manchester on September 13<sup>th</sup>, coinciding between the International Day to Ban Nuclear Tests, International Peace Day and the International Day to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons.

Other issues reported on in this report include:

- Other notable local, national and international events held around International Peace Day.
- A significant increase in the number of states that have both signed and formally ratified the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) during the UN General Assembly.
- Developments with the European structure of Mayors for Peace and the upcoming Executive Conference.
- A Mayors for Peace exhibition being held shortly by Manchester and Bristol.
- Consideration for events being held in 2020 – the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both the first use of nuclear weapons and the end of the Second World War.

## **2. Chapter meeting, Manchester Central Library, 13<sup>th</sup> September**

The UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter held a joint meeting with the NFLA. It was hosted by Manchester City Council.

The joint meeting was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September, which is close to three major UN-designated International Days – the International Day to Ban Nuclear Tests on August 29<sup>th</sup>, International Peace Day on September 21<sup>st</sup> and the International Day to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was also held at this time to accommodate a national tour organised by the Embassy of Kazakhstan and the non-governmental organisation, the ATOM Project, which assists people who have been affected by the testing programme of nuclear weapons. A Global Ambassador of the ATOM Project is Karipbek Kuyukov, who was born in a village close to Semey, Kazakhstan. Semey was known as Semipalatinsk when Kazakhstan was a part of the Soviet Union, and a site closeby was the venue for hundreds of destructive nuclear tests. Many people were exposed to radiation from the tests, including Karipbek's parents, and he was born without arms. Many other people were born with birth defects as a result of radiation exposure.

Despite his disability, Karipbek is an accomplished mouth painter and uses his experiences to paint the people and the landscapes affected by nuclear testing and nuclear weapons. As a Global Ambassador of the ATOM Project, Karipbek has been a passionate campaigner for the rights of communities affected by nuclear weapon testing around the world, and for the need for multilateral nuclear disarmament. Kazakhstan is also one of the few countries in the world who have voluntarily given up a nuclear weapons programme.

## **THE UK & IRELAND CHAPTER OF MAYORS FOR PEACE**

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The tour organised by the Embassy included meetings in the Westminster Parliament and the Scottish Parliament, where Karipbek met MPs, MSPs and peace / disarmament groups. There was also a meeting organised at the RAC Club in London in conjunction with CND. Some photos of these events are attached as Appendix 1.

At the Manchester meeting, Karipbek gave a moving account of the environmental damage that the Soviet nuclear testing programme had left to the Semey area. He noted that many people unwittingly went into the radioactively contaminated areas and many have been exposed to radiation. The site still remains an unsafe area to be in, and clean-up will take many years to achieve. This experience influenced the Government of Kazakhstan, created following the demise of the Soviet Union, to voluntarily give up any control of the weapons that were stored in their territory. Due to the environmental damage from the nuclear test programme in the country, Kazakhstan is a leading advocate for nuclear weapons disarmament. On August 29<sup>th</sup> 2019, the International Day to Ban Nuclear Tests, the Government of Kazakhstan formally ratified the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and presented its ratification documents to the United Nations Disarmament Office.

Also speaking at the seminar was Dr Becky Alexis-Martin of Manchester Metropolitan University. Dr Alexis-Martin has focused a core part of her research into looking at the effects of nuclear testing on the communities where the tests took place – many of them in remote Pacific Islands – and on some of the service and merchant navy veterans involved in the test programme. She is an Adviser to the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA). In her presentation, she noted the environmental, physical and emotional damage to thousands of people and cohesive communities in places like Maralinga in Australia, Christmas Island, the Marshall Islands, the Bikini Atoll and around Los Alamos in Nevada, as well as at Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan. She also showed photographs from a recent visit of British nuclear test veterans to Kiritimati / Christmas Island to meet with islanders and hold a commemoration ceremony. There are many memorial stones to BNTVA members in places such as in Manchester, Leeds, Paisley and at the National Memorial Arboretum. Dr Alexis-Martin's recent book on this matter is called 'Disarming Doomsday' and is available from bookshops.

Vijay Mehta of Uniting for Peace also spoke at the seminar to talk about his recently published book about the need to create Peace Departments in Government (at all levels) and in universities. He gave a passionate overview of the need to move away from militarism and towards a culture of peace. He outlined a number of states who have moved in this direction such as Costa Rica and Ethiopia. He also welcomed that a number of UK political parties had set up Shadow Ministers of Peace and Disarmament and believed it was possible for such a ministry to be established in a new UK Government in the near future. His new book is also available from bookshops.

The final speaker at the seminar was Dave Cullen, Director of the Reading-based Nuclear Information Service (NIS). He outlined the NIS report which looked at the growing costs and risks with the UK Government's programme to replace the Trident nuclear weapon programme. The report outlines the real complexity for the Ministry of Defence in a new nuclear weapons programme, both with developing the weapons and building the submarines. The report notes that costs are increasing and putting real and ongoing pressure on the wider defence budget. This is only likely to increase as the project develops. To download the report go to: <https://www.nuclearinfo.org/sites/default/files/Trouble%20Ahead%20low%20resolution%20version.pdf>

The next meeting of the Chapter will be in January / February 2020 and is likely to be held in the south of England.

### **3. Other events held on International Peace Day**

The International Day of Peace ('Peace Day') is observed around the world each year on the 21<sup>st</sup> September. Established in 1981 by a unanimous United Nations resolution, Peace Day provides a globally shared date for all of humanity to commit to Peace above all differences and to contribute to building a Culture of Peace.

According to the International Day of Peace website, there were 642 specially registered events held on the 21<sup>st</sup> September around the world. To look at some of these it is recommended to look at the International Peace Day website - <https://internationaldayofpeace.org/get-involved/>

The UN held its official event in New York at which UN Messengers of Peace interacted with over 700 schoolchildren.

Some of the events held in the UK and Ireland include:

- Bluefield Street Festival in Dublin's Smithfield Square.
- Belfast supports International Day of Peace in the Great Hall, Belfast City Hall.
- Vision of Hope concerts across the south west of England led by the singer Tally Koren.
- Global Drum Up for Peace in Bournemouth.
- A World Peace Public Meditation in Glasgow.
- Picnic for Peace in Lincoln City Centre.
- Peace Flag artwork in Kenton School, Newcastle.
- Reflecting on a Culture of Peace at Rydal Penrhos Memorial School.

The Chapter Secretariat were made aware of two particular high profile events held in London, which it hopes to promote the wider work of at the next Chapter meeting.

### ***Peace Partners event held in Croydon***

Peace Partners is a registered UK charity committed to meeting the fundamental human needs of clean air and water, nutritious food and individual peace. Peace Partners aims to raise public awareness, improve knowledge and expertise, and develop sustainable solutions to these global challenges.

On the International Day of Peace, some 70 people from various backgrounds and organisations attended the Peace Partners 'Waves of Change - Practice Peace' forum at Croydon's Fairfield Halls in South London. The day-long event was hosted by Peace Partners in association with The Tutu Foundation UK and Youth Futures.

The aims of the event were summarised by Dr Mitesh Desai, the day's chair person, as "to reflect on how peace can become a reality for us as individuals, for our families, in our communities, and indeed for countries across the world".

In partnership with PeaceCast.tv the entire event was streamed live and formed a part of PeaceCast.tv's annual Peace Day global webcast. This had the effect of increasing the event audience several times over.

There were presentations on the Prem Rawat Foundation's Peace Education Programme and the Tutu Foundation's Ubuntu Youth Project, as well as from a number of groups from the Croydon area with an active focus on youth well-being and conflict resolution. A signing of the 'Pledge to Peace' and a Meditation vigil were held, and invited guests included Shaniqua Benjamin, Croydon's Deputy Mayor and the Iman of Croydon Mosque. Also included were videos, live music and poetry, a panel debate with audience participation, and a Youth Futures workshop.

Peace Partners organise events bringing communities together and they have an extensive peace education programme. They also raise humanitarian aid to global communities affected by natural disaster. Their website is - <https://www.peacepartners.co.uk/>

The Chapter hopes to engage further with Croydon Council and highlight the work of Peace Partners at its next meeting.

### ***Peace One Day at the Globe Theatre***

In 1999, the actor turned filmmaker Jeremy Gilley set out to document his efforts to create an annual Peace Day. To this end he founded the non-profit organisation Peace One Day. In 2001 the organisation's efforts were rewarded when the member states of the United Nations

unanimously adopted the first ever annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on 21<sup>st</sup> September – Peace Day.

Since 2001, Peace One Day's objective has been to institutionalise Peace Day on the 21<sup>st</sup> September, making it a day that is self-sustaining, an annual day of global unity, a day of intercultural cooperation on an unprecedented scale.

To support this objective, and inspired by pivotal success in Afghanistan (where a 70% reduction in violent incidents was recorded by the United Nations Department of Safety and Security on Peace Day 2008), Jeremy Gilley launched a series of Peace One Day coalitions, each with a lead partner: the NGO Coalition; the 'Reducing Domestic Abuse' Coalition; the Student Coalition; the Faith Coalition; the Corporate Coalition; and the Schools' Network.

In 2014 Peace One Day launched a 3-year project in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The goal was to raise awareness of Peace Day and encourage all sectors of society in the region to stand together in the name of peace on 21 September.

In 2016, after several years of project work with the global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, it was estimated that 2.2 billion people had been exposed to the Peace Day message, that 940 million were aware of the day and that 16 million 'behaved more peacefully' as a result.

Through initiatives and collaborations, Peace One Day continues to encourage organisations and individuals to reduce violence at home, in the workplace, at school, in our communities and towards our environment.

The Peace One Day's 20th anniversary celebration was held at the Globe Theatre in London on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019. Amongst the highly impressive programme were performances from Sting, Basement Jaxx, Will Young, the Citizens of the World Choir and Emilie Sande, speeches from screen and stage actors Mark Rylance, Juliet Rylance and Jude Law and from the Peace One Day founder Jeremy Gilley.

Peace One Day's goal for 2025 is to reach 3 billion people with the message of Peace Day. Further details on their work can be found at <http://peaceoneday.org/> and again the Chapter hopes a representative from this group will be speaking at its next meeting.

#### **4. Number of countries and Councils ratifying or supporting the TPNW grows**

In 2017 122 states officially agreed at the United Nations to support the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The development came out of successful lobbying over a decade on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons by many civil society groups, one of which, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), received the Nobel Peace Prize that year. The other reason many non-nuclear weapon states agreed to the treaty was a growing level of frustration with the lack of progress, and growing stalemate, with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Whilst the TPNW has been actively opposed by nuclear weapon states, it has been taken up by many other states. In order to become a fully active treaty under international law, it requires the full ratification of at least 50 states. At present there are now 79 signatories to the treaty. On the 26<sup>th</sup> September, during the UN's annual General Assembly, a further 6 states officially gave their formal articles of ratification to the Treaty, bringing the total of ratifications to 32.

The states that ratified on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September included Ecuador, Bangladesh, Kiribati, Laos, the Maldives and Trinidad and Tobago. Also at the ceremony to sign the treaty – initiating their own process for ratification – were Botswana, Dominica, Grenada, Lesotho, St Kitts and Nevis, Tanzania and Zambia.

The ceremony was hosted by long-time leading supporters of the Treaty: Austria, Brazil, Costa Rica, Indonesia, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa and Thailand and it enabled presidents and foreign ministers to take this important step while they were gathered at the UNGA.

It is expected that the treaty will receive its formal approval when at least 50 states ratifying the treaty sometime - in 2020. This is a symbolically important date as it is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the first use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

As a parallel initiative, disarmament groups have also been encouraging Parliamentarians and Local Authorities to sign or pass resolutions giving their support to the TPNW. On the 26<sup>th</sup> September Fife Council became the fifth UK member of Mayors for Peace to pass a resolution supporting the TPNW with cross-party support. Fife join Manchester, Renfrewshire, Edinburgh and Hebden Royd Council in supporting the TPNW. There are now over 120 towns, cities, counties and federal states who have passed such resolutions. A full list of supporting authorities can be found on the ICAN Cities Appeal website - <http://nuclearban.org/cities>. If member Councils would like a copy of a model resolution on the TPNW please email the Chapter Secretary Sean Morris – [s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk).

The support for the TPNW was also celebrated at a special event on the 26<sup>th</sup> September at the Scottish Parliament organised by its Cross-Party Group on Nuclear Weapons. At this cross-party event a number of Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) highlighted their 'Parliamentarians Pledge' and Councillor Steve Burgess of Edinburgh City Council, who proposed the successful resolution encouraging the Council to support the TPNW, was also present with a larger version of Edinburgh's resolution. Photos from this event are attached as Appendix 2.

## **5. Mayors for Peace International Developments**

As has been mentioned in a number of previous Chapter Policy Briefings, the European Lead Cities of Mayors for Peace have been discussing for some time the creation of a European structure and staffing for it. Those discussions are now reaching a positive conclusion and will be discussed and approved at the upcoming Mayors for Peace Executive Committee, which is being held on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November in Hanover, Germany. Further details on what is agreed will be provided in a future Chapter Policy Briefing, as it will allow for greater and deeper engagement with all European members, including those in the UK and Ireland.

The Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace will formally open with a ceremony at the Aegidienkirche in the Old Town of Hanover. This 14<sup>th</sup> century church was badly damaged in the aerial bombing which destroyed large parts of the city between 1943 and 1944. The remains of the church were preserved as a war memorial and peace ceremonies are held at it on an annual basis. Within the interior of the church are a monumental sculpture designed in 1959 by Kurt Lehmann and called Demut (Humility). In 1985, Hanover's twin city, Hiroshima, donated a peace bell, which is installed close to the tower of the church, and it is used in an annual service on Hiroshima Day on the 6<sup>th</sup> August. This ceremony is being held on the 11<sup>th</sup> November, which is also the 101<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the end of the First World War.

The Executive Conference will be discussing its plans for 2020 and its 2020 – 2023 Action Plan. A special evening seminar is also being organised by Hanover which will include presentations from the ICAN Director Beatrice Fihn and the German Bundestag MP and former Environment Minister Jurgen Trittin. The seminar will consider the potential security crisis in Europe following the decision of the United States and Russia to abrogate from the INF Treaty, which saw a large number of nuclear weapons removed from Europe in the mid to late 1980s.

The Chapter Secretary and Manchester City Council's permanent Mayors for Peace representative (and former Lord Mayor), Councillor Eddy Newman, will attend the Executive Conference. A full report of the conference will be provided next month.

## **6. Mayors for Peace '50 Cities - 50 Traces' exhibition to be held in Manchester and Bristol**

The Mayors for Peace Executive Board approved the German Chapter of Mayors for Peace to support a modern art exhibition which highlights the need for disarmament. The exhibition, called '50 Cities, 50 Traces' has been curated by the Stuttgart artist Klaudia Dietwich, with support from Raimund Menges. This international art and peace project seeks to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which was signed in 1968 and was formally ratified in 1970. The artistic concept behind '50 Cities – 50 Traces' is to juxtapose individual traces

from 50 Mayors for Peace cities, highlighting the diversity and beauty of these cities and the daily life taking place therein. It also highlights the concern about the possible destruction of these cities by the use of nuclear weapons and advocates the Mayors for Peace maxim that 'Cities are not Targets!'

The exhibition has taken place in a number of German cities starting in Hanover. It has also been exhibited in Ypres, in Pittsburgh and in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

It will be now exhibited in Manchester Central Library, one of the 50 cities of which a 'trace' has been made. A special opening launch event will take place on November 5<sup>th</sup> – the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Manchester's declaration of concern over nuclear weapons – led by the Lord Mayor of Manchester. Members of the UK and Ireland Chapter would be very welcome to attend this launch event. The exhibition will be held in the Central Library until the end of January 2020.

The exhibition then moves on to Bristol, who are a twin city of Hanover. It will be held there in the Vestibules Gallery, Bristol City Hall from February 3<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> 2020.

The Chapter Secretariat is delighted that the exhibition can be held in Manchester and Bristol and encourages Chapter members and peace groups to attend it.

## **7. 2020 – the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first use of atomic weapons, the end of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations**

The year 2020 is an important anniversary year in being 75 years since the end of the Second World War. It is also the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first use of nuclear weapons. And it will be the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the United Nations. Commemorative events will take place across the world to remember this pivotal period of human history. In the UK, a special bank holiday has been set aside for Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the day when the war officially ended in Europe. Whilst there will be many events throughout the year, the Chapter Secretariat encourages member authorities to consider hosting more reflective events that can educate the public on the impact of war and the need for peace.

Hiroshima will be hosting the Executive and General Conference of Mayors for Peace between August 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> 2020 and this will be open to all of its members to attend. If members cannot attend it, you are asked to consider holding events in this period of August to remember the end of the war, the destructive impact of nuclear weapons and the need for peace, particularly in these uncertain times.

Events to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the United Nations would also be welcome, given its important role in seeking to reduce the need for conflict and promote international peace and friendship.

## **8. Conclusions and recommendations**

The Chapter meetings of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace are the main ways by which the organisation seeks to engage with its membership. It would be really beneficial to see more Mayors and councillors attend these meetings and engage their Council on supporting and promoting the work of Mayors for Peace.

Welcome European developments may allow for a deepening of interest and support in the work of Mayors for Peace from 2020 onwards, and the Chapter Secretariat encourages members to engage with it, once final agreement is made to a European structure.

There are a number of suggested recommendations for member authorities, including:

- The Chapter plans to meet next in late January / early February in the south of England. Members in this part of the country are encouraged to consider hosting this meeting. The Chapter Secretariat is also interested in holding future meetings in Wales, Ireland and Scotland. Members are encouraged to attend this meeting.
- Member authorities are also encouraged to look to pass cross-party resolutions to support the TPNW and follow in the footsteps of 5 UK authorities and over 120 municipalities around the

world. A series of possible model resolutions are available from the Chapter Secretariat – [s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk](mailto:s.morris4@manchester.gov.uk)

- Member authorities are encouraged to consider hosting the '50 Cities, 50 Traces' Mayors for Peace exhibition, and / or attend the exhibition when it is in Manchester and Bristol. An additional photographic exhibition is also available from the Manchester Secretariat – it has previously been hosted by 15 of our Chapter members across the UK and Ireland.
- Member authorities are encouraged to consider hosting and supporting events commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the first use of nuclear weapons and the creation of the United Nations; and be mindful of their membership of Mayors for Peace within it.
- Member authorities are encouraged to engage with organisations that promote peace education for supporting local community events – the Chapter can provide links with many of them. This briefing has highlighted the work of Peace Partners and Peace One Day. There are many others – previous briefings have highlighted the work of the Warrington Peace Centre, Peace Jam, Peace Education Scotland and CRESST - and the Secretariat is happy to put Councils in touch with them.
- Member authorities are encouraged to disseminate this briefing to Mayors / Provosts / Chairpersons, but also Council Leaders, Lead / Cabinet members for International Relations and for Education, and senior officers in these areas. The Policy Briefing will also be sent to peace and disarmament NGOs.

Photos from Karipbek Kuyukov’s talks in London, Edinburgh and Manchester – including the UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter

a) Meetings in Westminster and at the RAC Club, London



Above left: Karipbek with attendees at the Westminster Parliament event  
Above right: Bob Robertson MP addresses the event



The Kazakh Ambassador with Karipbek at the RAC Club event with CND



CND General Secretary speaking at the RAC Club event

b) Scottish Parliament



Left to right: Aigerim Seisembayeva, Deputy FM John Swinney MSP, Karipbek, Bill Kidd MSP, Alyn Ware of PNND



Karipbek speaking to invited groups at the Scottish Parliament

**c) Manchester Mayors for Peace Chapter meeting**



The Lord Mayor of Manchester with Karipbek Kuyukov



Karipbek signs the Lord Mayor's Visitors Book



Cllr Eddy Newman opening the Mayors for Peace Chapter meeting



Dr Becky Alexis-Martin speaking to the Chapter meeting

**Appendix 2**

**Photos from the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Nuclear Weapons event on the International Day to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons**



Left to right: Janet Fenton - SCND Vice Chair, Cllr Steve Burgess, Claire Adamson MSP



Left to right: Mark Ruskell MSP, Patrick Harvie MSP, Neil Findlay MSP, Bill Kidd MSP, Cllr Steve Burgess, Janet Fenton