



# Briefing paper

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**Date: 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**No.27**

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**Subject: Progress in developing the Mayors for Peace European Chapter and associated events**

## **1. Introduction**

This report has been developed by the Chapter Secretary and provides members with an overview of progress with the development of a Mayors for Peace European Chapter organisation, which was formally launched at the Executive Conference in Hanover in November 2019. The report also outlines the speaker programme for the upcoming UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter being held in late March.

Specific issues noted in this report:

- Progress with developing the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace.
- Participation at the Basel Peace Forum and associated events.
- Participation at the ICAN Paris Campaigners Forum.
- The programme for the UK and Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter meeting.
- A European Mayors for Peace reception with Pope Francis.
- The NPT Review Conference and progress with the TPNW.
- Plans for the 10<sup>th</sup> Mayors for Peace Executive and General Conference and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks and the end of the Second World War.

## **2. Progress with developing the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace**

As noted in Policy Briefing 26, at the Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace held in Hanover, last November, the European Lead Cities of the organisation agreed to the establishment of a European Chapter.

That meeting confirmed that the Lead City and Vice President of Mayors for Peace, Granollers, and the Provincial Council of Barcelona (an umbrella body looking after the interests of around 300 municipalities in the Greater Barcelona region) had agreed to provide total funding of around €300k in the period 2020 – 2023. The European Chapter's role would enhance the highlighting of issues around nuclear non-proliferation in Europe, focusing on ways to support the development of more safe, peaceful and resilient cities in Europe and deepening interest and political commitment amongst the 3,000+ Mayors for Peace members on the continent.

This new funding would provide for a Secretary of the Chapter, based in Granollers, and an Executive Advisor, who would both help with developing the Chapter and specific projects, as well as seeking to help in increasing Mayors for Peace membership, Chapters and Lead Cities.

Since this decision was made, the City of Granollers has recruited an international law firm (who have contracts with the international local government group, the UCLG) to develop statutes and a full terms of reference. An Operational Plan has been developed and is being commented on, and a Chapter website is also being constructed. The aim is to have these matters finalised by the summer for discussion and approval during the August meetings in Hiroshima.

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

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A European Lead Cities Officers Working Group includes the UK and Ireland Chapter Secretary, Sean Morris, who is based with Manchester City Council. It meets through telephone conference calls on a monthly basis with the primary aims of developing a four year Operational Plan, determining the remit of the Secretariat and Executive Advisor, considering the content of a website, and looking at relevant events and conferences which the European Chapter may wish to send representatives to. From the organisational side, the Chapter is contacting a number of cities around the continent to encourage them to take up a lead role and develop their own national / cross-national Chapters.

At the meeting in Hanover a Chapter Board was agreed upon. It is initially chaired by the Mayor of Granollers, with Manchester as its Vice Chair. It is working in 2020 on the following areas:

- To work with other groups like ICAN to encourage more members to pass resolutions supporting the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; as well as developing other strategic partnerships with relevant organisations.
- Develop a communications strategy including a website and the promotion of peace education on it.
- Develop a conference launching the Chapter and its remit later in 2020 – Manchester is considering potentially hosting this towards the end of the year.

Its activity is likely to increase as its organisational structure is fully put in place.

The UK and Ireland Chapter Secretary will be outlining progress and the potential benefits to Chapter members at its next meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> March in Manchester. Chapter members are encouraged to attend this meeting and engage with this positive development.

### **3. Participation at the Basel Peace Forum and associated events**

A European Mayors for Peace delegation attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Basel Peace Forum. This took place in the Swiss city on January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Basel Peace Forum was initiated by the civil society group 'Swisspeace' and is partially funded by the Cantonal City of Basel, and it brings together every January an impressive collection of civil society groups, local, national and international politicians and officials, academics, humanitarian organisations, business contacts, journalists and artists to discuss different aspects of peace-making and peace-building. The 2020 Basel Peace Forum focused on the issue of 'Cities for Peace' and included a lead panel discussion between the Mayor of Tirana, Albania, the Mayor of Maidan Shahr, Afghanistan and an architect who used to be a senior official at the City of Aleppo in Syria. The two day event included an interesting mix of seminars and workshops. See <https://basel-peace.org/2020/> for further details.

A side meeting was held between the Basel Peace Office, the Mayors for Peace European Chapter and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND). This brought together a wide mix of youth groups working on climate change, nuclear non-proliferation issues and peace education with civic leaders and Parliamentarians. The meeting included short presentations from the Mayor of Granollers and the Vice Chair of PNND, as well as presentations on a number of dynamic youth education projects. The meeting included the awarding of the first 'Peace and Climate action of European Youth (PACEY)' award to a project in Mitrovica, Kosovo. This initiative is trying to bring together young people from the Kosovan Albanian and Serb communities of this divided city to create a community garden on the roof of the City Hall. Mayors for Peace is in touch with the organisers of this project as part of developing wider links in the area.

The Mayors for Peace delegation also held a meeting with senior leaders of Basel City Canton and held a short meeting discussing progress with the European Chapter.

The meetings in Basel show the benefits of having a European Chapter in providing active presence of a Mayors for Peace delegation and directly engaging with Mayors, councillors and council officers, as well as relevant peace and humanitarian organisations. The new Chapter Secretariat is looking at connecting with other international groupings / conferences and researching with potential partnerships in this area as it moves forward.

#### **4. Participation in the ICAN Paris Campaigners Forum and Barcelona supports the ICAN Cities Appeal / TPNW**

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, usually referred to as ICAN, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for its work in promoting the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and helping to encourage over two thirds of UN member states to support the International Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

One of the most effective and impressive parts of ICAN's success has been its ability to engage with young people. On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> February ICAN held a campaigners meeting to invite OVER 700 activists, students, campaigners and anyone interested in these issues to discuss and learn about movement building, political change and activism. Over the two days discussions were held with a wide range of activists on different issues. It also provided testimonies from inspirational individuals who have shown courage in standing up to powerful states or organisations, as well as providing ways to develop campaigning and advocacy skills.

One of the workshops invited Mayors for Peace representative Lisa Clark (who works with the Italian Chapter of Mayors for Peace and is a Co –President of the International Peace Bureau) and Mayor Philippe Rio, Mayor of the Vice President and French Lead City of Grigny to talk to the audience on how to try and make change happen at the local, national and international level, as well as considering effective lobbying strategies. Also taking part in this workshop was Mounir Satouri, a French Member of the European Parliament; Leo Hoffmann-Axthelm of ICAN; and Maaïke Beenes of the Dutch group PAX. This session provided an opportunity for Mayors for Peace to promote its work to a younger audience.

An inspiring part of the Forum was a speech from Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor (or 'hibakusha') of the Hiroshima atomic weapon attack, who also spoke for ICAN at the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in 2017. Following the Forum, a local event was held in Barcelona to coincide with a decision by Barcelona City Council to pass a resolution supporting the TPNW and calling on the Spanish Government to also support this treaty.

At this event, Mrs Thurlow met the Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, and the Chair of the Mayors for Peace European Chapter, Mayoral Josep Mayoral, and heard about the work to support Mayors for Peace and the ICAN Cities Appeal. Mayor Colau is part of the UCLG (United Cities and Local Government) and is its Special Envoy to the United Nations. The event also allowed ICAN Spain to talk to the Mayor about the upcoming Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference at the UN and general progress with the TPNW.

#### **5. UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter meeting, Manchester Central Library, March 27<sup>th</sup>**

The next meeting of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter will take place in Manchester Central Library on Friday March 27<sup>th</sup> in Manchester Central Library.

The meeting will seek to provide member authorities with a detailed overview of progress with the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace and how Manchester City Council would like to see its UK and Irish Chapter members engage proactively with this positive development. The Chapter Secretariat is interested to hear from members on the wider remit of the Chapter, and ways to promote local examples of community cohesion, tolerance and peace-building. The Chapter Secretary will provide further information at the meeting, as well as talking about the plans for 2020 and the Executive and General Conference of Mayors for Peace taking place in August.

The meeting will also hear from Elena Tompkins, a colleague of the Chapter Secretary, who has recently been to Hiroshima to work for a short period in the International Secretariat of Mayors for Peace. She will inform the meeting of her experience in the Secretariat, the interaction between Manchester and Hiroshima, her experience of the city and its role as a city of peace and the plans for commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hiroshima atomic weapon attack.

A core part of Chapter meetings is to promote ways local Councils can promote peace education, community cohesion and peaceful, resilient towns and cities. The Chapter Secretary is pleased that the groups CARISMA and Peace Partners will be able to speak to the meeting. CARISMA was

established in 2002 and stands for Community Alliance for Renewal, Inner South Manchester Area. This grassroots community group was a response to an increase in gang violence, and ran a number of initiatives and projects such as Peace Week, out of which came the radio station Peace FM (now known as Legacy FM). Its strapline was "life-chances for young people in the community". The charity was closed in 2015 following a big drop in reported local gun and gang crime. Now the CARISMA name has been restored (operating as a Company limited by guarantee) for promoting new initiatives and projects, still with that core aim in mind.

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. To fulfil its aims, Peace Partners works with individuals, groups and organisations who share this vision. That have developed a peace education programme in community and educational contexts throughout the UK. In recent months, they have held such events in the likes of Croydon, Wolverhampton and Oxford, with their next meeting in Newcastle.

The final part of the meeting will discuss the issue of memory and the formal commemorations of conflict, peace and tolerance. Following the centenary of the First World War and with this year the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second World War this year, Dr Marcel Thomas from Manchester University will look at the way such events, and similar recent commemorations of terrorist incidents, are remembered today. Is there a need for change, and how should Councils / towns and cities seek to remember conflict and promote an alternative to it?

Registration is now open and member authorities are strongly encouraged to try and attend it. The flyer for the meeting is attached as Appendix 1.

## **6. European Mayors for Peace audience with Pope Francis**

Following an initiative from the Croatian Lead City and Vice President of Mayors for Peace, Biograd na Moru, an invitation has been provided by the Vatican State Foreign Service to the Mayors for Peace European Chapter to meet with Pope Francis. This meeting will be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Vatican Palace.

Attending this meeting will be the Lord Mayor of Manchester as well as Mayors from the fellow European Lead Cities of Biograd na Moru, Granollers, Hanover, Malakoff and Grigny.

The meeting arises from the continuing commitment of Pope Francis to promote the campaign for global nuclear disarmament. The Vatican State was the first to both sign and ratify the TPNW and it has hosted a number of receptions on the disarmament issue. The Pope has met at the Vatican with the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and last November made a state visit to Japan. This included a visit to the Nagasaki Peace Park and Urakami Cathedral in Nagasaki, and to the Hiroshima Cenotaph and Peace Park. The visit was profiled in the previous Chapter Policy Briefing and it showed the Pope's strong commitment towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The opportunity to meet Pope Francis is very much welcomed and the meeting allows Mayors for Peace to talk about its planned activities in Europe with the Pope.

A report on the visit will be provided in the next Chapter Policy Briefing.

## **7. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, United Nations, May 2020 and progress with support for the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**

This May, the five-yearly full review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will take place at the United Nations. It also marks the fiftieth anniversary of this landmark treaty coming into force. As the UN notes: "Since its entry into force, the NPT has been the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation regime. 191 States parties have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States, making the NPT the most widely adhered to multilateral disarmament agreement."

This year's Review Conference comes at a time of rising problems with the nuclear weapons issue. In 2019, the United States and Russia abrogated from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, blaming each other for breaking it. This 1987 Treaty was critical in reducing the

number of nuclear weapons in Europe and wider tensions between ‘east’ and ‘west’ within the Cold War. In recent months there has also been a ratcheting up of tensions over Iran’s nuclear programme, and stalemate over North Korea’s nuclear weapons programme. All the existing nuclear weapon states are modernising their nuclear weapons programmes at large expense.

A 2019 House of Lords inquiry into the international non-proliferation regime has commented that it is under its greatest stress since the end of the Cold War. They see little real expectation of progress this year. The Committee will be querying the UK Government’s planned strategy for the NPT Review Conference at a meeting in Parliament on the 27<sup>th</sup> February.

At the same time, there remains a growing movement of non-nuclear states who want to see a real change from the status quo. 35 states have ratified the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and a number more are expected to ratify by the time of the conference – one of which is the Republic of Ireland. It is expected that the important milestone of 50 ratifications – at which point it becomes a part of UN international law – will take place later this year. It is clear though that the existing nuclear weapon states, NATO member states and states with security agreements with various nuclear weapon states remain opposed to this treaty.

Within this negative background, the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will lead a Mayors for Peace delegation to the NPT Review Conference, and engage with a wide range of states and UN staff. Mayors for Peace will also engage with other civil society groups attending the conference.

At a city level, over 230 towns and cities in states that oppose the TPNW have passed resolutions supporting this treaty and calling on their own governments to engage within the multilateral disarmament process. As noted above, Barcelona is the latest signatory. In the UK, Oxford and East Ayrshire Councils are the latest to pass such resolutions. A major debate has also recently taken place in New York City Council on the TPNW and on divestment of funds from nuclear weapon companies. It is expected a vote on both matters will take place shortly.

An ongoing campaign to encourage more towns and cities to support this initiative continues and Chapter members should consider passing their own resolutions.

## **8. Plans for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 10<sup>th</sup> Executive and General Mayors for Peace Conference, Hiroshima, 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> August**

This August, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first use of nuclear weapons, as well as the end of the Second World War, will take place. There has already been a number of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary events, most notably the interfaith international events around Holocaust Memorial Day and the liberation of the Auschwitz camp.

In the UK, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day will be commemorated with a national bank holiday on the 8<sup>th</sup> May. The website - <https://www.veday75.org/programme/> - outlines a series of national events taking place, with a large number of smaller local events.

Notable amongst the national events are ‘A Cry for Peace Around the World’ – in this event, town criers and other people around the world will be undertaking a special short address from locations over the globe, starting off in New Zealand at 6.55pm UK time. People are being encouraged to read it out in workplaces, schools, community groups and local churches. The message reads as follows:

“Citizens, one and all,  
Please join this cry for peace that you now hear from me.  
Remember men & women, old & young, who died to make us free.  
The women left at home did not just sit and wait.  
They toiled in harsh conditions before dawn to very late.  
Factories, farms, other essential jobs, the women were quick at learning.  
They worked, some died, to keep the home fires burning.  
As we remember this special day, do not forget that every day someone needs your aid,  
Do not put away your poppies, letting your memories fade.  
Celebrate with the knowledge that VE Day is also a time to remember,

Beyond the solemn wreaths of the 11th of November.  
Let's thank all those who have gone before, with their colours proudly unfurled.  
Join us as united we say, 'Peace to the world'."

Following this at 7pm is 'Ringing out the Peace'. This event, held in association with the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers, will see bells in cathedrals, churches and other locations rang out in a collective celebration of peace. As the organisers of the 'VE Day 75' note - "The sound of bells is deeply rooted in British culture, providing the soundtrack to historic moments – calling us to pray, to work, to arms, to celebrate and, in times of crisis, to come together. Church bells will be rung throughout our nation and around the world in celebration of the peace and friendships we share today."

Mayors for Peace members are encouraged particularly to support these two short events.

For Mayors for Peace, three of the main dates to commemorate in 2020 are the first use of atomic weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August, and the International Peace Day on the 21<sup>st</sup> September.

The International Secretariat in Hiroshima is organising the 10<sup>th</sup> Executive and General Conference of Mayors for Peace from the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> August. It will take place in Hiroshima Conference Centre, which lies adjacent to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and is directly connected to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. The meetings will include an Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace, at which Manchester will take part. There will also be meetings of the Japanese Chapter of Mayors for Peace and the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace.

The programme for the General Conference of Mayors for Peace will be announced by Hiroshima shortly. It is likely to reflect on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and what may happen next. The meetings will culminate with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony on the 6<sup>th</sup> August. This major event has many thousands of attendees, including hibakushas, mayors, senior national politicians, Ambassadors to Japan from around the world and members of the public. Short statements will be given by the Mayor of Hiroshima – the Hiroshima Peace Declaration – the Prime Minister of Japan and the Secretary General of the United Nations, who has indicated he will be attending this year's ceremony. The event is shown live in Japan and around the world through the NHK World channel. It is followed by similar events on August 9<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony.

Mayors for Peace members from around the world are encouraged, where possible and practical, to attend the conference and ceremony in Japan. With the Olympics due to be held in Tokyo – and they conclude on the 9<sup>th</sup> August – members are encouraged to book early.

For those Mayors for Peace members who cannot attend the meetings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, encouragement is being made to hold local peace memorial ceremonies in your town or city. These events can be organised in whatever way is felt to be appropriate locally and can remember all those who have died in the Second World War and subsequent conflicts and terrorist incidents to the present day. Last year, over 50 major events were held across the UK and Ireland, and the Secretariat encourages further events to be held in the period between August 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.

Similarly, events to commemorate International Peace Day are encouraged to directly follow on from the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary events.

Manchester is considering events as well to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its declaration of a 'nuclear weapons free city' on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Further details on this matter will be provided in later briefings.

## **9. Conclusions and recommendations**

This report has shown that the creation of the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace is already beginning to bear fruit with a number of prominent events and commemorations planned this year. It is expected this initiative will develop further as staffing and funding increases over the next 12 months.

As a Vice President and Lead City of Mayors for Peace, Manchester will seek to put forward a local voice into the development of the European Chapter. The upcoming UK and Ireland Chapter meeting allows members to put forward their views on these developments and the future direction of Mayors for Peace.

In the world today, and Europe in particular, there are a number of issues which are bringing about tension within communities. At the international level as well, the upcoming NPT Review Conference takes place at a time of real challenge and a lack of consensus. It is all the more important therefore that local government, through an organisation like Mayors for Peace, can promote activities of peace-making, peace-building and improving community cohesion.

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

- Members are encouraged to attend the UK and Ireland Chapter meeting in Manchester on the 27<sup>th</sup> March.
- With 2020 being the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both the atomic weapon attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the end of the Second World War, members are encouraged to consider supporting appropriate local, national and international events for these anniversaries.
- Members are encouraged to consider passing cross-party resolutions that support the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the divestment of pension funds from companies involved with nuclear weapon production.
- Members are also encouraged to engage with the creation of a European Mayors for Peace structure.
- Voluntary invoices will be issued shortly to encourage the creation of an annual 'Flag Day' of Mayors for Peace Chapter members, and to show your solidarity with the organisation. We encourage you to process them and help build up a cross-national Chapter.
- Members are encouraged to support and promote peace education projects local to them, and inform the UK and Ireland Chapter Secretariat when they take place.
- Members are encouraged as well to consider developing public realm projects that support your own local history of promoting peace and justice.

Some selected photos from the events noted above are attached as Appendix 2.

Seminar flyer for the UK and Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter meeting, March 2020

**NFLA and UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter Spring Seminar, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Meeting Room 2, Level 2, Central Library, St Peter's Square, Manchester, M2 5PD  
1.30pm – 3.30pm**

## **Important changes to Mayors for Peace and the promotion of civic peace education programmes**

**Explaining welcome changes to Mayors for Peace as we approach the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first use of nuclear weapons; and looking at ways to encourage Council's to support innovative peace education programmes**



### **Speakers:**

- 1.30pm Councillor Abid Latif Chohan, Lord Mayor of Manchester – opening address
- 1.35pm Councillor Eddy Newman, Manchester City Council's Mayors for Peace executive representative – seminar introduction
- 1.40pm Sean Morris, NFLA / Mayors for Peace Chapter Secretary – the creation of the Mayors for Peace European Chapter and commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the atomic weapon attacks and the end of the Second World War
- 1.55pm Elena Tompkins, Policy Assistant, Manchester City Council – working in Hiroshima and understanding its role in Mayors for Peace
- 2.10pm Erinma Bell and Don Philips, Co-ordinators CARISMA - The work of CARISMA and the Manchester Outstanding Social Behaviour Awards (OSBAs)
- 2.25pm Chris Waite and Didge Hatcher, Peace Education Programme Advisors, Peace Partners UK – the work of the Peace Partners Education Programme in community and educational establishments in the UK
- 2.45pm Dr Marcel Thomas, Lecturer in Modern European History, Manchester University – Local History and the Future of Commemorating the World Wars
- 3.10pm Panel discussion (for a 3.30pm conclusion)

Photos from some of the events noted in this report



European Mayors for Peace Chapter Chair / Mayor of Granollers speaking at the Basel Peace Office / Mayors for Peace / PNND event on youth activism on climate change and nuclear non-proliferation



Manchester City Council officer Elena Tompkins working in the Mayors for Peace office in Hiroshima



Lisa Clark of the Mayors for Peace Italian Chapter speaking at ICAN Paris Campaigners Forum



The 'Engaging with Policy Makers' workshop at the ICAN Paris Campaigners Forum