Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki

Moving events were held both in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and across the world to remember the 75th anniversary of the first use of atomic weapons in war.

The Hiroshima & Nagasaki Peace Ceremonies were held as usual on August 6th and 9th and were livestreamed around the world. The Covid-19 pandemic had reduced the number of attendees, but both the Mayor of Hiroshima and Nagasaki read out strongly worded Peace Declarations.

Many other events were held such as the ‘Peace, Art, Music’ strand and the ‘Global Peace Wave’. Towns and cities showed their solidarity with live and online events held around the world.

A UK and Ireland Mayors for Peace Briefing, which is hosted on the NFLA website, outlines the Hiroshima and Nagasaki events, as well as those held across the UK and Ireland. NFLA thanks all its members for taking part in this anniversary.

Ireland and 3 other states ratify the Nuclear Ban Treaty

Ireland, Nigeria, Niue and St Kitts & Nevis used the opportunity of the 75th Hiroshima and Nagasaki anniversary to formally ratify the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

The number of states that have ratified the TPNW has now reached 44, meaning it just requires 6 more ratifications to become a full part of UN international law.

In an op-ed for the Irish Times, Foreign Minister Simon Coveney wrote about Ireland’s long-held involvement in seeking a world free of nuclear weapons. A special event with ICAN was held on August 6th to welcome the ratifications.

NFLA and Mayors for Peace both warmly welcome the decision by Ireland and the 3 other states. A NFLA media release notes Ireland’s progressive ‘nuclear free’ legal status and calls on the UK Government to engage with the TPNW process. It is on the NFLA website.
NFLA publishes report on the state of EDF’s AGR fleet

NFLA has published a detailed report considering the state of EDF’s Advanced Gas Reactor (AGR) fleet as they deal with the difficulties of age.

The AGR fleet includes reactors at Hunterston, Hinkley Point B, Heysham, Hartlepool, Dungeness & Torness.

The report outlines the technical issues with the Hunterston B and Hinkley Point B, which are beset with increased amounts of keyway root cracks in the graphite bricks. NFLA suggest these reactors, currently closed, should not restart.

The report also argues that the other reactors at Heysham, Hartlepool, Dungeness and Torness may experience similar problems and are likely to close earlier than EDF would prefer.

The report is all the more relevant given the decision to restart the Hunterston B reactor. It is on the NFLA website.

NFLA raises concern over Sellafield chemical incident

NFLA has publicised its concerns after the MOD Explosive Ordinance Division (EOD) had to be called out to dispose of chemicals at the Sellafield site which had an explosive capacity.

On 13th August, Sellafield staff identified a small amount of organic peroxide stored at the Magnox Reprocessing Plant that required disposing of.

As a precaution, a controlled evacuation of the site took place and the EOD called out. The EOD safely disposed of the material.

This incident follows on from an October 2017 incident where the EOD were called out to deal with a small number of solvent canisters. A report after this incident recommended a site-wide review of the chemicals used at Sellafield. NFLA calls on the HSE and ONR to investigate carefully this incident. A media release is on the NFLA website.

NFLA web meetings timetabled for the autumn

The NFLA Secretariat has started planning for online autumn meetings.

This will begin with the NFLA Steering Committee taking place on the 18th September.

Webinars and online business meetings are also planned for the four NFLA Forums in September & October.

A special public meeting webinar on new nuclear build is also being developed.

The NFLA AGM & 40th anniversary is being planned for November with other groups.
NDA commence consultation on its 2021 – 25 strategy

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority has commenced consultation on its draft strategy for the next five years of operation.

The NDA Strategy 4 document is its assessment of how it will deal with the huge nuclear legacy of materials of the UK nuclear programme in 2021-2025.

The Strategy document highlights dates the NDA plans to resolve each part of this legacy. This includes all Magnox spent fuel reprocessed by 2021, all nuclear legacy waste retrieved by 2046, and all plutonium repacked by 2060.

High level waste will be ‘disposed’ of by 2104, intermediate level waste by 2120 and low level waste by 2129 according to the document.

NFLA will consider the strategy and respond in detail to it.

NFLA welcomes Essex Councils opposing Bradwell B

NFLA welcomes recent decisions by Maldon District and Colchester Borough Council to oppose the proposed Bradwell B new nuclear reactor development.

In August, 2 meetings of the Maldon Council District Planning Committee decided to refuse a planning application at Bradwell for early land investigation on the site. They had concerns over ecological and archaeological damage with such work. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council have also resigned their posts.

August also saw all councillors in Colchester passing a resolution to oppose the Bradwell B site. The resolution was brought by the Council leader and passed by Lib Dem, Labour & Conservative councillors. It reads: “This Council objects to new nuclear at Bradwell due to the local environmental impacts and prefers a focus on renewable energy alternatives”.

A NFLA media release is on its website welcoming both decisions.

Forthcoming meetings of interest to NFLA members

NFLA Steering Committee webinar, 18th September

NFLA Welsh Forum webinar, 9th October

NFLA Scottish Forum webinar & online business meeting, 15th or 16th October (tbc)

NFLA England Forum webinar, 23rd October

NFLA 40th anniversary plans, 5th and 6th November

NFLA letters to the media, August 2020 (Emailed to members)

• NFLA opposes the reopening of Hunterston B Reactor 3
• Moorside new nuclear is another new nuclear pipedream
• NFLA welcomes Colchester BC resolution to oppose Bradwell B