

An Appeal
from
the World Conference of Mayors for Peace
through Inter-city Solidarity

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President
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Human History has witnessed many wars. Human beings have brought war after war upon themselves, and with each repetition precious lives and irreplaceable natural resources have been lost. During the first half of this century we experienced two world wars, and the second of these culminated in unique, unprecedented tragedy, the dropping of the atomic bombs.

Today the nuclear weapons accumulated on Earth are far more than enough to annihilate the human race itself, and it is clear that any nuclear war, once begun, would be a global crisis with human extinction in the balance. It has been 43 years since the bombs fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and it has been 43 years since many cities in Europe, Africa, and Asia have been reduced to ash and rubble by other weapons of mass destruction, however we have not yet succeeded in eradicating nuclear and conventional weapons.

There is, of course, no question about the importance of efforts by national governments to bring peace to our planet. However, those national efforts have not yet resulted in arms reduction nor have they assured lasting world peace without nuclear weapons. When we consider that in war, especially when nuclear weapons are used, it is the cities and the people who live in them that suffer most, it is only natural that city administrations, and the individual citizens of those cities as well, work as diligently as possible in the search of peace.

In light of the awesome responsibility thus imposed on the cities, we believe we must make a quantum leap in our efforts to fulfill that responsibility and establish lasting world peace. Based on this belief, we have established the World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity, an organization with the expressed purpose of clearing the road to peaceful coexistence through a solidarity of cities that transcends national boundaries and racial differences.

At present this organization comprises approximately 100 million people, the populations of 219 cities in 39 different countries of East and West, as well as nonaligned nations. For the sake of the life and future of the citizens in our towns, the armament race has to be stopped and a turn around to a secure peace and friendly cooperation between the peoples and states should be made. The horrors inflicted on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and on cities such as Coventry, Rotterdam, Volgograd, Dresden, and Marzabotto must never be repeated.

On behalf of the members of the organization and the populations it represents we hereby present the following requests to the Third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament and to all the people of the world:

1. An Immediate and comprehensive ban on nuclear testing and the eventual abolition of all nuclear weapons

In December last year the United States and the Soviet Union signed the INF Treaty. As the historic first reduction of nuclear weapons, we offer our highest praise to this action. This agreement must be the beginning of a comprehensive disarmament process.

However, the weapons that will actually be eliminated by this treaty are only a small fraction of the nuclear weapons that now exist on this planet. We cannot help believing that the quest for our ultimate goal, the total abolition of nuclear weapons, will yet be long and difficult. Nuclear weapons remain the greatest threat to human survival, and the abolition of those weapons must remain our top priority. And toward this end, all nuclear testing must be immediately stopped.

2. The abolition of chemical weapons and general reduction of conventional weapons

Chemical and biological weapons are ultimately just as threatening to

human survival as are nuclear weapons and are just as destructive in their effects, and therefore we add to our appeal for the abolition of nuclear weapons an equally urgent demand for a ban on all development, production, and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons.

It is evident that world peace cannot be achieved without reductions in conventional arms. We seek effective means of resolving international conflicts and disputes peacefully, and urge that the United Nations peace-keeping function be strengthened and utilized.

3. A ban on all weapons exports

Most of the weapons being used today in local wars were imported from countries uninvolved in the actual combat. In light of the significant role being played by weapons imports and exports in the escalation of such wars, we demand a ban on weapons exports to other countries, in this way causing a reduction in arms production and possibly aiding a conversion of the arms industries to peaceful production.

4. Assistance to the developing countries and the elimination of starvation, poverty, and related economic problems

World military expenditures, rising year after year, have now surpassed one trillion dollars annually. It is obvious that this astronomical figure for military spending is a major obstacle to economic and social development throughout the world. It is absolutely essential that these tremendous funds be turned toward resolving the most pressing problems facing mankind, notably assisting economic growth in the developing nations and eliminating starvation and poverty.

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The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity

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