

**Interactive remarks by Yasuyoshi Komizo, Secretary General of Mayors for Peace**

**To the Panel I of OEWG**

**Geneva, 24 February 2016**

Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me the floor. At the outset, I would like to reiterate our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Thani for his skillful chairmanship and his transparent, fair and inclusive manner in the proceedings.

Although much depends on our future work leading to the May session of the OEWG and beyond, we are encouraged to see interactive discussions in this session as a good starter. I would therefore like to make some additional remarks as part of interaction. There are 5 points:

First, on the point of the legal gap: in this discussion, my impression is clear. The key issue is not whether the legal gap exists, but rather whether or not the current legal regime is effective or clear enough to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. And it appears that there is significant work still to be done. I welcome a number of good initiatives displayed in this session.

Second, in the absence of nuclear-weapon states in this session, discussion took place on whether there is any role for non-nuclear-weapon states to perform in creating legal norms. I see a number of initiatives that non-nuclear-weapon states can take on their own, while keeping the doors open to inviting nuclear-weapon states to participate in the collective efforts. In this context, I would like to recall that the text of the NPT Article VI places the obligation to pursue nuclear disarmament negotiations in good faith on each of the parties and that, of course, includes non-nuclear weapons states. It also makes practical sense because non-nuclear-weapon states have committed themselves not to proliferate and they are potential victims of nuclear detonations if they happen. Therefore, not only are they obliged but they also have very good reasons and rights to engage in nuclear disarmament negotiations.

Thirdly, on security aspects: Here, Mayors for Peace welcomes that the world community is focusing on the harshly inhumane reality of nuclear weapons. Traditionally, international security has been discussed predominantly in terms of strategies and technologies. Of course, they are important aspects. One has to ask, however, for what purpose does “security” exist? I believe that in traditional security discussions, the perspective of human security has been fatally missing. If we do not base our security argument on the earnest wish of people in the grass roots for peace, the entire discussion is off the mark. Security has to serve the purpose of protecting people and important human values such as the sincere wish of caring mothers for the happiness of their children, as well as young people’s aspirations for the brighter future. We therefore encourage world leaders to engage in innovative ways to achieve peace and security in a collective manner that can also enhance mutual understanding and appreciation of diversity.

This leads to my forth point, and that is political leadership. Mayors for Peace encourages leaders to recall that past progress in nuclear disarmament has taken place at the peak of international tensions by initiatives of political leaders to reach out. I repeat that now is the time for political leaders to show their decisive leadership.

And this point leads to my last point.

In order for political leaders and experts to reinforce their determination to advance towards world free of nuclear weapons, Mayors for Peace encourages everyone to come to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to witness firsthand the harshly inhumane consequences of the atomic bombings. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they will know for sure why, in the eyes of *hibakasha*, nuclear weapons are the ultimate inhumane weapons and an absolute evil. Mayors for Peace, together with wide range of civil society partners, will wholeheartedly engage ourselves and support initiatives towards our shared goal for peace.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.