

The 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace

Closing Ceremony

August 10 (Mon), 2009 14:30 – 15:00
Nagasaki Brick Hall

Chairperson:

Tomihisa Taue
Vice President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Nagasaki

Report on the Nagasaki Appeal Drafting Committee Meeting:

Tadatoshi Akiba
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Hiroshima

Reading the Nagasaki Appeal:

Donald L. Plusquellic
Vice President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Akron, USA
US Conference of Mayors

Robert Harvey
Vice President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Waitakere, New Zealand

Tadatoshi Akiba
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Hiroshima

Speech by the representative:

Luc Dehaene
Vice President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Ypres, Belgium

Closing Remarks:

Tomihisa Taue
Vice President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Nagasaki

Tadatoshi Akiba
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Hiroshima

Chairperson: Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for waiting. This is going to be the last session. Let us now start the closing ceremony of the 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace.

Mayor Taue

First, the chair of the Nagasaki Appeal Drafting Committee, Mayor Akiba of Hiroshima, will present the results of deliberations in the Appeal Committee.

Drafting Committee Report:

Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima

The drafting committee meeting for the Nagasaki Appeal continued until late last night. Executive city delegates serve as members of the drafting committee. Fortunately, we were able to conclude the meeting within the time originally allocated to us.

We have summarized the various activities and traditions we have instituted in Mayors for Peace, and have shed as much light as possible on future activities. The staff prepared a wonderful working paper to begin with, a draft with excellent structure, and each committee member cooperated to make the final Appeal succinct and strong.

In terms of content, there were few objections, and we were able to conclude the documents within the time. There were no heated discussions about what was proposed.

Therefore, instead of me going through the details of the discussion, I think we should ask the person in charge to read the Appeal to make sure everyone understands it.

Mayor Taue

Thank you very much. OK, then, let's present the draft Appeal. We have three people to read the proposed Nagasaki Appeal: Mr. Donald Plusquellic, Mayor of Akron, Mr. Robert Harvey, Mayor of Waitakere, and Dr. Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima. These three will read it.

Nagasaki Appeal:

Read by Donald L. Plusquellic, Mayor of Akron

We, the representatives of 134 cities, 26 organizations from 33 countries, gathered at the 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace in Nagasaki to address our keynote theme: Nuclear Weapons Abolition is in our Hands! – Let's get the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol adopted in 2010.

Since 2003, Mayors for Peace has been actively campaigning to rid the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2020. We are delighted by the UN's designation of a Fourth International Decade for Disarmament, to begin in less than six months. We call on leaders and citizens everywhere to promote awareness of this Decade (2010-2020) and generate unprecedented public determination to liberate ourselves from the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The surest path to a nuclear-weapon-free world is stipulated by the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol. Thus, we call on the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to adopt this Protocol and implement it faithfully during the Decade for Disarmament. We note the special role of Japan in this regard. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are Japanese cities. As the only A-bombed nation, Japan should lead the global movement towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. The most effective way to do so is to champion unequivocally the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol.

Whether through the NPT Review Conference, the Conference on Disarmament, or the United Nations General Assembly, the international community must launch convincing negotiations towards a nuclear-weapon-free world in 2010. We will work closely with all individuals, groups and nations of good faith to ensure that this vital step is accomplished. We welcome the 5-point plan of the UN Secretary-General; in particular the prominence it accords commencement of negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention. We ask mayors everywhere to note that, at his initiative, the International Day of Peace, 21 September 2009, is devoted to the theme: "WMD: We Must Disarm!"

As mayors already contending with the impact of globalization and global recession on our citizens, we know that U.S. President Barack Obama was correct when he said in Prague on 5 April 2009, "[N]o matter where [a nuclear attack] happens, there is no end to what the consequences might be – for our global safety, our security, our society, our economy, to our ultimate survival." Confronting this extraordinary threat, President Obama asked that we "stand together for the right of people everywhere to live free from fear in the 21st century." Our wholehearted reply is, "Yes, together we can abolish nuclear weapons." Member cities, led by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are already adopting the term 'Obamajority' to refer to the vast majority of nations and peoples on this planet who seek liberation from the nuclear threat.

Read by Robert Harvey, Mayor of Waitakere

Our highest responsibility is to protect the lives and prosperity of the people we

represent. To do that, we must find ways to nurture global democracy and ensure that the will of the majority of our people is properly and effectively reflected in international decision-making. Thus, Mayors for Peace strongly urges all governments, the United Nations, and all relevant international organizations, to take the following actions:

1. Adopt the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol at the 2010 NPT Review Conference and ensure that multilateral negotiations on achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020 either commence directly in the Conference on Disarmament or are launched by the 2010 UN General Assembly.
2. Require that all military forces respect the integrity of cities and prohibit the use of explosive force in populated areas. (The same is expected of non-state actors.) “Cities Are Not Targets!”
3. Uphold human rights and work sincerely and urgently towards the elimination of hunger, poverty, discrimination, violence, and environmental destruction.
4. Abide by the Kyoto Protocol and any post-Kyoto agreements to make genuine, continuous progress towards a solution to the problem of global warming.
5. Shift funds from the military and preparations for war to activities that promote peace, hunger reduction, assistance to refugees, protection of the environment, and real solutions to the many other challenges facing the international community.
6. Create a new mechanism by which the will of cities can be regularly, systematically and directly reflected within UN decisions.

Read by Mayor Akiba

Mayors for Peace hereby declares our collective intent to work passionately in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation on the following:

- I. Urging world leaders, in particular those leading nuclear-armed states, to visit the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2010 to see firsthand the horror wrought by these terrible weapons.
- II. Improving communication within our expanding membership to enhance our capacity to act for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

III. Building strong relationships with national governments, local governments, and NGOs to promote the Mayors for Peace mission through broad-based, global cooperation.

IV. Establishing Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Study Courses in educational institutions around the world to convey the message of the *Hibakusha* as one of humanity's most precious intellectual assets, and promoting "peace and disarmament education" at all levels of society to spread the culture of peace.

We hereby resolve to work together with all sincere parties towards the goals and objectives described above, pledging to do everything in our power to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020.

Thank you very much.

Mayor Taue

Thank you very much. The mayors have read the Nagasaki Appeal draft document. Now, if you approve adoption of this Appeal, please indicate approval by applause. (Applause.) Thank you very much. With your applause, the Nagasaki Appeal from the 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace is adopted. This appeal will be sent to all participating member cities, national governments, as well as international institutions, including the United Nations.

In this General Conference of Mayors for Peace, 134 cities from 33 countries and 26 organizations are participating. On behalf of these participants, we would like to have some words from Mayor Luc Dehaene of Ypres, who serves as a Vice President of Mayors for Peace. Mayor Dehaene, please.

Luc Dehaene, Mayor of Ypres

I am honored that I may say thanks to everybody here present at the end of this session. Although I am on the other side of the world, I really feel at home for many reasons.

First of all, we had the honor to be present in the commemoration ceremonies on August 6 in Hiroshima and August 9 here in Nagasaki. I think no similar ceremonies are held in any city or region. It is good that people all over the world are taking care of the dead and remembering the past, not only for remembering but also for learning the lessons from the past to prevent such horrible events in the future. It is also good that people worldwide have talked about the same.

And as one of the labor union representatives this morning said, a visit with students can change our lives. That also has happened to me during my presence here in Japan, because we learned lessons from the history of the atomic bombings in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. We have to reproduce what we learned from you to teach in our countries although it is far from our homes. The moment here that we were confronted with the witnesses, the survivors, then it became real, it became really human, and that was a lesson for me, and I think, for all participants in this meeting. Something we can never forget, we may not forget, and we shall not forget. And this is one of the main issues Mayor for Peace has to work on: to learn the lessons from history to prevent those horrible acts in the future.

And I am here to say thank you. First, I want to thank Mayor Taue for hosting us in the beautiful way that you did. It was magnificent the way you hosted us here. It was something exceptional. So thanks for that. And also thank you very much to Mayor Akiba, our president. We are used to your hospitality and the way you keep things moving along, so we proceed with everything we need to do. So thanks for that.

Also, we have to thank all the keynote speakers for informing us, and I think that information was very meaningful. At all the sessions, we learned a lot, and I hope all the participants learned a lot from the remarks of the speakers.

Thanks also for the presence of the ambassadors, and other honorable guests, fellow mayors, thank you well, 'dank u wel' in Dutch. Thank you very much for being here and for your participation. Thanks to all of you for participating in this 7th General Conference, for your cooperation and especially for your active participation in debating. Thank you for that.

Thanks to everybody especially for all the people in the organizing committee. And I know that a lot of them had hard work not only during these days but in preparing this General Conference, the days and the months before and during these last days. It was not only during the days, but also at night they had to work. Thank you for that.

So, ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for being with us. Thank you for sharing your ideas.

And as I already mentioned, we have a lot of work to do in the coming decades. We may be marching on, as a speaker yesterday told us. From now on, we have to sprint to reach our goal in 2020. So from now to everybody on this particular spot or at home,

let's all go to work and pull all ranks of home, or bureau. Thank you all.

Mayor Taue

Thank you very much for your generous comments. As the organizer and host of this “homemade conference,” I would like to extend my apology if we have caused some discomfort. I would like to thank the supporters, the chairpersons and the panelists. I really appreciate your contribution.

The city representatives who are participating, the staff of the embassies, and also the NGO members, thank you all very much for travelling here, and for participating in this meeting. I really appreciate your efforts.

Further, those who are working backstage, the interpreters and the staff who contributed to running this meeting, I really appreciate your work. I know it was a really hard schedule for you.

We have spent more than 60 years restoring our city, and maybe you haven't had sufficient time to enjoy seeing Nagasaki City and enjoying our food. I do hope you can come back again to relax and have a good time in our city.

By meeting with you today and during this conference, we enhanced our network, and I do hope that this will give you the energy and the means to further promote the nuclear-free world we all want.

Lastly, but not least, I would like to ask for some closing comments from our president, Mayor Akiba.

Mayor Akiba

Fellow peace workers, I will skip listing all the different categories of people who have participated and who have contributed to the success of this conference. Mayor Taue has been kind enough to mention all of you. So what I would like to say is: thank you all for making this conference so successful. However I so have to thank Mayor Taue and the people of Nagasaki, the many volunteers, and the staff and everyone else who devoted so much time to making sure this conference ran well. I am grateful to you all.

Also, I would like to thank all involved for adopting such a beautiful, passionate – well I was cautioned yesterday during the drafting committee that in Italy ‘passionate’ is not used for such purposes – but anyhow passionate and inspirational appeal. I am sure that the Nagasaki Appeal will carry us further toward our goal.

As I listened to the voices of the participants, I was thinking of a symphony with peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020 as its themes. Some of you played the violin beautifully, others played drums, and some even danced - you know whom I am referring to. But the end result was a beautiful symphony in the form of the Nagasaki Appeal.

With this, I am sure we can reach even more people so that next year the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol will be adopted, and based on that, our goal of abolishing nuclear weapons by 2020 will be done with the enthusiastic support of more people around the world.

And at the same time, I was also visualizing this entire conference as a piece of a patchwork quilt. Each person who participated brought with them, although it was invisible to many people's eyes, a beautiful, strong, warm piece of cloth. Many people mentioned that it is important for us to find a common point of interest, a common point where we can connect with each other. But in creating a patchwork quilt, it is most important that each piece is different from the piece next to it; otherwise, the whole quilt will not be a beautiful, strong or warm whole. So, each one of you who is different has been greatly appreciated in bringing something inspirational, spiritual or intellectual into this conference. And by stitching together two pieces, we expanded our horizon. And then, as you add another, our vision becomes even broader and warmer.

And as we leave this conference, I hope you will extend your hand to another piece of beautiful cloth, so that by next May this beautiful patchwork quilt will engulf the entire globe with the spirit of peace so that it will become the starting point for the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

And I would like to conclude my thanks by quoting the last part of the peace declaration in Hiroshima: "We have the power. We have the responsibility, and we are the Obamajority. Together, we can abolish nuclear weapons by 2020. Yes, we can." Thank you very much.

Mayor Taue

Thank you very much. We are at the very end of this conference, but this is the starting point in our map to the future. Thank you very much for your kind words.

In preparing for next year, please remember that we will hold here the 4th Nagasaki Global Citizens' Assembly for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. I hope you will

all be able to come back. If you do not want to travel, you can just stay and live here in Nagasaki. However, we hope to see you as well at the NPT Review Conference this coming May. And four years from now, the venue of the 8th Mayors for Peace General Conference will be Hiroshima, and I hope to see you there.

During the welcome reception, there was an unplanned mixed choir of Mayors for Peace. I will again change our schedule, looking forward to our next reunion, to give you a little more message. Please stay just a few more minutes so we can make some change in the seating arrangements. The guests on the platform are requested to come down to the floor, so that you will be able to enjoy this extra show a little more. Thank you very much.

[Children's Choir and Finale]