

The 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace

Plenary Session II

THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY 2020

August 10 (Mon), 2009 13:00 – 14:30

Nagasaki Brick Hall

Chairperson:

Donald L. Plusquellic

Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Mayor of Akron; the US Conference of Mayors

Speakers:

Robert Harvey

Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Mayor of Waitakere, New Zealand

Stephan Weil

Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Lord Mayor of Hannover, Germany

Luc Dehaene

Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Mayor of Ypres, Belgium

Tom Cochran

CEO and Executive Director, the US Conference of Mayors

Josep Mayoral i Antigas

Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Mayor of Granollers, Spain

Alain Rouy

Councillor, City of Villejuif; Association Française des

Communes, Départements et Régions pour la Paix

(AFCD RP), France

Dominique Etave

Deputy Mayor, Vitry-Sur-Seine; Association Française des

Communes, Départements et Régions pour la Paix

(AFCD RP), France

Mussie Hailu

Ambassador-at-Large, Republic of Burundi

Mayra Gomez

Senior Programme Officer, Parliamentarians for Nuclear

Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), New Zealand

Chairperson: Donald L. Plusquellic

Mayor of Akron; the US Conference of Mayors

Welcome to Plenary Session II. Welcome all of you and thanks to our host, Mayor of Nagasaki, as well as all of the mayors and participants in this important conference. Our meeting today will be divided into four sections, and we only have an hour and a half, so I ask you, to the speakers, to try to condense your remarks. Four sections will consist of reports regarding the General Conference over the past few days as well as a concluding summary. To begin, I would like to ask for a report from Mayor Robert Harvey of Waitakere, New Zealand, who is the chair of our first Plenary Session. Continuing, we will hear other reports and I will introduce those individuals as we go. Mayor Harvey.

Report of Plenary Session I: Robert Harvey

Mayor of Waitakere, New Zealand

I greet each one of you here. Mayor Donald, thank you very much for letting me continue what was, I thought of, a very interesting session on Saturday. The subject was “CITIES AND CITIZENS CAN MOVE NATIONS –toward a worldwide paradigm shift–.” We met here, and it was a full house. And the speakers were, I felt, quite extraordinary. Although peace and security are generally thought of as national issues, the outbreak of war leads to casualties in urban regions. So we picked up on those subjects. The speakers were very clear and very passionate about how they felt the responsibilities we had as civic leaders were to protect the lives and the well-being of our people.

So, the mayors for peace gathered on Saturday, and came to give us their time and wisdom. Unfortunately, we ran out of time. But we did hear from the Mayor of Nagasaki. We did hear from the group from Florence, who were extraordinary in the way that they talked of the generosity of that Italian city in linking with Nagasaki over so many years. What I would like to just say is that many of the speakers had a long history with Japan, with the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

We heard, also, new speakers, new voices. We heard from the Mayor of Halabja in Kurdistan, Mayor Kareem. And he brought a new sense of his tragedy with the mustard gas and the terrible tragedy which befell the Kurdish people so many years ago. And he made it very real for us.

We also heard from the Lord Mayor of Hannover, Mr. Stephan Weil. Who was able to talk on what is happening in Germany. How and why they seem so progressive, we felt, in linking with the nuclear threat, which is all over us right now.

Then, we return to Japan and here two mayors picked up on the energy, and the passion and the wisdom that are growing in Japan, not only from Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but other cities also, which pleased us greatly.

Finally, we heard from a councilor from Dundee, a remarkable speech from George Regan. He talked of the British commitment. He is the chair of UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities. We were delighted to hear that enthusiasm from Great Britain, Ireland, and Scotland.

Unfortunately, Mayor Plusquellic, that was it. So we pass on the rest of our speakers to this session into your chairmanship. We wish you well in those endeavors. Thank you.

Mayor Plusquellic

Thank you, Mayor. Well done and very concise. Unfortunately, Lord Mayor Weil of Hannover had to leave because of an urgent matter. I am going to read a report that was prepared for him.

Report of Section Meeting I: Stephan Weil, Lord Mayor of Hannover

Read by Mayor Plusquellic

Lord Mayor called the meeting to order and explained that this session would be devoted to reflecting on our experiences of war and considering how to communicate these experiences and put them to use in solving our present global problems.

With that he called on Mr. Tsukasa Uchida, a survivor of the Nagasaki bombing, to help us all focus on the kinds of experiences we need to communicate. Mr. Uchida offered a harrowing account of the bombing. As a third year student in junior high he had been mobilized to work in a military factory. Had he stayed at home that day he would have died with the rest of his family because his home was only a few dozen meters from the hypocenter. He still regrets that his last encounter with his father was an angry one. Only a few bones of his father were found. Mr. Uchida pointed out that the war, the bombings and the terrible suffering Japan suffered were all due to the

military education Japanese received, training them to believe that the emperor was a god and that anyone who questioned the emperor or the government was a traitor. “We should have questioned much more,” he said, “it is now our mission to tell our stories not as political propaganda but as messages of peace to make sure no one forgets the terrible, absurd horror of war.”

Lord Mayor Weil pointed out that the survivors in both Japan and Germany are aging, so we are faced with the problem of how to keep their stories alive.

He then introduced Jean-Joel Lemarchand. Mr. Lemarchand responded gratefully to Mr. Uchida’s story and informed us that even the citizens of his small city in France are very much afraid of war and nuclear weapons. He emphasized the need for cities to work actively with their citizens to take effective precautions against war.

The next speaker was Hiroyuki Nakata, Deputy Mayor of Sapporo. Mr. Nakata described the many ways in which Sapporo is working to communicate peace to its children. At the time of the G8 Summit in July 2008, Sapporo, assisted by Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hosted a major A-bomb exhibit. The heads of government never saw it, but many ambassadors and other officials did. Furthermore, many Sapporo citizens saw it and found it shocking – both the content itself and the fact that they were so ignorant of this terrible event that took place in their own country. It was an extremely valuable experience and Sapporo intends to hold similar exhibitions in the future. Deputy Mayor Nakata thanked Hiroshima and Nagasaki for their efforts for peace, and encouraged other cities, saying “We cannot leave these efforts up to these cities alone. We all have to convey a message of peace to our children of the world.”

The next speaker was Miho Cibot from Malakoff, France. She spoke of her 27 years working to communicate the A-bomb experience in France. She spoke of the difficulty of doing so in a country that has nuclear weapons, believes that nuclear weapons ended the war, and where many people immediately respond by talking about Japanese atrocities in Nanjing. Most French people know nothing about Nagasaki or what happened here. The City of Malakoff is working toward a Nuclear Abolition Week, to begin on September 21, the International Day of Peace.

The next speaker was Mayor Bob Harvey of Waitakere, who started with a Maori greeting that none of the interpreters were able to handle. He then emphasized the

power of Mr. Uchida's story and the vital importance of getting such stories to today's children. In Waitakere, the city is sponsoring a program called Roots of Empathy in which a newborn baby is brought to school and the children are taught a little bit about how to care for it. The same baby then comes back to school at each of the 3 months, 6 months and 9 months, so the children can observe how it grows and changes, putting them in touch with the miracle of life and the preciousness of each baby. The mayor then explained that he is carrying a flame from Hiroshima and Nagasaki back to New Zealand for the start of the World Peace March, which will begin on October 2. He urged everyone to get involved with the Peace March when it comes to their country.

The final speaker for the afternoon was Ambassador Estifanos Afeworki Haile of Eritrea, who spoke on behalf of the mayors of Asmara and Massawa and began by expressing support for and solidarity with Mayors for Peace. He shocked the audience by saying that he, too, is a *hibakusha*. He remembers clearly as a child that the series of 17 nuclear tests by France in the Sahara Desert, and the people of his town became ill with strange diseases. No one knew why at the time, but everyone knows now that the radiation was carried by the clouds that build up in the desert. So as if slavery, colonization and proxy wars were not enough, Africa is still suffering from radiation damage due to the actions of European nations. In March, the Mainichi Newspaper did a story on weapons of mass destruction, chemical weapons being built and stockpiled by North Korea and Ethiopia. By October 2008, Japanese survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki visited Massawa, leading the mayor to join Mayors for Peace. The mayor herself is a survivor of Soviet air raids on Massawa in 1990.

Lord Mayor Weil then summarized the session offering gratitude to Mr. Uchida and emphasizing the need to get more true stories of war experience to children. He pointed out the vital need to begin peace education very early. He thanked all of the speakers and assured the participants that the problem of teaching children peace when they are surrounded electronically by war will be an ongoing topic and challenge for the mayors of the world. That concludes his report.

Mayor Plusquellic

Next, continuing, I would like to call for a report from the Chair of the Second Section Meeting, Mayor of Ypres, Belgium, who is with us today. Luc.

Report of Section Meeting II: Luc Dehaene

Mayor of Ypres, Belgium

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. As I am not a native speaker, maybe that helps to shorten your report. Sorry beforehand for that. But let me start with the report from the second part of the meeting yesterday afternoon.

In the meeting, we got some examples of campaigning in the 2020 Vision Campaign. We got examples from different countries. Two examples from France brought by Michel Cibot from Malakoff, another one brought by Mrs. Sonia Guenine from Vitry-Sur-Seine, an example of Manchester, Great Britain, and the example by Belgium told by Pol D'Huyvetter.

At the same time, we got an overview of national and regional political situations. Afterwards, Mr. Aaron Tovish reminded us of the history of Mayors for Peace and the history of 2020 Vision Campaign.

At the end of the meeting, we got some good news, namely the announcement of immediate affiliation of 13 cities in Bangladesh and the promise of at least 100 new member cities in that country.

But the main dish of this second section meeting yesterday afternoon was the lecture by Professor Mogami from International Christian University, an expert in international law. I will just remind you of three points of his lecture.

First of all, to remember the power that NGOs can have. And he referred to the Battle of Solferino, in Italy, which was the start of the initiative of the International Red Cross, which is worldwide well-known. With that example, he gave us a hope that Mayors for Peace can also be as strong as the International Red Cross.

Another headline of his lecture was that the possession and the use of nuclear weapons is, in fact, against international legislation. I think that is a good point to start. He also compared the situation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to Auschwitz, which was maybe shocking for some in the audience, but I think it is very real.

Last point to remember is that, maybe in these days, we are living a very important moment in history. Although the situation at this time maybe economically and

financially rather tough, that can also be an opportunity that can create opportunities that can create new hope. A couple of examples: first of all, it's already clear that the 21st century is no longer a century of national states and national governments, but the 21st century is certainly the era of cities and citizens. More and more, the cities will be taken by cities and citizens. And that is very important for reaching our goal soon. The second example was the Obama's speech. The Obama speech will also give us hope that we can reach our goal in 2020. Let's hope now that other world leaders and the Obama administration will follow.

This, ladies and gentlemen, leads us to the final conclusion. A conclusion, that we as Mayors for Peace, we have a huge responsibility. It is our duty to do everything in our power to reach that goal, the abolition of all nuclear weapons in the year 2020 so that we all can be present at the Olympic Games in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in a nuclear weapon free world in 2020. But, ladies and gentlemen, in the meantime, there is still a lot of work to do. Let's start tomorrow. Thank you.

Mayor Plusquellic

Thank you, Mayor Dehaene. We are going to begin a series of speakers who may comment about this Conference and the activities. We will begin with the Executive Director and CEO of the US Conference of Mayors, Tom Cochran. I would ask each of the speakers to come to the podium. I will just introduce a good friend, Tom Cochran as a person who has over 30 years experience leading an organization that represents cities of over 30,000 in population in the United States and has had tremendous success lobbying for issues that pertains to people who live in cities throughout the US. He has been committed, and has invited Mayor Akiba as a keynote speaker at our last annual meeting in Providence, and has continued to work with Mayors for Peace, leading the US Conference of Mayors. Tom Cochran.

Tom Cochran

CEO and Executive Director, the US Conference of Mayors

Thank you, thank you, Mayor Plusquellic. I think just briefly I would like to say that it is good to be in Nagasaki, because in our country historic pop culture and movies are all about Hiroshima. It is the way it is. And it has been very good for me to be here as an individual to remind myself of the innocent people we lost here. It is the first time here, and thank you for hosting the meeting.

The United States Conference of Mayors has had a relationship with the mayors of Hiroshima for 40 years. We are very very active, being a part of the first memorial. We've had delegations come every year and were here for the 60th and we are pleased to have a bench in the Peace Park.

It's very important, I think, for the delegates to recognize that the mayors of the United States have been in the forefront for peace. The mayors of the United States voted in 1970 against President Nixon's first withdrawal from Vietnam. So that took a lot of political courage from elected officials. Prior to that time, they said, "You guys just pick up the trash, keep the roads paved," but it was our decision to be much more involved in international relations.

There have been a lot of speeches here, and they were great. But we have to really get into the politics of what we need to do. So, we hailed in President Obama with hope for change. Sometimes we cannot just go for hope. You have got to remind him that we have to have change. We have to keep him strong, and certainly he was in Prague. But politically our country is just like a lot of other countries. If the President signs a treaty, it has to be ratified by the Senate. So, I think in all over our countries, we have been working with the Japan Association of City Mayors, while we are relating with the EURO CITIES, relating with the Metropolis, Argentine Mayors, organizations of mayors around the country.

I would just like to mention the portion of climate protection. We have 950 cities. The United States did not sign the Kyoto Protocol. But in 2005, 141 American mayors signed the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, representing the 141 countries that signed the Kyoto Protocol. Today we have 950 American cities calling for the treaty on climate protection that's taking place in Copenhagen. I mentioned that, because you have got a lot of green activity in the world right now. And in my opinion, the nuclear disarmament issue and the green issue can be used together, because people are very very active, more so in my country, on the green issue. So, what we have been trying to say is, "Hey, you are doing the green stuff, let's also talk about nuclear disarmament." So, we will be working with Mayor Plusquellic, and Mayor Akiba and others and organizations around the world. We know that presidents and prime ministers have a lot of children; they have a lot of issues before them. So it is very very important that mayors stand up at the local level and we have to give those mayors all countries the courage to do that.

We know also that the nuclear issue is very very tricky. Probably, the most traumatic thing in my generation was President Kennedy's assassination. The most traumatic thing for my children was 9-11. I know that you have all talked about it, but the danger is not that a nuclear weapon will be dropped out of an airplane. The danger is it will be carried in a black briefcase through an airport in a big city. And I think we need to talk about that when we discuss it politically. I hate to say we have to use fear to motivate people, but it does work. So when we discuss this, again, the whole question of the terrorist threats we have, and we've had this in the subways all over the world. I think the idea that an atomic weapon being on the subway in London, and places like that is very scary.

So we are here to say that our organization, the United States Conference of Mayors, 75 years old, is interested in talking more about strategic politics, and using our relationships with other organizations, such as the one here in Japan, in Tokyo, the Japan Association of City Mayors, we may meet with them next week, continuing to work with other organizations like ours, to share what's happened here with the grass-roots and non-profit groups, to continue to work towards peace, continue to work towards disarmament.

Because if the mayors don't stand up and do it, you are not going to get from the congressmen or senators. They are federal officials, they are not as close to the people as mayors are, it's the mayors that are going to change the world. And the scientists have said that you have got to change human behavior and human thinking. We have found it to be true on climate protection. We have found it true for breast cancer, and prostate cancer. The mayors can get on TV and say "get your test done." So, mayors can change the way people think and the way people act. And so, we believe that if this movement is going to be strong around the world, we have to activate mayors in other nations.

So, that is what we are doing with Mayor Plusquellic's leadership and my president who is the Mayor of Seattle, Washington, Greg Nickels. I thank you very much for this opportunity to speak to you and I look forward to working with you to go forward. Thank you.

Mayor Plusquellic

Thank you. Thank you, Tom. Our next speaker is Mayor of Granollers, Spain, Mr. Josep Mayoral i Antigas. Please come to the podium. I will tell you the mayor was up very late last night, working on the draft of the Appeal, as many other mayors here in this room. Welcome, Mayor.

Josep Mayoral i Antigas

Mayor of Granollers, Spain

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I am very impressed that you are working very powerfully toward peace. My stay in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was very short, but I was very impressed with your hospitality.

I would like to talk about my hometown, Granollers. For peace education, Granollers has a precious memory. Granollers has a population of 60,000 and it is 25 km north of Barcelona. Granollers has accepted many different kinds of people from around the world. Granollers has been carrying out various kinds of activities led by citizens.

Our town is proud of its past experiences, like historic intersections. In the second century, the Romans built Granollers. We have experienced a number of difficult times. The most tragic time was when Granollers was bombed during the Civil War of Spain. On May 31, 1938, five Italian airplanes in support of General Franco dropped 60 shells and 750 bombs. Within a minute, 224 people were killed by the bombardment, mainly women and children. This is the tragic memory we share in the town. This memory has to be held and kept as we experienced some very tough government decisions, but we decided to keep the memory in our mind and we should never repeat the same tragedies again.

So, peace is a very important concept for us, and we have been thinking how to realize and keep peace. We live in the age of harmony and dialogues, we can now take action to prevent conflicts and wars, and a lot of research works have been performed so far, and thanks to such research works, some dark part of our history has been revealed and brought into the light. Thanks to such research activities, we have taken a big step forward, and we have renewed our memory about this Civil War. So our historians, philosophers, and researchers dug out the memories of citizens about this dark age. Citizens have joined the effort as well, and a number of novels and documents have been published.

So, that is why we are living in a present Granollers, but we should take further steps forward not only remembering what happened in the past, but also to take a positive step toward the future, so that we can make a better democratic city. For peace, we should fight onward. Of course our town is fighting for building peace, because of its bitter bombing experiences in the past. It is necessary for us to talk about bitter experiences in the past, so renewing our bitter memories is needed. In order to build up a culture of peace in the civilized world, we should put pieces of memories of different cities together.

Every year on May 31, we commemorate this bombing, so attacks on civilians should never be repeated. In May 2008, we established the Center for Peace. I think this is for the realization and maintenance of peace. We should exchange our experiences in search of peace. We should work together for peace. Our idea is that we accept all kinds of memories held by citizens. This center has various functions. In the first place, we will listen to the testimonies of people. Also we would like to promote historic studies. The third is to promote education for younger people. We believe that it is very important to promote exchanges between the people who experienced the bombing and young people.

We are promoting mutual help and support among the citizens and also good association with other cities. By sharing the same purpose and goal, we promote the collaboration with other cities and organizations, so we share the same goal of peace building. Local assembly has supported this goal of the city. Together with other cities, we are forming networks to gain power to fight.

How can we do this more effectively, and how can we build peace? We should know our own cities and other cities. Only then we can get together to share the same goal. Sometimes people have some internal strife, then, we have to find ways to bring about a solution. What is happening in Granollers is to reconstitute past memories, so we can build a future vision. We should find our roots in the past, and the past memory should be used effectively for leading a better life. Everyday, we have to tell bad experiences to young people, and we want them to think about what they should do to build a better future. To this end, we should keep the memory of the past and joining the International Day of Peace, joining the dialogue with others, and spread local stories to the world. These are very necessary things.

So, networking will enable us to work together with other people in the world. I would like to propose the following. First is networking. First, internal network will be spread inside Spain. In November, we will spread this networking to reach even Mediterranean coastal areas, so we can spread peace in this area. We want to strengthen our ties with Mayors for Peace, we should accept our wounds of bombardment, and we have to tell the past experiences to younger people. I hope that they will have critical eyes. We want to let more our citizens to get involved in our activities. Thank you.

Mayor Plusquellic

Next speaker is Councilor, City of Villejuif, France, Alain Rouy.

Alain Rouy, Councilor, City of Villejuif; Association Française des Communes, Départements et Régions pour la Paix (AFCDRP), France

Mayor of Nagasaki, Mayor of Hiroshima, and our colleagues of city representatives from the world.

Villejuif is a peaceful town with a population of 50,000, located south of Paris. Since we came back from the 6th General Conference in Hiroshima four years ago, we have greatly improved ourselves in the fields of nuclear disarmament, encouraged by people in Hiroshima. We think that we can increase our power by meeting and talking with you as we are doing right now, through the collaboration with others.

This year also, after I go back to my city, we will commemorate the International Day of Peace on September 21 together with other cities. On that occasion, we will ask citizens to show flags of peace on the windows of their houses. Councilors of Villejuif and the citizens of our cities will conduct an official discussion on NPT, in order to disseminate the information on NPT to our citizens, and to put pressure on NPT Review Conference in May next year. Local municipalities and the citizens have to talk about this issue, because it is a fateful issue for us.

For the past four years, we have been accumulating knowledge and enhanced our activities. We started to empower ourselves so that we city representatives can work on international organizations. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are calling for us and well communicating with us.

As a result of that, we are eager to have our response reflected to the international arena. We are trying to communicate our public opinions to those international organizations. It is very important to organize ourselves, then, we can raise the awareness of our citizens, and accumulate our opinions.

Each mayor of Mayors for Peace needs to invite the neighboring city mayors to join the organization. We have to work on at least one city so they can participate and we can increase our power. I am going to work on our neighbor cities of Villejuif, so I think this is going to be a very important year. By taking initiative of collaboration through the networking of cities in Mayor for Peace, we have to be closer to our citizens, so we can enhance the awareness level of the public. Thank you very much.

Mayor Plusquellic

Next speaker is from Vitry-Sur-Seine in France, Ms. Dominique Etave. Ms. Etave.

Dominique Etave, Deputy Mayor, Vitry-Sur-Seine; Association Française des Communes, Départements et Régions pour la Paix (AFCDRP), France

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I am very much grateful to be with you in Nagasaki, again at the General Conference of Mayors for Peace.

Our city is located near Paris. For many years, our mayor has been very active in the peace movement. Just like cities represented here, Vitry is engaged in active collaboration and alliances, and raises the voices of citizens for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We hope that will be able to expand such networks to build up for a world without such nuclear threats.

As city councilors, we are entrusted with the intent and will of the electorate, which amounts to millions in number. Human beings are the core of activities. As the Mayor of Hiroshima said, "CANT: Cities Are Not Targets!" I believe that mayors and city councilors need to take such responsibility. Nuclear weapons are targeting cities, which is exemplified in the cases of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Due to the wars and various tensions, there is destruction of balances on a global scale... If this continues, the globe will continue to go into jeopardy and crisis, because victims are always poor people. There is no way nuclear weapons protect us or protect nations. Even the countries without any wealth are able to equip themselves with nuclear

weapons, but no nuclear weapon can protect human beings. Weapons and walls cannot guarantee their safety. They are using deterrence as excuses. The more threatening the people, the more threatened they are by others.

We have to be more active as we are in France. Citizens can have power and strength, whether you are a man and woman. All the people must pressure their national governments. We are responsible to eliminate nuclear weapons from this globe. Of course, in a way, we are benefited by the peaceful use of nuclear power. But we hope that we can eliminate totally the use of nuclear weapons. We need to apply force and pressure as the world is moving toward more diverse and it is in compliance with the international laws.

The governments were once responsible for disarmament. For example, there is the presence of military forces and thousands of billions of dollars spent for military use. If we can allocate only 30% of such expenses, we can eradicate poverty from the world. We hope that we will utilize such extra money for UNICEF, humanitarian assistance. We hope that we can increase initiatives of citizens so we can work for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

In Vitry-Sur-Seine, we are traditionally engaged in such activities. Even children are educated in that way, so we will be able to make perpetual peace. Through joining in Mayors for Peace, AFCDRP is very much committed to making further efforts to recruit more local authorities to participate in Mayors for Peace.

Obamajority is our catch phrase. We hope that we can utilize this as a pillar. The United States has recognized the moral responsibility, and they are committed for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We will be able to get rid of conflicts if such weapons are eliminated.

Mayor Plusquellic

Thank you. Next speaker is Ambassador at large of the Republic of Burundi, Hon. Mussie Hailu.

Mussie Hailu, Ambassador-at-Large, Republic of Burundi

Thank you. Dear friends. Before I present my remarks, I kindly ask you to join me in a moment of silence to remember all those victims of the atomic bombs of Hiroshima

and Nagasaki, and all the precious lives that are lost to war throughout the world. Could you please rise and observe one moment of silence? (Silent prayer) May those souls rest in peace. Thank you.

Your Excellencies, honorable mayors, dear participants of Mayors for Peace, dear fellow peace activists, ladies and gentlemen. Greetings of peace to you all. It is indeed a great honor and privilege for me to be here today with you for the 7th General Conference of Mayors for Peace. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my profound appreciation to the organizers of the conference, to the Mayor of Hiroshima, and to the Mayor of Nagasaki for inviting us and for the kind hospitality you extended to all of us. I am extending this gratitude on behalf of all people throughout the world who truly believe in the value of peace.

On behalf of United Religion Initiative, and Interfaith Peace Building Initiative, for which I have privilege to serve as Board Chairperson in my civil society, and also to ANT-Hiroshima, I would like to register my appreciation to Mrs. Tomoko Watanabe, the Executive Director of ANT-Hiroshima and all volunteers of ANT-Hiroshima, for being a leading example as what civil society and individuals can do, especially for promoting a culture of peace, international cooperation, and the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol.

At this August conference, may I convey the personal greetings of and best wishes of His Excellency Pierre Nkuruziza, President of the Republic of Burundi to each and every one of you? I would like also to express the President's appreciation to the work of Mayors for Peace and the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. I am happy to say we strongly support the purpose and mission of the two organizations and look forward to work closely to raise international public awareness regarding the need to abolish nuclear weapons and to contribute to genuine, sustainable world peace and international harmony. We also support the project 2020 Vision Campaign.

As you know, there is a preparation for the International Decade for Disarmament at the UN from 2010-2020 and as Mayor Akiba said, this is a decisive decade for nuclear disarmament and we all need to support it. I am also glad to say that this year the United Nations is calling for the International Day of Peace to be focused on Disarmament with the theme of "We Must Disarm: Take action for a world free of nuclear weapons." This is another good opportunity for civil society and individuals like you and me to stand together to say, "No to nuclear weapons."

It is also another positive hope, as it has been marked many times during this conference, President Obama that the United States will take concrete steps toward a world without nuclear weapons. At this point, allow me to congratulate Mayor Akiba for sending out a clear message to mayors and citizens throughout the world to take concrete action and join the initiative of the United Nations and call upon all of us to take this opportunity to draw public attention to this vital cause to create a nuclear-weapon-free world for all of us in the coming generations. I would like kindly to encourage you to participate in the observance of moment of silence during the International Day of Peace on September 21 and especially the mayors to proclaim the Peace Day of the UN.

Your Excellencies, mayors and guests, as you all know we are living at a critical moment in our history, a time when humanity must choose its future. Our world is experiencing a fundamental global crisis, a crisis in global economy, global climate change, global degradation of values, threat of nuclear weapons and lack of global ethic. Throughout the world, people are suffering from unemployment, poverty, hunger, racial discrimination, ethnicity and religious conflicts, the abuse of drugs, organized crime, corruption, and many other negative elements that we see in the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, that is why we are saying that peace is not only the absence of war, it is the absence of social injustice. War is the absence of human security at all level. This entire global crisis is a crisis which we all share in common. It is not only a problem of a certain country or region but it is a problem of all humanity.

Again, with this in mind, people from four corners of earth join hands together here to say “no more nuclear weapons, no more war.” I guess Mayors for Peace established such a platform for all of us to bring our voice collectively.

To solve this global problem we need a global solution. Each and every one of us need to be part of the solution by taking our own personal action as the world can only be changed when we change ourselves. It is an ideal time for us to move forward into action. If we can change ourselves, we can change the world. If everyone does his or her bit, together we can accomplish our common dream, which is a better peaceful world, in which all humankind can live in peace and harmony along with mother earth.

Therefore, it is high time for all of us, as citizen of this planet, to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole living being. Every one of us shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of all life on earth. We must recognize that in the midst of magnificent diversity of cultures, religions, ethnicities and races, we are part of one human family with a common destiny. As the Mayor of Nagasaki said, “We, as human beings, now have two paths before us. While one can lead us to ‘a world without nuclear weapons’, the other will carry us toward annihilation.” We have two choices: To choose the pathway which leads to peace or the pathway which leads us to destruction.

Our world is continuously changing, and in this changing world we cannot remain as we are, nor can we go back to conditions that are now behind us. We can only move forward, but not on the same path which has been leading us into war, conflict, violence, hunger, discrimination, and disrespect. We should not keep on living in crisis and conflict. I think, here, it will be more appropriate for me to quote Dr. Nagai from Nagasaki who truly teaches the essence of forgiveness and reconciliation:

“If a new wind is to be opened for all of us to live in harmony, reconciliation is the only way. An eye on eye will only lead us to be blind.”

It is an idea for us to follow the path of peace, a path which leads us from war to peace, from killing each other to co-existence, from disrespect to honoring each other, from hate to love, from despair to hope, from darkness to light, from being selfish to live for the sake of others, and from revenge to forgiveness.

For this to happen, ladies and gentlemen, we need to be guided by the Golden Rule. The Golden Rule is a universal principle that says “treat others the way you want to be treated.” The message of the Golden Rule is simple, universal and yet powerful, it is the most prevalent and universal moral principle in human history. It has been affirmed in many religions, traditions, indigenous cultures and secular philosophies as a fundamental principle of life and the foundation upon which the base of global ethic is found. The Golden Rule, with its roots in a wide range of world cultures, is well suited to be a standard to which different cultures could appeal in resolving conflict. As the world becomes more and more a single interacting global community, the need for such a common standard is becoming more urgent.

Your Excellencies, honorable mayors, I am aware that there are about 129 cities in 30 countries in Africa, which are members of Mayor for Peace. As you may know, we

have 54 countries in Africa so there are 20 countries and many more cities who are not yet members of Mayors for Peace. The remaining 20 countries, cities, also need to join this very important organization. We need to make Mayors for Peace a very active movement in all parts of Africa and the world. It will be also very important Mayors for Peace to work very closely with the African Union and I am sure that the African Union will support this initiative.

Therefore, I strongly suggest to the Secretariat of Mayors for Peace to consider organizing a conference in partnership with the African Union under the theme of African Mayors for Peace and Development. It is also good for Mayors for Peace to be represented at the African Union in order to work very closely on peace issues and to have political goodwill from African Heads of State. I am happy to say I have already discussed on this issue with Steve Leeper and Mayor Akiba, President of Mayors for Peace. And upon my return, my first action will be to inform the African Union, all relevant bodies in Africa, to embrace and subscribe to this mission and to join hands with you all to make our dream a reality.

Finally, I would like to say that Mayor Shinzo Hamai, who was elected by popular vote in 1947, dreamed to make Hiroshima the Mecca of all people who long for world peace, has now become a reality. I guess this is also true in the case of Nagasaki. The establishment of Mayors for Peace is such a testimony.

On this occasion of reading the Peace Declaration, Mayor Hamai said:

“This horrible weapon brought about a revolution of thought, which has convinced us of the necessity of value of eternal peace. That is to say because of this atomic bomb, the people of the world have become aware that a global war in which atomic energy would be used would lead to the end of our civilization and the extinction of mankind. This revolution in thinking ought to be the basis for an absolute peace, and imply the birth of new life and a new world.”

We all need to work together for peace to prevail on earth so that there will never be another Hiroshima and Nagasaki in any part of the world. There will not be any more genocides like the one in Rwanda. I call upon all citizens of the world to work together to abolish nuclear weapons and create sustainable justice in our world. May peace prevail in our mind. May peace prevail in our heart. May peace prevail in our family. May peace prevail in our city. May peace prevail on earth. Thank you so much.

Mayor Plusquellic

Thank you. Thank you, ambassador.

Our next speaker is Senior Programme Officer of the Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament Ms. Mayra Gomez.

Mayra Gomez, Senior Programme Officer, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), New Zealand

Minasama konnichiwa. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Let me extend my gratitude to Mayor Akiba, Mayor Taue, people of Nagasaki, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. *Ukamaw Waliki, Tena koutou katoa.* To the people of the four winds, I bring you greetings from Aotearoa, New Zealand and from my birth city La Paz, – the peace –, Bolivia. Thank you for the privilege to address you in my capacity as Senior Programme Officer of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, PNND for short.

This is my first time in Asia, first time in Japan and my first time in the City of Nagasaki. I am so grateful and as everyone before me has said, for the opportunity afforded me to remember never, ever, ever, to forget that what happened here 64 years ago, is still an ongoing possibility today with so many of these dangerous atomic bombs about. What an honor to join Mayors for Peace and all of this beautiful community of peace warriors committed to working toward ensuring that terrorizing citizens of the world with a nuclear catastrophe is unacceptable anywhere on mother earth as well as on father sky.

PNND now has with over 600 elected legislators from about 75 countries. Legislators, as elected officials worldwide, they are the link between civil society and government. They decide how to spend the money collected from our taxes. So, it is our choice to hold them accountable to allocating those resources toward disarmament, and investment on human capital goals or to be passive and allow them to continue upholding policies of military might for the financial benefit of the very few.

Members of parliaments also have oversight power. They can make sure that states either keep or renege on their commitments. They can make sure states act in goodwill on their existing conventions, including implementing them or, the alternative, they can signal when they fail to do so. We as citizens must remain informed and engaged with

them.

PNND members also serve as a bridge between national legislators with local bodies. In doing so, we've nurtured a very special relationship with Mayors for Peace. This includes joint actions, working together on strategy, and helping promote each other's organizations. An example of this is the joint statement by mayors and parliamentarians for a nuclear-weapon-free world. This highlighted the critical importance of our continued collaboration for disarmament and non-proliferation. The statement was signed by both mayors and parliamentarians from around the globe. It was presented at the United Nations General Assembly on October 2006, indicating that nuclear weapons continue to threaten the lives of the people who mayors and parliamentarians represent. The statement put forward the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, the commitment of mayors and parliamentarians to work together to achieve such a world, and a strategy to kick-start nuclear disarmament negotiations.

A key strategy to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world is to promote negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, a global treaty to abolish the weapons under strict and effective international control. The 2020 Vision of Mayors for Peace calls for this, as does the parliamentary declaration supporting a nuclear weapons convention, which was released just last year by a cross-party group of PNND members from the European Parliament.

Mayors for Peace and PNND members are also promoting a nuclear weapons convention proposal in a range of national and international forums, including national parliaments, mayoral conferences, the Non-Proliferation Treaty meetings and at the United Nations General Assembly. The European Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the European Council to support a nuclear weapons convention in the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol in order to achieve the early prohibition of nuclear weapons and their complete elimination by 2020. This work of Mayors for Peace and PNND has helped pave the way for the growing international support. Over 125 countries vote in favor of the nuclear weapons convention at the UN general Assembly.

Earlier this year, the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), they represent about 150 parliaments, they adopted a resolution calling on parliaments and parliamentarians to ensure universal ratification of the CTBT, and also to promote the UN Secretary-General's five-point plan for nuclear disarmament to support a number of

concurrent steps such as, reductions in nuclear stockpiles, establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones, and commencement of negotiations on a fissile materials treaty. Just a couple of days ago in Hiroshima, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reiterated his promotion of a nuclear weapons convention in his five-point plan for nuclear disarmament.

PNND members are also promoting the Costa Rican initiative, advanced at the UN Security Council last November by President Oscar Arias, for the implementation of UN Charter Article 26, which calls for the regulation of armaments in order to ensure the least diversion of human and economic resources from global needs. The Costa Rica Consensus is the basis for the rest of Latin America and the world to act upon those ideals, most especially at this time of global economic meltdown.

PNND and Mayors for Peace are also promoting the re-allocation of resources from the nuclear weapons industry in order to assist in meeting UN development goals.

Last September, here in Japan, PNND member Yohei Kono, who is a Speaker of the Japan House of Representatives, facilitated a historic meeting of the Speakers of the G8 countries in Hiroshima to pay tribute to the victims of the nuclear bombing and to pledge commitment to nuclear disarmament. Ladies and gentlemen, this was the first time a high-level US official had paid respects at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The participation of United States Speaker Nancy Pelosi in this Summit paved the way for President Obama in his Prague speech to be the first US president to recognize the moral responsibility of US nuclear disarmament arising from its use of nuclear weapons against Japan. That speech has been hailed as the most hopeful sign after a long dark tunnel but then it was overshadowed by North Korea's nuclear test. Now, without referring to the magnitude of the test or the magnitude of the publicity of the test, we note the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is again appealing to North Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks about dismantling its nuclear weapons program.

However, given the failure of those talks to prevent the nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, many of us are sharing growing support for the idea of Northeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ). Proponents of such a zone, we heard as Ms. Keiko Nakamura explained this morning that this would include legally binding security assurances from the Nuclear Weapon States not just to use nuclear weapons against the countries within this zone. The major reason why North Korea claims that it withdrew

from the NPT and tested nuclear weapons was because it could not secure guarantees that it would not be attacked. The Six Party Approach would require de-nuclearization of North Korea, without any requirements on South Korea or Japan. On the other hand, a nuclear-weapon-free zone would place some limits on extended nuclear deterrence in the region, requiring all three of them (North Korea, South Korea and Japan), as well as the Nuclear Weapons States to accept the restraints. Many activists believe this is less discriminatory, therefore more likely being acceptable to North Korea, because it does not oblige them to unilateral restraints.

In conclusion, I feel that in these three days here and also in my stay in Hiroshima, I come to the conclusion that yes, we can achieve the total ban of nukes by 2020 by being an active force to be reckoned with. An example of campaign initiatives that is going to happen is the current endorsement by Mayors for Peace, active participation by many of our PNND members in the upcoming World March for Peace and Nonviolence. The World March is going to encircle the planet carrying the abolition flame, ignited this week from the Hiroshima flame and it is going to carry the water from Nagasaki. The flame will be available digitally to be spread to everyone right up the NPT Review Conference in 2010.

In New Zealand, as we launch the march from Wellington on October 2, as you know from this morning's presentation, we are going to take the marchers through our Peace Garden because it is our lasting reminder of the importance of peace in our communities. We will honor Nagasaki by showing the marchers and visitors, the tree grown from a cutting of a camphor tree that survived nuclear explosion in Nagasaki. So we have our own *hibakusha* tree in New Zealand. Perhaps when the World March passes through Nagasaki, you may want to share with them the sculpture "The Cloak of Peace – Te Korowai Rangimarie" a gift from New Zealand as a symbol of our shared belief in peace.

The World March, you see our friends, is about reconnection with ourselves and with another. The youth particularly are showing new and exciting forms of communication and connection. The World March website is in number of sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and many many blogs dedicated to it. The webpage is now available in 26 languages, including Japanese. I have also known and met here, I would like to recognize the friends from France, who are just starting a campaign for what they calling themselves, "Bearers of Peace" and that is another march to come.

We can come together and connect. This is what it is about.

So, in less than two months from today, the World March will provide all of us 93 continuous days to concentrate on the splendor of human diversity, focused on nuclear disarmament, promoting the end of all types of violence, which is what really leads to wars. Our imagination is a limit, of how we continue to be present, to be active and to be peaceful, is going to guarantee tomorrow.

Finally, I'm practicing my Japanese, excuse me if I fail, "*domo arigato gozaimasu.*"

(Maori performance by Mayor Harvey)

Mayor Plusquellic

Well, ladies and gentlemen. I am the moderator of this session, but I cannot speak to Mayor Harvey's impromptu song there. I am not even sure if we got interpretation of that, but I am sure it was an important message for all of us. Sorry if I missed it. But we want to thank, as I wrap up the session, all of the speakers, in particular Mayor Harvey and Mayor Dehaene for the chairpersons' report.

I want to personally thank Mayor Taue for hosting this Conference here, and all of the great work of the staff for his and Mayors for Peace. The leadership Mayor Akiba and Mayor Taue have provided in this organization over these years is really commendable. And for many of us who have come more recently to this organization, they have carried the load for many of us.

I think the message here today, as I wrap up the session, is that many others have shared their experiences, commitments and pledges to continue this discussion. If there was a common theme in most of speakers, it was that education is vital, especially for young people.

For me, the most memorable part of the ceremony that many of us witnessed here in Nagasaki was the sharing of the survivor's experience, a woman who was nine in 1945. And that message I think is the one many of the speakers talked about that was so important, including the experiences in their own country at war that translates and allows them to maybe explain why this message is important. While not everyone can be here to witness a survivor speak, not everyone can be here to see the site, memorial

and pictures, one can, in other countries, use their own experiences to explain why this is so important, because the horrific events of August 1945 are beyond anyone's imagination. But to share those similar experiences and continue to get this message out will be very helpful in preventing any such occurrence in the future.

Many of the speakers talked about their local programs of empowering people, and getting people organized. I think Tom Cochran leading off and many other mayors, including Mayor Antigas, and Councilor Rouy talked about the importance of the leadership of mayors. We all have a soap box, we call it in the United States, a place from which we can speak and people listen. We are opinion makers. We are leaders. And mayors have that opportunity to carry this message. So Mayors for Peace is vitally important.

I think you heard other comments from the Ambassador and Ms. Gomez about the importance of, and the benefits of, re-directing spending, much of it is wasteful in many people's mind, probably everyone in this room, for nuclear weapons and other weaponry that could be so much better spent on addressing the human needs of mankind throughout our world, certainly in some parts of the world even need it more than others. Those resources could be used in much better way to help people, rather than the wasteful efforts in continuing this military spending.

I think lastly, there was a general theme, which was we build understanding by networking and through cooperation with others because we all are in effect one world. And we should never allow what happened here again.

I thank you all for coming. We are going to take a very short break. The closing session is to start here in six minutes. We need to clear the podium and then we will start closing session at 2:30pm. Thank you very much for all of your attention and thank you for participating and support in this conference.