

The 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace

Session I

August 4 (Sun), 2013 9:00-10:30

International Conference Center Hiroshima (Himawari)

Chairperson: **Kazumi Matsui**
President of Mayors for Peace
Mayor of Hiroshima

Agenda Explanation: **Yasuyoshi Komizo**
Chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation

MC

Ladies and gentlemen, we are going to start Session I. Session I is chaired by Mr. Kazumi Matsui, mayor of Hiroshima.

Chairperson: Mr. Kazumi Matsui, President of Mayors for Peace; Mayor of Hiroshima, Japan

Good morning. We would like to start Session I. There are five agenda items and yesterday all of these were approved by the executive conference. We would like to ask the general conference to discuss and make a decision. This is Session I. This is a place for the member cities to discuss and make decisions, so those who are representing other than the member cities are invited as observers and I hope you are going to use this as an opportunity to deepen your understanding. The first agenda is the executive official's explanation from the secretariat.

Secretariat: Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, Chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, Japan

I am Komizo, a chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. Let me explain Agenda Item I. Election of Executive Officials. Please see the first page of your handout. First, I will outline the current situation after the last general conference four years ago. The mayor Fongo-Tongo, Cameroon, the mayor of Montreal, Canada, the mayor of Mexico City, Mexico, the mayor of Montevideo, Uruguay, and the mayor of Frogn, Norway, were newly elected as executive officials. Therefore, the executive members of the Mayors for Peace currently consists of the mayor of Hiroshima as president, and 13 vice-presidents, namely the mayor of Nagasaki, the mayor of Hannover, the mayor of Volgograd, the mayor of Malakoff, and Muntinlupa, Manchester, Akron, Florence, Ypres, Biograd na Moru, and Granollers, Halabja, and the mayor of Brussels; as well as 5 executives, the mayor of Fongo-Tongo, the mayor of Montreal, the mayor of Mexico City, the mayor of Montevideo, and the mayor of Frogn. Those members can be reelected and we have contacted all those members, except three mayors who are not able to accept the reelection, all the other members including the newly elected executive officials are ready to serve as the new vice chair and president. So let me just list those names.

The mayor of Hiroshima as the president and the 15 mayors including the mayor of Nagasaki as vice presidents. I will probably admit those things because you can see those names in your paper. Our proposal is to request your approval on the new Composition of the Executive Officials. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matsui

This was the explanation from the secretariat. On this agenda, are there any questions or comments?

Mr. Komizo

I would like to, at this point, introduce to you two new vice chairs. Would you like to maybe stand up? The mayor of Mexico City, please stand up. And the mayor of Frogn, Mayor Vestby, those are the two new vice presidents so that you know that those are the new vice presidents. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matsui

For these proposed officials, if you are for the proposal, please give us a big hand. Thank you very much. Until the 9th general conference in 2017, we would like to ask the vice presidents to serve as the core members of the Mayors for Peace. Let us move onto Agenda Item 2, Sub Item 1. Revision to the Covenant of Mayors for Peace, Japanese version. Secretariat, please.

Mr. Komizo

Agenda Item 2. Revision to the Covenant of Mayors for Peace, only the Japanese version. I would just like to explain in English the meaning because in Japanese, *shicho* currently put, only means mayors of cities. But we have members, leaders from townships and villages. In Japanese, in order to make sure that those leaders are also included, we changed only the Japanese version from *shicho* to *shucho*. That covers all those other leaders. That is the only change and it doesn't affect the English version. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matsui

Thank you very much. So the secretariat has given you the explanation. Any questions or comments from the participants. I see none. Then I would like to ask you if you are for, would you please show your approval by acclamation? Thank you very much. The name of the Mayor for Peace for the Japanese version is going to be changed from *shicho* to *shucho* to open the membership to many more local authorities in Japan. For the Japanese participants who are here today, I sincerely hope that you will invite the neighboring local authorities who are non-members of the Mayors for Peace to join us. As mayor of Hiroshima City, local authorities in Japan, I hope all of them will join our organization in the not too distant future. I would like to count upon your cooperation.

Now for Agenda Item 2, Sub Item 2. This is regarding a revision to the Covenant of Mayors for Peace, both Japanese and English versions. Secretariat please.

Mr. Komizo

Page 4 of your handout. As stated in Section 1. Revised. Proposals made to introduce a new post under the secretary general to assist the secretary general and make other revisions to the provisions regarding the secretariat to respond to the recent increase in the number of member cities and to better implement our initiatives. Please see Section 2. Contents of Revision. Article 11. Establishment of the Secretariat currently stipulates that the secretariat shall be established in Hiroshima, which means the secretariat is located in Hiroshima City. The proposal is to replace the term Hiroshima with the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation to better reflect the reality. As a result, the new provision will lead, secretariat shall be established in the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation. This is the first point.

Then please look at Article 12. Secretariat staff are also subject to revision. Currently, paragraph 1 of this article provides that the secretariat shall be comprised of a secretary general and support staff. This will be revised to lead the secretariat shall be comprised of a secretary general and support staff. This will be revised to read “The secretariat shall be comprised of a secretary general, and secretary general, and support staff.” And the Japanese version of the article, the title of the secretariat leader is changed from *jumukyokuchō* to *jimusouchō*, both of which are translated as secretary general.

Also, two new paragraphs are inserted after paragraph 1 of article 2 to support the changes. They are, paragraph 2, the chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation shall serve as secretary general. This is ex-official. Paragraph 3, the executive director of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation shall serve as under-secretary general. Again, this is ex-official. By appointing these persons in the highest and second highest positions of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, that serves the secretariat to be secretary general and undersecretary general, these provisions aim to reinforce the structure for the secretariat. Accordingly, paragraph 2 in the current covenant is revised as paragraph 4 to read, “The staff accept the secretary general and under-secretary general shall be appointed by the president.”

This is followed by two additional paragraphs. They are paragraph 5, the secretary general shall preside over the duties of the secretariat. And paragraph 6, the under-secretary general shall assist the secretary general in case of the inability of the

secretary general to carry out the duties of the office or if the post is vacant. The under-secretary general shall fulfill the duties of the secretary general. The new covenant will enter into force on August 6, 2013, as shown in Section 3. For your reference we have attached the revised covenant as a whole in the following pages.

One additional remark, in the discussion in the executive conferences, there were requests informally that when the mayor appoints the chair and the director of officer of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, because this person is going to be the secretary general for the Mayors for Peace, the vice president would like to be informally consulted so that they would be comfortable that this person can also serve in the Mayors for Peace effectively. That is the explanation I would like to provide. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matsui

Thank you very much. Now, any questions or comments from the floor? None? If you are for this proposal, please show your approval by acclamation. Thank you very much with this revision. I believe we were able to make the further improvement on the secretariat. With your staff members, we hope that we will make further efforts to make the further improvement. Now Agenda Item 3. Measures for Strengthening the Management System of Mayors for Peace.

Mr. Komizo

Now Agenda Item 3. Measures for Strengthening the Management System of Mayors for Peace. We are going to expand our activities and try to involve in the new initiatives. This is something to support our own capacity in the secretariat and funding issues. Please look at page 11 in your handout. For the Japanese version it is on page 9. Since its foundation in 1982, Mayors for Peace has grown to an organization of more than 5,700 member cities from 157 countries and regions. The first point is to make this network a really workable one. One way is to focus on these cities. And then to finance issues.

The first measure is promoting regionalization and governization of regional activities as regards paragraph 1. "Selection of these cities and their roles in order to encourage proactive and independent activities appropriate to each region will promote the creation of regional groups." These are not very rigid regional groups. Depending upon the situation, we cater to regional groups in a very flexible manner to be practical and effective. First, we will select a number of lead cities to serve as chapters for the

Hiroshima secretariat and to take the lead in the regional activities because each region, while we have a very important common denominator of working towards the abolition of nuclear weapons, each region has their own problems like poverty alleviation and so on. We would like to encourage those regional activities and the lead city can lead those things. That is one important aspect. If also the non-executive cities become lead cities, we feel appropriate that they will be appointed as an executive city. These activities will commence from financial year 2015, two years from now.

The second measure is introducing membership fees, as 1) basic scheme for membership fees in order to build a system through which all member cities cooperate to support their organization while maintaining membership. Each city will be asked to pay an annual membership fee of 2,000yen. We will also welcome any voluntary payments of more than 2,000yen of course if they are willing to do that. At the same time, the city will not lose their membership automatically if they don't pay the fee because this is largely a voluntary thing but we would like to make sure that it is expected. Each city will send a fee through a lead city or directly about the payment. Each city can send, through a lead city or directly to the secretariat. But if the Hiroshima secretariat agrees that there are special circumstances to be considered, such as the necessity of using the funds for the chapter's activities or an excessive remittance changes to the Hiroshima secretariat. Cities can be exempt from sending the fee to Hiroshima. In specific cases, there is a mechanism to exempt some of the members from paying fees. Also when deemed appropriate by the Hiroshima secretariat after consultation with a lead city, cities paying their share to another local governmental organization involved in initiatives for abolishing nuclear weapons in the same region can be exempted from sending the fee to the Hiroshima secretariat. An example is Nagasaki and also Ypres leading very effectively for the 2020 Vision Campaign. Those are some of the examples we can see.

Next, the fee sent to the Hiroshima secretariat will be primarily allocated to new projects and continuing existing projects as listed in the action plan which we are going to discuss later. If a surplus is expect however, it may be appropriated for the usual running expenses of Mayors for Peace. In any case, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki confirm that they will continue to bear a portion of the running expenses, moreover if necessary. Each region may carry out a fundraising campaign in order to expand Mayors for Peace initiatives and secure a stable financial basis. So we are also encouraging innovative ways of fundraising to make sure that our funding will be stable

over a long, long time so we can carry our activities on long-term stability. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matsui

Thank you very much. Now to listen to the explanation by the secretariat with respect to this agenda. Any questions please? There are no questions? If you agree to this proposal, please show your concurrence by way of acclamation. Thank you very much. Now that we have concurred to the proposal on the measures for strengthening Mayors for Peace's management, we are going to introduce their regionalization and grouping of the region as well as the membership fee. Those will be started in FY2015 and one after another, the secretariat is committed to give you the report of the result. The next agenda, number four.

From 2013-2017, Mayors for Peace Action Plan, another deliberation item. Deliberation item number four.

Mr. Komizo

The Mayors for Peace Action Plan (2013-2017), it is another long document with details so before I think I will just highlight only the important things and in order to make you understand better, I would like to first focus on the four important thinking behind our proposal.

The first point is although we welcome all activities towards nuclear abolition, but Mayors for Peace would like to focus to give priority to launching negotiations and achieving a nuclear weapons convention at an early stage. So we will be focusing on this one but at the same time we welcome all the other activities as well. Secondly, we will enhance the framework of Mayors for Peace to effectively implement activities as we have already discussed. We would like to strengthen our own membership and secretariat and funding situation.

The third point, we would like to expand a network, Mayor for Peace's good network. But when we would like to go on to the effective campaign, we can cooperate with many like-minded organizations and groups like the International Red Cross or the US Conference of Mayors, and artist groups, even Sports and Peace composed of Olympic gold medalists and others – also interested. And also the other cities and parliamentarian peace groups. So we would like to expand our corporation with other like-minded groups. That is the third point.

And the fourth point is the timing we are in right now. It is 68 years after the atomic bomb. *Hibakusha* have been working very, very hard to appeal to the world to abolish nuclear weapons but they are aging. We need to listen to them because we don't actually know what happened at the ground explosion. We seem to feel we know but we don't actually. We need to listen to them and redouble our conviction and pledges to work towards abolition of nuclear weapons to come up with a world on the understanding of the belonging to the same human family so that we can actually change the grounds for the security. Those are the four elements actually which we drafted.

Now, please look at page 13 of your handout. In Japanese it is page 11. This already includes some of the comments we received and this has been discussed. There are three main elements. We are talking about. I will skip the parts I think I have already explained. One element I would like for you to draw attention of the major project because this is something concrete. It is the second page. If you look at the second page, two main projects. This is the contents. The first one is expanding membership and strengthening Mayors for Peace management system. We start from our own capacity so that we can do various things. And expanding membership, regionalization, and improving secretariat functions. We are also trying to increase the international face of the Hiroshima Secretariat, for example.

The second point is hosting international public opinions for nuclear weapons abolition. There are many concrete ideas included in this second comment. For example, our member cities can promote the A-bomb poster exhibitions or A-bomb survivor testimonies can be done through Skype TV conferences. I found it very effective too. Because of the aging situation of the *hibakusha*, they cannot travel too much. Also, Hiroshima and Nagasaki peace study courses will be further expanded. There are such a number of other activities – we are not going to continue but the focus is on the younger generation.

The third one is the promotion of actions for early realization of nuclear weapons convention. This is as I said. While we are trying to cultivate the groundwork of mutual understanding and the sense of community as human beings, but we have to also tackle the immediate goals to achieve nuclear weapons convention. This is about this, our immediate goal. That is our focus campaign. In this we also have listed a number of events so that we can target those events and work with other groups and appeal to the governments and international community. And also we are going to select some of the 2020 Vision Ambassadors for those prominent figures can send messages more

effectively to them. Those are some of the things but please look at the paper. You can find a number of very innovative and interesting concrete proposals included. But I think I would just like to stop at this point just to explain the basic points.

In this one you have also additional papers. I hope you can find one page paper called “additional paper.” This is actually a paper in the executive conferences. We have discussed salary of the action plan and two amendments agreed upon. Number one in the main project, expanding membership and strengthening Mayors for Peace management system, currently small fundraising, we have very simple wording. But there is a proposal to change Mayors for Peace will seek to explore and use better and more effective fundraising strategies to maximize fundraising beyond membership fees, for example. Specific events, joint projects with partners, and applications to funding and revenue giving organizations. Members feel that we cannot only depend upon our own funding but we can cultivate various innovative ways of fundraising to make our activities more vigorous. That is the first amendment.

The second one is, again the main project, number two. Fostering the international public opinion for nuclear weapons abolition. Basically the addition is we will especially strengthen and intensify our collaboration with Abolition 2000 and with the ICAN. Those are the two major groups of activities that we have been and we are going to be cooperating with. So we named those important ones. Those are the changes, both of them along the line of the proposal but make it stronger. Thank you very much.

Mr. Matsui

Thank you very much. Now, explanation has been given by the secretariat, including the two revisions proposed and approved in the executive committee. Including these two revisions, do you have any questions? If no further questions, let’s take a vote. As for this agenda item, including the revisions made at the executive meeting, if you agree to approve as it is, please clap your hands. Thank you for your cooperation.

Now based on this action plan, activities of Mayors for Peace will be enhanced and improved so we look forward to your continued cooperation. Now we would like to conclude Session I.

By the way, this is a great opportunity for executive cities to gather under the same roof. So from these executive cities that are sitting on stage, we would like to hear a few words to introduce themselves. To my right, the mayor of Nagasaki please.

Mr. Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki, Japan

I am Taue, mayor of Nagasaki. Three days after the Hiroshima bombing the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, so together with Hiroshima aiming at the world free of nuclear weapons. We are working very hard. The general conference of Mayors for Peace is going to be quite important for Nagasaki as well because the members of the Mayors for Peace exceeded 5,000. Since then, in addition to the quantity, we decided to be better in terms of the quality and the fundraising. We thought that we need to be a stronger organization during the past years. Executive members have had a lot of discussion as to how we can do it. In this general conference with your approval, we have these actions ready for the future. Member cities should be proud of being a part of this big network and in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, it is quite important that the executive cities together with all the members would like to be the engine for the great advancement.

Mr. Michel Cibot, Special Advisor to Mayor of Malakoff, France

Malakoff is close to Paris and the city of Malakoff is very happy to attend this meeting. We also attended all the previous meetings in Hiroshima. We are aware that we are coming into a new era. The massive disruptive power of weapons created by humans should never be used. In that sense, we are going into a new chapter so the direction of our organization is quite important. In France we have had lots of discussions on this issue. Next person please?

Mr. Mark Hackett, Councillor of Manchester City Council, UK

I am Councillor Mark Hackett from Manchester. I am also representing the UK and Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities. We have campaigned over many years for nuclear disarmament and we see this as part of an important process in a difficult world to make sure the gains that Mayors for Peace has made in bringing together well over 5 thousand cities now is the time to deepen the campaign and to place it on a secure basis so we can really engage millions and billions of people throughout the world in campaigning for a world free of nuclear weapons. Thank you.

Ms. Jasminka Bajlo, Mayor's Counselor of Biograd na Moru, Croatia

My name is Jasminka Bajlo and I represent the mayor of Biograd na Moru, a small town on the Croatian coast of the Adriatic Sea. We have joined Mayors for Peace in 2007 so we are a relatively new member. Very proud of also becoming one of the executive members through the activities that we have tried to organize because Croatia is a young country as you know, starting its democratic path about more than 20 years ago, but we

have suffered the scourge of war. So we think that our participation in this organization is very important as it is very important for every country. And since we have become members of Mayors for Peace, it has been six years now, the number has doubled. Now maybe we can say that a billion citizens of this world are participating in Mayors for Peace. We are very proud to be part of this organization and hope that it will leave an influence on the world and the people and that they will really start thinking about nuclear disarmament. Those are our hopes. Thank you.

Mr. Khder Kareem, Mayor of Halabja, Kurdistan, Iraq

Good morning everyone. I am the mayor of Halabja City which was attacked by the chemical bombs. I hope this conference and the members of this conference will bring peace in the world and the world without nuclear and chemical bombs. I hope this will bring the peace, especially in our region, the Middle East, as you see, not many problems that happen, and success to everybody. Thank you very much.

Mr. Thore Vestby, Mayor of Frogn, Norway

My name is Thore Vestby and I am mayor in Frogn in Norway. Norway has been taking a lot of initiatives in peace for a long time, we are doing it now, and we will do it in the future. And I feel privileged to represent the mayors of the country. I can tell you that this thing is a non-partisan thing. I can tell you that on the 6th of August there will be an article in the main newspaper in Norway where seven mayors for seven parties – that's what we have, seven different parties in Norway – will make a statement about disarmament. That will probably boost the membership and the focus on the issue. And I feel very privileged to be here and now being elected as vice president, I feel very privileged. Thank you very much.

Mr. Paul Schneider, Head of the International Unit of the Lord Mayor's Office, Hannover, Germany

Good morning everyone. My name is Paul Schneider of the city of Hannover. I am representing Mayor Bernd Strauch. He is present in Hiroshima but not present on the stage right now. We have two things to celebrate more or less. The one thing is celebrating our 30th anniversary of the twin city relationship with Hiroshima and at the same time we are having our 30 years membership with Mayors for Peace as well and he is with another delegation in the city. I am representing as well about 400 mayors of German members of Mayors for Peace. One mayor is inside this room from Stuttgart. Coming to what Thore Vestby said before, yesterday we had in the two leading newspapers in Germany a big advertisement for German Mayors for Peace and the

collaboration of NGOs, reminding our members of parliament in the days before the election about our topic. Regionalization, which we agreed upon a minute ago, is a major step forward in our organization and I really look forward to strengthen the network of mayors among the mayors in this region towards nuclear abolition. Thank you.

Ms. Marissa Cole-Rongavilla, Head of International Affairs Office of Muntinlupa, Philippines

Good morning. I am Marissa Rongavilla from Muntinlupa City, Philippines. On behalf of our mayor, Attorney Jimmy Fresnedi, I would like to express a strong desire to be part of this conference. However, we are just in the office barely a month after winning the midterm election last May. Muntinlupa City is a very small city in the Philippines, but we have something in common. We have a Japanese cemetery where the Japanese soldiers who died during the war were buried. We strongly believe that we learned from the lessons of the past. Before now, we are good friends with the Japanese who always visit our city. I am so honored to be part of this conference, learning a lot of things for the first time, and I hope our vision in the year 2020 to have a nuclear free world will be realized. Thank you all of you.

Mr. Dominique Dehaene, Alderman of Ypres City Council, Belgium

Good morning. My name is Dominique Dehaene. I am replacing our new mayor, Jan Durnez. We had elections last year and a new city council and a new local government came into place but that doesn't in any way change the engagement of the city of Ypres to the Mayors of Peace. Moreover, there is a new but younger generation coming up and we are happy to take the relief and taking over from the continued efforts of our town before. The upcoming period will be very important for Ypres with the remembrance of WWI, 100 years ago. This will give us a window of opportunities to bring in the spotlight to Mayors for Peace movement and the goals we set with this movement. The more we engage of course, the implementation of the 2020 Vision Campaign, mainly by the secretariat who is still in Ypres, which efforts we will gladly continue in the upcoming years. Thank you very much.

Mr. Josep Mayoral i Antigas, Mayor of Granollers, Spain

Good morning. We have a population of 60 thousand. It is in Catalonia, across from Barcelona. We are very honored to be here at this general conference. This conference is quite important for us. Mayors for Peace now has more than 5,700 member cities and this is the most important gathering of mayors and is a very important venue to achieve

peace for the world. Many people, many citizens, strongly with that Mayors for Peace will achieve something quite important. We are going to abolish nuclear weapons, we are going to make peace for the world. Those are our objectives. We hope to make a big step forward. We are faced with very difficult issues like organizational issues. There are new needs that we have to take up and we need to deal with regional issues as well. Therefore, this general conference is quite important for us and this shows that we are coming into a new step and a new stage. We pledge to strengthen our activities.

MC

Mayor of Hiroshima and members of the Mayors for Peace, the Africa, Asia, and Oceania city mayors, Miguel Angel Mancera Espinosa, the Mayor of Mexico City has some greetings.

Ms. Rosa Icela Rodriguez, Secretary of Social Development of Mexico City, Mexico

It is a great honor to be invited to attend the 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace. In this conference, our cities gathered together in order to achieve one common objective, that is peace for the world. In the name of Mexico City, we gladly accept being elected as the vice president and we wish to be the promoter of peace and exert leadership to achieve a city without violence. Unfortunately, in our country, violence is a serious issue because of the social gap and poverty as well as issues of immigration and too-low a level of living standards. In this situation, we would like to work hard toward the 2020 Vision in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and it is achievable. In order to prevent violence in cities and in order to prevent the use of guns, when I became mayor in 2010, we started a new program. With that program, we aim to eliminate violence from homes and guns from homes. We are taking initiatives. We have eliminated 6,800 guns already. Four years ago we started this initiative and the new mayor is going to continue this activity. And the churches and civic organizations are also engaged. It is a great honor to be a part of this wonderful general conference. Thank you very much

Mr. Pol D'Huyvetter, Executive Advisor, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation; Director, International Campaign Secretariat, Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign

Good morning. I am Pol D'Huyvetter, I am originally from Belgium. I worked for many years with Mayors for Peace in Belgium and Europe. But I have been based in Latin America and Brazil for the past four years to develop Mayors for Peace and the vision

of a nuclear weapons free world in that part of the world. We have been successful the past four years to receive support from a city like Mexico City and other leading cities, Latin America has been historically a leader in the world for nuclear disarmament and, like this here. We did for example receive the full support of the heads of state, the three heads of state from the region, towards a high level meeting which will take place in the UN on the 26th of September. Moreover, I should mention as was mentioned by our friends from Mexico City that Latin American mayors are very keen to be part of this organization to support the aims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to never witness this horror again, and we are with you and we will be working hard towards the 2020 Vision Campaign. Thank you very much.

Ms. Jacqueline Cabasso, Executive Advisor, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation; Mayors for Peace North American Coordinator, USA

My name is Jacqi Cabasso and I am an executive advisor to the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and serve as the North American Coordinator for Mayors for Peace. As an American citizen who was born after WWII, I have worked my entire life for the abolition of nuclear weapons and I consider it to be an extreme privilege, honor, and responsibility to actually work directly for the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation to spread the message of the *hibakusha*, that what happened to them is so terrible, it must never be allowed to happen to anyone again. In that spirit, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the loss recently of Senji Yamaguchi, who was a very important leading *hibakusha* in the early days of the *hibakusha* movement. I do have some encouraging news to report from Mayors for Peace in the United States. The US Conference of Mayors, which is the national association of big US cities, recently adopted a very strong and bold Mayors for Peace resolution, calling for US leadership in global elimination of nuclear weapons and redirection of military spending to meet domestic needs. And our US vice president, Donald Plusquellic, was unable to be here today but he is arriving this evening and will be here through the 6th. Thank you very much.

Mr. Aaron Tovish, Executive Advisor, Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation; International Director, International Campaign Secretariat, Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign

My name is Aaron Tovish. I have been working for the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation assigned to the 2020 Vision Campaign as its international director. This is the 10th years of the campaign and in the next session we will review the progress that has been made so far and the plans for the coming few years. It has been a great honor

to be able to be so closely associated with the city and the people of Hiroshima, but it has also been a tremendous honor to be able to speak on behalf of a wider and wider circle of cities. When I first came here, there were about 550 cities in Mayors for Peace. In the 10 years since, we have increased that membership 10 fold. That is quite an accomplishment but it also means that we have a much greater impact out there in the world. I talked with diplomats, I talk with heads of governments, with foreign ministers, and I can see the difference between the access we get and the listening that we get from these people because of the increase in the membership and the solidarity the cities have shown to Hiroshima and Nagasaki and to the cause of the 2020 Vision all over the world. So I thank you very, very much.

Mr. Matsui

The members of the executive cities have assured us of their strong determination for the promotion of an important cause. Thank you very much. Thank you very much for your cooperation for the smooth conduct of the meeting.