The 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace

Press Conference

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Nakabe Hall, Nagasaki University Bunkyo Campus

[Executive Cities of Mayors for Peace]

President:
Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima, Japan

Vice Presidents:
Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki, Japan
Thomas Hermann, Deputy Mayor of Hannover, Germany
Nkenfack, Mayor of Fongo-Tongo, Cameroon
Michel Cibot, Honorary City Manager of Malakoff, France
Eddy Newman, Lord Mayor of Manchester, UK
Jef Verschoore, Deputy Mayor of Ypres, Belgium
Jasmina Bajlo, Counselor of Biograd na Moru, Croatia
Josep Mavoral, Mayor of Granollers, Spain
Khder Kareem, Mayor of Halabja, Iraq

Executive:
Adrian Glamorgan, Mayors for Peace Working Group, Fremantle, Australia
MC
Let’s start the press conference.

Moderator: Mr. Mizuta, Director of the Public Relations Section, Nagasaki City, Japan
We would like to now start the press conference. I am acting as the moderator of this session. My name is Mizuta, Director of the Public Relations Section of Nagasaki City. In this press conference, we have invited the Executive City members who were the participants of the 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace. Press Conference lasts for 45 minutes. First, there will be the presentation and the explanation on the Nagasaki Appeal as well as the Special Resolution Requesting the Early Bringing into Effect of the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons, followed by the impressions by each Executive City representative. The question and answer will follow. First, Mayor Matsui, please give the summary of the 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace.

Mr. Kazumi Matsui, President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor of Hiroshima, Japan
In this very place of Nagasaki, we discussed about creating a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020. For four days in the past, we had thorough discussions together with the members of Mayors for Peace. Through the course of the discussion, various practices and ideas were presented. Also, we renewed our determination for peace at this meeting. Especially on July 7, we have been advocating for a Ban Treaty together with hibakusha, and this was finally adopted. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons totally matches with the 2020 Vision of Mayors for Peace: creating a nuclear-free world. I believe this is going to be a critical step forward. Therefore, as Mayors for Peace, we will try to identify the future challenges that is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. That has to be taken as the consensus of civil society. To the nuclear-weapon nations, they have to negotiate for disarmament in a sincere manner, and not only the United Nations but also to all the governments, we would like to ask them to participate so that we will be able to have the early bringing into effect of the Treaty. We have to create such environment for preparations. I believe this is going to be the challenge for us, Mayors for Peace.

As Mayors for Peace, based on those problems and issues in front of us, our objective is
to create a lasting world peace, which is more and more increasingly important. As to how we should bring ourselves into the future, we have added one more pillar to the pillar of activities. In the past, we have been focusing only on creating a nuclear-free world as the first pillar, but we added the second pillar to create realization of safe and resilient cities. We thus created Mayors for Peace Action Plan (2017-2020).

In order to realize a world without nuclear weapons, the voices of hibakusha should be shared among countries, not only the nuclear-weapon nations, but also their allies. We hope these countries will participate to realize the early entry into effect of the treaty, and it will become more important for us to continue to place requests to each governments to join the treaty together with our member cities and civil societies.

As for the second pillar, we have added one more activities to realize safe and resilient cities. There, of course, are various issues which hamper us to realize peace, but in order to prevent that from happening, it is necessary to create culture of peace. Terrorism and refugees, those are regional problems, but we need to tackle all those problems under the initiative of Lead Cities, and member cities are going to give further support for such activities. Through the course of those activities, SDGs, advocated by the United Nations, in order to realize this development plan, specific activities needs to be supported by Mayors for Peace. I am pretty sure that we will be able to make a progress by the activities we will be advocating.

But in order to secure that progress, we need to cultivate and foster international public opinion. Especially, it is necessary to enlighten and educate young people, the driving force for the future. Young people should be aware and understand what happened in the past, and try to understand and recognize them, and they will be able to look at the future. Thus, peace education is one of the important tasks we need to tackle in our association. In Session III, we had a discussion on the roles of youth. Together with the mayors of the member cities, there were a lot of discussions among the young people. It was quite buoyant and vibrant. It was well-accepted and I think we had a very good outcome. Very specific proposals were given by the young people in order for the local authorities to put them into practice, I think there should be a lot of experiences, good practices and teaching materials exchanged on the website and other means.
In this general conference, what we have reaffirmed is, Mayors for Peace, with its over 7,400 members from 162 countries, I believe this is the strength which can foster and raise international public opinion. We have to make the best use of such strength that we have. Together with our member cities, based on the action plan we paired, we hope we will be able to steadfastly realize our plan.

Now, in realizing the action plan, there were three discussions: roles of cities, roles of youth, and roles of civil society, NGOs and other organizations. Prof. Suzuki, Prof. Nakamura, and Dr. Tomonaga chaired each session. There was a wrap-up of each session just a few minutes ago.

Just to give you a further summery, I believe peace is the common wishes of everybody in the world. If that is the basic condition, in order to realize peace, what we can count on is the driving force of the young people on whose shoulder our future rests. The activities are based on human security for peace. This matches with the concept of realizing a world without nuclear weapons. The roles to be played by Mayors for Peace is to strengthen its connection with like-minded individuals, organizations and governments, and make our upmost efforts with a strong determination to realize everlasting peace without nuclear weapons. I believe that is the summery of this conference. We were able to reaffirm those voices which were quite significant to us. We are wishing that the member cities will continue with their efforts in further activities. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much.

Next, about the Nagasaki Appeal and the Special Resolution Requesting the Early Bringing into Effect of the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons, Mayor Taue, would you like to give us the summary?

**Mr. Tomihisa Taue, Vice President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor of Nagasaki, Japan**

The Nagasaki Appeal and the Special Resolution Requesting the Early Bringing into Effect of the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons is something I would like to cover.
Starting from the Nagasaki Appeal, there are three pillars. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, with the initiatives of Lead Cities to try to solve their regional problems, and also put into practice of peace education and creating culture of peace. This is not only on the initiatives of Mayors for Peace and cities, but I believe those are the common factors of actions we will be taking towards the UN and governments. As for the Ban Treaty, the actions Mayors for Peace will take, is that we would like to appeal for the early bringing into effect of the Treaty. We will deepen our collaboration with hibakusha, civil society, and countries advocating the Treaty, to encourage our respective governments, especially the nuclear-weapon nations and their allies who are under the nuclear umbrella. We will ask the United Nations and all the governments to comply with the NPT, and join the Treaty.

As for the regional issues, in the world, chemical weapons, conflicts, refugees, famine, discrimination, violence, environmental destruction and terrorism, those are the regional problems we come across from day to day. Therefore, as one of the actions of our association, we would like to solve those regional issues by the initiatives of Lead Cities so that we will be able to give further support for the realization of SDG by the United Nations in order to protect the well-beings and happiness of our citizens, we would like to strengthen the regional network while we are working on solving these challenges. To the United Nations and countries, we are asking to call on working further for the sincere efforts to address the global issues.

In order to solve these problems, it is necessary to make efforts to create a culture of peace. Therefore, members of Mayors for Peace, will emphasize on peace education on children and youth, to communicate the importance of peace, and to push actions to implement peace education. By participating in the Mayors for Peace network, each city is able to create an atmosphere where peace should be respected. We will call on the UN and governments to make opportunities for the creation of culture of peace, and to learn, touch upon, and understand the reality of atomic bombings. With those important points, we adopted the action plan from 2017 through 2020. We pledged to make every endeavor to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible day.
Now, about the special resolution, I would like to make a comment on this as well. In this general conference, as you know, that was immediately held after the adoption of the Ban Treaty. And we have adopted the action plan from 2017 to 2020, and this includes the early bringing into effect of the Ban Treaty. Now that we have adopted that, it is necessary to have the voices from the civil society. Therefore, in the 9th General Conference, we have come up with the Special Resolution Requesting the Early Bringing into Effect of the Treaty Prohibiting Nuclear Weapons. I have made such proposal and I got unanimous support. Thus we adopted the special resolution. I believe this is going to be one step further to put the treaty into practice. Including the nuclear-weapon nations, we appeal and call on for them to join the treaty, to bring into effect of the treaty. That’s all. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. We would like to ask each participant to give us their impression. The time limitation is one minute. Mayor of Hiroshima, would you like to start, saying your impression?

**Mr. Kazumi Matsui**

You can pass me. Because of the time, you can pass me.

**Moderator**

Mayor of Fongo-Tongo, would you like to give your impression?

**Mr. Nkenfack, Mayor of Fongo-Tongo, Cameroon**

Thank you very much. At the risk of repeating myself, I have to thank you all again. Thank you very much for your hospitality in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. I would like to express my appreciation. Yesterday, we adopted the appeal. We are very much satisfied with this appeal. When I go back to our city, we shall continue to endeavor further, and increase the membership of Mayors for Peace. We do have the action plan, we shall do the appeal in the university, together with young students. With many countries in Africa, we shall explain what we have adopted as Nagasaki Appeal. We shall make a presentation on the Nagasaki Appeal, and hope the expansion of Mayors for Peace so that we will be able to create peace in the world. We hope that we will be able to create
prosperity. If there is peace, we will be able to see development. We are very much satisfied. Not only for the citizens in Cameroon, but also throughout Africa, these are common issues to all the countries in Africa. Mayors of the cities of Africa, we just hope that they can participate in Mayors for Peace. If that happens, this is going to be a big organization. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. Next, Hannover, please.

**Mr. Thomas Hermann, Deputy Mayor of Hannover, Germany**

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the secretariat and the host city of Nagasaki for managing this conference. We had very good discussions about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and other global aims and global issues. I was deeply impressed by the two Peace Ceremonies, first in our sister city Hiroshima, and then in Nagasaki yesterday. Those were the ceremonies with a high level of dignity, and I was also impressed by the speech of hibakusha. When I go back to Germany, to Hannover in Europe, with the energy to realize the aims of new action plan, which is very good and the goal is specified. It will be the challenges we have in the next few years. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. Next, Halabja City, please.

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

Thank you very much for the secretariat and the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima for organizing this conference again. We are always on the conference, talking about atomic bombs, but especially the Middle East, in the region of Syria and Kurdistan, chemical bombs are still being used. There are mass destructions, and they are killings, especially children and women are affected with these things. Time is limited, so I don’t want to take so long time. I hope that we will succeed, and this conference was a success. And I would like to invite you for the anniversary of Halabja, to hold the Executive Committee Conference in Halabja in 2019. Thank you very much.
Moderator
Thank you very much. Granollers, please.

Ms. Carme Barbany, City of Granollers, Spain
Good afternoon. Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. There are four representatives from Spain. One is representing Barcelona, and another is representing the federation. I would like to express my deepest thanks to you all. We had wonderful welcome, and this has been wonderfully operated conference. I would like to express my thanks to all of you who have supported this conference. I attended the Peace Ceremony both in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and I was very much impressed, especially by the speeches given by hibakusha and activities conducted in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I was deeply impressed. The advancement of the activities was quite satisfactory for us, so together with you, we have been working, and that is a great honor and I’m very happy that we will keep on working with you. Lead City, or other federation of the cities of Spain, we would like to make efforts to invite new members to this organization. And also, we need to strengthen our ties. We hope to promote collaboration with other organizations. Lastly, for the implementation toward SDGs, I think we need to collaborate. In Spain, member cities of Spain are going to work hard in order to implement the action plan. Thank you very much.

Moderator
Thank you very much. Biograd na Moru, please.

Ms. Jasminka Bajlo, Counselor of Biograd na Moru, Croatia
The special thanks to Mayor Taue, for the excellent organization of all these events, and on this 9th General Conference, this is the third general conference that Biograd has participated in. In my opinion, among these three, this is the best one. Why is it the best one? I have to also say my congratulations to the staff of Mayors for Peace and to the Secretary General and to his staff for a magnificent, I must say, action plan. What really left to the best, I can say, the best experience here was the experience with the youth. Maybe it’s because years ago I used to work with children, and I worked with elementary school children, high school and university, I used to teach. This brought me back to the early stage, especially yesterday working on that session with youth. This is
something we have to emphasize that peace education must go through the young. The youth is our future. It just filled my heart to see these young people so enthusiastic, it’s unbelievable how enthusiastic they are. And the first impression I got this enthusiasm is three years ago when I was accompanying Mayor Matsui and delegation in New York. When we visited the high school in New York with high school students from Hiroshima to the high school in New York, and the enthusiasm of the high school students from Hiroshima showed. All the happenings, atomic bombings, has left a special impression. So now it’s been connected with yesterday, working with those young children. And my congratulations. You Japanese have beautiful youth and you must be very proud of your children. I hope that they will be an example to the others. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**
Thank you very much. Malakoff, please.

**Mr. Michel Cibot, Honorary City Manager of Malakoff, France**
Thank you very much. I would like to repeat the appreciations expressed by other fellow mayors. I would like to express my thanks to the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the secretariat. This is my ninth time to attend the general conference. Because I witnessed changes, I’m very happy. I have no regret. All the things that took place in the past are complimenting each other. In this conference, violence in Africa or in the US or in other regions, we have discussed the issue of violence. According to the action plan, we have decided to do something about understanding how violence is related to other issues. And we need to think about how nuclear weapons, the biggest level of violence, can affect us. Our country is a nuclear-weapon state. Therefore in France, actually, it’s not so easy to expand the network of Mayors for Peace, but we have many tools available. So we are going to have discussions, hoping that France, in the future, will join the Ban Treaty, supported by 122 countries just recently.

**Moderator**
Thank you very much. Next, Manchester, please

**Mr. Eddy Newman, Lord Mayor of Manchester, UK**
Thank you very much. I won’t repeat the thanks to mayors and the secretariat and everything. I made my speech just a few minutes ago, but please take that as said. As the City of Manchester that’s been hit recently by terrorism, I was pleased that we have agreed, as Mayors for Peace, in our action plan to have the secondary aim of “safe and resilient cities” that will deal with issues like terrorism as well as many other issues that affect the balance on the well-being of people of our cities. But clearly, the primary aim of Mayors for Peace is to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world and the lasting world peace. And I think that the experiences of, I’ve come to Japan for the first time this week, I’ve had a long history of, in my own country and in my city, working for peace and against nuclear weapons, but it’s something different to come to Hiroshima and Nagasaki where the people suffered in a terrible way. The consequences of the atomic bomb attacks. We listening to hibakusha, brings home even in more detail, not numbers of the people that were killed and affected terribly in this way. These two cities are also the actual facts on people’s lives and the loss of their family members, the illness is caused by radiation and so forth, and that gets through to us in a very strong way, and the brave hibakusha who obviously are now advanced age, but still, realize the importance of explaining the stories what happened to them and their families and their community, and that made a huge impression, as did the two ceremonies. I just finish by saying that we know that nuclear weapons can destroy the world and destroy humanity. There are so many nuclear weapons now, they are so much more powerful. Terrible weapons that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we just have to do everything possible to work between our cities and in our communities to organize campaign and pressure our governments and international community to get rid of nuclear weapons once and for all. That is the way to save humanity and to have a bright future for the children that we saw earlier and that we heard from yesterday. Thank you.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. Ypres, please.

**Mr. Jeff Velshore, Deputy Mayor of Ypres, Belgium**

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My native language is Dutch, but I’m afraid there is no interpreter of Dutch, so I will do it in English. First of all, I will subscribe what has been already said by the colleagues here on the table, concerning the thanks to
the organization and to the hospitality we have received here in this beautiful city. Also, I was very impressed by the very respectful and beautiful ceremonies in Hiroshima and in Nagasaki, and by the speeches of hibakusha. I was also impressed by the speeches of the President and the Vice President, mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the speeches they had on both ceremonies. Yesterday we heard the local mayor sending out a message to the government and there was also the prime minister. We had a very beautiful concert. We are the city of peace in Belgium. We suffered a lot also in the First World War. I think, if I may use the expression, that we have got a lot of ammunition to work even harder for being a beacon of peace in our country and in our region. We already have a peace office, we even have a peace prize, but not so known as the Nobel Peace Prize. I think we heard a lot of ideas to go further. I wish to thank also the colleagues in the Executive Committee for all the good reflections they have brought us during these four days in this 9th General Conference. It’s the first visit to Japan for me also, and I must say in this five days here, I only met with very friendly, very positive and very enthusiastic people. I think I’m falling in love with this country. Thank you very much.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. Now Fremantle, please

**Mr. Adrian Glamorgan, Mayors for Peace Working Group, Fremantle, Australia**

Thank you very much for your beautiful hosting of a sensitive ceremony here in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. At the basis of everything that you do, is love and concern for the hibakusha, and an eye to the future of humanity. It’s a big weight that you carry. But you carry it with great dignity and you signal to the world that nothing could be more pressing than removing weapons of mass destruction at the earliest. And with that in mind, I commend all that has been done at this conference to remind the world of its obligation to current generations, to future generations, but also, out of respect for the hibakusha who have suffered and who live now with the hope to perform their duty and rid the world of nuclear weapons. I say from Fremantle, which is long way away from the rest of the world, but no one is safe from nuclear weapons or its consequences, and that we must swiftly act. But I would also say that in meeting Mayors for Peace here, each one of them has a history that has dealt with violence in their own community,
violence harm or hurt, and together that community has taught itself and worked with each other to create peace within the community. These mayors, I commend to you. They are practical, realistic people who showed that there are practical measures to build peace and change in an attitude of mind. So I’ll leave Nagasaki with great hope and energy, and hope that you will enquire of each of these cities, discover their own history, and their own transformation of conflict into a world of hope. Thank you.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much. Now I’d like to open the press for your questions. When you raise your question, please state your company’s name and to whom you would like to address your question. Already we are past the time, and actually, the mayors and representatives have to move, so I would like to take questions or comments from two companies. Please raise your hand.

**Question 1:**

**Mr. Yamaguchi, The Nagasaki Shimbun**

Nagasaki Shimbun newspaper, my name is Yamaguchi. About the action plan, I have two questions. One is to President Matsui. About the action plan, this was adopted and you have the second pillar, “realization of safe and resilient cities,” and adding this pillar is leading to the “realization of a world without nuclear weapons,” the first pillar. Could you once again explain the connection between the two pillars?

**Mr. Kazumi Matsui**

Thank you very much. Eradication of nuclear weapons, yes, that is the primary and direct goal, but that leads to our ultimate goal of realizing a lasting world peace where people have to be assured of their safety and well-being. As of today, Hiroshima and Nagasaki’s efforts toward nuclear weapons eradication have been supported by all of those member cities of our organization. And we have been able to see the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Of course, we have to increase the number of those states which join the treaty. That’s the challenge. On the other hand, each city has its own regional issues. In trying to realize a lasting world peace, regional issues have to be tackled with in parallel with efforts for nuclear weapon abolition’s realization. And tackling these pillars together, we believe we are able to energize us
toward the achievement of the ultimate goal of lasting world peace. As we have continued our discussion in the past conferences, we had been discussing nuclear weapons eradication, but at the same time, we need to actually work on the regional issues, safe and resilient cities, and that has been the opinion expressed so far, and that is why we adopted the second pillar.

**Question 2:**

**Mr. Yamaguchi**
In relation to that question, I have a question to Mr. Michel Cibot. For many years, you have been participating in the general conference of Mayors for Peace, and besides the nuclear weapons abolition, how to do with other regional issues, I understand, has been discussed within the general conferences. But today, now, the second pillar was added to action plan. What do you think is the reason why this second pillar is now added?

**Mr. Michel Cibot**
Well, perhaps the process was systematic, without any problems or challenges. The themes we had dealt with have changed to some extent over the years. We, for instance, have adopted more advanced themes that are ahead of the rest of the world. By being perseverant, we will be able to get the consensus of many others. For instance, I have a friend from Italy, here in this hall, and when the time passes, as we see from the incident of Galileo, when the time passes, we know what is true. Of course I am old enough to know all of those things. French cities have worked hard over the years. Many cities have worked as members of Mayors for Peace, and also they have worked upon in collaboration of their citizens, and that is why we are able to convince ourselves that we can put this second pillar, and we believe that the second pillar will invite many other like-minded cities and colleagues.

**Moderator**
Any other questions or comments? Please.

**Question 3:**

**Mr. Okada, The Asahi Shimbun**
Asahi Shimbun newspaper, my name is Okada. My question is related to the previous question. Terrorism, poverty and refugee crises are added as a new pillar in your action plan. I think that is what was decided in the next action plan. All of you come from different cities and different countries, and some have already touched upon this point, but in your cities or in your regions, what challenges are you faced with? Especially among the second new pillar, what kind of regional or city issues are you faced with? And how would you like to solve these issues? If possible, I would like to ask each one of you, but if there is anyone who would like to answer this question, please. Should I mention to whom I would like to address this question? Well then, who should I pick up? I don’t have a particular preference. Mayor of Fongo-Tongo, there was a reference to the social economic development, so including that, could you respond to my question?

Mr. Nkenfack

Africa is a vast continent. I am from Cameroon. It’s one part of one region in a big continent of Africa, but Africa is such a big continent, consisting by sub-regions, but we have a problem of terrorism, Boko Haram, the terrorist group. They are killing people in many countries. This is not a formal, declared war, but an informal terrorist activity. We have accumulated various experiences so far, and we have seen a lot here in Japan, and we would like to link such experiences as a ray of hope and when we return our country, we would like to continue to work, by holding seminars and meetings, especially to the young people, this is what I would like to work upon. Adults understand the evil of terrorist groups, but that is not the case for the young people. They do not really understand the evil nature of terrorist groups. They might be misled and they might be recruited to a terrorist group, so we need to educate them so that they will not be misled or deceived. In Cameroon, giving drugs or narcotics to young people, and giving them ammunition and weapons for fighting, and they come to places like such a convention place and they conduct a suicidal bombing. So we need to educate them so that they will not die or kill themselves without a cause. What was satisfactory to me in this conference is that there were so many young people, students, in this conference. They are engaged in the process of peace, understanding peace. This will spread peace in the world. I would like to use this experience. In Africa, by holding seminars in Africa, and
if necessary, please invite me to such a seminar in Africa, and please share your experiences with the young people in Africa.

I am so thankful to all of you, and thank you very much for giving me this chance again to take the floor. Peace can’t be bought with any money, and development can be achieved only when the peace prevails. So, your work toward peace, I think, can be spread to the rest of the world. Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and what happened in those two cities should never be repeated. Today, terrorists are using all kinds of weapons, and which are not necessary. We hope to see peace in the world. Irrespective of the colors of skins, we are all brothers and sisters, and we need to reconfirm this fact. Thank you.

**Moderator**

Thank you very much for your response. Unfortunately, the time is very limited. Mayor Matsui has to attend to another business and he has to return to Hiroshima. So he is going to be excused. Other executives, they can answer your questions if there are further questions. Any further questions from the press? There seems to be none, so I call this is the end of the press conference. Thank you very much.