

The Hiroshima Appeal

We, representatives of 5,712 cities from 157 countries/regions around the world, have met at the 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace held in Hiroshima and engaged in extensive discussions on the theme ‘Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons—Conveying the “Spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki” to the World.’

In August 1945, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were reduced to ruins, in both cases by a single atomic bomb, and more than 210,000 people from the two cities lost their precious lives. The suffering of the atomic bomb survivors—known as *hibakusha*—from the blast, heat and radiation continues to this day, 68 years later. Having lived through an experience too cruel to be put into words, the atomic bomb survivors have continued to appeal for nuclear abolition and to extend their desire for peace to the people of the world. Their dedication stems from their deep humanitarian conviction that “no one should ever again suffer as we have.”

Mayors for Peace, which feels a strong sense of responsibility to guarantee the safety and welfare of citizens everywhere, empathizes profoundly with the spirit of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in striving for nuclear abolition and peace, and is intensifying its activities to promote the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

“Hiroshima” and “Nagasaki” are names that are now well known throughout the world. However, those states that possess nuclear weapons have turned a deaf ear to the earnest appeals of the *hibakusha*, and during the Cold War they engaged in a nuclear arms race that eventually increased their number to the current total of nine. While there has been some reduction in the number of nuclear weapons, this has been too slow and inadequate. Today, almost a quarter of a century since the Cold War ended, an estimated 17,300 nuclear weapons continue to pose an intolerable threat to humanity and the environment. With about 2,000 nuclear weapons on high alert, the threatened use of nuclear weapons, euphemistically called “deterrence,” and the unspeakable horror it implies, is still the mainstay of the international security regime. Furthermore, nuclear proliferation remains a current and dangerous threat, and we cannot deny the possibility that a sub-national terrorist group might obtain nuclear weapons.

And yet, in a time of unprecedented global economic crisis, fantastically expensive programs to use new tests to modernize nuclear weapons systems are underway in all of the states that possess nuclear arms, with no end in sight, misappropriating resources that are badly needed to fund basic human needs.

The need to achieve a world without nuclear weapons that will be sustainable over the

long term compels us to build a new society in which mutual distrust and threats are replaced by a shared sense of community, rooted in an awareness that we all belong to the same human family. In such a society, diversity will be treasured and disputes will be resolved through peaceful means. The road to this goal may be long and difficult, but it is certainly achievable, and we must proceed with determination. At the same time, while on this path, it is absolutely necessary to prevent the criminal act of another use of nuclear weapons, which would result in unfathomable disaster to humanity and the environment. To this end, concrete policies, frameworks and confidence-building measures to promote international and regional peace and security must be put in place — in particular, in regions such as the Middle East, North East Asia and South Asia, where nuclear tensions are on the rise.

Facing the continuing threat posed by nuclear weapons, we need to redouble our efforts to bring all states to the table to commence negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible date. This is the main goal of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign to ban nuclear weapons.

While we acknowledge the many complementary efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, we, Mayors for Peace, place our priority at this stage on promoting a nuclear weapons convention or other effective means of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons. In this context, we welcome several promising new developments that are highlighting the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and accelerating the momentum toward their becoming outlawed. The Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference referred for the first time to the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and a nuclear weapons convention. In March this year, Norway hosted a ground-breaking conference in Oslo on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, with 127 governments in attendance. A follow-on conference, hosted by Mexico, is scheduled for February 2014. In May, a new United Nations working group open to all member states began meeting in Geneva “to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.” And the first ever UN High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament will take place on September 26 in New York.

Mayors for Peace calls on all states, including those that possess nuclear weapons, to participate constructively and in good faith in the new UN working group, the UN High-Level Nuclear Disarmament Meeting, and the Mexico conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, as well as in preparations for the 2015 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Along with this immediate campaign, we will also expand our activities to advance the

longer-term goal of cultivating the sense of global community as one human family that will ultimately be the basis for lasting world peace.

In order for Mayors for Peace to carry out this ambitious agenda, further expansion of our membership and the development of proactive and independent activities at the regional level are necessary. Further, we need to convince people around the world to actively support the heartfelt desire of the atomic bomb survivors for peace. To raise global awareness as widely as possible about the harsh reality of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, especially among future generations, we must strengthen our relationships with the United Nations, parliamentarians, associations of local authorities, the International Committee of the Red Cross, international peace organizations, other organizations working for peace, human rights, and protection of the environment, and prominent figures in culture, the arts, and sports. Our collaborative activities can help to mobilize widespread international public opinion for peace.

By expanding the number of our member cities and deepening the involvement of existing members, and through increased networking with diverse organizations, we will overcome the barriers of mutual distrust based on nationality, race, or religion, and create a security system rooted in a sense of global community as members of the same human family.

In light of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the gas attacks on Halabja and the upcoming commemoration of the centennial anniversary in 2015 of the first use of a weapon of mass destruction on Ypres, Mayors for Peace will use these tragic examples of the use of other weapons of mass destruction to further our goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Mayors for Peace has been a humanitarian organization since its founding in 1982 by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Cities join first and foremost out of human solidarity with the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, especially the survivors of 1945. Membership has grown to 5,712 member cities in 157 countries/regions, and we now represent more than 1 billion people. We shall further enhance our capacity to serve member cities and support their activities, and call upon others to join our efforts to further nuclear abolition and peace. Finally, whatever the source of radiation may be, we must do everything we can to prevent any more *hibakusha* anywhere.

Mayors for Peace calls on the United Nations and all governments to take the following measures:

1. To make sure that policy makers and officials from governments and international agencies responsible for nuclear disarmament visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to

deepen their understanding of the indescribable human tragedy of the atomic bombings, and disseminate the earnest wish of the atomic bomb survivors for the abolition of nuclear weapons

2. To establish policies and frameworks for confidence-building measures among nations to make sure that nuclear weapons will never be used again

3. To aim for the early implementation of a nuclear weapons convention, or other effective means of establishing a nuclear-weapons-free world, and to start concrete negotiations towards its conclusion

4. To actively work on replacing the current security system of nuclear deterrence, which attempts to maintain peace through the threatened use of nuclear weapons, with one rooted in a shared sense of community as fellow members of one human family, taking into account experiences gained by regional communities such as the EU, ASEAN, and CELAC.

Addressing the above points, at its 8th General Conference, Mayors for Peace adopted a dynamic *Action Plan* for the period from 2013 to 2017. We hereby pledge to make every endeavor to achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

August 5, 2013

The 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace
Hiroshima