



Mayors for Peace

Secretariat

C/O Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, 1-5 Nakajima-cho, Naka-ku, Hiroshima 730-0811 Japan
Phone: +81-82-242-7821 Fax: +81-82-242-7452 E-mail: mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp
URL: <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/index.html>

Message to Member Cities from the President of Mayors for Peace

~ Let us call on national governments to advance
negotiations for a nuclear weapons prohibition treaty~

The First Committee of the UN General Assembly has recently adopted a resolution by a large majority vote to convene negotiations in 2017 on a “legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons”. The General Assembly is expected to adopt the resolution at its plenary session in December and start negotiations in March and June 2017. The atomic bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (*hibakusha*), who have long been appealing for a world without nuclear weapons, wholeheartedly welcome the decision and hope that this will mark a significant new turning point bringing the world closer to achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

While the resolution was supported by 123 countries, most of them non-nuclear-armed states, the nuclear-armed states and those under their “nuclear umbrellas” either opposed or abstained on the decision. It is disappointing that there is a serious rift among nations on this historic initiative. We are fully aware of the reservation expressed by the opposing states on the basis of security concerns. Nonetheless, they must realize that the doctrine of nuclear deterrence offers no solution to the global challenges we face today, including security concerns. It is the most important task for the whole international community to seek a new global security paradigm that promotes mutual understanding, instead of the defunct concept of nuclear deterrence based on mutual distrust. In this context, we commend President Obama for his insight in declaring during his recent visit to Hiroshima: “[A]mong those nations like my own that hold nuclear stockpiles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them”.

We ask all policymakers of the world, especially those in nuclear-armed states, to recall that past nuclear disarmament measures were taken during peaks of international tension by joint initiatives of political leaders. For example, Presidents Kennedy and Khrushchev signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, soon after the Cuban missile crisis. Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev signed a bilateral treaty in 1987 to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Now is the time for world leaders to show their decisive leadership. Let us also remind ourselves that the united voices of wide ranging civil society members have always been the driving force behind past progress in nuclear disarmament.

We strongly believe that, to realize global nuclear disarmament at the earliest possible date, it is crucial for all UN Member States—especially those possessing nuclear weapons and their umbrella states—to participate in the negotiating conference next year and to start engaging in constructive deliberations. As a nonpartisan organization working to realize the earnest wishes of the *hibakusha* for nuclear abolition, Mayors for Peace has a vital role to play in encouraging the states dependent on nuclear deterrence to change their policies, through providing advice and effective campaigning. For these reasons, we ask all member cities, and especially those of you in the states whose national leaders cling to nuclear deterrence for current security reasons, to urge your policymakers to actively participate in the conference and to accelerate negotiations for nuclear disarmament. To make our campaigning more effective, we hope to share ideas and successful cases among member cities and would like to ask for your cooperation in this regard.

We hope and expect government representatives to demonstrate decisive leadership at next year's negotiations, which we believe will bring us closer to achieving a world without nuclear weapons. We ask all members of Mayors for Peace to join in our efforts in advancing our cause.

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MATSUI Kazumi
Mayor of Hiroshima
President of Mayors for Peace