

Mayors for Peace News Flash (March 2013) No.39

Dear member cities and supporters of Mayors for Peace,

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Please find below recent news related to our activities.

If your city has any news it wishes to share with others, please feel free to contact us!

Mayors for Peace member cities as of March 1, 2013

5,551 cities in 156 countries/regions with 15 new members

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■International Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear weapons held in Oslo, Norway

The Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs hosted the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo on March 4-5, 2013, which was attended by 127 countries. The five permanent members of the UN Security Council, the P5 (China, France, Russia, UK and US) were absent. Mayor Thore Vestby of the city of Frogn, Norway, an Executive member of Mayors for Peace represented officially our network of 5,551 local governments.

Before the Conference, the Civil Society Humanitarian Summit organized by ICAN was held on March 2-3, attended by more than 400 participants from more than 70 countries. Mayors for Peace delegates also participated in this summit to discuss common strategies and promote cooperation with the 2020 Vision Campaign and Mayors for Peace membership expansion.

At the Conference beginning from March 4, under such titles as ‘Immediate humanitarian impact of a nuclear weapon detonation,’ ‘Wider impact and long-term consequences’ and ‘Humanitarian preparedness and response,’ presentations and discussions were developed and the conference was concluded on March 5 by the chair’s summary stating that ‘It is unlikely that any state or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation in an adequate manner and provide sufficient assistance to those affected.’

The chair welcomed the offer from Mexico to host a follow-up meeting to this conference (the date to be determined).

▼Text of the Chair’s Summary:

http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/aktuelt/taler_artikler/eide_taler/2013/nuclear_summary.html?id=716343

▼Related information (2020 Vision Campaign website):

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/home/artikel/7c98e3b45c2af59d86da04a27a24b67d/historic-oslo-conference.html> (Oslo Conference)

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/home/artikel/55464e4bb66c18bfcfb29c160f91eda2/ican-conference-for-a-ban-on-nuclear.html> (ICAN Conference)

■Mayors for Peace stands with Halabja in commemoration of 25th anniversary of gas attack

This March, it has been 25 years since the horrible chemical gas attack on Halabja, Kurdistan, Iraq. Mayor Khder Kareem of the city of Halabja commemorated the event on March 16 with the families of all 5,000 victims. The Halabja gas attack on March 16, 1988 has been the largest use of weapons of mass destruction since the Atomic bombing in Nagasaki. President Kazumi Matsui of Mayors for Peace had sent a message to the Mayor of Halabja, a Vice President of Mayors for Peace, for the important commemoration of the city. On the occasion of the commemoration, it was delivered by Mayor Thore Vestby of the city of Frog, Norway and Ms. Jasminka Bajlo, Foreign affairs counselor to the Mayor of Biograd na Moru, Croatia on behalf of Mayors for Peace.

■ **Protest against a new type of nuclear test conducted by the US**

It was announced that the United States conducted a new type of nuclear test twice between October and December last year. Mayors for Peace sent out the Letter of Protest to the government of the US to protest against the test on March 12.

▼ Text of Letter of Protest:

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/activities/statement/protest/130312_en.pdf

■ **Invitation to Mayors for Peace 8th General Conference in Hiroshima 2013**

The 8th General Conference of Mayors for Peace will focus on future directions, including measures to strengthen our organization as well as the next phase of the 2020 Vision Campaign aiming for the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.

As a lot of cities across the world have already expressed their intention to participate, we would like as many cities as possible to consider their attendance in this General Conference along with their sister cities. Please take advantage of your city's friendship network to invite non-members to join Mayors for Peace and to attend the General Conference. We are soon sending the programs for the conference and starting to accept registration of the conference as well as accommodation reservations. We appreciate your kind support for the successful organization of the General Conference.

Term: August 3-6, 2013

Venue: International Conference Center Hiroshima

Registration: available from early April

■ **Four Mayors for Peace in the Netherlands contribute Op-Ed against the stationing nuclear weapons**

The mayors of four Dutch cities such as Wassenaar, Capelle aan den IJssel, Bunnik and Groningen, wrote an Op-Ed piece ahead of the Oslo Conference to support the end of the stationing of US nuclear weapons in the Netherlands. The article appeared in a leading Dutch newspaper, the NRC Handelsblad.

▼ Full article (2020 Vision Campaign website):

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/home/artikel/c1f01601284efbc4b0315caaabb06792/op-ed-piece-by-dutch-mayors.html>

■ **Cochin (India) becomes the first Associate City for the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign in South Asia**

One of the UN Representatives of the 2020 Vision Campaign, Meryll George, during a visit to India met with the Mayor of Cochin, Mr. Tony Chammany, and presented the proposal of Cochin becoming an Associate City for the 2020 Vision Campaign. Cochin accepted it with great pleasure and enthusiasm shouldering the responsibilities associated with Associate Cities focusing on a membership drive as well as financial contributions. Mr. Thomas Mathew, Chairman of the International Association of Religious Freedom (IARF) South Asian Coordinating Council played an important role in the initiative. We look forward to expanding Mayors for Peace initiatives and activities in South Asia

through this encouraging first step.

■UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace hold its working group meeting in London

The UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Working Group held its latest meeting on February 18 in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

A good attendance of member authorities and NGOs working on the nuclear weapons issue took part in the discussion. The meeting had a full and open discussion on the proposed structural and financial changes to Mayors for Peace and these comments have been directly fed in to the Mayors for Peace Secretariat.

The meeting also considered ways to increase the profile of Mayors for Peace in the UK and Ireland, where most Mayors are of a ceremonial rather than an executive nature. The meeting agreed that the Working Group Secretary should liaise with the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Secretariat to develop a questionnaire to ask its members how to develop into an active and dynamic local chapter of the organization. £1000 was raised in voluntary donations in 2012/13, a good start that will hopefully increase as the profile of Mayors for Peace grows.

For further details on Mayors for Peace in the UK and Ireland please contact its Secretary, Manchester City Council officer Sean Morris on 00 44 (0)161 234 3244.

■Announcement of joint seminar on nuclear weapons non-proliferation in Edinburgh, UK

A joint seminar on the subject of nuclear weapons non-proliferation and the challenge to build a coalition to push for reductions and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons around the world will be held in Edinburgh, UK on April 19.

It has been organized by the Nuclear Free Local Authorities Scotland Forum and Steering Committee in association with Abolition 2000, the Parliamentarians for Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament (PNND) and the UK Mayors for Peace. It coincides with the Abolition 2000 International AGM which takes place in Edinburgh, Scotland on April 16 - 18.

The seminar will take place in Edinburgh City Chambers on the morning of Friday, April 19. Confirmed speakers include Tadatashi Akiba, the former Mayor of Hiroshima and now Chair of the Middle Powers Initiative; Matt Robson, a former New Zealand Government Disarmament Minister and PNND's SE Asia Co-ordinator; Bill Kidd MSP, Co Chair of the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Nuclear Weapons and a PNND Board Member; and Karipek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the Kazakhstan ATOM Project, a 2nd generation victim of the Soviet nuclear test programme and a visual artist.

The purpose of the seminar will be to consider why 2013 is a pivotal year in the discussion over nuclear weapons and the importance of building a strong coalition of support to campaign for a nuclear weapons free world. Admission for the seminar is free and registration details can be found on the NFLA website below:

http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/events/NFLA_Scotland_Joint_NWseminar_April_flyer.pdf

■Delegates from Goyang, South Korea visit the Secretariat of Mayors for Peace

Delegates from Goyang, South Korea, visited the Secretariat of Mayors for Peace on February 18.

The city of Goyang declared itself a 'City of Peace' this year and visited Hiroshima to study its history of an International City of Peace and Culture. Goyang joined Mayors for Peace in March, 2012 and will hold Goyang International Flower Exhibition 2013 in May this year.

Mayors for Peace Secretariat asked them to attend the 8th General Conference in August and to cooperate with South Korean membership expansion.

■Financial contributions from member cities to the 2020 Vision Campaign - Update for February 2013 [Ypres, Belgium]

The 2020 Vision Campaign received donations from 9 cities in 6 countries during the month of February coming to a total of 2,545.00 Euros.

We would like to extend our gratitude to those member cities for their generosity in supporting our efforts to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world by 2020.

▼ Full article (2020 Vision Campaign website):

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/home/artikel/63d3c58df346ddf089e6a51de9f50a7f/contribution-update-Februa>

[ry.html](#)

▼ List of cities that made contributions in February:

http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/fileadmin/user_upload/2020VC/Home/February_2013.pdf

▼ How to make contributions:

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/members/contribute-to-mayors-for-peace.html>

■ Poster exhibit commemorates 5,000-city milestone

To commemorate the 5,000-city milestone, please hold a poster exhibit in your municipality.

By holding these exhibits in as many cities as possible, we hope to directly inform millions of citizens regarding the impact of nuclear war, including the fact that even a limited war would cause catastrophic climate change resulting in global famine, and the role city leaders strive to play. We have heard from more than 250 cities around the world, such as Vienna, Austria; London, UK; Volgograd, Russia; Kabul, Afghanistan, that they held the poster exhibition responding to our request. Please do hold an exhibition and bring this issue to the attention of people in your city.

The posters are available in Spanish, Catalan, English, French, German, Russian and Japanese. You can download them from the Mayors for Peace website. We are also preparing an Arabic version. For detailed information, please refer to the instructions for downloading the posters in "The Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki -The 5,000-Member Milestone Exhibition,-" a document forwarded to our member cities. We would appreciate it if you could let us know when you hold the poster exhibition and submit the report after the exhibition to the Secretariat. The report format is provided at the Mayors for Peace website below.

>>Posters: A2 size (approximately 24 by 36 inches); 19 posters.

>>This poster exhibit was created based on a mandate from the 8th Executive Conference held in Granollers, Spain in November 2011 and Japanese member cities' Conference in January 2012.

▼ Related Information:

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/campaign/projects/poster/index.html>

■ Please support the petition drive for a nuclear weapons convention

The next step in abolishing all nuclear weapons by 2020 is to negotiate a nuclear weapons convention.

A nuclear weapons convention will prohibit the acquisition, development, possession, deployment and use of nuclear weapons and all related activities.

At our Executive Conference in Granollers, Spain in November 2011 and the first Japanese Member City Meeting in Nagasaki in January 2012, we agreed to promote a global grassroots petition drive through which all member cities can call for an immediate start to negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention.

Thanks to a lot of supporters across the world, we received 629,391 signatures as of March 1, 2013.

Let's gather millions of signatures and make our voices heard. (The petition is available for printing or online at the links below.)

▼ Petition form (PDF):

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/data/pdf/petitionform_en.pdf.

▼ Online petition:

<https://www.ssl-hiroins.city.hiroshima.jp/pcf/en/form.htm>.

■ Visitors to the President of Mayors for Peace last month

President Kazumi Matsui of Mayors for Peace welcomed the visitors as follows in February and asked them to support for the activities of Mayors for Peace and cooperate with the membership expansion.

February 5 *Mr. Abang Wahap, Mayor of Kuching North City, Malaysia

February 20 *Mr. Dambadarjaa Batjargal, Consular General of Mongolia in Osaka

■ Mayors for Peace member cities – 5,551 cities in 156 countries/regions

Thanks to your invaluable support, on March 1, we added 15 new member cities, bringing total membership to 5,551. As a result of cooperation from the Union of Russian Cities which President Matsui asked to help with Russian membership expansion during his visit to Volgograd last September, five cities joined from Russia. We welcome further initiatives to promote membership and can provide support from Hiroshima as needed. Please invite your fellow mayors to join.

▼ Related information (PDF):

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/data/pdf/2013/newmembers1303_en.pdf

If you have any comments, questions, or would like to unsubscribe or change your contact information, please contact us at:

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