



Inter-city Solidarity Newsletter

World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity

March 15, 1999 / No.11

The Hague Appeal for Peace Conference

May 11-15, 1999

Join the May 14 Workshop

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first international peace conference held in The Hague, the Netherlands in 1899, the "Hague Appeal for Peace" campaign is currently underway by an initiative of civic organizations around the world. The central project of this campaign is to hold a civil society conference in The Hague under the theme "Time to Abolish War | Peace is a Human Right."

Aiming at delegitimizing armed conflicts and creating a culture of peace for the 21st century, the four strands of the campaign are as follows: (1) **to strengthen international humanitarian and human rights laws and institutions;** (2) **to advance the prevention, peaceful resolution, and transformation of violent conflict;** (3) **to develop and link disarmament efforts, including nuclear abolition;** (4) **to identify the root causes of war, and develop a culture of peace.**

The plan calls for lectures by Nobel Peace Prize laureates including Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other eminent international peace activists at the opening ceremony on May 12. The conference will break down into various workshops and seminars that will probe the four strands listed above. On the final day (the 15th), the conference is expected to adopt the "Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice."

As was already informed by the letter of November 1998, on the afternoon of Friday May 14, the Mayors Conference will hold a workshop "The Roles of Municipalities in the

Struggle for Peace and Human Rights" in conjunction with the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities. There will be opportunities to form collaborations not only with representatives of local governments from around the world but also with international NGOs. We look forward to your city's participation.

For details of the workshop, contact the Secretariat. Regarding participation in the conference as a whole, please refer to the Conference Registration Packet or contact The Registration Secretariat for "Hague Appeal for Peace"; P.O.Box.1558, 6501 BN Nijmegen, The Netherlands
Tel: 31-24-323-4471; Fax: 31-24-360-1159
E-mail: hap99@congres.net
<http://www.haguepeace.org/index.html>



Time to Abolish War | Peace is a Human Right

The Hague,
The Netherlands

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Mayors Conference Protests against Subcritical Nuclear Tests Conducted by the United States and Russia

The United States conducted its sixth subcritical nuclear test on February 9, following a fifth test on December 11, 1998. Russia also revealed on December 24 that it had carried out five subcritical nuclear tests between September 14 and December 13, 1998.

The Mayors Conference considers that these acts contravene the growing wave of international support for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Letters of protest were sent to both countries under the joint signature of the mayors of the nine Executive Cities as shown below.

Letter of Protest to the United States

February 10, 1999

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The President of the United States of America

On February 9, the United States conducted a sixth subcritical nuclear test. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has recently begun negotiations toward a ban on the production of weapons-grade fissile material (Cut-Off Treaty). In this and many other ways the international community is obviously working to steady the nuclear non-proliferation regime that was badly shaken by the nuclear tests conducted last year by India and Pakistan. In conducting subcritical tests now, you have willfully betrayed these efforts by the international community, utterly discounting the overwhelming majority that favor the abolition of nuclear weapons. We deeply regret your action and, on behalf of the 464 cities in 100 countries and regions that are members of the World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity, we strongly protest.

You insist that subcritical testing does not violate the CTBT, but you are clearly violating the spirit of that treaty. We are gravely concerned that your repeated testing and your clearly stated intent to continue possessing nuclear weapons are aggravating distrust of the nuclear powers and threaten to provoke a new round of nuclear proliferation.

The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity demands that the United States listen to the international community's pleas for a world free from nuclear weapons. We demand that you stop provoking nuclear proliferation, immediately halt your subcritical nuclear tests, and accept your sworn obligation as a nuclear power to work actively and positively toward nuclear disarmament. We further request that you take the lead among nuclear powers and exert every effort to build an international community that assures national security without relying on nuclear weapons.

The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity

Letter of Protest to Russia

December 25, 1998

The Honorable Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin
The President of the Russian Federation

It is now clear that your country conducted five subcritical nuclear tests during September 14 to December 13, 1998. We deeply regret these actions, which so clearly contravene international public opinion demanding the abolition of nuclear weapons, as exemplified by the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December. On behalf of the 461 cities in 100 countries and regions that are member of the World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity, we strongly protest.

By conducting these tests in competition with the United States, you have made clear your intention to continue possessing nuclear weapons. We are gravely concerned that this attitude by your country and the United States increase distrust of both nuclear powers and adds impetus to the competition to develop nuclear weapons.

We, the World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity, demand that Russia and the United States listen soberly to international public opinion seeking a world free of nuclear weapons and, to stop further movement toward nuclear proliferation, that you immediately halt subcritical nuclear testing and accept your duty as a nuclear power to work actively and positively toward nuclear disarmament. We further request that you take the lead among nuclear states and exert every effort to build an international community that assures national security without relying on nuclear weapons.

The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity

India and Pakistan Respond to Letters of Protest against their Nuclear Tests

Numerous letters of protest, including from mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, were sent to India and Pakistan in response to their nuclear tests conducted last May. Replies were received from the Indian ambassador to Japan, Siddharth Singh, and Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan as follows.

Response from the Ambassador of India

May 27, 1998

Dear Mayor Ito,

I am writing in response to your letter concerning India's nuclear tests. While I will convey your sentiments to my Government, I thought I should share with you the concerns and compulsions which led India to undertake these tests.

Peace and stability in India's neighbourhood and immediate surrounding regions is a major priority for India. We have tried to promote this objective by constructive engagement, confidence building measures, dialogue and strengthening regional cooperation. In similar manner, we have joined other efforts to strengthen international peace and stability. For India, national security includes non-military aspects like economic and social development, environment and political and social problems. India devotes sustained attention to all these issues in working out its national security.

Like any other country, India has to attend to its legitimate security interests arising out of its geography, physical parameters, its historical experience and the global security dimension. We carry out an assessment of this rationally and define our security requirements objectively. (This explains the low defence expenditure of around 2.4 % of GDP over the years.) India's security environment became more complex with one of its neighbours becoming a nuclear weapon state in the sixties and with its progressively enhanced military modernisation programme. India's neighbour to the west has had a longstanding clandestine nuclear weapon and missile development programme with an established record of external assistance. This accumulation of nuclear weapons technology and missiles in our immediate neighbourhood cannot be ignored. We also remain concerned by the continuing high level of nuclear weapons in the world.

India has consistently worked for global nuclear disarmament

and the elimination of nuclear weapons believing this to be the ultimate basis for regional and global security. India has been a pioneer in global nuclear disarmament. In 1954, we were the first to declare the need for a ban on nuclear weapons testing. At that time, only 64 tests had been conducted. In 1965, we called for a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which would include matching obligations on the nuclear weapons states to get rid of their nuclear arsenals. In 1988, we put forward a phased programme of action for establishing a nuclear weapons free world. We joined and participated, constructively and in good faith, in the CTBT negotiations for two and a half years. By this time in 1996, nuclear weapon states had carried out over 2000 tests! The reasons for our not being able to become state-party to NPT and CTBT were made clear during the negotiations and have been reiterated regularly. We cannot accept a situation where weapon states insist that nuclear weapons are essential for their security, but that security of all other states depends on their abjuring nuclear weapons. India maintains that global nuclear disarmament, and the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction can only be achieved through multilaterally negotiated agreements that are universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory. We are a State party to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions because these conventions are universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory. In parallel with these efforts, we have worked with other countries in our region, for strengthening regional peace and cooperation.

Despite these efforts by India, there has been little amelioration in our regional and the global security environment as it impinges on India. Our valid security concerns remain unaddressed, despite the fact that we have repeatedly made known these concerns in our discussions at bilateral as well as multilateral occasions. We have had to take into account the implications of specific events such as the recent test by Pakistan of a medium range missile. It was not an isolated event,

but one which confirmed what we had been saying all along.

There is strong public sentiment in India that our legitimate security concerns have been ignored by the international community. The collective call for genuine global nuclear disarmament to which India has actively contributed has also been ignored. Furthermore, instead of being given credit for its consistently responsible approach, India has been penalised through the denial of technology. Countries which continue to upgrade their military nuclear programmes and contribute to proliferation receive certificates of good conduct and liberalized access to nuclear and related technology. Unlike some other countries, India does not have the benefit of belonging to any bilateral or multilateral military or security arrangements with an associated nuclear umbrella.

India has not exercised its nuclear option for years. It developed a nuclear capability but voluntarily refrained from weaponising for over 24 years, after the peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974. This was a case of restraint unique in nuclear history. India persevered in this policy in the hope that there would be recognition of its serious and legitimate security concerns growing out of the continuing accumulation of nuclear weapons and missiles in its immediate neighbourhood as well as the lack of serious movement towards global nuclear disarmament. The selective non-proliferation agenda of some countries, based on double standards, has been pushed with increasing intensity, focussed in particular on India, with an implication that if India does not conform, it will be isolated and targeted. Taking into account this situation, India was obliged not to further delay steps that were essential to meet its minimal, legitimate defence interests.

The nuclear tests were meant to ensure that the nuclear option is a credible option. This was essential in order to provide reassurance to the people of India that their national security interests were being fully protected. It should be understood that in undertaking these tests, India has not embarked on any exaggerated programme for building a nuclear arsenal. The data collected from these tests will enable Indian scientists to carry forward their work using computer simulations and sub-critical experiments which some CTBT signatories are already undertaking. The planned series of tests has been completed. India has made an offer to consider adhering to some of the undertakings in the CTBT subject to further negotiations. We

are also ready to participate in the negotiations for the conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut off Treaty (FMCT) at the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament.

In undertaking the tests, India has not contravened any agreements, treaties or principles of international law. The allegation made in some quarters that our tests have undermined regional or international peace and security is regrettable. India has a record of strong commitment to regional peace and cooperation as well as to the promotion of global nuclear disarmament that show up these charges as groundless. India is a responsible country and takes its security decisions in a sober manner. If the collective demand for effective global nuclear disarmament and India's repeated clarifications about its genuine security problems had been heeded, it would not have been compelled to take this decision. And India remains committed to working together with the international community to realise the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

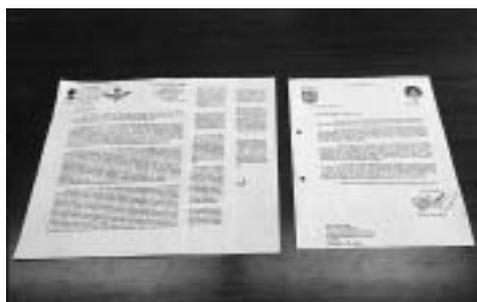
India values its relations with Japan and expects understanding of the compulsions behind the nuclear tests. India is very sensitive to Japanese public sentiment on this issue, given its experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We have special regard for the feelings of the Japanese people. In the same manner, we had hoped that due regard would be paid to public sentiment in India. I believe condemnatory and emotive reactions are counterproductive. Japan and India must be able to talk with each other frankly and freely but also in an atmosphere of understanding. I hope that our historical record of being appreciative of each others position will help us to overcome the present difficulty and realise the full potential of a close and mutually beneficial relationship.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature)

Siddharth Singh

(Letter from Pakistan on page 8)



Response letters from India and Pakistan

Letters and News from Member Cities

The Secretariat received the following responses to the last newsletter and the Peace Declarations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki which were sent to member cities, as well as reports of cities' peace-related activities.

(All were addressed to President Hiraoka. Some have been abbreviated due to limited space.)

Dublin, Ireland

August 20th, 1998

Thank you for your letter of August 10th, 1998 together with the newsletter.

On Thursday 6th August 1998 I continued the tradition of my predecessors in office and joined members of the Irish Branch of C.N.D for a commemoration ceremony at the beautiful Cherry Tree planted some years ago in Merrion Square Park, Dublin. It was a fine sunny day and many citizens joined remembering the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

You will notice from our notepaper that Dublin is a declared Nuclear Free City. On behalf of the people of Dublin I express the hope that nuclear testing will never again occur in any part of the world, and call for an outright ban on such tests.

With my personal greetings and good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature)

Councillor Senator Joe Doyle
Lord Mayor of Dublin

Riga, Latvia

Riga, 20 August 1998

Thank you very much for your kind letter of 10.08.1998.

We support your opinion that in troubled times like these in world affairs the citizens of the world should join together in demonstrating their unequivocal desire for abolition of nuclear weapons. We condemn nuclear weapons in general and we will work with you in raising citizens' awareness towards the abolition of nuclear weapons and peace in the world.

We are convinced that the global campaign implemented on your initiative will gain a world-wide support of Mayors.

With best wishes,

(Signature)

Andris Berzins
Chairman

Cochabamba, Bolivia

August 28, 1998

Nuclear testing done in Pakistan and India has, once again, brought terror upon the world.

The memory left of the atomic explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and of the millions of victims who left behind so much grief and pain should have been a lesson learned. However, many countries have yet to learn this lesson, in that they still believe that the only way power can be expressed is through destruction and death.

Today more than ever, the potential for devastation that nuclear arsenals hold is the driving force behind our efforts to make the entire international community more sensitive to respecting human rights and the right to life, which should be of the utmost priority.

We should join together in all our efforts and our pacifist desires, so that the super powers reduce their arms races and target their economic resources towards the fight against hunger and poverty.

The Hon. Township of Cochabamba, Bolivia joins with the World Conference of Mayors in its resounding call for a formula for peace, and it will make every effort possible to foster, among youth and upcoming generations, a culture based on peace and people living together peacefully.

I ask that you be so kind as to spread this message.

Sincerely yours,

(Signature)

Manfred Reyes Villa E.

Constitutional Mayor

Honorable Township of Cochabamba

(Translated from Spanish)

Due to limited space, letters from Nuwala Eliya, Sri Lanka and Qom of the Islamic Republic of Iran were unable to be published.



Letters from member cities

Khulna, Bangladesh

September 17, 1998

In concurrence with the theme and motto of the Peace Declarations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I like to reproduce my humble opinion that the activities of Mayors Conference are progressively advancing towards its goal for ushering real peace in the face of various odds of political controversies. To my honest credence, I can plainly profess, " the indefatigable efforts of the Peace Forum of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will once succeed in establishing a common platform of peace and tranquillity in defiance of all wild pranks of atomic challenges of the power politics". It is bare fact that the Indo-Pak nuclear tests are the ugly effects of pivoted vengeance of politics. We should stand abreast to voice the slogan for abolition of the roots of all such political vengeance under the principles of Nuclear Non-proliferation drive and the comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The Peace Mission of Mayors Conference will not go futile.

As a rule of principles I always avert the policy of belligerence and political vengeance. As such I always denounce the acts of Indo-Pak nuclear test. Though Khulna City Corporation would not have any documentary protest against the Indo-Pak nuclear tests yet we stand abreast to voice the slogan against the said nuclear tests.

With best wishes
(Signature)
Sheikh Tayebur Rahman
Mayor of Khulna City Corporation
Bangladesh

Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Dec. 28, 1998

We received your letter of 10 August 1998, with regard to denouncing the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan.

I would like to inform you that the Islamic Republic of Iran is amongst the countries that have brought up the subject of a world without mass destruction weapons in the Disarmament Conference and other international forums for years, and it has constantly pursued this goal.

It is evident that the above mentioned nuclear tests have struck at the balance of power in the region and have produced an atmosphere of horror at regional and international levels. The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly disapproves of these acts and in this regard the Honourable Iranian Foreign Minister requested the denunciation of these acts and formation of a Core Group from nuclear and non-nuclear countries to condemn this act. The group will present appropriate solutions to prevent the repetition of such nuclear tests in the south of Asia region and ban the nuclear proliferation as well in the future.

The Core Group is also bound to implement these solutions if necessary. Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran has applied for membership of a Task Force which has formed at the suggestion of five nuclear countries and some of the western countries and follows the same objectives as the Core Group.

The membership of our country is being considered at present.

During his visit to India and Pakistan, the Honorable Iranian Foreign Minister negotiated with the leaders of these countries in order to persuade them to stop the nuclear competition in the region and join the international disarmament treaties such as CTBT and NPT.

We would like to emphasize that the Islamic Republic of Iran will be continuing its attempts towards nuclear disarmament and will support all the measures in this regard.

Best regards,

Faithfully yours,
(Signature)
Mahdi Jamali Bahri
Director-General
Public and International Relations Department

New Member Cities

Davenport (Australia), Darmstadt (Germany), Manukau (New Zealand), Durban South Central (South Africa).

"Hiroshima-Nagasaki: Never Again"

Como, Italy

The city of Como in Italy held an A-bomb exhibit entitled "Hiroshima - Nagasaki: Never Again" from May 2 to May 29, 1998. The exhibit in the restored ancient church of San Francesco located in the central part of Como attracted roughly 4,300 visitors. On May 23 the city held a conference "Science for Peace: Possibilities of Disarmament in the Third Millennium" at the municipal library.



Poster advertising the A-bomb exhibit

International Art Contest for Young People: "Education to Peace"

Forli, Italy

Under the theme of the late Mother Teresa's words: "Twinship: a Peace Gesture," the Italian city of Forli held the "Third International Art Contest for Young People" from May 15 to 25, 1998, as part of "Europe Week." The city's central plaza was brightened by the 2,535 children's painting on display.



The hall exhibiting drawings by children from around the world
Courtesy of Comune di Forli, Ufficio Rapporti Internazionali, "Third International Art Contest for Young People: "Education to Peace"

"Harrisburg-Hiroshima-Nagasaki Remembrance Week"

Harrisburg, U.S.A.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania designated the week of July 31 to August 9, 1998, "Harrisburg-Hiroshima-Nagasaki Remembrance Week." During the week, Mayor Stephen R.

Reed issued a peace declaration. On August 9, the Harrisburg-Hiroshima-Nagasaki Committee sponsored the commemorative projects "Art for Peace and Justice" exhibit and "Candles on the Water" which attracted many local residents, including families with children.



People participating in "Candles on the Water"

"Art for Peace"

Furth, Germany

On August 6, 1998, the "Art for Peace" ceremony was held in a city public park in Furth, Germany to commemorate the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The event featured the works of city-resident Japanese artists Kunihiko and Atsuko Kato. Deputy Mayor Günter Brand made a forceful appeal during the ceremony for the abolition of nuclear weapons and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Commemorative Ceremony of the Hiroshima Atomic Bombing

Montreal, Canada

A ceremony was held in the Japanese pavilion of the botanical garden in Montreal, Canada on August 6, 1998 to commemorate the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Montreal, which declared itself a nuclear-free zone in 1986, formed a sister-city relationship with Hiroshima in May last year. During the ceremony, the Peace Bell donated by Hiroshima was rung and the mayor pledged to work towards a permanent ban on nuclear weapons and world peace.



Montreal Mayor Pierre Bourque and Scientific Research and Development Division Head Michel Labrecque strike the Peace Bell from Hiroshima.

New President

Takashi Hiraoka, who served as president of the Mayors Conference during his two terms as Mayor of Hiroshima since February 1991, left office on February 22 at the conclusion of his term. Mr. Tadatoshi Akiba, who was elected mayor on January 31, assumed the post on February 23.

New president Akiba's profile: Born in Tokyo in 1942. He received a Ph. D. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA. Professor at Tufts University, USA. Professor at Hiroshima Shudo University. For the past nine years, he has served as a member of the Lower House of the Diet.



New President
Tadatoshi Akiba
Mayor of Hiroshima

Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb Photo Posters Available for Use

The Secretariat offers upon request Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb Photo Posters to cities and organizations for use in peace-related projects.

Sets of 20 posters (73cm by 103cm) are available in eight languages: Japanese, English, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. Please contact the Secretariat for details. (Posters in Japanese are available for loan only.)

The United Nations has designated the year 2000 as the "International Year for the Culture of Peace," and the period from 2001 to 2010 as the "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World."

The UN Vienna Civil Society Award has been established to be conferred on individuals and organizations which have made a marked contribution in a field that helps prevent crime, drug abuse, and terrorism, or contributes to justice and the development of urban communities. For details, contact the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna.

Tel: 43-1-26060-4090 Fax: 43-1-26060-5929

E-mail: atresco@unvienna.un.or.at

Website <http://www.un.or.at/OOSA/vcsa/index.html>

(Continued from page 4)

Response from the Pakistani Foreign Minister

6 July, 1998

Honourable Mayor Takashi Hiraoka,

Thank you for your kind letter which reflects your sincere aspirations for international peace and security. I deeply appreciate your thoughts and concerns.

No one can understand the scourge of nuclear weapons better than the innocent people of Hiroshima, who were subjected to an unprecedented nuclear attack more than half a century ago. Their suffering has been the driving force behind the universal abhorrence against all weapons of mass destruction. The people of Pakistan are fully cognizant of these realities.

You will appreciate that Pakistan took the painful decision of conducting nuclear tests only to safeguard its national security and territorial integrity. India's provocative and unreasonable action, in addition to destabilising the region has destroyed the evolving consensus against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the post-Cold War world. India thus deserves the unqualified condemnation of the international community.

Let me assure you that Pakistan stands committed to the goal of making the world free of nuclear weapons. We have already declared a unilateral moratorium on further nuclear testing, and have also undertaken to uphold the international norm against the transfer of nuclear technology. As always we intend to remain in the forefront of efforts aimed at achieving global peace, security and prosperity.

Please accept, Mr. Mayor, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours Sincerely,

(Signature)

Gohar Ayub Khan

World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-city Solidarity Secretariat

1-2 Nakajima-cho, Naka-ku, Hiroshima, 730-0811 Japan

Tel: 81-82-241-2352 Fax: 81-82-242-7452

E-mail: mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp

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