

## Memorial Ceremony in Volgograd – August 6, 2016

Municipality: Volgograd (Russia)

Mayor: Andrey Kosolapov

Event: Peace ceremony in memory of the victims of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima

Date: August 6, 2016 (Saturday)

Place: Federal State-Funded Cultural Institution “State Historical and Memorial Museum-Reserve “The Battle of Stalingrad” (located at 47, Chuikova St., Volgograd, 400005)  
Number of Attendees: approx. 60



Traditional peace memorial ceremony takes place in Volgograd every year on August 6 to manifest the city’s solidarity with its Japanese twin-town and in memory of those who perished during and after the atomic bombing of 1945. The event was attended by the Acting Mayor of Volgograd Mr. Vladlen Kolesnikov and the Honorary citizen of both Volgograd and Hiroshima Mr. Yury Starvatykh, civic organizations representatives, students, school pupils, members of “Volgograd-Hiroshima” friendship society and International Friendship Club.



At 8.15 – the time when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima 71 year ago – “The Battle Of Stalingrad” memorial museum came to life with the toll of the Peace Bell. Memorial ceremony attendees honored the victims of the bombing with a minute of silence and lay at the foot of the bell flowers and paper cranes as symbols of our rejection of war and violence.

‘Although Volgograd and Hiroshima are thousands of kilometers apart, the connection is strong between us. It is formed by the pains of war and the courage of citizens who had to restore their peaceful lives literally from ashes. Both our cities suffered greatly during World War 2, and that is why serving Peace is so important for us. Volgograd is one of the vice-presidents of a major international organization “Mayors for Peace”, the headquarters of which are located in Hiroshima, its President city’, said Mr. Kolesnikov.

He also reminded the attendees that the next year will see the 45th anniversary of the friendly relations between Volgograd and Hiroshima, pointing out that just a few days later Volgograd will host the International Youth Conference for Peace in the Future, which is another joint project by our cities (the conference was initiated by Hiroshima and since that time takes place alternating between the city itself and its partners.)



In 2016, “Volgograd-Hiroshima” friendship society held among its members a contest for the best Power Point presentation to the topic of the atomic bombing. The winning work (“The Phoenix City: the Story of Hiroshima’s Restoration”) was presented to the ceremony attendees by its author Sergey Babenko.

After the event, all people could leave their signatures on Mayor for Peace petitions against nuclear weapons. Among first to sign was Mr. Yury Starovatykh.

‘Stalingrad people have a firm understanding of what war is and what tragedy it entails. All people in the world have only one planet and one common right for life, and it is in our power to protect it’, he said.



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**Media reports:**

1. Official website of Volgograd City Council (Russian): <http://www.volgsovet.ru/d1d0/Activity/PressRelease/i15967>
2. “www.v1.ru” news website (Russian): <http://v1.ru/text/newsline/196868219060224.html>