



Statement

Mayors for Peace European and North American Lead Cities Statement, February 13th 2019

The governments of the United States and Russia have both decided to formally suspend their involvement in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. This now gives just a few months to restore one of the most important treaties of the Cold War era. This Treaty helped to lead to the withdrawal of large numbers of nuclear and conventional missiles from Europe and considerably de-escalated the threat of a nuclear conflict on the continent.

As Vice Presidents and Lead Cities in Europe and North America of the Mayors for Peace (1), an organisation established by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1982 and committed to the eventual goal of a world without nuclear weapons, we are very concerned with the suspension and potential abrogation of this core nuclear disarmament treaty. We are also concerned with plans by both these and other states to extensively modernize their nuclear arsenals, including development of stealthier and lower yield more “useable” weapons.

The President of Mayors for Peace, Mayor Kazumi Matsui, commented on these developments (2): “Quite recently, the Mayor of Nagasaki and I sent a letter of request to the Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation to convey the earnest wishes of civil society, which expects to see acceleration of both governments’ efforts based on this treaty. The announcement of withdrawal despite such an expectation is against the wishes of civil society, and it is not acceptable at all.

So that the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will never be repeated, and in order to respond to the wishes of civil society, we once again strongly urge the leaders of the US and Russia to continue their dialogue and efforts based on reason and not to abandon this treaty without an alternative arrangement.”

The European and North American Lead Cities of Mayors for Peace strongly support this call for dialogue from the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We do not want to see nuclear missiles return to military bases around Europe where their presence could ratchet up international tension and security.

Mayors for Peace is a strong supporter of the new Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty’s nearly 50-year obligation to negotiate in “good faith” the elimination of nuclear weapons, which will be discussed in May of this year at the United Nations. The great progress that has been made since the signing of the INF Treaty risks going into reverse, starting a new arms race in a much more uncertain world.

We too call on President Trump and President Putin to come together and find a diplomatic solution to this crisis. There remains over 14,000 nuclear weapons in the world, over 90% of which are owned by the United States and the Russian Federation. The real need is to find sensible ways to de-escalate tension and promote again multilateral nuclear disarmament. We do not want to see nuclear weapons stationed again across Europe and the start of a new type of ‘cold war’. We call as well on European leaders to work with the US and Russia to find a new form of peaceful diplomacy and to help restore this important treaty.

Ends –

For more information please contact Sean Morris, UK and Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter Secretary. The UK & Ireland Chapter has issued this statement on behalf of the European and North American Vice Presidents / Lead Cities of Mayors for Peace, on 00 44 (0)161 234 3244.

Notes:

(1) The European and North American Vice Presidents / Lead Cities of Mayors for Peace who formally support this statement are:

- Ms June Hitchen, the Lord Mayor of Manchester (UK)
- Ms Jacqueline Belhomme, the Mayor of Malakoff (France)
- Mr Philippe Rio, the Mayor of Grigny (France)
- Mr Stefan Schostok, the Lord Mayor of Hannover (Germany)
- Mr Thore Vestby, the Honorary Mayor's representative of Frogn (Norway)
- Mr Josep Mayoral Antigas, the Mayor of Granollers (Spain)
- Mr Ivan Knez, the Mayor of Biograd na Moru (Croatia)
- Mr T M Franklin Cownie, the Mayor of Des Moines (USA)
- Ms Valerie Plante, the Mayor of Montreal (Canada)

(2) See Mayors for Peace, February 1st 2019

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/whatsnew/news/data/20190204/Mayor_Matsui's_comment.pdf