



**NFLA 30th ANNIVERSARY – CIVIC VISIT OF
MAYOR OF NAGASAKI AND HOSTING OF
THE MAYORS FOR PEACE 2020 VISION
CAMPAIGN BOARD MEETING
Manchester – 4th & 5th November 2010**



Official report of proceedings:

**November 4th, 2010 –
Launch of A-bomb exhibition**

The official commemorations for the 30th anniversary of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) began in the People's History Museum in Manchester.

The Museum is hosting the exhibition 'Hiroshima and Nagasaki Atomic Bombings – 65 Years On', which has been kindly donated by the Mayor of Nagasaki, Tomihisa Taue. It will be on from November 4th – 28th 2010.

**NFLA have over 60 members in the UK
and Ireland. Mayors for Peace have
4301 members from 145 countries.**



This important photographic exhibition charts the destruction of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 6th and 9th August 2010 by two atomic bombs. It provides disturbing images of the deaths and injuries that occurred and the devastating damage to two large and thriving cities. It provides an overview of how the cities were reconstructed and brings the debate to the present day with the work of Mayors for Peace and its campaign for a nuclear weapons free world.



The exhibition was officially opened by Councillor Mark Hackett, Lord Mayor of Manchester, and the Mayor of Nagasaki. There was also important and inspiring speeches from the NFLA Chair, Bailie George Regan and two survivors of the atomic bombings in Nagasaki – the Chair of Nagasaki Municipality, Takashi Yoshihara and Yoshiro Yamawaki, an officially appointed 'hibakuska' (atomic bomb survivor), who has been formally recognised by the Prime Minister of Japan for his work.

The Director of the Atomic Bomb Museum, Tomoo Kurokawa, explained the role the Museum had played in the development of the exhibition and welcomed the co-operation with the People's History Museum and its Director, Katy Archer. The speeches were all filmed by a Japanese film crew from the state broadcaster NHK for a documentary of the visit. The event was also shown on national Japanese news.

Unveiling of commemorative plaques

The event continued with the unveiling of two memorial plaques on the outer wall of the Museum, overlooking the River Irwell.

One of the plaques was on the original Museum and was re-laid. It commemorated the 40th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings in 1985 and was inspired by the late NFLA Chair and Manchester City Councillor Bill Risby.



A smaller second plaque allowed for the opportunity to re-dedicate the original plaque for the 65th anniversary of the atomic bombings and to commemorate the memory of Bill Risby, who sadly died in 2009. His wife Marie was part of the official unveiling and said how fitting it was that the plaque should be at the People's History Museum. She was delighted to attend the 30th anniversary of the NFLA and to meet the delegation from Nagasaki.

Launch and inaugural walk of the Manchester City Centre Peace and Social Justice Trail



The concluding part of the morning commemorations was the launch of the Manchester City Centre Peace and Justice Trail. The NFLA Secretary, Sean Morris, explained that the Trail had been developed a Steering Group to highlight the many people, ideas, movements and monuments to peace and social justice in the city of Manchester.

20 sites included the founding of the trade union and co-operative movements, the inspiration for the suffragettes movement and the wider call for universal suffrage, a centre of religious tolerance and the work for gay and equal rights. It also highlighted Manchester's leading role in the anti-slavery movement.

The Trail follows on from similar peace walks in other cities like Bradford, London, Coventry and Leeds. It uniquely has both a young person's version and an adult version and a website is being developed highlighting Manchester as a 'City of Peace'.

An abridged version of the Trail was led by blue badge guide and the author of the 'Manchester Confidential' website, Jonathan Schofield. The walk included stops outside the People's History Museum, the Abraham Lincoln statue, the Town Hall and the John Bright statue on Albert Square.

Civic lunch for the Mayor of Nagasaki and opening of the NFLA's 30th anniversary Steering Committee meeting

The delegation from Nagasaki were invited by the Lord Mayor of Manchester to his suite for lunch. The Mayor of Nagasaki signed the Lord Mayor's visitor's book and civic gifts were exchanged.

Both the Lord Mayor of Manchester and the Mayor of Nagasaki are Vice Presidents of the Mayors for Peace, an international peace organisation seeking the abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.



Directly following the lunch the Mayor of Nagasaki was welcomed to the 30th anniversary meeting of the NFLA Steering Committee. Mayor Taue is the Chair of the National Council of Japanese Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NCJNFLA). The Mayor noted how honoured he had been with the civic welcome from Manchester and how proud he was to be able to jointly commemorate the 30th anniversary of the NFLA in Manchester. In the presence of NFLA councillors and officers from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland the Mayor emphasised the effectiveness of joint working in the campaign for a nuclear free world.

The NFLA Chair said how honoured the NFLA was to welcome the Mayor of Nagasaki to England and was delighted that Manchester had provided a warm civic welcome to the Mayor and members of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Board.

The Nagasaki delegation then moved on to a visit of the Imperial War Museum North and the Manchester United football stadium, whilst the NFLA discussed issues of importance to its campaigns on nuclear energy and nuclear weapons proliferation.

Civic reception for the NFLA's 30th anniversary



The highlight of the day was the Lord Mayor's official civic reception for the 30th anniversary of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities, which was held in the Lord Mayor's Apartments.

Lord Mayor Hackett opened the event by talking of his personal commitment to the NFLA and the Mayors for Peace and the relevance of both organisations.

The NFLA Chair, Bailie George Regan, responded with his gratitude to the strong support given to the NFLA over 3 decades by Manchester City Council. He noted how proud he was to chair the organisation and the importance of the NFLA in being a key part of the nuclear policy debate; as important now as it was in 1980. He also paid tribute to the Councils who remain members of the NFLA and Mayors for Peace and gave a personal comment on his sadly missed friend and former NFLA Chair, Bill Risby.

Mayor Taue made an address noting the very warm welcome provided by Manchester and how impressed he was of the city. He noted the close friendship between the NCJNFLA and the NFLA and how both organisations had to work with the Mayors for Peace for the common aim of a nuclear weapons free world. He noted the importance of the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision board meeting and the A-bomb school's event taking place the following day. He thanked all for attending and being involved in this critical endeavour – a nuclear free world.



Following on from Mayor Taue's address, Chairman Yoshihara gave a moving address of his own experience of the atomic bomb blast in Nagasaki on August 9th 1945. He talked of his personal commitment to be involved in campaigning for the abolition of nuclear weapons and how delighted he was that so many other towns and cities were part of this coalition.



Two Parliamentarians also spoke – Senator Mark Dearey of the Irish Parliament talked about why Irish Councils had joined the NFLA and the importance of its work in challenging the need for nuclear energy. Ireland by law is a nuclear free state. Senator Dearey stated how important the NFLA was in this debate and the tireless work provided by current NFLA Secretary Sean Morris and his predecessor, Stewart Kemp, who was also present.

Tony Lloyd, MP for Manchester Central, highlighted the important role local government had in influencing the nuclear policy debate and he emphasised that the opportunity for significant reductions in nuclear weapons was available now, and groups such as the NFLA

and Mayors for Peace need to presently be putting pressure on national governments to achieve this objective.

The NFLA Secretary concluded the speeches by reading out an address from the Mayor of Hiroshima, Tadatoshi Akiba, President of the Mayors for Peace. He noted the importance in raising public awareness of the importance of abolishing all nuclear weapons by 2020. He gave a personal tribute to Bill Risby. Mayor Akiba also noted the urgency of the task of civil society to challenge their governments to negotiate a nuclear weapons convention by 2020.



Mayor Akiba also noted that Hiroshima was exploring the feasibility of bidding for the 2020 Olympics, which they would make into a 'Festival of Peace'. In closing his address he noted: "I sincerely hope that, with your support, we can make our two dreams – a nuclear weapon free world and the Hiroshima Olympics – come true in the current decade."



NFLA members, Mayors for Peace board members and other invited guests followed the speeches with informal and friendly conversation. The civic reception was concluded by the cutting of a special 'NFLA at 30' birthday cake by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, the Mayor of Nagasaki and the NFLA Chair. The cake had been designed and baked by the NFLA Administration Assistant, Gemma Harris, who was congratulated for such an attractive and delicious cake!

November 5th, 2010 - Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign Association Board Meeting

The focus of the events moved on to the Mayors for Peace, as it held its board meeting in the MDDA board room.

Chaired by the Mayor of Ypres, Luc Deheane, the board provides the leadership of the Mayors for Peace in its campaign to abolish nuclear weapons by 2020. Mayors or mayoral representatives attended the meeting from Manchester (UK), Hanover (Germany), Malakoff (France), Granollers (Spain), Halabja (Iraq), Glasgow (UK), Frogn (Norway) and Nagasaki (Japan), along with Mayors for Peace international staff.



The board meeting spent a considerable amount of time discussing its budget and the real need for Executive Cities and Mayors for Peace members to financially support the organisation, despite the international recession and substantial pressure on local government budgets. Innovative ways at developing fund-raising events and promoting peace education were highlighted by a number of Executive Cities.

The meeting also discussed the Mayors for Peace priorities for the next year, which included a strong presence at the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) Conference taking place in Mexico City on November 20th. The 2020 Vision Campaign is also looking at ways to develop a Special Conference on Nuclear Disarmament and encourage the establishment of a Conference to develop a Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone – one of the key actions from the 2010 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference. Co-operation with like-minded groups such as Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and

Disarmament (PNND), the Abolition 2000 Network and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) was also approved and encouraged.

Schools event – Nagasaki A-bomb survivor gives his testimony to Greater Manchester schoolchildren

Whilst the board meeting was taking place, a number of students from Whalley Range High School in Manchester were interviewing the two Nagasaki A-bomb survivors Takashi Yoshihara and Yoshiro Yamiwaki, about their experiences on August 9th 1945, and the effects the bombings had on them and their families. The students were deeply moved and inspired by what they heard. Film students from the University of Central Lancashire filmed the meeting and a DVD of the whole day is being developed.



In the afternoon, around 100 students from a further 5 schools from Manchester and its environs came to the People's History Museum to hear Mr Yamiwaki's moving testimony of his experiences in 1945 and onwards. This event was opened by the Mayor of Nagasaki and the Lord Mayor of Manchester, who both mentioned the importance of educating young people of these key events of the Second World War. The event was jointly organised with CND's Peace Education Officer, Anna Liddle.

The event began with a short play performed by students from Whalley Range High School, who gave in drama the traumatic experiences of children injured by the atomic bomb.

Mr Yamiwaki was 11 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. His house was just 2 kilometres from the hypocentre and many of his family were killed in the bomb. Mr Yamiwaki movingly told of the great suffering on that day and the work to rebuild the city. He answered a number of frank questions from the young people present noting his desire for peace and reconciliation between all people and the urgent need to never allow a third atomic bomb to be used on another city.

Following this moving and powerful event, the Nagasaki delegation were provided with an informative tour of Manchester's 'Sportcity' complex, the largest sports development in Europe, which included visiting the National Squash Centre, the Manchester Athletics Stadium and the City of Manchester Stadium, home of Manchester City. In the evening, Nagasaki residents on a tour of the UK met up with the civic delegation and NFLA staff for an informal and friendly meal in the Japanese restaurant 'Samsi'.

The Nuclear Free Local Authorities Secretariat would like to thank the Lord Mayor of Manchester, councillors and officers in Manchester City Council, the People's History Museum, the Imperial War Museum North, Jonathan Schofield, Anna Liddle and CND, Manchester City Football Club, the Palace Hotel, the Midland Hotel, Visit Manchester and all those who attended these important events for their presence and generosity.

Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary and Principal Policy Officer, Manchester City Council

