

Mayors for Peace New York Appeal

Mayors for Peace Assembly in New York

New York, 29 April 2015

On August 6 and 9 this year, the world will commemorate the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively. These commemorations provide an opportunity for citizens everywhere to pay their respects to the hundreds of thousands of their fellow human beings who were casualties on those tragic days. It is also an occasion to honor the atomic bomb survivors (*hibakusha*) and to recognize the inhumanity of the nuclear weapons that they and their families have had to endure.

Mayors for Peace acknowledges with admiration that *hibakusha* are determined that “no one else shall ever again suffer as we have.” With this powerful message, they have been greatly contributing to the global movement to eliminate all nuclear weapons. Their message is addressed to all humanity and future generations.

Representing cities throughout the world and as members of Mayors for Peace, we issue today, upon the holding of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, this appeal for a renewed global commitment to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We make this appeal on the basis of our shared mission to protect the lives and property of our fellow citizens against any future use of nuclear weapons, the most inhumane and indiscriminate of all weapons of mass destruction. We believe that in order to achieve this common goal, political leaders shall not remain holding nuclear weapons abolition as a simple “desirable goal”, but they must turn this into a “concrete achievement” with unshakable political will. And also essential to achieve this goal is the strong support of public opinion to carry this goal forward.

Mayors for Peace, with 6,649 member cities from 160 countries and regions around the world, is a politically non-partisan organization, transcending differences in nationality, race, and religion. Member cities of our organization support the 2020 Vision, aiming for nuclear weapons elimination by 2020. They include cities from the five nuclear-weapon States Parties to NPT as well as cities from nuclear weapon holding states not Parties to NPT. The number of member cities has risen by about 2,000 cities in just the past four years, and the rate of new membership is accelerating, with the total population of these cities now making up a seventh of all the people on the earth, or one billion people. We are convinced that this expanding worldwide network will certainly act as a powerful driving force in leading international public opinion towards the lofty goal of nuclear weapons elimination.

Ever since the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed its deep concern at the continued risks posed for humanity by the possible use of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences resulting from such use, the humanitarian impact of these weapons has become pressing issue for rapidly increasing numbers of constituencies. A joint declaration on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons has been adopted five times up until now, and with each time, the number of subscribing countries has been increasing. The same trend is evident also in the number of participating countries in the international conferences on the

humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons held three times in the past with a turnout of 127 countries the first time, 146 the second time, and finally at the conference held in Vienna last December, a record high of 158 countries. They provide clear evidence that awareness concerning the inhumanity of nuclear weapons has been steadily rising among Governments as well.

Nevertheless, we voice our deep concerns over the lack of substantive progress in nuclear disarmament and of negotiations on a nuclear weapons or any other legal framework to outlaw nuclear weapons. Furthermore, we, Mayors for Peace, reject excuses for inaction such as that cruel acts of terrorism and conflicts among nations are impeding these negotiations. Now is the time when the rising tide of deeper understanding on the inhumanity of nuclear weapons continues to spread by tireless efforts of *hibakusha* and concerned people in civil society, for the policymakers of the world, especially those of nuclear weapons states, to demonstrate decisive leadership and work together towards nuclear weapons abolition and the creation of an international environment that will make it possible.

The Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) requires all its parties to enter into negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament, and the 2010 NPT Review Conference noted the reaffirmation by the nuclear-weapon states of their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Representatives of all countries attending the NPT Review Conference, must always keep in mind the grave damage nuclear weapons use could cause in their country or neighboring countries, and engage in focused discussion to take steps towards accomplishing a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.

We, the member cities of Mayors for Peace, are prepared to provide full support to achieve this important goal.

With lead cities of Mayors for Peace located worldwide, we now launch a new executive system of promoting activities globally on common goal of achieving peaceful world free of nuclear weapons, and locally on addressing specific challenges unique to each region. Furthermore, in collaboration with peace-related NGOs, parliamentarians, scholars, lawyers, doctors, environmental groups, youth, women, artists, human rights activists and other like-minded partners around the world, we are promoting measures at multiple levels.

On this 70th anniversary year of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Mayors for Peace pledge here in New York that we shall unite the voices of all the like-minded citizens around the world, and that we shall strive to the best of our abilities towards nuclear weapons abolition by 2020, and towards the ultimate common goal of realizing everlasting world peace for all the humanity.