

2017 Mayors for Peace Youth Exchange for Peace: Support Program for "HIROSHIMA and PEACE"

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Words cannot express how grateful I am for the opportunity to take part in the Support Program for HIROSHIMA and PEACE. Meeting people from all over the world, getting to know different perspectives and coming to different conclusions after listening to the same set of facts is absolute evidence that every single human being is unique in its feelings and the way it reacts to its circumstances. With that in mind, after listening to the Hibakusha testimonies, after visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and being able to ask questions to mayor Matsui, I flew back to Brazil reflecting upon the knowledge I had acquired and thinking about how to employ it towards a peaceful, nuclear armament-free world for myself, my beloved ones and future generations.

I have come to the conclusion that it will be no easy task. But I am eager to do my part in trying it in a plethora of ways.

Therefore, I am glad to inform that, on invitation by Victor Augusto Mendes (who also visited Hiroshima on August this year), I will be debating International Civil Societies, and how can they promote peace on the Catholic University of Santos International Affairs Week (last week of September). Sharing information on Mayors for Peace is an important step towards our goal of abolition of nuclear weapons. However, looking in hindsight, I wish I could have get to know more about Mayors for Peace in a practical level. Visiting its offices, meeting more of its staff (especially foreigners, if there are any) would be very useful in make the whole experienced a bit more fleshed out and relatable for people who can then engage and spread the word about it.

While giving feedback of my journey to Hiroshima to Ms. Paula Quagliato, head of the International Affairs Office of our city, I have learned there are plans for the chance for Santos to have a permanent city council for peace in the near future. The chance that peace initiatives will be received with even greater support by the City Office is something that shouldn't be underestimated. It is that, along with being an executive city in Mayors for Peace makes Santos an example for other cities (not only for Brazil but for South America and the whole world).

HIROSHIMA and PEACE was a wonderful and absolutely rich experience. While some of the knowledge I've acquired can be applied right away. most of it needs to be "translated" to the completely different reality of Brazil. In order to do that, I have contacted PET Educação Popular - an extension program in my university which focus on Popular Education, and I will be talking to them on early October about how the education in Hiroshima revolves around the cities' singularities while still maintaining the high level of education I have seen every time I visited Japan. One of my strongest beliefs is that learning comes through being able not only to provide good education (to socially vulnerable people, in particular) but doing that while still debating crucial issues to the communities where the learners are. That was (and still is) one of my life goals, both personally and professionally.

The substantial increase of threats from North Korea and from the USA are being noticed all over the world, and Brazil is no different. That's why besides the support of previously said group, I also have discussed with Professor Tania Maria Ramos de Godoi Diniz, a personal friend of mine and head of the Social Work department in the Federal University of São Paulo about how can we conduct a series of talks in our university about nuclear disarmament and how money leads war efforts most of the time.

These small but concrete steps are to be taken before the end of 2017.

Before ending my report, I would like to once express my gratitude towards Mayors for Peace and its staff for the opportunity that was given to me, Hiroshima City University, its staff and students for the great moments we've experienced together and for everything I've learned past July and August. It was a very humbling and at the same time, empowering two weeks for me.

I honestly hope we can work together for a long time. Only a combined, multicultural effort will accomplish the abolition of nuclear weapons.