



Mayors for Peace News Flash

April 2021 / No.136

Mayors for Peace Member Cities

8,024 cities

in 165 countries and regions

(as of April 1, 2021)

[Help us achieve 10,000 member cities!](#)

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<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/index.html>

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<https://www.facebook.com/mayorsforpeace>

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“Like” and share our Facebook and Twitter posts to help spread awareness of our mission.

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10th General Conference is rescheduled for August 2022

Mayors for Peace has been making arrangements to hold its 10th General Conference in Hiroshima this August, after our decision of postponing it from August 2020.

However, even today, the world is yet to see clear signs of an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. Amidst such a situation, it would be very difficult to hold such a large-scale conference hosting attendees from all over the world, while preventing the spread of infection at the same time. In addition, some member cities outside of Japan have mentioned to the Secretariat that they are unlikely to be able to travel to Hiroshima to attend the General Conference due to financial constraints their cities are facing—reallocating and securing budget for medical support and economic recovery, while confronting decrease in tax revenues.



Given the circumstances, after discussing with the Executive Members, we have decided to postpone the 10th General Conference for another year. It is now scheduled to be convened in August 2022, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of Mayors for Peace.

On the other hand, with the end of the 2020 Vision at the end of the year 2020, and the growing momentum for the abolition of nuclear weapons with the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in mind, developing and adopting a new Vision and a new Action Plan should not be further delayed. Hence, we have decided to convene the 12th Executive Conference online, at which we will adopt a new Vision and a new Action Plan.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Invitation for the Children's Art Competition "Peaceful Towns" 2021



In order to further promote peace education in member cities, Mayors for Peace once again holds the annual art competition on the theme of "Peaceful Towns." All children (between 6-15 years old) of over 8,000 member cities in 165 countries and regions are invited for the 2021 competition!

Categories:

Category 1: 6-10 year olds & Category 2: 11-15 year olds

Number of applications allowed per city:

Up to 5 artworks for each category

Submission Deadline:

5:00 PM (Japan Standard Time), November 1, 2021

Submission and inquiries:

Email the Secretariat: mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp

Details of the competition:

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/vision/initiatives/2021_Art_Competition.html

Request for Payment of the 2021 Mayors for Peace Membership Fee

In order to facilitate future activities and strengthen the sense of solidarity amongst member cities, Mayors for Peace introduced an annual Membership Fee in 2015.

This year again, we ask each member city to pay a fee of 2,000 Japanese yen (about 19 USD/16 Euro as of March 2021) per city. If your city has not paid their Membership Fee in previous years, we ask your city to pay the total amount owed for each unpaid year since 2015. The collected Membership Fees will be allocated toward new and existing projects listed on the Mayors for Peace Action Plan.

A request for payment of the 2021 membership fee was sent to each city by email on April 1. We deeply appreciate your kind cooperation.

Request for the 2021 Mayors for Peace Membership Fee (Mayors for Peace website):

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/aboutus/fee.html>

Member city activities

● Halabja, Iraq

Commemoration of the tragic chemical bombardment of Halabja

Report by Mr. Zimnako Mohammed, the City of Halabja

Halabja is the deep wound that embodies the suffering of the Kurdish people during the last century. Thirty-three years ago, Saddam Hussein ordered his air force to bomb the Kurdish town of Halabja by the chemical weapons.

Around 5,000 people, majority women and children, were killed when the former regime of Iraq dropped mustard gas onto the city of Halabja on March 16, 1988. The event, which was recognized as an act of genocide by Iraq's High Court in 2010, has left a permanent scar in the historical memory of the Kurdish people.

Many survivors suffered long-term health problems as a result of the attack, which was part of a longer genocidal campaign called Anfal against Iraq's Kurds by the Baathist regime.

Similar to the previous year, this year people of the city, victims and survivors gathered to commemorate that tragic event. Municipality of Halabja organized various activities on that day including:

- Municipality of Halabja in cooperation with Mam Humanitarian Organization, started a project to plant 5,000 trees in the Halabja to memorialize the 5,000 victims of the catastrophe
- A photography exhibition for Halabja Photographers Organization
- Children art exhibition with the chemical bombardment subject
- The art work to prepare a garden of flowers with the remaining of the chemical bombs
- Opening of the Halabja Cultural Museum
- Participation in various panels and discussion regarding the event



Photos: Courtesy of the City of Halabja

● Tehran, Iran

Tehran Municipality held the ceremony for Planting Tree of Peace and Friendship

Report by Ms. Sahar Seyed Tafreshiha, Tehran Municipality

In the Week of Natural Resources of Iran, the ceremony for “Planting Tree of Peace and Friendship” was held at the invitation of the Center of Communication and International Affairs of Tehran Municipality, with the presence of Ambassadors of 50 countries and UN Representatives.



Photos: Courtesy of Tehran Municipality

At the ceremony, the Mayor of Tehran stated that “following the request of international organizations to increase green space and public space in industrial cities, the Municipality has been working for the development of walking and cycling space for citizens in recent years.” He also invited to join the “car-free Tuesdays,” which is the program of Tehran municipality for peace with the environment.

The Head of Tehran Green Space Organization also said: “Tehran has achieved many successes in developing green space in the region— 75 parks have increased to 2,209 parks and 2,937 hectares of green space has increased to 43,752 hectares.”

Following this ceremony, the attending ambassadors planted olive trees in the Tehran book garden as a symbol of peace and friendship and as the signs of their countries' presence.

Regional chapter activities

- **Catalan Chapter**

- Granollers opens a nuclear weapons exhibition**

Report by Ms. Helena Aranda Mayor, the City of Granollers, Spain


The exhibition, created by FundiPau (a Catalan NGO member of ICAN) commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings

Until April 8 Granollers citizens could visit the exhibition “Nuclear Weapons #NEVERAGAIN!” at the Can Pedrals Library. The exhibition was opened with a conversation between the Mayor of Granollers Josep Mayoral and the director of FundiPau Jordi Armadans. The municipalities of Barcelona, Sant Boi de Llobregat and Sant Sadurní d’Anoia have also hosted the exhibition.

The exhibition “Nuclear Weapons #NEVERAGAIN!” was organized to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. 75 years later, nuclear weapons continue to be a threat to humanity and the planet: there are 13,400 nuclear weapons in the world in the hands of 9 countries, and so far, disarmament agreements have made no significant progress. On January 22, 2021, however, after years of mobilizations and campaigns by civil society organizations (including Mayors for Peace and Fundipau), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted at the UN in July 2017, entered into force. This is a magnificent and essential first step towards advancing towards the eradication of these weapons but much remains to be done to get all countries to join them.

The exhibition, therefore, aims to be an instrument of awareness of this situation at a time when organized civil society has reached this historic milestone. Despite this, the support of the public is needed to get as many countries as possible to join it - the Spanish state has not yet done so - in order to move towards a world free of the nuclear threat.

The exhibition consists of 10 panels and begins with the testimony of Hiroshima survivor and activist Setsuko Thurlow, who in 2017 received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The exhibition then explains the operation of nuclear weapons, reviews the terrible effects that have caused the tests and the use of these weapons, warning of the threat posed by the large number of nuclear warheads that are still active. Lastly, it presents the work of organized civil society today to move towards its ban and sets out the outstanding challenges to achieving the goal of its total elimination.

 Weblink to the YouTube recording of the opening:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2q6pOI53fM>

● UK and Ireland Chapter

The UK & Ireland Mayors held their spring webinar

Report by Mr. Sean Morris, UK & Ireland Mayors for Peace Chapter Secretary

The UK & Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter held their spring webinar on the 26th of March. With a well-attended meeting of Mayors, Provosts, senior councillors and civil society representatives, the Chapter was opened by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, and it was then chaired by Manchester Councillor Eddy Newman.

The webinar touched on the following issues:

- * The Chapter Secretary, Sean Morris, provided an overview of UK & Ireland, European and global progress in the Mayors for Peace organisation.
- * Dr Rebecca Johnson of ICAN UK gave an analysis of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the ICAN Cities Appeal and the UK Integrated Defence & Security Review.
- * Anna Lubelska, co-founder of the UK Peaceful Schools Initiative, explained the work of Peaceful Schools and how they could be encouraged across the UK & Ireland.
- * Ulrike Eckert, International Officer with the German City of Chemnitz (a partner city of Manchester) provided an overview of the Chemnitz Day of Peace and its peace education plans as part of being a future European Capital of Culture.
- * Richard Outram, Policy Officer at Oldham Council provided a colourful presentation of their ginkgo peace seed project. 10 of the Chapter's members now have ginkgo trees originating from Hiroshima, and others are likely to follow.

It was agreed that the Chapter's next meeting should be on or close to International Peace Day in September. Members were encouraged to support other peace anniversaries.

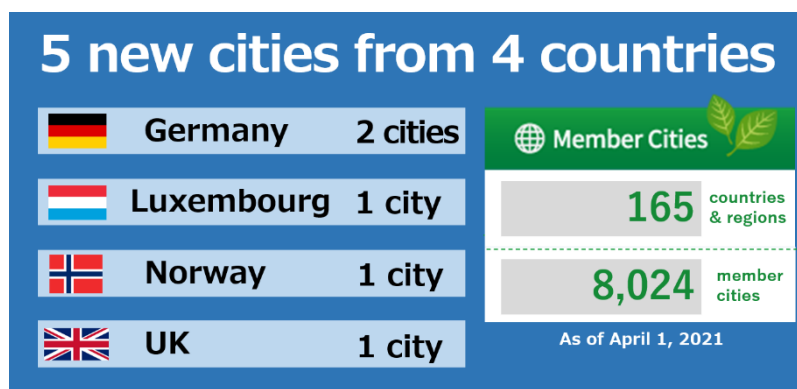
● **Please send us a report on your city's peace activities**

Help us tell other members what you are doing! Please send the Secretariat a short report on a peace activity or initiative by your city so that we can share it on our [website](#) or the News Flash. Reports on your city's activity or initiative that stimulate youth to be engaged in peace activities or promote 'culture of peace' are especially welcome! We look forward to receiving ones.

Email: mayorcon@pcf.city.hiroshima.jp

*Please write a short (up to 200 words long) report in English, and send it to the above email address with photos (if any). Please include key information such as the date, venue, description, and result.

Mayors for Peace member cities - 8,024 cities in 165 countries/regions



Help us achieve 10,000 member cities!

On April 1, we gained 5 new member cities, bringing our total membership to 8,024. We thank all involved in promoting expanded membership for their invaluable support. Below is the breakdown of the new members.

Country	New Members	Total No.	Remarks
Germany	Ennepetal, Schwalmtal	711	Thanks to efforts by Hannover, a Vice President and Lead City.
Luxembourg	Bertrange	59	Continuing from February, new cities joined.
Norway	Sortland	105	
UK	Cornwall	84	

List of new members (PDF):

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/data/03_newmembers/2021/newmembers2104_en.pdf

Membership by country (PDF):

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/data/01_monthly_updating/07_membership_by_country_en.pdf

Help us achieve 10,000 member cities!

Mayors for Peace aims to achieve 10,000 member cities to foster international public support for the realization of a world without nuclear weapons. Invite other cities in your country, as well as your sister cities and any other cities with which you have relations to join Mayors for Peace. You can download a letter of request and document pack below.

The document pack is available in 10 different languages: Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish.

Letters of request to join Mayors for Peace and document pack

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/aboutus/join.html#section01>

Reports by Executive Advisors

- **Webinar: Abolish Nuclear Weapons -TPNW & People's Campaigns-**

Report by Mr. Thomas Hajnoczi, the Executive Advisor for Mayors for Peace

On 16 April the Asia Europe People's Forum held a webinar on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and people's campaigns in which 188 persons from 15 countries took part. Mayors for Peace Executive Adviser Thomas Hajnoczi highlighted that without the prohibition norm a world without nuclear weapons is not possible. Therefore opposition to the TPNW is tantamount to rejecting the early achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons. Nuclear umbrella states cling to the continued existence of nuclear weapons in their security policy also for the future which runs counter to nuclear disarmament.

Yayoi Tsuchida informed about the civil society campaign to join the TPNW in Japan where 72% of the population wants to join the treaty.

Kim Chinyoung from the Republic of Korea explained the situation there with regard to the TPNW and DPRK.

Achin Vanaik regretted that so far only Bangladesh is a state party of the TPNW in South Asia, but could become or join a nuclear weapon free zone.

Ludo de Brabander addressed the presence of nuclear weapons without parliamentary approval in Belgium where 77% of the population favours joining the TPNW.

Lisa Clark from Italy where even 87% supports the TPNW informed about civil society action.



- **“Advancing Integral Disarmament in Times of Pandemic”
Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development**

Report by Mr. Randy Rydell, the Executive Advisor for Mayors for Peace

On 23 March, the Vatican's development Dicastery and SCRAP—a British NGO initiative, the Strategic Concept for the Removal of Arms and Proliferation—jointly hosted this webinar on ways to advance disarmament during the pandemic. [Click here to see the website for this 4-hour event.](#)

The event featured remarks by five Cardinals, three Archbishops, representatives from several religions (Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Hebrew), the grand-daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, Religions for Peace, Pax Christi, ICAN, and other groups. Many speakers endorsed the UN Secretary-General's call for a “Global Cease Fire” during the pandemic and the “Fratelli Tutti” encyclical by Pope Francis, with its strong support for nuclear disarmament. ([Webpage](#))

The event also emphasized inter-faith dialog and cooperation in advancing nuclear disarmament, conventional arms control, and shifting resources from weapons to meeting human needs in development, health, the environment, and peace. The webinar endorsed SCRAP'S comprehensive approach to disarmament, including its proposal for a treaty on “general and complete disarmament.” [Click here to see a press report.](#)

● **Webinar: “Advancing Nuclear Disarmament under the NPT: The Stockholm Initiative and its Stepping Stones Ahead of the Review Conference”**

Report by Mr. Randy Rydell, the Executive Advisor for Mayors for Peace

On 17 March, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research hosted a 2-hour webinar on the Stockholm Initiative, a 16-nation proposal led by Sweden and Germany before the 2020 NPT Review Conference (now scheduled for August 2021) that identified 22 “stepping stones” of near-term measures for progress in nuclear disarmament.

The Initiative is further described [here](#).

The meeting began with a survey of nuclear-weapon challenges and concluded with a discussion emphasizing “risk reduction” measures. Speakers included experts and officials from: Germany; Sweden; France; Malaysia; Japan; Russia; the United States; the UK; Switzerland; and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. Highlights included:

- Support for the 1985 Reagan/Gorbachev joint statement against nuclear war and in support of the non-use of nuclear weapons.
- Reaffirmation that the common goal remains the achievement of nuclear disarmament.
- The value of new crisis management, confidence-building, risk reduction measures—with the latter being the primary responsibility of the nuclear-armed states.
- The need to engage nuclear-weapon allies, the non-NPT states, and non-nuclear-weapon states in the disarmament process.
- The need to devalue and reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security policies.
- Concerns over the UK’s recent decision to expand its arsenal, and a UK response citing the need to maintain its “minimum credible deterrent.”

The meeting did not address the role of non-governmental groups, women, youth, cities, legislatures, or environmental issues. A recording is available [here](#).

Request to promote various measures based on the Mayors for Peace Action Plan

At the 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace held in Nagasaki in August 2017, we developed our Action Plan (2017-2020*), aiming for lasting world peace. Together, we hope to make significant strides toward realizing this goal. Please promote all appropriate measures based on the Action Plan within your own municipality or regional group.

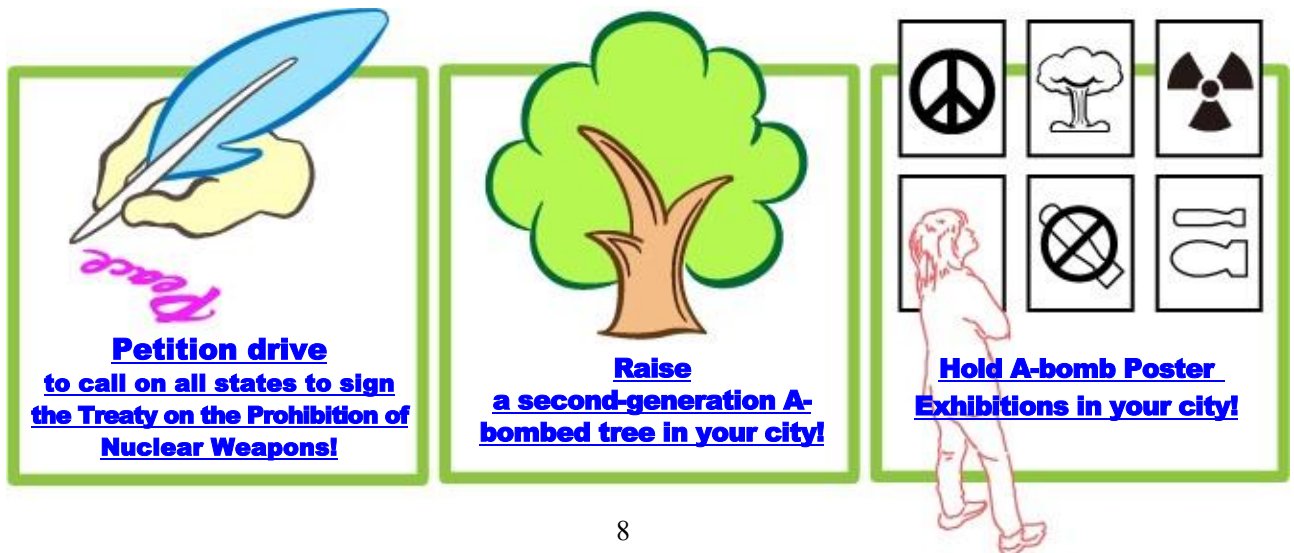
*A new Vision and a new Action Plan are to be developed and adopted at the 12th Executive Conference of Mayors for Peace, which is planned to be held online by August 2021. (See page 1 for a relevant article.) The current Action Plan will temporarily remain effective until then, and initiatives and activities based on it continue to be implemented.

🔗 Mayors for Peace Action Plan (PDF):

http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/conferences/general/data/9th_gc/9th_gc_Action_Plan_en.pdf

🔗 Initiatives implemented under the Action Plan:

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/vision/initiatives.html>



Call for input: examples of initiatives to foster peace-seeking spirit

The Mayors for Peace Secretariat has been seeking examples of peace education initiatives conducted by any organization (city hall/school/NGO, etc.) in Mayors for Peace member cities that are conducive to raising peace-seeking spirit among future generations. The Mayors for Peace Secretariat accepts reports on a rolling basis, so please send your report whenever your project is completed. The submitted reports will be posted on our website and in the Mayors for Peace News Flash as a source of information for other member cities that are planning to launch their own peace education program.

 Call for Input on the Mayors for Peace website:

<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/vision/initiatives.html#section10>

Peace news from Hiroshima

(Provided by the Hiroshima Peace Media Center of the CHUGOKU SHIMBUN)

Five photographic negatives taken by former Chugoku Shimbun photographer Yoshito Matsushige (1913–2005) that document what happened in Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, have been designated important tangible cultural properties by the Hiroshima Municipal Board of Education. They are known as the only existing photographs taken on the day of the bombing that capture the desperation of those who experienced the atomic bombing.

Few photos involving the atomic bombing were taken on the ground on August 6, 1945, the day Hiroshima was thrown into unprecedented chaos. In 2007, a survey conducted by the Chugoku Shimbun of materials held by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and others identified 35 photos. Of that total, 25 were of the mushroom cloud created by the atomic bombing, with only five photos depicting the horrors faced by Hiroshima citizens beneath the mushroom cloud. All five photos, precious materials conveying the reality of the bombing to those alive today, were taken by Mr. Matsushige.

When the Peace Memorial Museum's main building reopened in April 2019 after completion of major renovations, panels with two photos taken at the Miyuki Bridge (each measuring approximately two-meters square) were put on display in a larger space than before. While emphasizing the extensive damage caused by the bombing, the photos also highlight the indiscriminate nature of the attack on civilians.

The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have consistently displayed the photos taken by Mr. Matsushige at A-bombing exhibits they have held overseas since 1995. In 2020, his photos were even exhibited at the Battleship Missouri Memorial at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Mr. Matsushige's photos are "witnesses" of history. The world must take great care to pass down the invaluable photos to following generations as a warning to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again.

Please see the following for more peace-related news.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum updates exhibits—60 items to be shown to public starting today

<http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=104281>

Hiroshima National Peace Memorial Hall begins exhibition introducing lives of Jesuit priests

<http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=104059>

Number of visitors to "Peace Exchange Space" at A-bomb survivor's home in Hiroshima surpasses 5,000

<http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=104635>

Photographic negatives taken on day of A-bombing designated important cultural properties by Hiroshima School Board

<http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=104676>

Seven A-bomb survivors' groups initiate signature campaign to call on Japanese government to ratify nuclear ban treaty

<http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/?p=104602>

Mayors for Peace Official Social Media Accounts

<Twitter> 
<https://twitter.com/Mayors4Peace>



<Facebook> 
<https://www.facebook.com/mayorsforpeace>



 The latest and archived issues of Mayors for Peace News Flash are available at:
<http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/english/statements/newsflash.html>

If you have any comments or questions, please contact us at:

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