



Briefing paper

Date: 17th August 2021

No.35

Subject: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day events, TPNW webinar and general update

1. Introduction

This report has been developed by the Chapter Secretary and it provides UK & Ireland Chapter members with an overview of events held for the 76th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks, one of the important peace anniversaries that the Mayors for Peace organisation seeks to commemorate.

Other issues considered in this report include:

- A major peace crane exhibition within the Edinburgh Festival at the Scottish Peace and Justice Centre.
- Plans for a joint Mayors for Peace / ICAN webinar on the 21st October.
- Plans for the first States Parties Conference of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.
- Support for a Global Parliament of Mayors statement on the impacts of climate change on migration and peace building.
- An update on the Mayors for Peace ginkgo seeds project.

2. Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremonies, 2021

On August 6th and 9th every year since 1946, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki have held annual Peace Memorial Ceremonies to remember those who were tragically killed in the atomic weapon attacks that at the time destroyed much of these cities. Each city has created Peace Museums and Peace Memorial Parks as permanent reminders of the attacks and the need for peace and reconciliation. They encourage people from around Japan and the world to visit them and join in solidarity with them.

These annual ceremonies have become increasingly important, and they are shown live on Japanese television and across many parts of the world. They usually attract large amounts of people, with special guests invited to join with the hibakusha (survivors of the bomb) each year, including the Prime Minister of Japan, national ambassadors to Japan, senior members of the United Nations and non-governmental groups and lead cities of Mayors for Peace (when there is an adjoining General Conference of Mayors for Peace every four years).

The great challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic allowed for only a small ceremony to be held in 2020, the 75th anniversary of the attacks, which was a real disappointment for all. Again this August, increasing infections meant the event was held at just 10% of usual capacity. Despite this, it was still a moving ceremony in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki with all the main components of the ceremony still in place.

The centrepiece of the ceremony follows after a 1-minute silence at 8.15am on the 6th August and 11.02am on the 9th August – this is the exact time of the atomic weapons attacks on both cities.

THE UK & IRELAND CHAPTER OF MAYORS FOR PEACE

C/o Nuclear Policy, City Policy Section, Level 3, Town Hall Extension, Manchester, M60 3NY
Tel: 0161 234 3244 E-Mail: sean.morris@manchester.gov.uk Website: <http://www.mayorsforpeace.org>

The Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki give annual 'Peace Declarations' which provide a reminder of what took place in August 1945, the state of peace in the world today and the need to continue to work for a world without nuclear weapons.

In the 2021 Peace Declarations, Mayor Matsui of Hiroshima and Mayor Taue of Nagasaki both welcomed the formal ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which was instituted into the United Nations in January. They called on the Japanese Government and other governments who had not supported it to reconsider their diplomatic strategy and, at the very least, observe the first States Parties Conference of the TPNW in March 2022. They also welcomed that more hibakusha from areas of 'black rain' contamination – areas of each city where it rained shortly after the attacks, the rain coming down as black droplets due to radioactive contamination – would now be receiving recognition and compensation. They also welcomed the ongoing support of the 8,000+ members of Mayors for Peace. They noted the real challenges that remain in creating a nuclear weapons free world, with modernisation of nuclear weapons taking place in all of the existing nuclear weapon states.

These declarations are attached as Appendix 1 and 2.

Also speaking at the ceremony were the Prime Minister of Japan, Yoshihide Suga and, representing the UN Secretary General was the Under-Secretary General and High Representative on Disarmament Affairs, Ms Izumi Nakamitsu. The Prime Minister acknowledged the real challenges that exist in bringing the international community together on nuclear disarmament issues, whilst in a video message the UN Secretary General lamented the slow progress in implementing multilateral nuclear disarmament.

3. Local Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day ceremonies

The ongoing challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic again limited opportunities for larger and indoor events for members of Mayors for Peace and the wider peace community in showing their solidarity with Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, a recent lifting of some restrictions allowed for a substantial number of largely outdoor events to go ahead in the UK and Ireland.

Some of the most notable events that took place included:

- **Manchester** – As a Vice President of Mayors for Peace, the Lord Mayor of Manchester led a Hiroshima Day service held by the Manchester University war memorial on August 6th. The event included the reading of the Hiroshima Peace Declaration, a laying of a wreath and a minutes silence, and a communal reading of the UN Peace Declaration. An online series of pages were also created for this year's anniversary and can be found at: <https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/news/article/8820/manchester-remembers-the-events-of-hiroshima-and-nagasaki-76-years-on>
- **Dublin** – The Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Japanese Ambassador to Ireland, officers of the Irish Government Department of Foreign Affairs and the Chair of CND Ireland attended a Hiroshima Day ceremony in Merrion Square. The speech of the Japanese Ambassador to the ceremony can be found at: https://www.ie.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/11_000001_00020.html
- **Leeds** – The Lord Mayor of Leeds, the Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council, the Chair of the NFLA and the Chair of CND were amongst the speakers at the Leeds annual commemoration held on Nagasaki Day, the 9th August, by the Mayors for Peace memorial plaque and tree in Park Square in the city centre. At the ceremony mention was made of a second ginkgo tree planted in the square that commemorates Leeds City Council passing a resolution of support for the TPNW.
- **London** - London Region CND's annual Hiroshima Day Commemoration took place at the commemorative Hiroshima cherry tree in Tavistock Square, in the presence of the Mayor of Camden and the former leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn MP. In addition, the Elected Mayor of Newham was presented with peace seeds from the CND General Secretary at a ceremony in Stratford. The Mayor of Kingston-upon-Thames laid a wreath at a local event organised by Kingston CND at Canbury Gardens in the district.
- **Glasgow and Edinburgh** – Councillors, MPs and MSPs attended CND Scotland's commemoration event held by the Hiroshima peace tree in Kelvingrove Park in Glasgow. A prominent event also took place in Edinburgh on the 6th August to formally open a peace

crane exhibition, which hopefully will travel to Glasgow for the COP climate change conference in November. This is discussed in more detail in section 4 below.

- **Bradford** – The Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford was amongst the speakers on the 7th August at the Hiroshima memorial in Norfolk Gardens behind Bradford City Hall.
- **Liverpool** – The Lord Mayor of Liverpool laid a wreath by Liverpool’s Hiroshima memorial stone in St John’s Gardens, which is behind the monumental St George’s Hall.
- **Shetland Islands** – The Convener of the Council planted a Hiroshima ginkgo peace tree at a special ceremony around Hiroshima Day by the main library in Lerwick. This matter is further discussed in section 7 below.
- **Hebden Bridge** – the Mayor of Hebden Royd was one of the speakers at a Calder Valley for Peace and Justice event by the wavy steps of the packhorse bridge in the town centre from 3pm.
- **Sheffield** – Peace groups in Sheffield held a commemorative event by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki memorial stone in the Peace Gardens that adjoins Sheffield Town Hall.
- **Oxford and Didcot** – two events were held this year. On Friday 6th August peace activists marked Hiroshima Day with a gathering for reflection beside Ladygrove Lake in Didcot, while Nagasaki Day will be commemorated in Bonn Square, Oxford on Monday 9th August in the presence of a number of Oxford councillors. A Peace Walk from Didcot to Oxford along the Thames Path also took place during Sunday 8th and Monday 9th August.
- **Paisley** – despite heavy rain, Renfrewshire councillors, local MSPs, peace and faith groups held a commemoration event by the Peace Pole in Paisley Park.
- **Inverclyde** – local councillors, MPs and MSPs attended a service organised by local peace groups by the Custom House in Greenock.
- **Birmingham** – a socially distanced event with readings, reflection and poetry took place close to Birmingham Cathedral on the 7th August.
- **Abingdon** – a silent vigil took place by Abingdon War Memorial on the 6th August.
- **Milton Keynes** – a Hiroshima Day reflective event took place on the 6th August by the Peace Pagoda, with an evening lantern floating ceremony.
- **Lewisham** – a socially distanced peace picnic took place in the Archbishop Tutu Peace Garden in Grove Park on the 9th August.
- **Bromley** – a socially distanced vigil took place opposite The Churchill Theatre, followed by a silent walk to the lake in Church House Gardens for the scattering of white flowers, and poems and peace statements.
- **Llandudno** – a commemoration event with peace and faith groups took place to remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki organised by the Aberconwy Peace and Justice Group.
- **Many other events took place across the UK and Ireland.** Further details can be found on the CND regional and national group websites and of other peace groups like Pax Christi and SGI.

Selected photos from some of these events can be found at Appendix 3.

4. **Peace crane exhibition in Edinburgh, 6th – 28th August 2021**

One of the most notable events held in the UK and Ireland this August was the opening of a major art and peace education exhibition at the Scottish Peace and Justice Centre in St John’s Church. This is on Princes Street in the centre of Edinburgh.

The Peace Cranes exhibition is an initiative of Peace & Justice Scotland delivered in partnership with the Edinburgh Just Festival and St John’s Church. It features a monumental installation by the Scottish artist Janis Hart that transforms the entire heritage space of St John’s Church into a bird sanctuary to 140,000 origami paper cranes. These have been folded by people from across the UK, France, Canada, New Zealand and Japan over the last five years. The installation offers a space for wonder, hope and reflection on the over 140,000 victims of the 1945 atomic bombings in Hiroshima, as well as highlighting the great acceleration of species extinction through the origami symbol of the endangered red-crowned crane.

The Peace Cranes exhibition is dedicated to Atsuko Betchaku (1960-2017), an Edinburgh University student from Japan who was also a Peace & Justice Scotland volunteer. She sparked

the international wave of folding 140,000 origami peace cranes commemorating each of the 140,000 Hiroshima victims and illustrating a shared desire for peace and disarmament.

Peace & Justice Scotland has been building a culture of peace across Scotland since 1980 and is a partner in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Just Festival has links with the world-famous Edinburgh Festival and organises events around issues of peace, justice and humanitarianism.

The organisers of this exhibition still require £3,500 to cover the remaining costs for the Peace Cranes exhibition, not only for the duration of the Just Festival but seeking to see it hosted during the COP26 – UN Climate Summit to be held in Glasgow. There is a desire to take the exhibition to Glasgow in November. Donations will help with the costs of talks, peace and climate cafes, films and workshops, as well as towards the remaining costs for the installation of the exhibition. Your contribution – however small – would be much appreciated.

The exhibition was opened on the 6th August at a special ceremony including the Consul-General of Japan based in Edinburgh; Bill Kidd MSP, Chair of the Scottish Parliament's Cross-party group on nuclear weapons; Professor Jolyon Mitchell, Director of the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Theology and Public Issues; Reverend Markus Dunzkofer, Rector of St John's Church; and Helen Trew, Director of the Just Festival.

Other guests at the launch event included Tommy Sheppard MP, Lord Wallace the Moderator of the Church of Scotland; and Professor Lynn Jamieson, the Chair of the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Brian Larkin, Coordinator of Peace & Justice Scotland said at the launch: "We're delighted that the Peace Cranes exhibition will be the centrepiece of this year's in situ Just Festival, in the year that, after 40 years as Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre, we have now become Peace & Justice Centre Scotland, with the mission of building a culture of peace in Scotland."

The Peace Cranes exhibition also includes free online opening and closing events as part of Just Festival 2021.

Further information and details on how to visit the exhibition live or online can be found at:

<https://peaceandjustice.org.uk/what-we-do/peacecranes/> or

<https://www.just-festival.org/eventbrite-event/peace-cranes/>

5. Mayors for Peace / NFLA / ICAN webinar preparing for the TPNW

As noted in Policy Briefing 34, the European Chapter of Mayors for Peace is working with the UK & Ireland Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) and ICAN on a high-profile webinar in preparation for the first States Parties Conference of the TPNW.

The webinar will be held on the 21st October 2021 and is considering the importance of this first conference in setting a dynamic energy towards nuclear disarmament and a more peaceful world.

The first flyer for the webinar is attached at Appendix 4, and the 90-minute event will include:

- Opening comments and the webinar's moderation by Thomas Hajnoczi, Executive Advisor of Mayors for Peace, and a former officer within the Disarmament Office of the Austrian Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- Short messages from representatives of the Irish, Maltese and Vatican State governments, European states who have ratified the TPNW.
- A keynote address from Alexander Kmentt, President-designate of the TPNW States Parties Conference, of his hopes and plans for the meeting.
- Messages from two key organisations heavily involved in the TPNW – the International Committee of the Red Cross and a speaker representing the hibakusha / nuclear test veterans movement.
- Messages from Mayors / Council Leaders of European cities who have passed resolutions supporting the TPNW.

- Closing messages from the CEO of ICAN, Beatrice Fihn and the Chair of the Mayors for Peace European Chapter, Mayor Josep Mayoral of Granollers, Spain.

Registration for the webinar will begin in mid-September. Chapter members are encouraged to attend it online.

6. Plans for NPT and TPNW Conferences

After considerable discussion, due to repeated cancellations arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has now been scheduled to meet 4-28 January 2022 at the United Nations in New York. This still is subject to whether it is safe to hold early next year. The President-designate will convene informal consultations with all states parties in October 2021 to evaluate the situation and conditions related to the pandemic, and to confirm the dates of the Conference. Due to these public health concerns, the Conference has had to be postponed twice (27 April–22 May 2020 and 2-27 August 2021).

To allow the NPT Conference to take place, the TPNW States Parties Conference will now provisionally take place at the UN in Vienna on 22–24 March 2022. The conference is likely to respond to the actions and outcomes of the January NPT Conference, as well as set out its vision and plans for trying to bring more signatories and ratifications towards it.

Civil society efforts are also taking place to encourage those states who have not started proceedings to sign or ratify it, or who have formally opposed the treaty, to at the very least observe the conference. In Europe, there has been confirmation that a number of such states are planning to observe it, and further effort on this matter is continuing. The Conference Chair, Alexander Kmentt, is contacting states over the agenda and detail for the meeting, and the important role civil society groups will also take within the three days.

7. Other issues – Global Parliament of Mayors statement / ginkgo seeds update

Chapter members may be interested to hear of a couple of relevant initiatives they are encouraged to support.

Global Parliament of Mayors ‘Call for Action’ on migration and climate change

The Mayors for Peace European Chapter has cooperated with the Global Parliament of Mayors, a local government group that seeks to bring the voice of the sector into international decision-making forums. It is based in The Hague and its website is <https://globalparliamentofmayors.org/>. Amongst its executive members is the Elected Mayor of Bristol, Marvin Rees.

GPM has contacted the Mayors for Peace to seek members support in a new initiative which relates to the likely damage and challenges that climate change could bring to large parts of the world. This could potentially bring about large amounts of forced migration in the near future. Some 21.5 million people per year on average over the past decade have had to flee their homes due to climate related reasons. By 2050, it is expected that over 200 million people will be forced to leave their homes because of climate change.

GPM note that forced migration is the human face of the climate crisis, and towns and cities have often become sanctuaries for many migrants. GPM have announced a call for action that prepares local government for potential future waves of migration brought about by the challenges climate change could bring – forced migration due to crop failure, severe flooding or unbearably hot temperatures and the political crises that such issues could inevitably create.

As a Vice President of Mayors for Peace, Manchester City Council has signed and supported the Call for Action. Like most UK towns and cities, Manchester has had to deal with waves of migration over many centuries and, within its climate emergency resolution, it is fully aware of the huge challenges that climate change is creating across the world.

Chapter members are encouraged to consider the Call for Action to advance knowledge, action and collaboration around the issues of forced migration created by the impacts of climate change.

Further information on the matter can be found at the GPM website call to action webpage:

Hiroshima A-bomb tree seeds peace education programme

There are now 12 members of the UK and Ireland Mayors, Provosts and Leaders for Peace Chapter who have ginkgo and other Japanese tree seeds that come from Hiroshima-based trees that were damaged in the August 6th, 1945 atomic weapon attack but survived and regrew. These are powerful symbols of peace and of regeneration after a catastrophe.

The members that have seeds include Manchester, Edinburgh, Hull, Shetland Islands, South Ayrshire, Oldham, Rochdale, Hebden Royd / Calderdale, Cornwall, Norwich, Hastings and Winchester. We are delighted that there has been such interest in acquiring seeds from Hiroshima, and to develop appropriate places for their location, as well as peace education programmes with local schools.

The Shetland Islands Council has grown a number of trees from their ginkgo seeds, and on Hiroshima Day this year the latest tree was formally planted at a site close to the main library in Lerwick town centre.

Shetland Amenity Trust staff have carefully nurtured the ginkgo seeds, which were initially grown in a greenhouse before being brought on outdoors. Some seedlings have already been planted out in other locations in Shetland, including at some local schools, with other sites still being considered. It is hoped that the story of the trees will be an educational resource to stimulate discussions about conflict and peace.

On August 6th, a ginkgo tree sapling was planted beside Shetland Library, in the grounds of the former St Ringan's church, ahead of the planned move of the Council Chamber from the Town Hall next year.

Malcolm Bell, Convener of the Council said: "The seeds of the ginkgo trees in Hiroshima are a powerful symbol of hope, survival and resilience. They serve as a constant reminder of the need for meaningful dialogue and political discourse as a prerequisite to achieving lasting peace between nations."

A picture from the ceremony are included in Appendix 3. The Secretariat is keen to hear of progress with developing the seeds and ceremonies around their planting as and when they take place. If you would be interested in receiving more information on how to request seeds from Hiroshima please get in touch with the Chapter Secretary – sean.morris@manchester.gov.uk.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

This report has focused on the many events, ceremonies, exhibition and associated initiatives to commemorate the 76th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic weapon attacks. The Secretariat sincerely thanks members who took part in their local events.

Member authorities are recommended to be involved in the following actions:

- To consider online or live events to support International Peace Day on September 21st, or to support the work of the 'Peace One Day' group noted in Briefing Number 34 - https://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M4P_Briefing_No_34_European_Chapter_and_ExecCon.pdf
- To continue to seek to pass resolutions of support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- To seek to attend the Mayors for Peace / ICAN / NFLA webinar on preparing for the TPNW States Parties Conference being held on the 21st October.
- To support the GPM Call to Action on Climate Change and Migration.
- To consider receiving ginkgo tree seeds from Hiroshima.
- To look at ways to promote peaceful cities and peace education at the local level. Briefing Number 33 gave an extensive overview of peace education charities and trusts working within the UK and Ireland – https://www.nuclearpolicy.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/M4P_Briefing_No_33_Chapter_meeting_and_progress_report.pdf

Hiroshima Peace Declaration 2021



On this day 76 years ago, a single atomic bomb instantly reduced our hometown to a scorched plain. That bombing brought cruel death to countless innocent victims and left those who managed to survive with profound, lifelong physical and emotional injuries due to radiation, fear of aftereffects, and economic hardship. One survivor who gave birth to a girl soon after the bombing says, “As more horrors of the bomb came to light, and I became more concerned about their effects, I worried less about myself and more about my child. Imagining the future awaiting my daughter, my suffering grew, night after sleepless night.”

“No one else should ever suffer as we have.” These words express the will of survivors who, having known horrors too painful to recall, were condemned to fear, frustration, and agony by the likely future of their children and their own irradiated bodies. When hibakusha tell their stories, they convey not only the horror and inhumanity of nuclear weapons but also an intense yearning for peace, born of compassion. Finally, after 75 long years of sustained activity, their demands have moved the international community. This year, on January 22, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) entered into effect. It remains now for world leaders to support this treaty, shifting their focus toward a truly sustainable society free from nuclear weapons.

The novel coronavirus still ravages our world. The community of nations recognizes this threat to humanity and is taking urgent measures to end it. Nuclear weapons, developed to win wars, are a threat of total annihilation that we can certainly end, if all nations work together. No sustainable society is possible with these weapons continually poised for indiscriminate slaughter. The combined wisdom of all peoples must be trained on their total abolition.

The road to abolition will not be smooth, but a ray of hope shines from the young people now taking up the hibakusha’s quest. One survivor who witnessed hell that day entrusts our future to the young with these words: “Start small, but start. I hope each of you will do whatever you can to promote and maintain the treasure we call peace.” I ask our young to sustain an unshakeable conviction that nuclear weapons are incompatible with full, healthy lives for their loved ones. I further ask them to share that conviction persuasively with people around the world.

We must never forget that young people can certainly compel world leaders to turn away from nuclear deterrence. Three years after the bombing, Helen Keller visited Hiroshima, encouraging its residents in the struggle to recover. “Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.” Her words remind us that individuals, when united, have the power to change the world. If the determination to live in peace sweeps through civil society, people will elect leaders who share that determination. Nuclear weapons are the ultimate human violence. If civil society decides to live without them, the door to a nuclear-weapon-free world will open wide. The atomic bombed city of Hiroshima will never stop preserving the facts of the bombing, disseminating them beyond borders, and conveying them to the future. With the more than 8,000 Mayors for Peace member cities in 165 countries and regions, we will promote a worldwide “culture of peace.” In a global culture where peace is a universal value, world leaders will find the courage to correct their policies.

Given the uncertainty concerning nuclear weapons derived from stalled disarmament negotiations, I have an urgent demand to make of world leaders. The time has come for a profound tactical shift away from reliance on threats toward security based on trust derived from dialogue. Experience has taught humanity that threatening others for self-defence benefits no one. Our leaders must understand that threatening rivals with nuclear weapons achieves nothing of value, but treating each other with empathy and building long-lasting friendships connect directly to national self-interest. To that end, I urge all world leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, achieve a deeper understanding of the bombings, fulfil the disarmament mandate of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and join the discussions aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of the TPNW.

With respect to the Japanese government, I request productive mediation between the nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states. Furthermore, in accordance with the will of the hibakusha, I demand immediate signing and ratification of the TPNW, then constructive participation in the first Meeting of States Parties. Fulfilling the role of mediator must involve creating an environment that facilitates the restoration of international trust and security without reliance on nuclear weapons. The average age of our hibakusha is close to 84. I demand more generous assistance for them and the many others suffering daily due to the harmful physical and emotional effects of radiation. I demand as well immediate relief for those exposed to the black rain.

At this Peace Memorial Ceremony marking 76 years since the bombing, we offer heartfelt prayers for the peaceful repose of the souls of the atomic bomb victims. Together with Nagasaki and likeminded people around the world, we pledge to do everything in our power to abolish nuclear weapons and light the way toward lasting world peace.

August 6, 2021

Kazumi Matsui
Mayor, The City of Hiroshima
President of Mayors for Peace

Nagasaki Peace Declaration 2021



This year saw the passing of a Catholic monk. Toumei Ozaki spent his whole life following in the footsteps of Father Maximilian Kolbe, the man who was called the "Saint of Auschwitz." Brother Ozaki spoke out about his experiences in the atomic bombing up until just before his life came to a close at the age of 93. In his diary he left behind these words:

The countries of the world, all of them, must completely abolish nuclear weapons or there will be no peace on earth. Nuclear weapons are not conventional bombs. Only those who experienced the atomic bombings can understand the terror inherent in radiation. Parents, children, loved ones and many others were killed by these bombs. In order to see that they are not used again I keep saying, "This is wrong! This is wrong!" I keep screaming for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Those of us who survived the hell of the atomic bombings want to make sure that we have peace without nuclear weapons before we die.

The "peace without nuclear weapons" that Brother Ozaki continued to call for has not as yet been realized. However, the wish he had has borne fruit in the form of a certain treaty.

This year marks the 76th year since humankind experienced the tragedy of the atomic bombings and we are now standing on a new horizon with regard to nuclear weapons. When the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons came into force this January, it was the first time in human history that there had been an international law clearly stating that nuclear weapons are unequivocally illegal.

The process to make this newly established treaty grow into a universal rule for the world and realize a world free of nuclear weapons will now begin. The point of departure will be the first meeting of state parties to the treaty, which will be held next year.

Conversely, however, the danger of nuclear weapons continues to grow. While the nuclear-armed nations have a responsibility to uphold the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and reduce nuclear weapons, moves such as the public announcement by the U.K. about increasing the number of nuclear warheads in that country show that dependence on such weapons is actually increasing. Furthermore, the competition to replace existing nuclear weapons with more sophisticated weapons and develop new types of nuclear weapons increases.

In order to follow a single path toward a world free of nuclear weapons amidst these two conflicting movements, world leaders must commit to nuclear arms reductions and build trust through dialogue, and civil society must push them in this direction.

I hereby appeal to the Government of Japan and members of the National Diet:

As the country that is most aware of the tragic consequences of nuclear weapons, please join as an observer to the first meeting of state parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in order to look into ways to develop this treaty. With regard to the stipulation in the treaty to provide assistance to victims of the use or testing of nuclear weapons, surely this is an area where Japan and its government can contribute more than any other country. In addition, please sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and see to its ratification at the earliest possible date.

While adhering to the war-renouncing principle of peace in the Japanese Constitution, please look into building a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Northeast Asia that would create a "non-nuclear umbrella" instead of a "nuclear umbrella" and be a step in the direction of a world free of nuclear weapons.

I hereby appeal to the leaders of nuclear-armed nations and countries under their nuclear umbrellas: You must face the reality that thinking of nuclear weapons as necessary to defend your countries under "nuclear deterrence" actually makes the world a more dangerous place. I ask you to see that substantial progress towards nuclear disarmament is made at the next NPT Review Conference, starting with greater steps by the U.S. and Russia to reduce nuclear weapons.

To everyone living on this earth:

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have experienced on a global scale the loss of everyday aspects of our lives that we previously took for granted. We have learned that in order to overcome this crisis it is necessary for each and every one of us to think of ourselves as concerned parties and act appropriately. Now we all ponder together the question of how we can build an even better future when the pandemic is over instead of just returning to the way things were before.

It is the same with nuclear weapons. Are we members of the human race going to choose a future in which we continue to maintain nuclear weapons that will pollute the earth and doom humanity? Hasn't the time come for us to raise our individual voices, as is being done in the movements for decarbonization and sustainable development goals, and speak out against the dangers inherent in nuclear weapons in order to bring about change in the world?

May Nagasaki be the last place to suffer an atomic bombing.

These words are sent from Nagasaki to people all over the world. Hiroshima will eternally be remembered in history as the first place to suffer an atomic bombing, but whether Nagasaki continues to take its place in history as the last place to suffer an atomic bombing depends on the future we build for ourselves. The unchanging resolve of the hibakusha to see that "no one in the world ever goes through that experience again" is expressed in these words, as is the goal clearly stated in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. It is a hope that each and every one of us should continue to hold onto.

Let us share these words with the people of the world and follow a clear path towards a nuclear-free world over the 25-year period that begins this year and brings us to the 100th anniversary of the atomic bombings.

While joining forces with young people of the last generation to directly hear the voices of the hibakusha, Nagasaki will continue to communicate the truth about what happened 76 years ago; facts that must never be forgotten.

The average age of the hibakusha is now over 83. I ask that the Government of Japan provide improved support for the hibakusha and relief measures for those who experienced the atomic bombings but have not yet received official recognition as bombing survivors.

Ten years have now passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and its aftermath. We will not forget what happened in Fukushima. We extend from the bottom of our hearts a call of encouragement to all those in Fukushima who continue to face a variety of hardships.

While extending our deepest condolences to those who lost their lives to the atomic bombs, I hereby declare that Nagasaki will work tirelessly alongside Hiroshima and all people who desire peace to spread a "culture of peace" around the world and bring about the abolishment of nuclear weapons and the realization of eternal peace.

August 9th, 2021

Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki
Vice President of Mayors for Peace

Selected photos from local events held to commemorate Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day



The Lord Mayor of Manchester laying a wreath on Hiroshima Day at Manchester University



Some of the core attendees to the Leeds Hiroshima – Nagasaki Day event – the Chapter Secretary, the Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council, the Lord and Lady Mayoress, the NFLA and CND Chairs



The Convener of Shetland Islands Council with a plaque and a Hiroshima gingko peace tree



The Lord Mayor of Liverpool laying a wreath on Hiroshima Day at St John's Gardens



The Deputy Mayor of Bradford speaking at its Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day event



Some of the guests to the launch of the Edinburgh Peace Cranes exhibition, including the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Consul-General of Japan, Bill Kidd MP and the Chair of CND Scotland

Photo credits: Greater Manchester & District CND, Yorkshire CND, Shetland Islands Council, Merseyside CND, Peace and Justice Centre Scotland.

Mayors for Peace / ICAN / NFLA joint webinar draft programme

Mayors for Peace European Chapter, NFLA & ICAN joint webinar,
Thursday 21st October 2021, 2pm – 3.30pm CET (1pm – 2.30pm GMT)

Building a nuclear weapons free world – the TPNW States Parties Conference and the role of cities, key institutions & civil society

Programme – based on CET timings:

(Timings around Europe: Western European Time for UK, Ireland, Portugal and Iceland 1pm – 2.30pm; Central European Time 2pm – 3.30pm, Eastern European Time 3pm – 4.30pm, Eastern Standard / Moscow Time 4pm – 5.30pm)



2.00– 2.05 Opening comments -
Thomas Hajnoczi, Executive Advisor, Mayors for Peace

2.05 – 2.20 Messages from TPNW European States Parties –

- Foreign Minister of Malta, Evarist Bartolo
- Foreign Minister of Ireland, Simon Coveney
- Former Ambassador of the Vatican State to the United Nations Cardinal Silvano M. Tommasi (all invited)



2.20 – 2.40 Keynote address –
Alexander Kmentt, President-Designate of the TPNW States Parties Conference (confirmed)

2.40 – 3.00 The role of international institutions and civil society in encouraging states to engage in the TPNW -

- Helen Durham, Director of International Law and Policy at the International Committee of the Red Cross
- Hibakusha representative / nuclear test veteran on the role of the TPNW in recognising the rights of those affected by nuclear weapons (being invited)



3.00 – 3.20 The importance of cities in supporting the TPNW and lobbying their governments to engage in this disarmament process -

- Deputy Mayor of Hannover (confirmed)
- Mayor of Amsterdam / Dutch / Belgian city (invited)
- Mayor / Provost / Leader of a UK city – (being invited)
- Mayor of Lyon (invited)



3.20 – 3.30 Closing comments -

- Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director, ICAN (confirmed)
- Mayor Josep Mayoral of Granollers, Chair of the Mayors for Peace European Chapter (confirmed)

Registration details – to follow