

Towards a Peaceful 21st Century: World Cities Get into Action

Hiroshima and Nagasaki play host the Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-City Solidarity from August 4 to 9

The Fourth World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-City Solidarity, which aims at the abolition of nuclear weapons and the realization of world peace through cities of the world transcending national borders in cooperation, is to be held from August 4 to August 9 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the first cities in human history to have been devastated by nuclear weapons. Although the East-West Cold War structure has collapsed and the international community is moving toward nuclear disarmament, serious ethnic conflicts and regional disputes are breaking out in large number. Summarizing the events of the 20th century, characterized as the century of war, the conference will debate topics relevant for the 21st century, such as efforts toward the abolition of nuclear weapons following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the wide range of problems that pose a threat to the peace of humanity, such as starvation, poverty, abuse of human rights and destruction of the environment.

The World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-City Solidarity was formed by the cities supporting the "Program to promote the solidarity of cities toward the total abolition of nuclear weapons" which was articulated by the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the Second U.N. Special Session on Disarmament, held in June 1982. As it now stands, the upcoming conference, which is an international NGO based on the U.N. Charter, is to comprise 416 cities representing 98 countries from around the world.

The First Mayors Conference was held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki three years after the organization's founding, in 1985, the 40th year after the atomic bombings. Participating in that conference were mayors representing 67 cities from 22 overseas countries,

and those from 33 cities in Japan. The Second Mayors Conference was convened in 1989, with 81 cities from 26 overseas countries in attendance, as well as 38 cities from Japan. The Third Mayors Conference was held in 1993, attracting the attendance of 93 cities from 43 overseas countries, in addition to 41 cities from Japan. These figures clearly indicate that the circle of cooperation has steadily continued to grow.

The Fourth Mayors Conference is to be held with the participation of 98 cities representing 48 overseas countries, as well as 40 cities from Japan (as of July 27), the highest figures to date. Compared to the previous conference, there are eleven more participating countries and sixteen more cities. Worthy of note is the fact that the number

of cities representing the regions of Europe and Africa has increased, while the number of cities from the U.S. and Asia has remained the same.

The First World Conference of Mayors for Peace through Inter-City Solidarity, held in



The International Conference Center at the Peace Park where the city mayors will meet

1985, was convened amid tense confrontation as the U.S. and Soviet superpowers sought to expand their weapons arsenals. The Second World Conference, in 1989, was held in the positive environment of steady progress in the relaxation of tensions and increased cooperation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Emboldened in their efforts toward realizing world peace, the conference participants sought further reductions in nuclear weapons, and appealed strongly for an immediate and total ban on nuclear weapons testing in order to prevent new nuclear development.

The 1993 conference, the first to be held after the collapse of the East-West Cold War structure, was marked by active debate about the necessity of dealing with more life-related issues, such as poverty, the abuse of human rights and environmental destruction, among others, in addition to

nuclear disarmament, as a role cities could take toward the attainment of peace.

Held as the 20th century draws to a close, the upcoming conference will summarize the events of the present century, drawing lessons that can be applied toward the next century. Concerning the central theme of the abolition of nuclear weapons, deliberations will be conducted into such areas as the efforts that need to be made following the conclusion of the CTBT treaty, and the possibility of solidarity with NGOs in order to realize a world free of nuclear weapons. Seeking measures to resolve threats to world peace, such as starvation, poverty, the causes of increasing numbers of refugees, human rights abuses and environmental and energy problems, the conference will debate what contributions cities can make to the creation of a new world order based on peace.

Efforts toward Designation of A-Bomb Dome as World Heritage Site Adding Strength to Nuclear Abolition



Ruins of Hiroshima after the A-Bombing. The remains of the building at the center is now called the A-Bomb Dome (taken by Shigeo Hayashi in October, 1945)

The city of Hiroshima was subjected to the first atomic bombing in the history of humankind. Near the spot marking the hypocenter of that explosion stands the A-Bomb Dome, a monument that conveys the tragic consequences of nuclear weapons and the horror of war. In December of last year, the A-Bomb Dome was registered as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site. Its registration follows that of the Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland as one of the "negative heritage sites", which tell the history of

humankind's errors. The people of Hiroshima welcome the world's recognition of the A-Bomb Dome as the "Hiroshima Peace Memorial" and are committed to using this opportunity to give further strength to the ongoing movement to eliminate nuclear weapons from the earth.

The A-Bomb Dome was constructed in 1915 as the Hiroshima Prefectural Commercial Exhibition Hall (later named the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall). It was designed by the Czech architect Jan Letzel

(1880-1925).

At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb exploded approximately 580 meters above and 160 meters to the southeast of the building. The force of the blast is estimated to have been the equivalent of 15 kilotons of TNT. Accompanying the explosion was a gigantic fireball that extended 100 meters in diameter. In the short span of 1.4 seconds, the ground reached 6,000 degrees Celsius, a temperature greatly exceeding the melting point of iron.

All wooden structures

within two kilometers of the hypocenter were destroyed either by the force of the blast or by fire; and wooden structures within four kilometers were either completely or partially destroyed, depending on the distance. Approximately 70,000 homes were damaged, and the city was reduced to ruins. It is estimated that the bomb killed 140,000 people (with a margin of error of 10,000 people).

Although the Industrial Promotion Hall was located at the hypocenter, the steel frame of the building's rounded roof miraculously survived, as the bomb exploded nearly directly overhead. The building thus became known as the A-Bomb Dome. Repairs aimed at preserving the building have been undertaken twice, in 1967 and 1989, in hopes of maintaining it as a symbol of the movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

The situation with regard to the world's nuclear weapons continues to seesaw. In the advisory opinion that it presented in July of last year, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) took the view that "a threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law". The advisory opinion included the caveat, however, that "the Court

cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a State would be at stake". Though the ICJ avoided making a ruling on the use of nuclear weapons for self-defense, the people of Hiroshima considered the Court's action a step forward.

In September of last year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which prohibits all nuclear weapons test explosions. India, which seeks a specific schedule for the abolition of nuclear weapons, is opposed to the treaty. Pakistan also refuses to sign. For the people of Hiroshima, it is extremely regrettable that the prospect for implementation of the treaty is not yet in sight.

Moreover, in order to examine the performance and maintain the level of explosive power of its nuclear weapons stockpile, the United States forcibly conducted a non-explosive "SUBCRITICA" at its nuclear test site in Nevada on July 2. Believing that the test "violated the spirit of the CTBT", the people of Hiroshima opposed very strongly.

Atomic Bombing Exhibition Tours In European Cities

Since 1995, the fiftieth year after the atomic bombing, the city of Hiroshima has been calling on other cities throughout the world to host "Atomic Bombing Exhibitions" (collections of artifacts from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings) in order to show the consequences of nuclear war. Nuclear weapons are the most cruel and inhumane of all the weapons, even having the potential to annihilate the entire human race. Hiroshima believes that these exhibitions of atomic bombing materials can themselves be powerful means to further heighten international public opinion toward the abolition of nuclear weapons and accelerate the movement aiming at eliminating such means from the world.

Starting May 20 and lasting through August 6, Hiroshima city government is holding an atomic bombing exhibition in Barcelona, Spain, as the initial stop in a "European Exhibition Tour". Hiroshima is convening the exhibition with the cooperation of the city of Barcelona, the autonomous region of Catalonia, the Catholic diocese, as well as other

authorities. The exhibition is being held at the Pia Almoina Museum of Art, which is located next to the Barcelona Cathedral in the center of the city.

Hiroshima is displaying a total of 161 items, including three works from the "Hiroshima Panels", a series of paintings created by the husband and wife team of Iri and Toshi Maruki that depicts a scene of people whose bodies were burned in the bombing and corpses piled one on top of the other, as well as the uniforms of mobilized students exposed to the atomic bombing, beer bottles melted from the heat, and a panel that shows the distribution of nuclear weapons today.

Adjacent to the art museum, a replica of the A-Bomb Dome standing 11 meters high has been constructed as a monument to peace. Children attending a Japanese school in the local area have decorated the monument with a string of one thousand folded paper cranes as a wish for peace.

The European Exhibition Tour is the first such event that the city of Hiroshima has independently planned. Con-

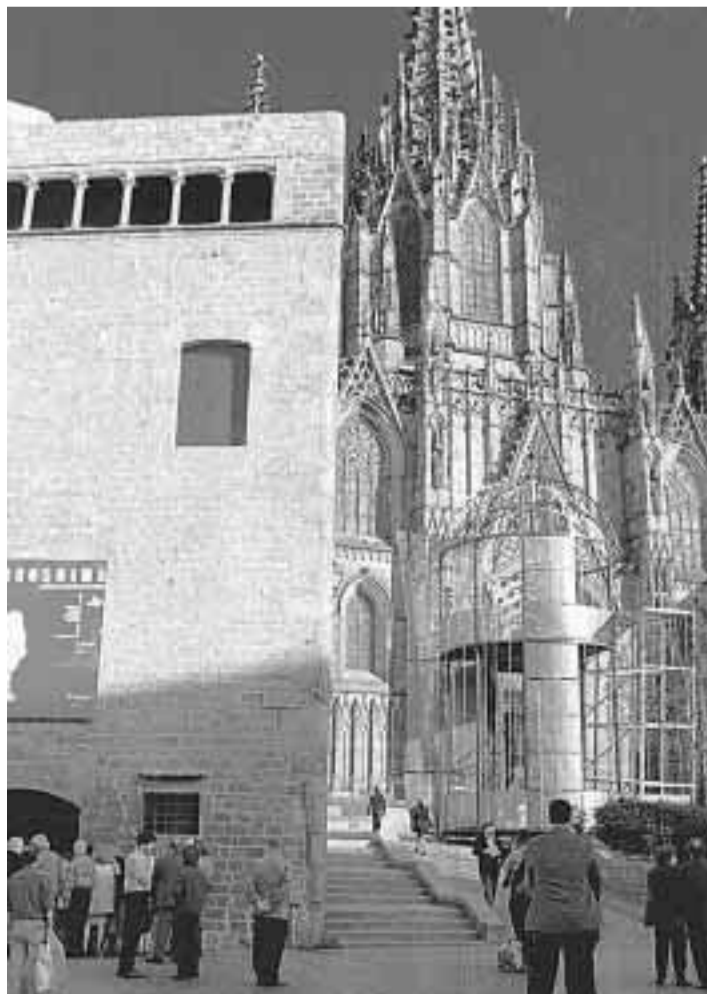
tinuing for a year, the tour will include stops in many cities throughout Europe. After leaving Barcelona, the event is scheduled to open in Heidelberg, Germany, and then Nimes, France. Requests for the display have been received from nine other cities in four countries: Spain, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland.

In 1995, 50 years after the bombing, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington D.C., had been planning to hold an atomic bombing exhibition. However, it was essentially forced to abandon the project due to opposition from World War II veterans and some members of Congress who asserted that "the atomic bomb hastened the end of the war".

Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cities that were scheduled to lend materials demonstrating the consequences of the bombings, thought that it was important to "inform people of the horror of nuclear weapons and to bring Japan and other countries closer together in their mutual understanding of the nuclear issue", and thus cooperated in an atomic bombing exhibition planned by the American University in Washington D.C., in July of the same year.

Both cities then joined with

In front of Barcelona Cathedral stands a peace monument replica of the A-Bomb Dome. On the left is the Pia Almoina Museum where the Atomic Bombing Exhibition is being held



the group "Veterans for Peace" and displayed the atomic bombing materials in August 1996, in Columbia,

Missouri. In March of this year, the materials were put on display in the Italian cities of Perugia and Assisi.

Messages from Conference Participants

City Statistics 1) Population 2) Area; square km 3) Major Industries



Kerman (IRAN)
Mayor: Seyyed Hossein Sabiri

Iran have a rich experiences from the past eight year war, and the young generations are familiar with the harmful consequences of war and conceive very well the imposed war, and with regard to the orthodox characteristic of Islamic revolution in Iran, the youth of this country are prepared to defend the values of their country in every occasion. In my opinion as far as I know, the disastrous events of Hiroshima, have not yet been well explained in countries such as Iran and it would be better if some arrangements are anticipated in the 4th world conference and a series of subjects are notified.
1) 380,000 2) 13 3) copper, iron, coal, carpet weaving



Jerusalem (ISRAEL)
Mayor: Ehud Olmert

For nineteen years our city was divided, between 1948 and 1967. It is our absolute priority to ensure that this never happens again. During times of peace, walls are not built, cities are not divided. Human rights as enshrined in Israeli law are a priority because they form the practical, living expression of the ethics which are central to the Jewish religion and culture.

Our city is referred to in the heavenly sphere and on the earthly plane. Perhaps that is why the earthly city is so beautiful and has been fought over so often in her history. It is certainly one of the reasons why our residents care deeply about the city and its environment.

This conference is an opportunity for us to discuss peace on the level of the city. We hope to reach a clearer understanding of the significance of the beautiful world peace in the lives of others, especially the Japanese people who went through the horrors of Hiroshima. We hope to have the opportunity of representing our own experiences to the open-minded participants of this great gathering.

1) 640,000 2) 123 3) high technology



Darkhan (MONGOLIA)
Governor: Yondon Vandansuren

Our city and in general, Mongolia, attaches great importance to the education of the younger generation, among others, in peace and war history. The curriculum of the schools include the subject of world human history and in particular, the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In addition to this, we try to explain Hiroshima's experience to the young children and general public.

Environmental issues and poverty are among the priorities of our city. We face in Darkhan, and in general, in Mongolia, the pollution of air, water, decrease of water level, drought, climatic warming, sand movement, desertification and deforestation.
1) 86,000 2) 32,750 3) construction materials plants, limestone brick works, cement works, steel works, sheepskin garment factory



Hanoi (VIETNAM)
Vice Chairman of People's Council: Bang Viet

During recent years, ethnic conflicts in many countries tend not to reduce but sometimes have become more acute. Many countries have been deeply submerged in their prolonged ethnic conflicts. Consequently, millions of ordinary people have been killed or injured; their labor achievements have been destroyed; people are now suffering from famine and poverty. It is very the ethnic groups in each country that decide the prosperity or decline of the country. To help ethnic groups of those countries in ethnic conflicts gradually remove their hatred, getting closer to each other for common goals-peace and prosperity of the country-is not only an urgent demand but also a noble obligation of every genuine state in the whole world.

1) 2,500,000 2) 900 3) electronics, automatics, concise engineering, biological technology



Faâa (French Polynesia)
Mayor: Oscar Temaru

I would have preferred a Total Nuclear Elimination Treaty (TNET). But the proposed US and Russian treaty can be considered as a first step towards peace. And as mayor of the most populated city in Tahiti, Polynesia, my main priorities are both social and environmental. Our city regularly meets with church leaders and non profit associations in order to assist needy for both housing and meals. We also collaborate with these groups in organizing garbage collection and clean up on our public streets and neighborhoods. The main portion of our municipal budget is concentrated in our schools for building and nourishing cafeteria menus. Unfortunately, the colonial system has created innocent victims. Many underprivileged children depend upon our school lunches. It is for this reason the city council have put emphasis on serving well balanced meals. Additionally, we lobby and educate our citizens to continue our struggle for independence. There can not be democracy in a country ruled by another.
1) 25,000 2) 34.20 3) tourism



Wollongong (AUSTRALIA)
Mayor: David Anorew Campbell

Within our city, we do focus strongly on local environmental issues and the maintenance of local indigenous rights. On a global level, I believe the community of our city recognizes the role that war plays in creating famine, environmental catastrophes, refugees and the violation of human rights and does what it can, where it can to influence our Federal Government in its response to such crisis.

In sending a representative to the Conference we hope to confirm its support for World Peace, learn of ways in which it can help to foster that climate, bring back to the people of our city an energy that will allow a rejuvenated commitment to the issue.
1) 180,000 2) 750 3) steel, coal



Durban, North Central (SOUTH AFRICA)
Mayor: Lydia Johnson

Peace issues in the greater Durban region are economic issues, social issues, educational issues and development issues. We have just emerged from four decades of apartheid rule and the huge discrepancies created by this unjust system have resulted in crime, corruption and poverty. We believe that it is only through development and economic growth that we will be able to address the urgent social needs of our people and to create a stable and peaceful community.

It is our hope that through this contact all cities will join a movement for peace and democracy around the globe.

1) 779,000 2) 210 3) clothing, engineering, chemicals, wood products



Angers (FRANCE)
Deputy Mayor: Gerard Pilet

Our city's priority with regard to the peace issue is to develop twinning procedures through increased cooperation and development between countries and their people. And for school children in Angers, a "Resistance Prize" is presented to young people who have written a document on peace. Regarding CTBT, we think that it is not enough to condemn nuclear testing: all tests on our planet should be abolished. We hope for a world where the reason of the heart, and not just economic reason, will be listened to more; a world with increased fraternity and tolerance for the benefit of man.

1) 250,000 2) 45 3) electronics and computers, automobiles, agriculture, food production



Ilion (GREECE)
Mayor: Basilis Koukoubinos

The benefits of peace and disarmament must be in the top priorities of states, governments and organizations. Both local authorities and the organized popular movement have a prominent part in this affair. The sensibility of our municipality as far as our nuclear issue is concerned, is also proved by the symbolic decision of the City-Council to declare our city as a nuclear-free city. We wish that the 4th World Conference of Mayors for Peace, which will be held in Hiroshima, to contribute with its decisions to the promotion of the human rights, world peace and disarmament.
1) 100,000 2) 9 3) —



Klaipeda (LITHUANIA)
Vice Mayor: Audra Daujotiene

Disposal of nuclear weapons creates psychological tension in the world and causes many nations to look at each other with some distrust. We think that with the ban of nuclear tests will be made a first step toward friendly reciprocal intercourse. The Cold War is over, but the military combats outbursts between different ethnic groups. Under the idea of nation-state, one ethnic group is regarded as centralizing and more important in particular state formation. It involves the discriminatory dispositions on ethnic grounds and stimulates the conflictive understanding of interaction between different ethnic groups. One idea of resolving those problems is decentralization of authority in nation-states and the creation of identity based on regional dependence.

1) 204,000 2) 71 3) fishing, fish processing, ship building, repairing sea transport



Fort Collins (U.S.A.)
Mayor: Ann Azari

Peace ultimately can only arrive when we work together on solutions to real problems. Through working together, we learn respect, mutual responsibility and shared values. By working to solve problems of environmental health, poverty, human rights, etc, we are building the foundation of peace. Peace must be experienced through reduction of fear of differences. Our community continually struggles with these challenges.

Our city believes that world peace cannot be achieved without the type of communication and harmony that will be the focus of this conference.

1) 105,000 2) 119 3) education, electronic products, health products