



**Religions for Peace** 



## **A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good** **Legislators and religious leaders join forces for nuclear abolition**

**PRESS RELEASE**

*August 6, 2015*

'Religious leaders, mayors and parliamentarians share the common good of a nuclear-weapon-free world' announced leaders of Religions for Peace, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and Mayors for Peace at a meeting in Hiroshima today.

'We join together to highlight the continuing risks of a nuclear catastrophe - whether by accident, miscalculation or intent – and the moral and security imperative to achieve nuclear abolition,' said Rev Sugitani, Chair of the Religions for Peace Standing Commission on Disarmament and Security.

'Nearly 16,000 nuclear weapons remain in the world's arsenals costing \$100 billion annually - funds that could instead be used to implement the Sustainable Development Goals,' said Mr. Saber Chowdhury MP, Co-President of PNND and President of the Inter Parliamentary Union. 'We reaffirm UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's description of the abolition of nuclear weapons as a "*common good of the highest order.*"

'The experience of Hiroshima reminds us of why nuclear weapons must be abolished,' said Mr. Kazumi Matsui, Mayor of Hiroshima and President of Mayors for Peace. 'As long as nuclear weapons exist, anyone could become a Hibakusha (nuclear victim) at any time.'

The three organizations released a joint statement today commemorating the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and also the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the establishment of the United Nations. The statement notes the vital roles of religious leaders and legislators to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

'In special ways mayors are responsible for protecting the safety and welfare of their citizens, as well as for preserving and promoting cultural and environmental values and heritages; parliamentarians for national policies and laws for the benefit of present and future generations; and religious leaders for advancing the shared moral principles and respect for the well-being of all people regardless of ethnicity, nationality or religion,' notes the statement.

‘Together—as mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders— we support the common good of nuclear abolition. We reject nuclear weapons, which threaten our humanity, contravene our moral principles, violate international law and thwart the safety and well-being of current and future generations.’

The three organizations will circulate the statement for endorsement by religious leaders, mayors and parliamentarians. They will then present it to the United Nations on September 26, the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, in order to support UN initiatives and processes for complete nuclear disarmament.

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## **A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good**

*Statement by parliamentarians, mayors and religious leaders to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the onset of the nuclear age and the foundation of the United Nations*

From the ashes of World War II, and in the wake of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United Nations was established with a common vision to end war and with its first resolution to eliminate “all weapons adaptable to mass destruction.”

70 years later, over 16,000 nuclear weapons remain in the world’s arsenals costing \$100 billion annually - funds that could instead be used to reverse climate change, eliminate poverty and address other social and economic needs.

As parliamentarians, mayors and religious leaders we join together to highlight the continuing risks of a nuclear catastrophe - whether by accident, miscalculation or intent – and the moral and security imperative to achieve nuclear abolition.

We reaffirm UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s description of the abolition of nuclear weapons as a “common good of the highest order.”

In special ways mayors are responsible for protecting the safety and welfare of their citizens, as well as for preserving and promoting cultural and environmental values and heritages; parliamentarians for national policies and laws for the benefit of present and future generations; and religious leaders for advancing the shared moral principles and respect for the well-being of all people regardless of ethnicity, nationality or religion.

Together—as mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders— we support the common good of nuclear abolition. We reject nuclear weapons, which threaten our humanity, contravene our moral principles, violate international law and thwart the safety and well-being of current and future generations.

We commit to principled action to advance shared security and well-being based on deeply held and widely shared moral principles, the rule of law and a profound commitment to non-violent conflict resolution.

We call upon world leaders to commit to nuclear abolition and to replace nuclear deterrence with shared security approaches to conflicts. We further urge states to advance a nuclear weapons convention or framework of agreements that eliminate nuclear weapons.

We pledge to engage our constituencies and to strengthen the cooperation among religious leaders, parliamentarians and mayors to promote this vital mission.

*Adopted in Hiroshima on August 6, 2015, for presentation to the United Nations on September 26, the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*