

# BOUNDARY PEACE INITIATIVE

## Hiroshima & Nagasaki Commemorated

Submitted by: JJ Verigin on behalf of sponsors.

Seventy-three years ago the world was forever changed by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Yet today despite numerous government pledges and many NGO driven efforts for nuclear disarmament, many feel that nuclear conflict by accident or design is more probable than at any time since the end of the cold war.

As politicians and pundits engage in heated rhetoric and international relations become more fraught, as governments spend trillions to modernize their nuclear arsenals, while the majority of the world's people face political, social, environmental, and other challenges, it is up to us to remind our leaders of their promise NEVER AGAIN!

Kootenay Boundary area residents are invited to the annual commemoration of Hiroshima Day on Monday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at Selkirk College Mir Center for Peace in Castlegar at 6 pm, and the annual commemoration of Nagasaki Day on Thursday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at Gyro Park in Grand Forks at 12 noon.

Sponsored by: the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ, the Kootenay Region United Nations Association in Canada, and the Boundary Peace Initiative.

### Nagasaki Peace Declaration

By: Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki  
August 9, 2017

#### “No more hibakusha”

These words express the heartfelt wish of the hibakusha that in the future nobody in the world ever again has to experience the disastrous damage caused by nuclear weapons. This summer, the wish has moved many nations across the globe and resulted in the creation of a certain treaty.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which of course prohibits the use of nuclear weapons, and furthermore their possession or deployment, was adopted this July by 122 nations, a figure representing more than 60% of the United Nations' member states.

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### (From last column) Nagasaki Peace Declaration

This was a moment when all the efforts of the hibakusha over the years finally took shape.

I would like to call this treaty, which mentions the suffering and struggles of the hibakusha, “The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Treaty.” I would also like to express our profoundest gratitude to all of the nations that promote this treaty, the United Nations, NGOs and others who have acted with such vigorous determination and courage to rid the world of weapons that go against the spirit of humanity.

However, this is not our final goal. There are still around 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world. The international situation surrounding nuclear weapons is becoming increasingly tense. A strong sense of anxiety is spreading across the globe that in the not too distant future these weapons could actually be used again. Moreover, the nuclear-armed states are opposed to this treaty and there is no end in sight to the road towards “a world free of nuclear weapons,” the realization of which is our objective. The human race is now faced with the question of how this long awaited treaty can be utilized to make further progress.

I hereby make the following appeal to the nuclear-armed states and the nations under their nuclear umbrella. The nuclear threat will not end as long as nations continue to claim that nuclear weapons are essential for their national security. Please reconsider your policies of seeking to protect your nations through nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligates all its member states to achieve nuclear disarmament. Please fulfill this obligation. The whole world awaits your courageous decisions.

To the Japanese government I have this appeal to make. Despite the fact that the Japanese government has clearly stated that it will exercise leadership in aiming for a world free of nuclear weapons, and play a role as a bridge between the nuclear-armed states and the non-nuclear-armed states, its stance of not even participating in the diplomatic negotiations for the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty is quite incomprehensible to those of us living in the cities that suffered atomic bombings. As the only country in the world to have suffered wartime atomic bombings, I urge the Japanese government to reconsider the policy of relying on the nuclear umbrella and join the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity. International society is awaiting the participation of Japan.

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(From page 1) **Nagasaki Peace Declaration**

Furthermore, I ask the Japanese government to affirm to the world its commitment to the pacifist ethos of the Constitution of Japan, which firmly renounces war, and its strict observance of the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. As a specific policy representing a step forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons, it should act now by examining the concept of a “Northeast Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone.”

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This, we will certainly never forget: the fact that at 11:02 a.m. on August 9, 1945, an atomic bomb exploded in the air right above the hill where we are now assembled, killing and injuring 150,000 people.

On that day, the furious blast and heat rays reduced the city of Nagasaki to a charred expanse of land. People whose skin hung down in strips staggered around the ruined city looking for their families. A dumbfounded mother stood beside her child who had been burnt black. Every corner of the city was like a landscape from hell. Unable to obtain adequate medical treatment many of these people fell dead, one by one. Even now, 72 years after that day, the damage resulting from radiation exposure continues to ravage the bodies of the surviving hibakusha. Not only did the atomic bomb indiscriminately steal the lives of beloved family members and friends who had always been at each other’s side, it then went on to hideously devastate the subsequent lives of those who survived.

Leaders of all the nations of the world: please come and visit the atomic-bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I want you to see what happened down here on the ground beneath the mushroom cloud, not from a perspective high above it; I want you all to see with your own eyes, hear with your own ears, and feel with your own hearts just how cruelly the atomic bomb trampled on the dignity of human beings. I want you to imagine how you would feel if your own family had been in Nagasaki on that day.

When people have experienced something painful and distressing they tend to lock up that memory in their hearts and are reluctant to talk about it. This is because talking about it entails being reminded of it. The fact that the hibakusha have continued to talk about their experiences while enduring physical and mental scars represents an act by individual members of humankind to protect our future by determining, to make the utmost efforts to spread their message.

I make this call to all the people of the world. The most frightening things are disinterest and the process of forgetting. Let us all pass on the baton of peace that we have received from the hibakusha and those who have experienced war, so it is seamlessly carried on into the future. (Continued next column)

(From last column) **Nagasaki Peace Declaration**

The 9th General Conference of Mayors for Peace is currently being held here in Nagasaki. Many representatives of towns and cities that have painful memories of war and civil strife participate in this network of 7,400 municipalities. In solidarity without friends in Mayors for Peace, we will send out from Nagasaki to the world the message that with united efforts and unwavering commitment, even calls of peace from small cities can provide a strong impetus for global progress, just as the hibakusha have shown us. “Nagasaki must be the last place to suffer an atomic bombing.” These are the words hibakusha have continuously repeated until their voices have become hoarse. We will prove that their words are a common wish and ambition of all mankind.

The average age of the hibakusha now exceeds 81 years. The “era in which the hibakusha are still with us” is drawing to an end. I strongly request that the Japanese government improve the assistance given to hibakusha, and provides relief to all those who experienced the atomic bombing.

Six years have elapsed since the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant Accident. As a city that has experienced the threat of radiation, we stand with the victims in Fukushima Prefecture and offer them our support.

I hereby pay tribute to the memory of all those who lost their lives to the atomic bombing, and declare that we, the citizens of Nagasaki City, will join hands with all the people around the world who pray for a world free of nuclear weapons, and continue to tirelessly work towards the realization of the abolition of nuclear weapons and everlasting world peace.



Whoever destroys a single life is as guilty as though he had destroyed the entire world; and whoever rescues a single life earns as much merit as though he had rescued the entire world.

*The Talmud Mishna Sanhedrin 37a*

## Call of the international groups of fasters We demand nuclear disarmament!

We are groups of fasters who have decided to forego nourishment for at least 4 days, from August 6<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, until August 9<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki, to express our total opposition to nuclear weapons, and to call for their complete abolition.

Never has determined popular protest against nuclear weapons been more necessary. The world is fraught with tensions, as the US President tears up the nuclear agreement with Iran while pushing to increase US military spending to nearly \$700 billion a year, greatly increasing the probability that hardliners in Iran will seek nuclear weapons for their country, possibly aped in turn by Saudi Arabia. The ballet of proposed talks with North Korea interspersed with threats on Twitter of nuclear Armageddon continues.

Meanwhile, all existing nuclear-armed states from China to France and the UK are renewing and modernising their arsenals. The clock of the apocalypse has again been moved forward, to 2 minutes before midnight, in other words, the risk of nuclear attack is considered comparable to the most dramatic moments of the Cold War. 16,000 nuclear weapons are currently in active service, including 2,000 on alert.

At the same time, there are seeds of hope. The International Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, sponsor of our fast, has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Just one year ago, a dramatic change in the dynamics of nuclear disarmament occurred, with a United Nations vote on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 in favour of a treaty banning nuclear weapons. 122 countries voted in favour of this treaty, scheduled to enter into force as soon as 50 countries ratify it. This gives a new momentum to the overwhelming majority of nations, civil society organizations, and ordinary citizens, who resolutely oppose the folly of nuclear weapons.

A surge in public opinion is essential. The possession, production and threatened use of nuclear weapons must be prohibited. The United Nations Treaty must be upheld, and enforced!

**We, the undersigned groups of fasters, call on each and every person to join us in expressing this urgent call: Nuclear disarmament must happen now! Join the Fast! Demand your country to sign the Treaty!**

### Groups of Fasters in:

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(From last column) **nuclear disarmament!**

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### Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents people of diverse backgrounds officially brought together in 2002 because of our mutual concern for the rise in world conflict. Our mandate is to participate in multilateral non-violent conflict resolution in support of global human rights, ecological and environmental sustainability and international law through education, sharing of information, dialogue and activism locally and globally. We encourage and seek your participation in our mutual work for true peace based on social justice, equality, accountability, integrity, honour, respect, etc in order to build a better world today and future generations.

**BPI web site:** [www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org](http://www.boundarypeaceinitiative.org)

*BPI meetings are suspended until at least 3 people commit to meet monthly. For information call (250) 444-0524 or (250) 442-0434 or email [LApeace@telus.net](mailto:LApeace@telus.net).*

## What's Up?

**Hiroshima Day--August 6<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm in Mir Center for Peace**  
Selkirk College, Castlegar, B.C.

**Nagasaki Day—August 9<sup>th</sup> @ 12 noon in Gyro Park, Grand Forks, B.C.**

**Upcoming events:** International Day of Peace Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>. BPI hosts the B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition conference in October.

**Video** of the Sept. 21, 2017 Walk the Drum and Peace Concert are available for \$10 a set. To order call Laura at 250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434 or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net)

The BPI welcomes your input. Articles are the author's responsibility and may not be common consensus of members. To submit articles contact Laura at **250-444-0524 or 250-442-0434** or email [L4peace@telus.net](mailto:L4peace@telus.net).

The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Canadian Peace Congress, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War and an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We work with a wide range of local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6  
Go to the Government of Canada website for MP contact information at <http://www.canada.gc.ca>



## As we Remember the Victims And Honour the Survivors Of Hiroshima & Nagasaki



## Let us Act to Ban Nuclear Weapons & The Nuclear Industry

**Join us on  
August 9, 2018 @ 12 o'clock Noon**  
(Bring your lunch along if you want)  
**In Gyro Park, Grand Forks, B.C.**  
(Across from Save On Foods)

*Sponsored by: Boundary Peace Initiative, USCC Working Groups for Peace and Social Justice, Kootenay Region  
United Nations Association in Canada*

Naturally, the common people don't want war....., but after all it is the leaders of a country who determine the policy, and it's always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it's a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship..... voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.

Hermann Goering

Stated during the course of the Nuremberg Trials after World War II. *Published in the book Nuremberg Diary by Gustave M Gilbert*