World Conference - Abolish Nuclear Weapons; Resist and Reverse the Climate Crisis; For Social and Economic Justice

April 24-26, 2020: location New York City

Humanity faces two existential threats: the increasing dangers of nuclear war and climate disruption. Human beings created these threats, which can only be reversed by mass popular actions.

2020 will mark the 75th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki -- the beginning of the nuclear era which threatens human survival today. It also marks the birth of international efforts and movements to abolish nuclear weapons and create a nuclear free world. 2020 is also the 75th anniversary of the end of the second world war in Europe and Asia and the founding of the United Nations, the 25th anniversary of the UN Climate Change Conference following the Rio Earth Declaration, and the 10th NPT Review Conference will be held at the U.N. in April and May.

With the encouragement of partners involved in organizing annual World Conferences against A- and H-Bombs in Japan on the anniversaries of the A-bombings, the Peace and Planet network and the International Peace Bureau, supported by the Abolition 2000 Global Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, have initiated planning for a World Conference and related events in New York City on the eve of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. These events build on the 2010 and 2015 conferences and mobilizations in New York, which included addresses by then-UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Hibakusha (victims of the atomic bombings and nuclear testing) and disarmament movement leaders. Rallies and inter-religious services involving thousands of activists from around the world culminated with the presentation to the United Nations of millions of petition signatures urging the complete elimination of the world’s nuclear arsenals.

Our commitments are to prevent nuclear war, to achieve the prohibition and elimination of all nuclear weapons, to work for the relief of and in solidarity with the world’s Hibakusha, to promote disarmament, stemming and reversing the climate crisis, social and economic justice, and building the intersectional movements we will need to prevail. Disarmament will be an important topic at the different events, and “no to war” the general basis of our actions.

In organizing for the conference, we seek the broadest possible engagement with nuclear weapons abolition, peace, justice and environmental constituencies as well as diplomats and politicians from countries which are actively and meaningfully committed to achieving a nuclear weapon-free world and a sustainable environment.

Danger & Opportunity

The World Conference will provide a timely opportunity to sound the alarm and to inspire popular movements and sympathetic governments to address the challenges, posed by growing dangers of nuclear war, the climate crisis and the racism, repressions.
and inequalities spurred by authoritarian, militarist and oligarchic governments. Racism, other forms of hate and growing economic inequality, driven in part by the rise of authoritarian governments, truncate the lives and hopes of people across the planet. The struggles for peace and democracy are two sides of the same coin. The Conference also provides a unique opportunity to promote and build intersectional and youth-led movements.

A successful outcome of the 2020 NPT Review Conference will be a challenge. The nuclear-armed states remain resistant to fulfilling their Article VI disarmament obligations and, in what threatens to become a new unrestrained nuclear arms race, they are all engaged in upgrading their omnicidal nuclear arsenals. Plans include deployments of new land-based nuclear weapons in Europe. And nuclear weapons proliferation (possibly by Saudi Arabia, Brazil or others) further undermines the viability of the NPT.

Powerful popular movements and local, state and national governmental commitments, including the Paris Climate Agreement, have responded to the growing dangers of climate disruption. But global temperatures and seas continue to rise. The climate crisis is already exacting heavy tolls on human lives and wellbeing. Deadlier hurricanes and cyclones, flooding, famine and sea level rise are taking lives, destroying communities, leaving people hungry and homeless, and fueling desperate mass migration which contributes to militarized conflicts. Additionally, as UNESCO’s Global Assessment Study recently reported, assaults on biodiversity have left one in four species at risk of extinction, threatening the ecosystems on which human life depends.

The Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty, expected to come into force in 2020, is a beacon of hope, and has become a priority for many of the world’s non-nuclear nations. A World Conference held during the 2020 NPT Review Conference, on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings -- at a time of increasing nuclear danger and the threats of wars -- will serve as one of the last and greatest opportunities to put the experiences of the Hibakusha at the center of international attention. It will be a critical time to highlight their continuing warnings that “human beings and nuclear weapons cannot coexist,” and to recall the principal directive of the seminal 1955 Russell-Einstein manifesto: “remember your humanity and forget the rest.”

The World Conference will provide a unique opportunity for the world’s nuclear disarmament campaigns, allied movements and organizations, and diplomats committed to banning and eliminating nuclear weapons to amplify our abolition demands to the Review Conference. Making links to climate and social and economic justice movements offers a new opportunity to develop the alliances and intersectional movements we will need to prevail.

We envision the following events:

· A World Conference against A- & H- Bombs held at a suitable site in Manhattan
· A rally and march to the United Nations or Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza

· Presentation of millions of Hibakusha and other petition signatures urgently calling for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons to the NPT Review Conference

· An international and interdenominational religious ceremony

· A disarmament, peace, justice and environmental festival

· Self-organized youth events

While we will seek the broadest possible international presence and participation in New York City, we recognize that many will be unable to travel internationally. We thus encourage partner organizations in other countries to organize parallel events.

September 2019

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New York Bureau of Pressenza (USA)

Oleg Bodrov
Public Council of the South Coast of the Gulf of Finland (Russia)

Reiner Braun
International Peace Bureau (Germany)

Sharan Burrow
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Jackie Cabasso
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Reece Chenault
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Noam Chomsky
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Lisa Clark
International Peace Bureau (Italy)

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Joseph Gerson
American Friends Service Committee Campaign for Peace, Disarmament & Common Security (USA)

Chuck Johnson
International Physicians for the Prevention Of Nuclear War (USA)

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Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (Britain)

Mouvement de la Paix (France)

Movimiento Antinuclear de la República Argentina (MARA)