

AUGUST 6 AND 9 HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI DAY

Toronto Mayor David Miller, a member of the international Mayors for Peace organization, proclaimed August 6 and 9, 2006 as Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day, on behalf of Toronto City Council. Canadian Pugwash member Phyllis Creighton was the MC for Nagasaki day, the major memorial day chosen for this year. Following is an excerpt from her remarks:

I welcome you to our gathering to remember the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 61 years ago.

We gather in anxious times, deeply troubled by the mounting tragedy in Palestinian lands, Lebanon, and Israel, and by fear of war escalating in the middle east under the ominous shadow of the nuclear umbrella.

Encouraged by the mayor of Montreal, Hiroshima mayor Tadatoshi Akiba has just issued, on behalf of the executive of Mayors for Peace, an urgent call for peace in the Middle East. I quote from it:

“Cities are not targets! The bombardment of cities and towns in Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine . . . Is unconscionable. . . With excessive and indiscriminate firepower, military action has lost all sense of proportion. Continued armed conflict cannot be condoned. There must be an immediate ceasefire.

Everyone wants and deserves to live in dignity and security. The overriding imperative is to promote a dialogue among all people in the region. Retaliation must be foresworn; reconciliation must be the touchstone. Peace is possible even now.”

Let us all act on our hope that both sides cease their wanton violence and the international community begin rebuilding peace and destroyed lives.

Warring madness persists elsewhere – Iraq, Afghanistan. Death triumphs, humanity perishes. And since violence breeds violence, we are haunted by the spectre of the final holocaust.

In Vancouver from June 23 to 28, 2006, the World Peace Forum gathered 5000 people from around the world

At the opening session, philanthropist Jennifer Simons caught the forum’s vision in her message that “we must and can end war,” so too did Judge Christopher Weeramantry, who headed the International Court of Justice, which recognized the immorality and illegality of nuclear weapons

The Forum had 350 plenary sessions and workshops and it included a meeting of the organizations “Mayors for Peace” and “Peace Messenger Cities.”

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Toronto has been a member of “Mayors for Peace” since 1983, when City Council voted to declare Toronto a nuclear weapon-free zone. Toronto is also a “Peace Messenger City”--one of the 62 so named in 1986 by the un for their contribution to the International Year of Peace.