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U.S. Conference of Mayors Unanimously Adopts...

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U.S. Conference of Mayors Unanimously Adopts Resolution "Calling on the Next U.S. President to Pursue Diplomacy with Other Nuclear-Armed States; Participate in Negotiations for the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons; Cut Nuclear Weapons Spending and Redirect Funds to Meet the Needs of Cities".

Sponsors include NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, Des Moines Mayor Frank Cownie and Little Rock Mayor Mark Stodola

Indianapolis - At the close of its 84rd Annual Meeting yesterday, the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), for the 11th consecutive year, adopted a strong resolution in support of Mayors for Peace, warning that "the nuclear-armed countries are edging ever closer to direct military confrontation in conflict zones around the world," and calling on the next President of the United States "to pursue new diplomatic initiatives to lower tensions with Russia and China and to dramatically reduce U.S. and Russian nuclear stockpiles."

Cautioning that "more than 15,000 nuclear weapons, most orders of magnitude more powerful than the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs, 94% held by the United States and Russia, continue to pose an intolerable threat to cities and humanity," and that "the largest NATO war games in decades, involving 14,000 U.S. troops, and activation of U.S. missile defenses in Eastern Europe are fueling growing tensions between nuclear-armed giants," the USCM "calls on the next President of the United States, in good faith, to participate in or initiate... multilateral negotiations for the elimination of nuclear weapons as required by the 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty."

The resolution commends President Obama for visiting Hiroshima and concluding negotiations with Iran, but notes that "the Obama Administration has laid the groundwork for the United States to spend one trillion dollars over the next three decades to maintain and modernize its nuclear bombs and warheads, production facilities, delivery systems, and command and control," and that "federal funds are desperately needed in our communities to build affordable housing, create jobs with livable wages, improve public transit, and develop sustainable energy sources." The USCM "calls on the next President and Congress of the United States to reduce nuclear weapons spending to the minimum necessary to assure the safety and security of the existing weapons as they await disablement and dismantlement, and to redirect those funds to address the urgent needs of cities and rebuild our nation's crumbling infrastructure."

The USCM also "commends Mayor Denise Simmons and the Cambridge City Council for demonstrating bold leadership at the municipal level by unanimously deciding on April 2, 2016, to divest their one-billion-dollar city pension fund from all companies involved in production of nuclear weapons systems and in entities investing in such companies," and "congratulates Des Moines and its Mayor T.M. Franklin Cownie on Des Moines' appointment as Lead City for the U.S. section of Mayors for Peace."

Mayors for Peace, an international organization, founded in 1982 and led by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, aims through its 2020 Vision Campaign to achieve the global elimination of nuclear weapons by 2020. Mayors for Peace membership has grown by more than ten fold since 2003, as of June 1, 2016 counting 7,063 cities in 161 countries and regions including 207 U.S. members, representing some one billion people, one-seventh of the world's population. On June 22 in Des Moines, Mayor Frank Cownie formally agreed to serve as Lead City for the U.S. section of Mayors for Peace.

Addressing the USCM International Affairs Committee on June 25, Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo, Secretary-General of

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Mayors for Peace, explained:

"One common challenge we face is that many countries continue to maintain that their national security depends on nuclear deterrence. Yet nuclear deterrence is based on mutual distrust and attempts to maintain peace through the threat of indiscriminate mass killings. Such a system cannot be sustainable. We must also note that nuclear weapons cannot offer any effective solutions to the global security challenges of the 21st century. They also consume budgetary and technological resources needed for economic development, including the welfare of the world's cities."

The USCM is the nonpartisan association of American cities with populations over 30,000. Resolutions adopted at annual meetings become its official policy. This year, for the first time, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser added their names as co-sponsors of the Mayors for Peace resolution.

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