

IVth General Assembly of Peace Messenger Cities Yokohama, Japan, August 23 - 25, 1991

"Enhancement of Mutual Understanding Through International Exchange -- Roles of Cities for Global Peace"

The fourth Assembly in Yokohama gathered delegates from 38 cities. The Association's statutes, passed on a provisional basis in New Haven in 1990, were ratified at this meeting. Afterwards, the executive committee of the Peace Messenger Cities, made up of 16 cities, was elected and an executive board appointed among its members. It was formed of:

Chairman: Verdun
Vice-Chairman: Yokohama
Treasurer: San Jose
General Secretary: Geneva
Members: Dakar, Delhi, New Haven

In the course of the various debates, the cities were led to relate their engagements in actions in favour of peace and of their ideas on actions to undertake. In expectation of the celebration of the UNO's 50th anniversary, each city was invited to think of a way of commemorating the event.

The World Union of Cities for Peace and International Association of Peace Messenger Cities amalgamation proposition was also studied. The assembly decided to entrust of settling the question.

The decision of creating a permanent technical secretariat in Verdun was also taken.

YOKOHAMA APPEAL

Delegates from 38 Peace Messenger Cities of 26 countries gathered in Yokohama from August 23 to August 25, 1991, to participate in the Fourth General Assembly of Peace Messenger Cities, at which they discussed the topic, "Promotion of Mutual Understanding through International Exchanges" from various perspectives with the hope of contributing to the development of world peace from the municipal level. Even as the world is embracing more harmonious relations, we cannot help but turn our attention to the fact that there still exist threats to international peace. As we entered the decade of the 1990's, the pre-existing world order began to break down, forcing the international community to adjust accordingly. The cold war, which had so dominated post-war world politics, has ended, manifested by the collapse of the Berlin wall, and by German reunification the following year. In 1987, U. S. u Soviet negotiations brought about abolition of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF), and in July of this year, the unprecedented START Treaty was signed. While countries in Eastern Europe rally toward freedom and democracy, the disparity of wealth between the northern and southern hemispheres still persists. In the recent case of the Soviet coup d'Etat we were reassured by the strength of peace and democracy, which have prevailed over the forces of oppression against fundamental human rights. Within cities, diverse ethnic groups must learn to live in harmony. And now, the focus is shifting to a new problem for humankind, destruction of the environment on a global scale. Amidst all these changes in the world, we have evolved toward a new world order with the United Nations at the centre. The "scourge of war" should be avoided once and for all, and alternative means to the use of force in

settling conflict must be found. In spite of the desires of human kind the spectre of annihilation of world peace is always present.

Perhaps at no other time has the need been so great to prevail on the world community to band together and lend their intellect and talents to the cause of peace. We must concentrate our energies on industries which will help humankind, and work to lessen our economies' dependence on arms production. Our cities have been proclaimed "Peace Messengers" by the United Nations, so we must bear this responsibility by taking the lead in the development of peace in the international community. Realizing what is required of cities and states to achieve peace, and throughout our discussions in this conference, recognizing what must be done to make world peace a reality, we must resolutely undertake the following steps:

1. We were proclaimed Peace Messenger Cities on the occasion of the International Year of Peace, the purpose of which was to raise public awareness of the fundamental issues surrounding peace, while at the same time fostering support for the United Nations. We resolve to continue to fulfil the goals of the International Year of Peace. We also desire to co-operate with organizations representing the same aspirations and similar aims.



Conference Hall at Yokohama Pacifica, 1991.

2. We will improve our citizens' awareness about United Nations activities in order to strengthen the United Nations' capability as an international organization whose goal is the maintenance and promotion of peace.

3. Recognizing how important mutual understanding among cities is to develop peace in the international community—a collection of different cultures, with their own respective social systems and histories—we will give consideration to opportunities for international exchanges among cities, be they cultural, educational, sports, or economic exchanges.

4. Since cities are the closest level of government to the people, they bear primary responsibility in developing peace within



Civil Forum "The Role of Municipalities for World Peace" in Yokohama Conference.

the international community. Therefore, we will give consideration to encouraging all citizens to take an active interest in peace, especially young people who are to inherit this world.

5. Recognizing that peace enables cities to prosper, we will give full consideration to international co-operation as well as environmental protection and the plight of refugees, global problems that demand our long-term commitment. Bearing in mind the global negative consequences caused by the disaster on the people and the environment by the nuclear power station of Chernobyl, we support the effort of the United Nations to alleviate these consequences.

6. We will pledge to work to influence our national government to work at the United Nations to resolve conflicts without the use of force, and to support a comprehensive nuclear test ban and other related resolutions at the United Nations. We must also urge the United Nations to restrict international arms trade.

7. We must respect diversity and promote mutual understanding among our citizens so that we might all live in harmony. To achieve this goal, we pledge to provide people with forums in which they might exchange information and views.