

VANCOUVER APPEAL
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PEACE MESSENGER CITIES

Inspired by a new generation of peace activism, we, the members of the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities, so designated by the General Assembly of the United Nations, in association with Mayors for Peace and its affiliates in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, on the occasion of the World Peace Forum 2006, meeting in our 19th General Assembly, call on cities and communities around the world to work together to end war and build a peaceful, just and sustainable world.

Meeting in Vancouver, a Peace Messenger City, a microcosm of global diversity in peoples and cultures, and the site of the 2010 Olympics games, IAPMC representatives call urgent attention to the fact that global militarism today constitutes a serious threat to cities, communities and indeed the planet itself.

Global militarism is reflected in escalating nuclear tensions, caused by the failure of the signed obligation of Article 4 of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty of 1970 to negotiate for the abolition of nuclear weapons by the Nuclear Weapons States, thus creating the atmosphere for the proliferation of nuclear weapons by other nations. Rising military budgets are distorting the world economy, denying local governments the finances necessary for cities and communities, for health, housing, education, transportation and other social needs. Violence between peoples is increasing, manifested through violence against women and through racism. Raging wars, invasions and continued occupations are aggravating international tensions. The authority of the United Nations is being undermined.

Global militarism has arisen in conjunction with the "War on Terror". As Peace Messenger Cities, we condemn all forms of terrorism as fundamental breaches of international law. But war is not the answer. Indeed the "War on Terrorism" has become a breeding ground for more terrorism, risking further escalation and the potential for global catastrophe.

Cities have a long history of dealing with the effects of war. Peace Messenger Cities has played an important role in the nuclear abolition and disarmament movement. Today, we call on local governments, in an appropriate and effective manner, to work with community partners to make the world's citizens aware of the dangers of global militarism. This is the responsibility of municipal leaderships who have sworn to provide for the good and welfare of their citizens.

We salute the international partners we have met with in Vancouver, committed to the common cause of peace, embracing all the sectors of the human family—women, youth, educators, lawyers and physicians, environmentalists, political leaders, indigenous peoples, faith-based peoples...

We especially endorse the continuing efforts and policies of Abolition 2000, with its 2000 worldwide affiliates, for the mobilization of the global community and the United Nations for the abolition of nuclear weapons. There can not be sustainable development for cities without peace.

We reiterate our call for the General Assembly of the United Nations to follow through on Resolution 59/71 mandating a Special Session for Disarmament 4 as an introduction to an international Decade for Disarmament.

We call upon all organizations devoted to peace to support this Call by creating a global demand that the United Nations face the issue of disarmament, a founding issue of the Charter of the United Nations.

We urge the approaching Olympic Games in Vancouver to become the spur for the declaration of a ceasefire of all conflicts throughout the world in the tradition of the Olympic Games itself and for the United Nations to continue in that spirit to deal forcefully with the issues of sustainable development and meaningful assistance to the developing world, as a necessary basis for peace itself.

History will mark this gathering of activists, from cities and communities, as a critical contribution to an accelerated struggle for peace and justice.

We salute the people of the greater Vancouver region for their commitment to peace and their support making our Assembly possible.

General Assembly
International Association of Peace Messenger Cities
June 26, 2006
Vancouver, Canada