



PRESS RELEASE

City of Akron 166 S. High Street Akron, Ohio 44308

(330)-375-2345 Fax:(330)- 375-2468

Web: www.akronohio.gov

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jackie Cabasso, Mayors for Peace North American Coordinator (510) 306-0119; jackie@2020visioncampaign.org<[Mailto:jackie@2020visioncampaign.org](mailto:jackie@2020visioncampaign.org)>

U.S. Conference of Mayors unanimously adopts resolution “Calling for U.S. Leadership in Global Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and Redirection of Military Spending to Domestic Needs”

Akron, Ohio (June 28, 2013) - Mayors for Peace congratulates the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) for its unanimous adoption of a bold resolution “Calling for U.S. Leadership in Global Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and Redirection of Military Spending to Domestic Needs.” The resolution, passed by the Conference on June 24 at its 81st Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, calls for constructive U.S. engagement in new international disarmament forums and reorientation of U.S. national priorities by reducing military spending and redirecting those funds to meet the needs of cities.

The USCM is the nonpartisan association of American cities with populations over 30,000. As explained by its outgoing President, Mayor Michael Nutter of Philadelphia, who chaired the final plenary: “Resolutions, if passed, become the official policy of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.”

The resolution was adopted on the heels of President Obama's June 19 Berlin speech in which he declared, "so long as nuclear weapons exist, we are not truly safe," and announced his intention to seek further bilateral nuclear weapons reductions with Russia. The resolution was introduced by Akron Mayor Donald Plusquellic, a former USCM President and Vice President of Mayors for Peace, and had 29 additional sponsors. It highlights several important new multilateral disarmament initiatives not mentioned by Obama in Berlin, and calls on the President and the U.S. government to demonstrate good faith by constructive participation in those initiatives:

- * The first ever High-Level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament, to be held on September 26, 2013 at UN headquarters in New York;
- * A UN working group open to all member states "to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons;" and
- * A follow-on conference to the February 2013 Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be hosted by Mexico in early 2014.

The resolution expresses the USCM 's "deep concern" that both the May session of the new UN disarmament working group and the Oslo Conference took place without the participation of the United States or the other four nuclear-armed Permanent Members of the UN Security Council. As set forth in the resolution, nearly a quarter of a century past the end of the Cold War, an estimated 17,300 nuclear weapons, 94% of them in the possession of the United States and Russia, continue to pose an intolerable threat to humanity. Massive spending is underway on programs to modernize U.S. nuclear weapons systems.

As the resolution notes, nuclear weapons spending is emblematic of Pentagon spending. In 2012, during a time of continuing domestic financial hardship, the U.S. spent \$682 billion on its military, accounting for nearly two-fifths of the world total.

Further, the budget sequester enacted in March is impeding the economic recovery in cities by making deep cuts to vital federal programs that help fund essential services. In contrast, Pentagon spending has grown by 50% in real dollars in the last 12 years, not including war spending, and nearly all of the "cuts" up for debate are, in reality, reductions in the spending growth rate.

The resolution concludes that our nation's deep economic crisis can only be addressed by adopting new priorities to create a sustainable economy for the 21st century. To that end, the resolution calls on the President and Congress 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; to redirect those funds to meet the urgent needs of cities; and to reduce military spending to reinvest in programs to

provide basic human services, create jobs, rebuild infrastructure and meet the needs of America's cities.

The full text of the resolution is available at:

wslfweb.org/docs/uscmres2013.pdf<<http://wslfweb.org/docs/uscmres2013.pdf>>. (Official version at usmayors.org/81stAnnualMeeting/media/resolutions-adopted.pdf<<http://usmayors.org/81stAnnualMeeting/media/resolutions-adopted.pdf>>)

Mayors for Peace, an international organization, founded in 1982 and led by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is working through its 2020 Vision Campaign for 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, 2013 counting 5,645 cities in 156 countries and regions, with nearly 200 U.S. members – in all, representing some one billion people.

The USCM resolution was sponsored by Mayors Donald L. Plusquellic of Akron, OH; Ed Pawlowski of Allentown, PA; John Hieftje of Ann Arbor, MI; Tom Bates of Berkeley, CA; Matthew T. Ryan of Binghamton NY; Henrietta Davis of Cambridge, MA; Mark Kleinschmidt of Chapel Hill, NC; Satyendra Singh Huja of Charlottesville, VA; Franklin T. Cownie of Des Moines, IA; Michael A. Tautznik of Easthampton, MA; Kitty Piercy of Eugene, OR; Ed Malloy of Fairfield, IA; Joy Cooper of Hallandale Beach, FL; Alex Morse of Holyoke, MA; Mark Stodola of Little Rock, AR; Paul Soglin of Madison, WI; John DeStefano of New Haven, CT; David J. Narkewicz of Northampton, MA; Chris Koos of Normal, IL; Frank Ortis of Pembroke Pines, FL; Michael Brennan of Portland, ME; Gayle McLaughlin of Richmond, CA; Ardell Brede of Rochester, MN; Stephen Cassidy of San Leandro, CA; Helene Schneider of Santa Barbara, CA; Bruce R. Williams of Takoma Park, MD; Neal King of Taos Ski Valley, NM; Richard D. Schneider of South Pasadena, CA; Laurel Lunt Prussing of Urbana, IL; and Geraldine Muoio of West Palm Beach, FL.

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