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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ITUC)

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Campaign on Peace and Abolition of Nuclear Weapons launch on the eve of the NPT Conference

Brussels, august 2009 (ITUC OnLine): The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Mayors for Peace are launching today an international campaign on peace and the abolition of nuclear weapons by the year 2020. Sixty-four years after the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the danger of nuclear proliferation is acute, and growing.

Nuclear weapons pose a threat to all of humankind and are morally unacceptable. They are a greater risk than any problem they seek to solve. In the world today there are almost 24,000 nuclear weapons. Together these arsenals have the destructive power to cause devastation equivalent to 400,000 Hiroshima bombs, where just one bomb killed more than 140,000 people.

Conflicts often have their roots in poverty, inequality, violations of human rights including workers' rights, lack of decent work, corruption, and bad governance. Trade unions contribute to fighting the causes of conflict and promote the preservation of peace through their struggle for solidarity and social justice.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is a vital instrument for achieving disarmament, and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The ITUC advocates full ratification and implementation of the NPT by all UN Member States as well as all other instruments that aim for disarmament and lasting peace.

The ITUC has launched a petition to say "no to nuclear weapons!" The petition will be delivered in May 2010 to Ban Ki Moon, UN General Secretary during the next NPT Conference at the UN in New York. "Nuclear weapons pose a serious threat to peace and human security and must be eliminated altogether," said Guy Ryder, ITUC General Secretary.

"Success in achieving global disarmament including abolition of nuclear weapons would free up resources for urgent economic and social needs, to help the global economy pull out of the deep worldwide recession which is costing tens of millions of jobs" said Tsuyoshi Takagi, the President of the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO), and vice president of ITUC.

"We need all to stand up against these weapons specifically designed to decimate populations." Said Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima. "and we need action quickly - that's why Mayors for Peace initiated the 2020 vision campaign." Mayor Akiba is President of Mayors for Peace

The petition can be found on the campaign website:
<http://www.ituc-csi.org/peace>

<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org>

Mayors for Peace, now with over 3000 city members in 134 countries, works to build solidarity and to facilitate coordination among cities that support the Program to Promote the Solidarity of Cities toward the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons. Its primary goal is to work internationally to raise awareness of the need for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 312 affiliated national organisations from 157 countries.

Website: <http://www.ituc-csi.org/> <http://www.youtube.com/ITUCCSI>

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