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Nuclear Abolition Flame kicks-off World March

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Publication date: Sunday 4 October 2009

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Nuclear Abolition Flame kicks-off World March

A flame promoting the abolition of nuclear weapons kicked-off the World March for Peace and Nonviolence in Wellington on 2 October the 140th anniversary of Gandhi's birthday. The Nuclear Abolition Flame will be carried around the world on special torches designed in New Zealand and made from native New Zealand wood. The flame will be used to inspire people to support the United Nations Secretary-General's five-point plan for nuclear disarmament which includes a call for negotiations on a treaty to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons entirely.

Following the end of the World March in Punta de Vacas, Argentina, the Nuclear Abolition Flame will be carried to New York for the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty meeting, to encourage governments at the meeting to start nuclear abolition negotiations.

The physical flame is supported by a virtual flame which anyone can spread to friends, family and acquaintances, and which includes action ideas and contacts to promote nuclear abolition.

The flame originates in Hiroshima from the Peace Flame which was lit from the embers of the 1945 nuclear blast and will remain burning in Hiroshima Peace Park until nuclear weapons are eliminated.

The flame was brought to New Zealand by Mayors for Peace Vice-President Bob Harvey, and used on preliminary Peace Marches in Auckland, Waiheke Island, Tauranga and Whanganui before kicking off the World Peace March in Wellington on 2 October. One of the torches was carried 207 kilometers by foot on a peace march from Whanganui to arrive in Wellington in time to join the World Peace March opening events. The Peace Flame was also used in the 3 October Christchurch Peace Walk in support of the World Peace March.

In Wellington, the Nuclear Abolition Flame was presented to World Peace March leader Rafael de La Rubia by Krystal Boyes (one of the Whanganui-to-Wellington peace marchers) and Maynie Tompson (one of the Waiheke Island peace marchers). 90-year-old Maynie Thompson also walked on the Wellington Peace Heritage Walk launched on 2 October by the World Peace March, and in 1996 walked across the United States in the Great USA Peace March.

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Photos

Maynie Thompson, Krystal Boyes and Rafael de la Rubia
with the nuclear abolition torches

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90-year-olds Maynie Thompson and Kit Nelson
carry the Nuclear Abolition Flame on the Waiheke Island Peace March

Lighting the Nuclear Abolition Flame. Wellington 2 October