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From 6 to 12 November

The Hiroshima Flame for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons will be carried through France

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The World March for Peace and Nonviolence, instigated by *World Without War*, and supported by the international networks *Abolition 2000* and *Mayors for Peace* (chaired by the Mayor of Hiroshima), began on 2 October in New Zealand and will finish on 2 January 2010 in Argentina after travelling round the world.

The Hiroshima Flame for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons will accompany it and will then continue to New-York, where there will be a huge demonstration for peace and nuclear abolition in May 2010 during the Review Conference for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In France from 6 to 12 November 2009, at the initiative of ACDN (Action of Citizens for Nuclear Disarmament), the Hiroshima Flame will be carried through Paris, Saintes, Saint-Pierre d'Oléron, Bordeaux, Agen, Cahors, Toulouse, Perpignan and other towns, before arriving in Barcelona on 13 November.

French text placed on line: 8 October 2009

The World March aims to raise awareness of the dangers of the current world situation. Instigated by *World Without War*, one of the organisations of the Humanist Movement, it has gained in a few months the support of thousands of individuals, organisations, institutions and personalities in the fields of science, culture, sport, politics, all conscious of the urgency of the present moment.

It has stimulated a wide range of initiatives in over 100 countries, thus prefiguring the day when common humanity will claim back its destiny from the hands of the "Lords of War" - the military-industrial complex whose hidden and noxious actions were denounced by President Eisenhower as long ago as 1961.

The world today is marked by many kinds of violence: endemic wars, arms stockpiles and military budgets constantly rising (nearly 1500 billion dollars in 2008 alone), military occupations of territory, and new forms of insecurity such as political or religious fanaticism and terrorism. These are all fed by financial exploitation and economic inequality, social injustice, famine and poverty alongside opulence, and major ecological crises (climate, water, energy, pandemics, and pollution by radioactive, chemical or biological agents). Since 1991, in Iraq, ex-Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Gaza, weapons containing depleted uranium - which attacks the DNA of cells - have caused increases in cancers and birth deformities in military and civilian populations, creating a **veritable silent anthropocide**. And over all that, there hangs the permanent risk of nuclear conflict, deliberate or accidental.

Atomic weapons are both the symbol and the cornerstone of this inhuman system, which is based on threatening to annihilate opponents, and on taking hostage our towns and peoples - indeed on state terror. A different world is urgently needed, and is possible: a world of peace, nonviolence, cooperation, freedom, brotherhood and justice. That is the world to which we mean to be marching.

The propositions of the World March

To avoid nuclear catastrophe, we need to transcend violence, and so we demand:

- [-] worldwide nuclear disarmament,
- [-] the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from occupied territories,

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- [-] incremental and proportional reduction in conventional weapons,
- [-] signed treaties of non-aggression between nations, and
- [-] renunciation by governments of war as a means of resolving conflicts.

There is an urgent need to strengthen our collective consciences in favour of Peace and disarmament, but we must also awaken a consciousness of nonviolence that rejects not only physical force but also other forms of violence (economic, racial, psychological, religious, sexual etc.) This new sensibility will alter social structures and will open the path to a Universal Human Nation.

The World March invites each and every person to take on responsibility for changing the world, by transcending their own violence and developing a nonviolent attitude first in their immediate circles and then wherever they can exercise influence.

SITE: www.theworldmarch.org

We claim the right to live in peace and freedom. Living under threat is not living free. In hundreds of towns, there are marches, festivals, forums, conferences and other events taking place or being organised to emphasise the urgency of peace and the necessity of nonviolence. For the first time in history, an event of this huge scale is being set in motion by the ordinary people concerned.

The urgent task: to abolish radioactive and nuclear weapons.

In 2009, alongside the actual battlefied use of anthropocidal weapons containing radioactive uranium, the world has an arsenal of atomic arms with approximately 25000 nuclear warheads. The greatest danger for humankind today is the threat of a nuclear conflict which could even cause the disappearance of all human life.

In theory, atomic bombs are not made to be exploded but only to deter others from exploding them. In fact, they are on permanent alert and can explode at any moment. Several times since 1945 the planet nearly had a nuclear war.

Today the vast majority of the world's people, showing more sense than their leaders, wish to abandon these inhuman and suicidal weapons (76 % on average, according to a poll conducted in 2008 in 21 countries; 86 % in France). According to General Lee Butler, formerly in charge of all the US nuclear weapons, they are "**fundamentally dangerous**" (even France, with only 1.5% of existing nukes, could cause a billion deaths); they are "**extraordinarily expensive**" (they cost France 1500 billion francs up until 1998, current figures are secret; they cost the USA 50 billion dollars in 2008 alone); they are "**militarily ineffective**" (unusable except for avenging a nuclear attack by an enemy and multiplying the destruction!); and they are "**morally indefensible**" (relying on the threat of wholesale massacres - which are crimes against humanity).

France is unfortunately one of the chief nuclear proliferators, through her policy of exporting non-military nuclear technology - which can be diverted to making weapons -, and through her arms modernisation programme (the M51 missile, the new nuclear sub, new nuclear warheads, Laser Mega-Joule research aimed at a new generation of thermonuclear arms, simulation programmes, etc.). Only **a referendum** could determine whether or not these policies correspond to the wishes of the citizenry. And a referendum is what we demand.

Meanwhile the USA and Russia, at last taking seriously the nuclear powers' commitment to eliminate their nuclear arsenals (article VI of the NPT), are negotiating drastic and mutually monitored reductions in their arsenals. Both

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Barack Obama ("I will make the objective of eliminating nuclear weapons around the world a central element of US nuclear policy")* and Vladimir Putin ("I think we would do better to close that Pandora's box")* say they are ready to eliminate their nuclear arsenals. (*Remarks made on 10 and 11 Sept, 2008).

On 24 September 2009, despite some reticence on France's part, the UN Security Council unanimously confirmed the objective of a "world without nuclear weapons". Our nation must now match her actions to her promises.

Today the hope of ridding the planet of all nuclear weapons, under strict and effective controls, has become a concrete objective which we can impose on our political representatives, by means of a [engagement citoyen](#) `class='spip_out' rel='external'>citizen's engagement`.

SITE: www.acdn.net/ `class='spip_out' rel='external'>www.acdn.net`

The Hiroshima Flame

A Peace Flame was lit in Hiroshima's Peace Park in memory of the victims of the atomic bomb of 6 August 1945. As long as one nuclear weapon remains, it will continue to burn. On 5 August 2009, it was used to light a "Nuclear Abolition Flame". The *Abolition 2000* network (which groups over 2000 organisation or municipalities) and **Mayors for Peace** (more than 3000 towns and cities worldwide) have decided to have this flame carried around the globe by the international team that is doing the whole march. On the way, it will be used to light or rekindle various other flames, including the *Nuclear Disarmament Flame* in Saintes, which was first lit in May 2001. There is also the option of a "virtual" nuclear abolition flame: anyone can borrow it from Abolition 2000's website and send it by internet to other people - for example to political representatives - in order to affirm the desire for the nation to pursue this objective.

Site : www.abolitionflame.org/ `class='spip_out' rel='external'>www.abolitionflame.org`

Itinerary for the Nuclear Disarmament Flame in France

Between 6 and 12 November, as part of France's hosting of the World March, the Hiroshima Flame for the abolition of nuclear weapons will be carried through **Paris, Saintes, Saint-Pierre d'Oléron, Bordeaux, Agen, Cahors, Toulouse and Perpignan**, before arriving in **Barcelona** on 13 November 2009.

In each of these towns, various events will be organised as the flame passes through (street theatre, concerts, film, round-table discussions, press conferences...), so as to raise people's awareness of the urgent need for nuclear and general disarmament.

The choice of these particular towns relates to the mobilisation of their citizens. Saintes was the first French city to join *Abolition 2000* (in June 2000, by unanimous vote of the city council) and Mayors for Peace (in March 2008, also by unanimous vote).

Saint Pierre d'Oléron joined those two networks in July 2009.

Any town in France, whether or not located on the flame's itinerary, can do the same. It only requires the citizens and

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their representatives to wish it (for documentation : mailto: contact@acdn.net). In Belgium more than half the cities have joined *Mayors for Peace*, and after that the parliament adopted the position of calling for the withdrawal of US bombs stationed on Belgian soil, and for Europe to be freed from nuclear weapons.

Let us together ensure that none of our towns and cities ever suffer the fate of Hiroshima.
