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The Norwegian Nobel Committee
Henrik Ibsens Gate 51
Oslo
Norway

Dear Members of the Norwegian Nobel Committee:

I am submitting to your consideration for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize one of the most imaginative and successful of the many organizations and movements that are in the forefront of the campaign for the global elimination of nuclear weapons: Mayors for Peace.

Your annual task, never an easy one, has become even more difficult in recent years as the number of worthy candidates recommended for the world's most prestigious award has been steadily increasing.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to me that, in your deliberations, priority should be given to individuals and movements involved in peace issues with an obvious global significance which, moreover, are urgently demanding a solution. Furthermore, the successful nominee should meet the criteria specified by Alfred Nobel in his will.

It is clearly unrealistic to expect in the foreseeable future "the abolition or reduction of standing armies," but the reduction and abolition of nuclear armaments is a feasible and, indeed, urgent task of the world community. It is also an obligation under Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This was reiterated in the unanimous opinion of the International Court of Justice issued on July 8, 1996, which stated that "there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament."

Unfortunately, no more than modest progress has been made in this respect. Instead, more countries are acquiring nuclear weapons and the likelihood of their use is increasing. This danger is especially acute in regions in conflict, such as the Korean peninsula and the Indian subcontinent. But the development of new nuclear weapons among the nuclear-armed nations is also a cause for concern. The nuclear weapons modernization program under U.S. President Barack Obama is particularly startling when set against his April 2009 pledge to build a nuclear weapons-free world. Other countries, such as Russia and Britain, are likewise committing themselves to renewing and modernizing their nuclear forces.

The fact that the world has so far escaped disaster and that the nuclear arms race has been restrained in some ways is in no small measure due to the campaigning efforts of well-informed,

concerned, and courageous individuals and the movements they have inspired. This has been documented in my award-winning scholarly trilogy, *The Struggle Against the Bomb: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement* (Stanford University Press, 1993-2003).

Numerous individuals and organizations around the world continue the struggle today, and their efforts are vital in the process of bringing countries to the table to start negotiations on a convention to eliminate nuclear weapons. A most hopeful sign is the spectacular growth in recent years of Mayors for Peace, an organization with deep roots in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and that is now spanning the globe. Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the first cities to be destroyed by nuclear weapons; ever since, their citizens, including prominently the survivors and their successive mayors, have been leading the global campaign for a world without nuclear weapons.

I believe that the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Mayors for Peace is richly deserved, and will provide an important stimulus toward the realization of its goal. At the same time, such an award would also honor the many survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have devoted their shattered lives to ensure that there will never again be a nuclear war.

With respectful greetings,

Lawrence S. Wittner, Ph.D.
Professor of History emeritus