

U.N. head 'backs global peace plan'

The daily Yomiuri 11 November 2011

NEW YORK (Kyodo)—Hiroshima Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki has said that U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon backed his "Hiroshima for Global Peace" plan when the two met as part of the governor's North American tour to promote it.

"Secretary General Ban Ki Moon expressed first his own personal commitment to disarmament for the nuclear issue and said he will also support our plan," Yuzaki told reporters after the meeting at U.N. headquarters. "So I think that's a big push for us."

Yuzaki's initiative "seeks to contribute to global peace using Hiroshima's experience of destruction by the first atomic bomb, and reconstruction from its ashes," according to a press release.

On Aug. 6, 1945, the United States dropped the world's first atomic bomb over Hiroshima in the closing days of World War II. Three days later, another bomb was detonated over Nagasaki.

Because of its history, Yuzaki believes Hiroshima should "play a major role in creating and promoting a road map toward nuclear abolition."

He also envisions developing human resources to help countries in post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building, as well as furthering comprehensive research geared to promoting global peace with Hiroshima acting as an "international peace hub."



The Yomiuri Shimbun

Hiroshima Gov. Hidehiko Yuzaki, left, talks with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, right, at U.N. headquarters in New York on Wednesday.

During his meeting with Ban, the governor was promised U.N. backing through access to experts and networks as well as political support.

Yuzaki noted that Ban has traveled to Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan, which was a primary nuclear weapons test site in the Soviet Union, in advocating disarmament and a nuclear-free world.

"Of course the U.N. is actually where governments are negotiating disarmament

and support from the U.N. has very strong, political meaning," he added, noting that it "would encourage us."

Prior to leaving for the United States, Yuzaki laid a wreath at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, then flew to Hawaii as his first destination. On Saturday he began his U.S. tour by offering a wreath at the USS Arizona memorial in Pearl Harbor.

From there he traveled to Chicago and Washington, where he met with political leaders, academics and the press.