

London school students at Downing Street to plea for a nuclear weapon free world

Wearing colourful paper cranes, a symbol of peace and good health in Japan, a group Year 9 students from Maria Fidelis School London delivered a letter to the Prime Minister at Downing Street yesterday urging him to abolish nuclear weapons, an urgent message for our time.

2012 marks the 50th anniversary of the Cuban missile crisis and closer to home, Defence secretary Philip Hammond announced £350 million contracts for the design of new nuclear-armed submarines.

This action, organised by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Pax Christi UK was part of an international project initiated by young people in Hiroshima, Japan. They have written to every world leader with their message, "As youth from Hiroshima, we are deeply concerned that our future is still being threatened by almost 20,000 nuclear weapons. We are writing to you and other leaders to ask for help in eliminating this threat. We enclose a gift of 1,000 hand-made paper cranes - each one a prayer for a peaceful nuclear-free world." In return for their gift, they are seeking a message of support for a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

In the delegation to Downing Street were Harriet Agyekum, Catherine Huberson-Abie, Nawal Saleh, Regina Salazar and Tyty Mamisa and Martin Birdseye who is a member of ICAN-UK* and Pax Christi*.

* ICAN-United Kingdom

Was set up in 2007 to raise awareness of the need for a comprehensive nuclear weapons abolition treaty and build popular support for the government to begin work on such a multilateral agreement. ICAN-UK works with leading NGOs to promote negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention through education, parliamentary lobbying and nonviolent action.

Website: <http://www.icanw.org.uk>

More photographs here

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/paxchristiuk/sets/72157631963527978/2012-0496-en-gl-SD>