



## MEDIA RELEASE

**For Immediate Release  
July 31, 2013**

### ***Shirley Douglas featured speaker at August 6<sup>th</sup> Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration in Toronto***

TORONTO -- Actress Shirley Douglas, OC, will be the featured speaker at the **August 6<sup>th</sup>** Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration at **Toronto City Hall**, beginning at **6:45 p.m.** Shirley will call on the Harper government to take a leading role in the world-wide movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

Shirley's remarks will be live-Tweeted with Hashtag: [#HiroshimaDayTO](https://twitter.com/HiroshimaDayTO)

A participant in *Ban the Bomb* marches in England in the 1950s, Shirley Douglas founded the Canadian chapter of *Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament* during the height of the Cold War in 1983. She has joined over 675 fellow Members of the Order of Canada who have appealed to the federal government to take a leading role in international negotiations to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Shirley Douglas recalls her childhood memories of the fateful day:

*"On a beautiful summer's day – August 6th, 1945, I was at Carlyle Lake, Saskatchewan, with my mother and father. I was eleven years old. We heard on the radio that a bomb like no others had been dropped on Hiroshima. The news dribbled in all day. 'One bomb flattened the city...killed thousands of people, animals, all living things,' we were told by the voice on the radio. Aside from that, no one knew anything.*

*The story continued to unfold and 3 days later we learned another bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. News reports described a city and people cloaked in white ash...survivors with their skin melted or burned away by radiation, begging to die. Others were vaporized. No one was there to offer survivors even a sip of water, let alone comfort; 90% of the nurses and doctors were dead and 43 hospitals were gone. Many of the survivors languished for days before succumbing. We were witnessing the dawning of the Nuclear Age."*



The Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration is organized by the **Hiroshima Day Coalition** and **Sierra Club Canada**. Sponsors and supporters include the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Physicians for Global Survival, Veterans Against Nuclear Arms, the Toronto National Association of Japanese Canadians, Science for Peace, Conscience Canada, Toronto Article 9, the Toronto Area Interfaith Council, and Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament.

In addition to Shirley's featured speech at the August 6<sup>th</sup> Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration, there will be:

- Readings of the Toronto and Hiroshima Peace Declarations, prayers led by the Toronto Area Interfaith Council;
- Musical performances, including the Yakudo Drummers, singer Tabby Johnson and flautist Ron Korb;
- A lantern ceremony in the Toronto City Hall reflecting pool will conclude the commemoration; and
- Inside Toronto City Hall, a photo exhibit and paintings by Hiroshima and Nagasaki atom bomb survivors will also be open to the public August 6-9<sup>th</sup>.

**DEMAND**  
**A Nuclear Weapons Free World**

**August 6, 2013 @ 6:45 pm**  
Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto

Featured Speaker:  
**Shirley Douglas**  
Toronto & Hiroshima Peace Declarations

Tabby Johns on  
Yakudo Drummers  
Ron Korb, flautist  
Raging Grannies  
Regent Park School of Music  
Lantern Ceremony

Free and open to all  
hiroshimaday@yahoo.ca  
www.hiroshimadaycoalition.ca

Hiroshima and  
Nagasaki Poster  
& Survivors'  
Artwork Display  
August 6-9  
Toronto City Hall  
Rotunda  
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Planning Committee  
members: Voice of  
Women for Peace  
Japanese Canadian  
Cultural Centre  
Toronto Article 9  
Science for Peace  
Physicians for Global  
Survival  
Toronto Area Interfaith  
Council  
Veterans Against  
Nuclear Arms  
Sponsors and  
supporters: Canadian  
Pugwash Group  
Conscience Canada  
Performing Artists for  
Nuclear Disarmament  
Toronto NAJC

**Hiroshima-Nagasaki Remembrance**

In 1945 the Red Cross said that atomic weapons should be abolished. Almost 70 years later, we are still trying to abolish nuclear weapons. We have made some progress but the reality is there have been over 2000 bombs tested -- in our atmosphere, under water and underground, and the madness continues.

Back in 2010, representatives of United Nations, NATO and the U.S. State Department descended on Ottawa to meet with the leaders of a number of nuclear disarmament organizations and like-minded civil society leaders. As Douglas Roche wrote at the time: *"It was all designed to move the Canadian government to actively support US President Barack Obama's commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world."* Did it? No, unfortunately. The Harper government has been missing-in-action on nuclear weapons abolition.

President Obama represents a new opportunity to substantially reduce the 17,000+ nuclear weapons still in existence, but he needs the support of Canada and other allies.

The Hiroshima Day Coalition hopes to convince PM Harper to take a leading role in the world-wide movement to abolish nuclear weapons.

In recognition of its ongoing efforts to abolish nuclear weapons, Angela Kane, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, recently commended the Hiroshima Day Coalition:

*"The efforts of the Coalition play an important role in preserving our collective memory of the devastating humanitarian consequences from the use of nuclear weapons. The more the public knows about these consequences, the greater will be their determination to prevent any future use of these weapons, and to pursue their total elimination."*

In her remarks, Angela Kane emphasized that the total global expenditure on nuclear weapons is counted in many trillions of dollars when she concluded:

*"August 6<sup>th</sup> provides an especially appropriate moment for the entire world to consider the alternative uses such funds could make in addressing real human needs of social and economic development."*

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**For further information, please contact:**

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