

US leads G7 in ambassadors' boycott of ceremony commemorating atomic bombing of Nagasaki

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The United States has led a boycott by six G7 members of Friday's ceremony commemorating the atomic bombing of Nagasaki during World War II. Justified on the basis that the mayor of Nagasaki refused to invite the ambassador of the genocidal Israeli regime to the ceremony, the coordinated decision by the imperialist powers to stay away underscores that they are prepared to risk a world war waged with nuclear weapons.

A ceremony is held each year on August 9 at the Nagasaki peace statue to mark the dropping of the second atomic bomb, which killed an estimated 40,000 people instantaneously and killed tens of thousands more over subsequent weeks and months. It followed just three days after the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. American imperialism remains the only power to have used these barbaric weapons in warfare.

The ambassadors to Japan of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the US and the European Union addressed a letter to the city authorities in July stating that "it would become difficult for us to have high-level participation" if Israel was excluded. Nagasaki Mayor Shiro Suzuki confirmed Thursday his refusal to invite Israel, citing the security threat posed by potential protests against the Zionist regime's genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza. In June, the Japanese city addressed a letter to the Israeli government calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, where the Israeli military has slaughtered upwards of 200,000 people over the past 10 months, according to an estimate by *The Lancet* medical journal.

In this context, the insistence by the imperialist powers that the representative of a regime guilty of crimes on a scale not seen since the Nazis' Holocaust of European Jewry and the incineration of two Japanese cities by

American imperialism is a scandalous provocation. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government has bombed hospitals, universities and all other civilian infrastructure, intentionally starved more than 2 million Palestinians, authorised the torture and abuse of prisoners, and cut off water, electricity, fuel and medical supplies to the Gaza Strip. On Thursday alone, the Israel Defence Forces struck two schools sheltering displaced people in Gaza City, killing at least 15 people and injuring dozens.

By the end of March 2024, Israel had dropped some 65,000 tons of ordnance on Gaza, more than three times the explosive power of the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A large proportion of the explosives used to raze Gaza to the ground consists of the 14,000 2,000-pound bombs sent by the Biden administration to Israel since October 2023.

In their letter protesting Israel's exclusion, the ambassadors of the imperialist powers nonetheless had the audacity to accuse city authorities in Nagasaki of "politicising" the ceremony by failing to invite Israel. They asserted that it would be unjustified to place Israel on par with Russia and Belarus, the only other two countries excluded from the ceremony in Nagasaki. This is rich coming from Washington, Berlin, London and Paris, the very imperialist powers that organised the overthrow of Ukraine's pro-Russian president in a fascist-led coup in 2014, armed Kiev to the teeth, and provoked the reactionary Putin regime to invade Ukraine in 2022. In the more than two years since, the imperialist-fuelled conflict has claimed the lives of at least 500,000 Ukrainians and tens of thousands of Russians.

Moreover, these same imperialist powers have endorsed the Gaza genocide as part of advanced preparations for a region-wide war against Iran, which would plunge the long-suffering Middle East into a bloodbath and risk the

lives of millions. The war in the Middle East is one front in what is rapidly emerging as a third world war involving all of the imperialist powers in a redivision of the world to secure their geostrategic and economic interests. In pursuit of these interests, the imperialists are prepared to sanction any crime, including the use of nuclear weapons.

The dropping of two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by American imperialism led to the deaths of over 200,000 people in the blasts and subsequent radiation. With this demonstration of its utter ruthlessness and brutality, Washington wished to demonstrate to the world its readiness to use unrestrained force to secure its hegemony and ensure a swift end to the Second World War so as to prevent the further advance of Soviet troops into Japanese-occupied parts of China.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote in an article marking the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings,

There is a certain naïveté on the part of the American people with regard to the utter ruthlessness of the American ruling class, particularly in relation to the Second World War. That war has long been presented by the American media and political establishment as a great war for democracy, against fascism and tyranny. In fact, the principal reason that the United States entered the war—and the underlying motivation behind all its actions in prosecuting the war—was to establish itself as the dominant and unchallenged world power. In pursuit of this aim the lives of hundreds of thousands of Japanese were of little consequence.

Almost 80 years on, American imperialism's determination to offset its rapidly deteriorating economic position through the use of military might takes precedence over the lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, Ukrainians and Russians, whose fate is as inconsequential for the imperialist warmongers as that of the Japanese civilians was for their predecessors.

The imperialist ambassadors' decision to boycott the ceremony comes in the wake of the NATO summit last month in Washington at which plans were finalised to directly intervene into the war with Russia in Ukraine. The aggressive military alliance announced the creation of a permanent office in Ukraine, and a command centre in Germany tasked with overseeing weapons deliveries to

the fascistic Kiev regime and waging the war on nuclear-armed Russia. This is a prelude to the deployment of NATO troops, hundreds of whom are already in Ukraine. These reckless moves intensify the conflict with Russia, which threatens to spiral into a nuclear exchange that would risk human life across Europe and the world.

Washington and its NATO allies are not only risking a nuclear exchange with Russia, but also with China in the Asia-Pacific. Last month's NATO communique denounced Beijing as "a decisive enabler of Russia's war against Ukraine." The preparations for war with China are supported by Japanese imperialism, which agreed to an expansion of the US-Japan Security Treaty to deepen bilateral cooperation on military and defence cooperation. Washington has established a series of bilateral, trilateral and quadrilateral alliances in the Asia-Pacific, including its regional allies Japan, Australia and India, to isolate Beijing diplomatically, economically and militarily. The trilateral AUKUS alliance between the US, Britain, and Australia specifically focuses on the construction of long-range nuclear attack submarines for use in a war with China.

The only way to stop the descent into imperialist barbarism in a third world war is through the development of a global anti-war movement led by the working class. The international working class must unify under its leadership all progressive elements in society in a fight for the socialist transformation of society to put an end to imperialist war and the capitalist profit system in which it is rooted.



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