

*Led by Washington, ambassadors from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the European Union and Australia refuse to attend peace ceremony in Nagasaki because Israel was not invited due to genocidal war on Gaza*

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Nagasaki, August 8 (RHC)-- Western ambassadors in Japan, including those from the United States and Britain, will boycott Japan's annual peace memorial ceremony in Nagasaki since Israel was not invited.

Japan holds a ceremony on Friday marking the 79th anniversary of the US bombing of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945.

Among the invitees to the ceremony are dignitaries from more than 150 countries and territories. Israel, however, has been left off the list because of the regime's ongoing atrocities in the Gaza Strip.

The decision to not invite Israel's ambassador Gilad Cohen was announced by Nagasaki's mayor Shiro Suzuki last week. Suzuki said he made the decision based on "various developments in the international community in response to the ongoing situation in the Middle East."

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel said Wednesday that he would not attend the memorial service which according to him was "politicized" by Nagasaki's decision not to invite Israel.

Britain's ambassador, Julia Longbottom, also declined to attend the event.

Other representatives from the United States and Britain will however attend Friday's event, the embassies said.

Four other Group of Seven nations — Canada, France, Germany and Italy — and the European Union and Australia would follow suit, according to media reports.

The European Union's ambassador would not take part "due to his agenda" and the bloc would be represented by a lower-level diplomat, AFP quoted a spokesperson as saying.

A spokesperson for the French embassy said its number two would attend the ceremony, describing the decision not to invite the representative of Israel as "regrettable and questionable."

And the German embassy said that the head of its political division would attend, with the decision made "in light of the absences and availability" of senior embassy staff.

Israel's ambassador Cohen also reacted to the mayor's decision, saying that he sent the wrong message to the world. He told U.S. broadcaster CNN on Monday that he was "really surprised by (Suzuki) hijacking this ceremony for his political motivations." Suzuki said that the decision not to invite Cohen was "not politically motivated."

Nagasaki officials said Suzuki had sent a letter to Israel's embassy in June urging an immediate cease-fire in Gaza.

Israel has been under huge international pressure to end its genocidal war in the Gaza Strip. The regime's war machine has claimed the lives of almost 40,000 Palestinians since October 7, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

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