



NEWSLETTER

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GENERAL

Pax Christi Luxembourg hosts Annual General Meeting and Workshops

The Annual General Meeting of Pax Christi International took place in the city of Luxembourg on 19 June 2012. Msgr. Jean-Claude Hollerich, Archbishop of Luxembourg and Bishop President of Pax Christi Luxembourg welcomed members. The AGM was followed by several workshops that took place on June 20th and 21st, 2012. The topics of the workshops ranged from the Arms Trade Treaty, nuclear disarmament, the situation in the Middle East (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt) as well as on the Israeli – Palestinian conflict. A single session was devoted to national and international lobby and advocacy and on human rights for asylum seekers and refugees in the context of the Schengen Treaty. The AGM and workshops were hosted by Pax Christi Luxembourg. For more information read the press release in English [2012-0248-en-gl-IS](#) and in German [2012-0248-de-gl-IS](#).

AFRICA

South Sudan's first year as an Independent State

On 9 July 2012, South Sudan will celebrate its first year as an independent state. Armed conflicts at the border with Sudan and oil production have caused continuous tension. On 19 June 2012, IKV Pax Christi Netherlands held an Africa meeting in Utrecht to dialogue and debate about South Sudan. For more information on the meeting read here www.ikvpaxchristi.nl

EurAC calls for an end to the violence in East DRC

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAC), of which Pax Christi International is a member, expressed grave concern for the renewed outbreak of violence and insecurity in the Democratic Republic

of Congo since April 2012. The organisation calls on the European Union and its Member States to urge the Congolese government to renew its commitment to genuine reform of the security sector and to address the causes of insecurity in the region, including the role of neighbouring Rwanda. To read the text of the statement, see Ref. [2012-0229-en-af-HS](#) in English or Ref. [2012-0229-fr-af-HS](#) in French.

Cardinal Monsengwo recognised for Commitment to Peace

Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya was awarded the Peace Prize by the German-based Ecumenical Network for Central Africa last month. Cardinal Monsengwo, Archbishop of Kinshasa (DR Congo) and formerly Co-President of Pax Christi International, was recognised for his strong advocacy for peace; calling for an end to the violence in his country and violations of human rights especially in the East. He has called the 28 November 2011 presidential and legislative elections a 'deception'. The elections were widely criticized by international observers. The award was presented in Berlin on the occasion of a conference on the DR Congo and was sponsored by the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation.

AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN

Award for Sr. Dianna Ortiz Pax Christi USA

Members of Pax Christi USA were ecstatic for their own Sr. Dianna Ortiz, who received an award from the Program for Torture Victims, in Los Angeles on 31 May 2012. For more information read the announcement of the award [here](#).

ASIA & PACIFIC

Calling Taiwan for more Development

On 28 May 2012, Pax Christi in Taiwan (JPIC-AMRS) issued a letter addressed to the Minister President of the Republic of Taiwan concerning military expenditure versus development aid. Read the letter in [2012-0205-en-ap-SD](#).

Japan on Changes in the Constitution after Earthquake

On 8 June 2012, the Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace, a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International, has made available the last article of Ken Takada titled “Characteristics of the Movements to Change the Constitution after the Great Earthquake”. Read the article here <http://www.jccjp.org/jccjp/English.html>

UN Human Rights High Commissioner meets Minority Communities in Pakistan

The National Commission for Justice and Peace, a Member organisation in Pakistan, held a meeting composed of minority communities with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, on 5 June 2012 in Islamabad. Read the statement of the High Commissioner here: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/Media.aspx>

Family Therapy Initiative for survivors of conflict in Kandy, Sri Lanka

On June 1-3 2012, the Human Rights and Media Office in Kandy, a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International in Sri Lanka organized a programme to assist couples readjust to family life where a partner had endured trauma and survived conflict. This initiative was led by a couple from Family Services Colombo and was held at the Fatima Retreat House, Lewella, Kandy. For more information read the report on the approach and outcomes of programme here. [2012-0237-en-ap-PE](#)

MIDDLE EAST

“Occupation Tastes Bitter”- A Campaign for unambiguous labelling of goods from Israeli Settlements -

In a press release issued on May 31, 2012, Pax Christi Germany demanded the unambiguous labelling of goods from Israeli settlements. In view of the present unclear declaration, the Mideast Commission recommends abstinence from buying. The Mideast Commission of Pax Christi Germany has started a nationwide campaign for the clear labelling of goods from the Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian territories against international law. Read the English at [2012-0209-en-me-NV](#). Read in German at www.paxchristi.de. Read more at <http://www.jpost.com/International/Article.aspx?id=272452>

Publication about the concept of sumud (steadfastness) in Palestine

AEI-Open Windows of the Arab Educational Institute, Member Organisation of Pax Christi International in Palestine, has published a new book about the concept of *sumud* or steadfastness. The book contains stories by Palestinians, interviews, and reflections about sumud called the “Soul of the Palestinian people.” The authors of the book are Toine van Teeffelen in cooperation with Victoria Biggs and the Sumud Story House. The book is published by AEI’s Culture and Palestine series. To place an order, e-mail aei@p-ol.com (att. Elias Abu Akleh). The cost is 5 Euro excluding postage. For more information e-mail tvant@p-ol.com (Toine van Teeffelen).

Syria: Civil society activism under the shadow of growing militarization

Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen call for increased support to the Syrian non-violent protest movement. Since the start of the revolution in March 2011, civil society activism in Syria has never been so strong, even if it is overshadowed by the growing militarization. This briefing is based on discussions with civil society activists during a

mission of Brigitte Herremans to Lebanon on 25 - 30 May 2012. Read in 2012-0220-en-me-CT and in Dutch 2012-0220-nl-me-CT.

More about Brigitte Herremans in Dutch at <http://www.broederlijkdelen.be/medewerker/brigitte-herremans>.

Listen to a radio interview in Dutch at <http://nieuws.vtm.be/buitenland/201206074835-assad-schuift-verantwoordelijkheid-bloedbad-van-zich-af>

Pax Christi France calls on Syria to Dialogue instead of Violence

In a press release dated 14 June 2012, Msgr. Marc Stenger, Bishop President of Pax Christi France, called all Syrian parties involved in the conflict to dialogue instead of further violence. The blood of innocent victims feeds our indignation. We cannot stay outside and do nothing. Especially our governments should take stronger action. A possible military initiative is not the best way to help the conflict solved. Read in French at [2012-0238-fr-me-HS](http://www.paxchristi.fr/2012-0238-fr-me-HS).

Towards Good Faith and Confidence in Diplomatic Process with Iran

On 24 June 2012, the Co-Presidents of Pax Christi International addressed a letter to the European Union concerning the role of the negotiations partners and Iran on nuclear issues. Pax Christi International welcomes the resumption of talks between Iran and China, France, Germany, Russia, the US and the UK and encourages on-going diplomatic efforts to resolve outstanding questions about Iran's nuclear programmes. Furthermore, Pax Christi International firmly rejects the possibility of military action and calls for a process of normalization of relations with Iran. Read the letter in English [2012-0241-en-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.nl/2012-0241-en-me-SD) and in German [2012-0241-de-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.nl/2012-0241-de-me-SD). Member Organisations of Pax Christi International are invited to address similar letters to their national political authorities.

EUROPE

Pax Christi Germany Visits Ukraine

Pax Christi Germany is planning a visit to Ukraine from 29 September to 6 October 2012. The aim of the visit is to better understand the on-going situation of what is happening in Ukraine society and especially, how have people been living with the events of the past – the mass killings that took place during the Second World War, “the forgotten Holocaust.” Participants will visit Lviv and the capital city Kiev and will explore the cultural differences between Central and Eastern Europe. For more information on the visit refer to the www.paxchristi.de website.

Reflections from Pax Christi Wallonia – Bruxelles

In June 2012, Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles held a series of reflections. On 6 June 2012, a reflection was held on the upcoming elections for the local level in Belgium. On 13 June 2012, Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles held a conference with debate about the future of Somalia in Africa. The country has been the focus of many armed conflicts combined with natural disasters. Politically, the authorities are very fragile and on June 14th, a session was held on the role of the (migrants) Churches in Belgian society. A final session was held on June 18th concerning diversity in Belgian society. For more information refer here www.paxchristiwb.be

Annual Report of IKV Pax Christi Netherlands 2011

IKV Pax Christi Netherlands issued its Annual Report 2011. The report can be downloaded in Dutch at www.ikvpaxchristi.nl. To read a summary in Dutch visit the following link: <http://www.rorate.nl/nieuws/nws.php?id=71638>

DISARMAMENT & DEMILITARISATION

Church campaigns for a strong Arms Trade Treaty

The World Council of Churches (WCC) convened a meeting of African and other churches in an ecumenical campaign, building support for a strong and effective Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The meeting was held from May 29th to the 31st in Cape Town, South Africa and was hosted by the [Economic Justice Network of Southern Africa](#) in collaboration with the [South African Council of Churches](#). With a month left for governments to negotiate the first global arms trade treaty, churches from countries most affected by unregulated trade in arms gathered to finalize advocacy plans. The event brought together church leadership and advocacy staff from faith-based organizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia, South America and North America. Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Pax Christi Secretariat attended this meeting. For more information on this campaign click the link here <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/church-campaigners-rally.html>

Catholics join forces and collaborate for an Arms Trade Treaty

Members of the International Catholic Organizations Network (ICON) gathered together for a briefing on 7 June 2012 on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in New York. About 20 people representing several large organizations attended the event organized by Beth Begley of Pax Christi International. Gene Sullivan of the [ATT Legal Response Network](#) and Allison Pytlak of the [Control Arms Coalition](#) secretariat provided background on the treaty process and the recent launch of the coalition's 100 day countdown to the treaty negotiations in July. Members were also introduced to the [Interfaith Declaration on the ATT](#), which is a sign-on statement open to religious leaders and faith-based organizations of any religious tradition and will be presented to governments ahead of the treaty negotiations. [Pax Christi International](#) was among the first organizations to sign the

Declaration; it has since been endorsed by such high-level leaders as Desmond Tutu. The briefing included a lively question and answer period and spurred a high level of discussion on many facets of the ATT including the inherent moral imperative among event participants.

IKV Pax Christi Netherlands Actions on the Arms Trade Treaty

On the 24th of May 2012, the Dutch Red Cross together with IKV Pax Christi, AI and Oxfam Novib organized a debate about arms export and the ATT in the Humanity House, The Hague. Some of the participants were Nathalie Weizmann from the ICRC, Brian Wood from AI, Paul van der Ijssel, Dutch Disarmament Ambassador, Arjen El Fassed (MP Green Left) and Michiel Holtackers (MP Christian Democrats) and Wim Zwijnenburg who discussed various elements of the negotiations and arms trade in general (see [www. Wapenfeiten.org](http://www.Wapenfeiten.org)). IKV Pax Christi also launched their Black Market place and are actively promoting this, hopefully with some controversy and media attention, which can be found here:

<http://controlarms.nl/zwartemarktplaats/create> They are close to completing the Holland Next Top-lobbyist contest where competitors have to collect as many signatures as possible and come up with some brilliant ideas for promoting the campaign so they can win a trip to New York.

<http://controlarms.nl/toplobbyist>

Pressing urgency for NATO's position on its Nuclear Weapons in Europe

The recent Chicago Summit made little headway on NATO's nuclear position and its 28 member states continue to fall along a diverse spectrum of views on the Alliance's nuclear arsenal. Though leaders on both sides of the Atlantic are preoccupied with a number of current pressing issues, NATO's nuclear dilemmas cannot be put off much longer without undermining its cohesion and strength. A discussion on this topic was organised by Carnegie Europe in Brussels on 13 June 2012. Fr. Paul Lansu of the

International Pax Christi Secretariat attended the discussion.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

Universal Periodic Review in Jordan

On 30 May 2012, IKV Pax Christi Netherlands and the Jordan Civil Society Programme co-hosted a workshop in Amman, Jordan, giving Jordanian civil society an idea of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process and their possible role. The workshop aimed to deepen the understanding of civil society organizations to the requirements of participation in the UPR process. It also encouraged exchange and learning about experiences from regional civil society coalitions which have been active in recent UPR in neighbouring countries e.g. Lebanon. An update was provided on the UPR mechanism and latest developments related to it. A total of 35 representatives from Jordanian civil society organizations participated in the workshop. Jordan is at the UPR Review Agenda in 2013. For more information visit the Jordan Civil Society Program www.csp-jordan.org and IKV Pax Christi www.ikvpaxchristi.nl

19th Session Human Rights Council at the United Nations

The Human Rights Council 19th session of the United Nations is taking place from June 18th to July 6th, 2012. Enrique Sierra, representative of Pax Christi International attended a meeting on June 18th with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

HUMAN SECURITY AND VIOLENCE

Kerry Diocese gets Eco award

The diocese of Kerry, Ireland has become the first Catholic diocese to be awarded an Eco-Award from Eco-Congregation Ireland, an inter-denominational environmental organization representing five

different churches. The Eco-Award was given to the Kerry Diocese in recognition of the impressive work done by several parishes during Diocese of Kerry Earth Week 2011. The award was presented to Bishop Bill Murphy on the 20th of May by Sr Catherine Brennan SSL who is the Chairperson of Eco-Congregation Ireland. Bishop Murphy said that respect for creation and the environment is “an essential part of the Gospel” and reminded us that we are “stewards” of God’s creation. He commended Sr Regina O’Connell and the Kerry Diocesan Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee, who spearheaded the work for Earth Week, and gave particular credit to Sylvia Thompson for her “Trojan work”. Sr Catherine singled out the people of Killorglin, where the Catholic and Church of Ireland parishes worked together. Go to <http://www.dioceseofkerry.ie/page/pastoral-groups/Creation%20Time/> Diocese of Kerry Earth Week runs from 29th September to 7th October 2012. For more information on Eco Congregation Ireland visit <http://www.ecocongregationireland.com>. The Kerry Diocesan Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee is a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International.

Pax Christi International at Rio + 20 in Rio, Brazil

Martha Inés Romero, Latin America Coordinator of Pax Christi International and Prof. Alirio Cáceres from the Javeriana University in Bogota, Colombia, represented Pax Christi International at the Rio + 20 Conference in Rio de Janeiro, 20 – 22 June 2012. Prof. Cáceres is a permanent deacon with the Archdiocese of Bogota and Member of the Eco-Theologian Table. He is an expert in inter-religious dialogue focus on environment, care of creation and protection of natural resources. Pax Christi International issued a statement on the Rio + 20. Read in Spanish at [2012-0246-sp-gl-HS](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0246-sp-gl-HS), English [2012-0246-en-gl-HS](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0246-en-gl-HS), French [2012-0246-fr-gl-HS](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0246-fr-gl-HS), German [2012-0246-de-gl-HS](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0246-de-gl-HS).

PEACE BUILDING

New Challenges for Catholic Peace building

On May 29-30, 2012 about 45 participants gathered from around the world at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in Rome to consider “New Challenges for Catholic Peace building” in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of Pope John XXIII’s ground-breaking encyclical on peace. Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, opened the meeting with a reflection on *Pacem in Terris* as a living document, noting that the encyclical emphasizes relationships and existential dignity as constitutive of the “densest, thickest, richest human reality.”

Among the seminar participants were former Pax Christi International Executive Committee members Laura Vargas from Peru and Hanna Nassif from Lebanon, Pax Christi Philippines president, Bishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ, Pax Christi International Executive Committee member Sister Filo Hirota, MMB from Japan, and Pax Christi International Co-President, Marie Dennis. Read more at [2012-0231-en-gl-PB](#) and at [2012-0222-en-gl-PB](#).

EPLO General Assembly in Belgrade on 30-31 May

Representatives of member organisations of the European Peace building Liaison Office, including Pax Christi International, travelled to Belgrade for the semi-annual General Assembly on 30th and 31st of May. As part of developing the EPLO strategic plan for 2013-2015 they deliberated in exploratory discussions the current policy and organisational objectives and feasibility of possible plans for continuation of current objectives. A decision on the content and direction of the new strategic plan will be taken in the next General Assembly in November in Brussels.

The key decisions that were taken during this GA concerned the Steering Committee, a new member and the approval of accounts and audit report. Of the four candidates that stood for election, Aurélien

Colson (ESSEC Iréné) and Simon Gray (Saferworld) were re-elected to the EPLO Steering Committee. Aurélien Colson will continue in the role of EPLO Treasurer. The Budapest Centre for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities has been accepted as an EPLO member. This takes EPLO’s membership to 31 organisations, based in 15 countries. The General Assembly voted to approve the EPLO accounts 2011 and the auditor’s report.

In the morning of the 2nd day an interesting policy meeting on Serbia took place. The two panel discussions covered the “*Reform of the security and justice sector in Serbia: Using the EU accession process*” and “*EU accession and educational reform: What potential to promote peace?*” Astrid Schrama represented Pax Christi International.

Countdown to the International Day of Peace

The 100 days countdown to the International Peace Day which is on 21st September has begun. The UN Secretary General calls on people everywhere to reflect on ways to build sustainable peace, for us and for future generations. Pax Christi International promotes the International Day of Peace. Read in English at [2012-0239-en-gl-PB](#) and in French [2012-0240-fr-gl-PB](#).

PEACE EDUCATION AND YOUTH WORK

Pax Christi Flanders offers creative summer trainings for Youth workers

UM4P of Pax Christi Flanders presents two creative summer trainings this Summer. The trainings are as follows: 1) Identity and collective trauma in a multicultural society from July 18th to the 28th in Belgium, and 2) Training 2: “Rehearsal for Life” from August 3rd to the 12th in Macedonia. For more information on the trainings visit the Pax Christi Flanders website at

<http://www.paxchristi.be/2012/06/two-international-creative-trainings-this-summer-for-youth-workers/>

DEVELOPING PEACE SPIRITUALITY AND THEOLOGY

[Pax Christi International Peace Spirituality: How Pax Christi Member Organisations worldwide live their Spirituality for Peace as source of inspiration for a journey towards a peaceful future.](#)

For the past few years, Pax Christi International has been consciously inviting people in our movement around the world to share their spiritual journeys in whatever ways they can. Bringing together the stories of grassroots people and their communities, we have begun to capture the complexity of human experiences that take place in a world where war, conflict and violence exist alongside hope, peace and reconciliation. We undertake this effort to understand how people acted in a given situation, but also to ponder their reflections on the use of violence and the option of employing methods of active nonviolence in a given situation.

This new resource includes fragments of Pax Christi's second collection of stories and reflections. The 'stepping stones' that describe Pax Christi's vision and mission and begin to articulate our spirituality of peace are rooted in the lived experiences of persons and communities engaged with the Pax Christi International movement worldwide. Read the document in [2012-0245-en-gl-PS](#)

[A call to Churches to become involved in the Time for Creation](#)

From 1st September 2012, the first day of the Orthodox Church year to 4 October 2012 - the feast of Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and the environment, churches are called to become involved in the Time for Creation. As 2012 is the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, the WCC and Pax Christi International especially encourage prayers and celebrations around this theme. For more information visit <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/events-sections/countdown-to-climate-justice/time-for-creation.html>

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

Click here to view the International Calendar of upcoming events:
<http://archive.paxchristi.net/MISC/calendar.pdf>.

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Pax Christi Newsletter
Pax Christi International
21 Vieux Marché aux Grains
B-1000 Brussels,
Belgium.

Pax Christi is the International Catholic Peace Movement with members worldwide
For more information visit our website:
www.paxchristi.net

To make a donation to Pax Christi International please click [here](#).