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GENERAL

Bread is Life – Fast for a Just Peace in Syria

Pax Christi International is launching a “bread is life” campaign during Lent 2013 to raise awareness about the suffering of civilian communities in Syria and to express solidarity with those who are trying to survive in Syria and as refugees in surrounding countries.

The Bread is Life campaign will take place from 13 February to 31 March 2013, to coincide with the Christian observance of Lent. The acute suffering of civilian communities has been made immeasurably worse by a shortage of bread, Syrian's staple food, caused in part by the deliberate bombing of bakeries.

We call on all Pax Christi members and friends worldwide to raise awareness about the plight of the Syrian civilian population, who feel abandoned by the rest of the world; to join in a global act of solidarity through prayer and fasting; to send the Syrian people messages of support; and to advocate for effective humanitarian assistance. We invite all Pax Christi Member Organisations and people of good will to:

1. Leave a message of solidarity for the people of Syria that we will pass to our contacts in Syria and those living abroad. You can forward your message via [email](#), through our [Facebook](#) page or via [Twitter](#).
2. Fast for one day or more to show your solidarity with the Syrian people. Please also tell us when you are fasting so we can let our contacts in Syria know (also via [email](#), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)). This can be done individually or as a group. Prayer services or fasting vigils in parishes and religious communities could be organised as opportunities to learn about the situation in Syria and to write solidarity messages. The power of fasting joins the political with the very personal.

Pax Christi International urges the end of violence and calls to respect the life of all Syrians without any distinction because of race, ethnic origin, creed, gender or others. Pax Christi International calls for a just peace in Syria.

Read more in [English](#); [Français](#); [Español](#); [Deutsch](#); [Italiano](#); and [Nederlands](#) ■

AFRICA

Voices from Mali

Armand Dembele, Coordinator of the Initiative Malienne Pax Christi pour le Développement, a Member organisation in Mali, has written to the International Secretariat and to Pax Christi Austria expressing his appreciation for the solidarity they have received. "It is at moments in difficulties, that you know your friends" Armand wrote. He analyses the situation on the ground in Mali and he defends the policies of the Mali government and the French military intervention. Read his letter in [French](#). ■

AU Summit: Strong Declarations by AU Heads of States

The 20th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The theme was "Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance." The session ended on 28 January 2013 with the AU Heads of State and Government committing to ensure implementation of the Assembly Decisions and Declarations that were arrived at during deliberations. Mussie Hailu represented Pax Christi International at the Summit. There were a number of decisions adopted, some of which can be read [here](#). ■

AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN

Pax Christi International Workshop on Resolution 1325 and Human Trafficking

A Pax Christi International workshop was held in Panama on the Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and on human trafficking. The focus was on the situations in Latin America and the Caribbean, also in the context of the Churches and Church related organisations. Participants came from Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Haiti, Guatemala, Chile, Panama, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. The workshop took place at the Instituto Cooperativo Interamericano from 6 till 8 February 2013. ■

Pax Christi USA: Atlanta, Site for 2013 National Conference

Pax Christi USA has chosen Atlanta, Georgia as the site for the National Conference of 2013, which is to be held 14-16 June 2013. Atlanta is the birthplace of Martin Luther King, Jr. More information about the site change and the National Conference is available on Pax Christi USA's [website](#). ■

Canadian participation in the missions of the UNO for the assertion of peace

Pax Christi Montréal was present at an international seminar taking place from 11 till 13 February 2013. On that occasion Richard Renshaw wrote an article in which he familiarizes the readers with the results of a study accomplished jointly by Jocelyn Coulon and Michel Liégeois who show the encouraging results of the Canadian peace missions; then he draws some cogitation for the social education of the Church. The mission of Pax Christi Montreal includes the spread of research on peace building. Read in [French](#). ■

Pax Christi Montreal's Letter to Colombian President

On 16 February 2013, Pax Christi Montreal sent a letter to Juan Manuel Santos, the President of Colombia. They expressed their solidarity with the peace efforts made by the Colombian government but also expressed their concern regarding threats against the families of community workers. The full letter is available in [Spanish](#). ■

ASIA - PACIFIC

6 Month Report of "Girls Home" by IDEAS

Initiatives in Development, Empowerment and Awareness Society (IDEAS), is a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International in India. IDEAS is committed to working for children's rights and for the rights of domestic workers and for victims of violence in society. A girl's home was started in 2009 to take care of girls who are deprived, depressed, and deeply wounded. In their 6 month report, IDEAS provides more information on the girl's home, including daily activities, benefits the girls are receiving, and case studies. The full report is available in [English](#). ■

Pax Christi International Meets with Indian Activists

On 20 February 2013, Fr. Paul Lansu of the Pax Christi International Secretariat met with a group of Indian activists in New Delhi, India on the topic of the Arab Spring and its Implication on Palestine Liberation. The meeting was organised by the Indian Solidarity Ecumenical Network (ISEN) – Kairos Palestine. Fr. Paul Lansu visited India to give lectures and to present papers on the Middle East. More information about Fr. Lansu's meeting in New Delhi can be found [here](#). ■

MIDDLE EAST

Pax Christi International Calls for End of Settlement Policy by Israel

Pax Christi International issued a statement towards an active ban of Israeli settlement products, 30 January 2013. Given the uncertain post-election political landscape in Israel, Pax Christi International calls attention to an issue which was largely neglected in the Israeli election campaign and is not nor appears to be a priority in the negotiations about the formation of a new Israeli government: the illegitimacy of the Israeli occupation and the continuation of the settlement policy. Pax Christi International therefore supports new initiatives by international civil society towards an active ban of Israeli settlement products. Read the statement in [English](#); in [German](#) and in [Dutch](#).

On 29 January 2013, Pax Christi Germany issued a press release on the same issue. Look on the [website](#). ■

Meeting the Palestinian Ambassador in Brussels

Pax Christi Flanders is planning a meeting with Leila Shahid, since 2005 the Palestinian Ambassador for Belgium and the European Union. Leila is the first female Palestinian Ambassador. The meeting takes place on 23 March 2013 at Broederlijk Delen in Brussels. Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat will attend. ■

Archbishop Sako Now Known as Patriarch Raphael I

Pope Benedict XVI confirmed the appointment of Archbishop Louis Sako, 64, as Patriarch Raphael I of Baghdad of the Chaldeans on 2 February 2013. Patriarch Raphael had served for nearly 10 years as Chaldean Archbishop of Kirkuk, Iraq. Patriarch Raphael has pledged to work for unity – not just within the Chaldean Church but also with Orthodox communities. In 2010, Msgr. Louis Sako, received the Annual Pax Christi International Peace Award for being a prominent defender of Iraq's endangered minorities and a staunch advocate of the difficult democratization and reconciliation process in Iraq. In a letter, the Co-Presidents of Pax Christi International, Msgr. Kevin Dowling and Marie Dennis congratulated the new Patriarch. ■

EUROPE

Msgr. Giovanni Giudici, President of Pax Christi Italy, introduced Pax Christi to Pope Benedict

On 16 February 2013, Bishop Giovanni Giudici, President of Pax Christi Italy, explained the activities and aims of the Pax Christi movement to Pope Benedict XVI during the Ad Limina visit of the bishops from Lombardy. Specifically, Bishop Giudici expressed his gratitude for the Pope's teachings on the spiritual roots of peace that were presented in the Message for the World Day of Peace during his pontificate. He also recalled the final point of the Message of January 2013, in which the Pope draws upon the journey of peace education.

Bishop Giudici also outlined the theme of the next National Congress, "It's the time of nonviolence," and said that the movement offers training to those who consciously commit to overcome every form of violence, particularly the use of weapons and war as a tool for the reconstruction of conflict.

Msgr. Giudici thanked Pope Benedict XVI for the beatification of Franz Jägerstätter, a witness of love for peace in his objection to war. The spirit of love and peace comes from evangelical radicalism; from the custody of the primacy of conscience; from the passionate reading of the Bible and Church documents.

Additionally, Bishop Giudici asked for the blessing of the movement, its participants and supporters, which Pope

Benedict XVI willingly imparted on the people and ideals that move Pax Christi Italy. Read also in [Italian](#). ■

Solidarity with Hunger Strikers in Church in Vienna

With a petition of solidarity, Pax Christi Austria (Oberösterreich) expressed serious concern about the refugees who have been looking for shelter in the Votivkirche in Vienna and went in hunger strike for their rights. Read in [German](#). Pax Christi Austria publishes regularly its own Newsletter. Read the February 2013 issue in [German](#). The General Assembly of Pax Christi Austria takes place in Linz, 8 – 9 March 2013. ■

Peace Spirituality Encounter in Poland

Pax Christi International is planning two interlinked workshops on peace spirituality in Poland. The main theme is: "Peace Spirituality Encounter: Drawing from History, Transforming the Present and Creating a Future for Peace." The first workshop, with focus on peace spirituality and transformative justice, is planned together with KIK in Warsaw, Member Organisation of Pax Christi International, 15 – 18 May 2013. The second workshop is a pilgrimage/retreat in Auschwitz/Birkenau, 18 – 20 May 2013. The Encounter brings delegates together from different Central and Eastern European countries. Representatives from Member Organisations active in the region will also be invited. The programme and invitation will follow. ■

Pacem in Terris and Pax Christi France

Pax Christi France is having a seminar on the Papal Encyclical *Pacem et Terris*, Peace on Earth of 1963. The main question on this 50th anniversary is: what are the challenges for peace in the future? Interventions will be given by Msgr. Marc Stenger, P. Alain Paillard, Jean-Baptiste de Foucoud and José Henriquez, Secretary General of Pax Christi International. The seminar takes place on 16 March 2013 in Paris. On 17 March, the General Assembly of Pax Christi France takes place. ■

Pax Christi UK's Ash Wednesday Liturgy

Pax Christi UK called notice for Ash Wednesday events to witness against UK Government's nuclear war preparations. Events were held in London, Liverpool, and Glasgow. The liturgy in London involved prayer, song, and symbolic actions, as well as nonviolent civil disobedience. Similar events were held in Falsane, Scotland at the Trident nuclear submarine base. The liturgy can be read [here](#). Read a report of the event [here](#). ■

DISARMAMENT / DEMILITARISATION

Pax Christi UK's Statement on Drones

Pax Christi UK has issued a statement, 31 January 2013, on its concerns about the development and use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or drones. Pax Christi UK is concerned about the rapid growth in the development and use of UAVs, which could be used in a way

that conforms to Just War teaching; however, they are currently used indiscriminately. The full statement and background package is available [here](#).

Control Arms' Lobby Brief ATT Diplomatic Conference March 2013

Control Arms has released a Lobby Brief covering their lobby objectives and messages for the lead up to and during the UN ATT Diplomatic Conference in March 2013. The Brief also contains information for use in advocacy letters or meetings with government officials, and a template letter that can be used. The main goal is to get states to agree to a stronger version of the draft treaty text and to cover all types of arms transfer, as well as all conventional arms.

Pax Christi International strongly urges all Member Organisations to write letters to their governments, making use of the template letter included in the Brief. We must act to ensure that a good treaty is achieved, not simply any treaty. The Lobby Brief is available in [English](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#). ■

Maryknoll's Request for Senators to Sign Letter on ATT

Maryknoll, a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International, asked individuals to call their senators on 6 February 2013 to ask them to sign a letter to President Obama in support of a robust Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Talks on an ATT are to resume at the UN in mid-March. More information, including the Senate sign-on letter to President Obama, is available [here](#). ■

Letter on the Arms Trade Treaty to H.E. Werner Bauwens

On 14 February 2013, Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat sent a letter to His Excellency Ambassador Werner Bauwens, the Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The letter concerned the task of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, to be held 18-28 of March. Pax Christi International wrote to make every effort to ensure that a stronger, improved version of the draft text is agreed to. The letter is available in [English](#). ■

Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective ATT: Final Conference Letter

The Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective ATT has released a Final Conference Letter in February 2013. The document provides a template letter and information for organisations to send to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in their country during the month of February 2013. The full letter with instructions is available [here](#).

Delegates at the conference of Pax Christi International are: Alexandra Hiniker, Beth Begley, Patrick Ryan, Cesar Villanueva, Tony D 'Costa and Wim Zwijnenburg. ■

Control Arms' Global Week of Action Tool Kit Now Available

In February 2013, Control Arms released a Tool Kit for their Global Week of Action, which will be held 11-17 March 2013. The packet includes information on organising stunts, working with the media, talking to your governments,

and taking action online. Members Organisations of Pax Christi International are invited to make use of the toolkit. The Tool Kit is available in [English](#). ■

Nuclear Policy Conference

The 2013 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference takes place in Washington, DC on 8 and 9 April. That meeting brings together over 800 experts and officials from more than 45 countries and international organisations to discuss emerging trends in nuclear non-proliferation, strategic stability, deterrence, disarmament, and nuclear energy. Beth Begley, representative of Pax Christi International at the United Nations, will attend. ■

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Spiral of Violence in Israel & Palestine should be Broken

Pax Christi International submitted a written intervention before the 22nd Session of the Human Rights Council on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict taking place in Geneva, 25 February – 22 March 2013. Item 7: Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. Pax Christi International calls upon the HRC to address the issues of visas, prisoners, civil society, settlements, water, and the separation Wall in an effort to achieve a peaceful solution. Both parties must be held accountable for their actions, which violate international law. Read the intervention [here](#).

Member Organisations are invited to approach their national governments, embassies and press agencies. ■

NETWORKING

Peacebuilding 2013: *Pacem in Terris* at 50

From 9-10 April 2013, there will be a conference on Catholic Peacebuilding and US foreign policy at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. The conference is sponsored by the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, the Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies at The Catholic University of America, and eleven other universities, institutions and organizations. The conference will serve as one of the main US commemorations of the 50th anniversary of *Pacem in Terris*. Marie Dennis, Co-President, and José Henríquez, Secretary General of Pax Christi International will represent the movement. More information on the event and how to register is available [here](#). ■

2013 Annual General Assembly Pax Christi International in Berlin

The Annual General Assembly of Pax Christi International which is the legal body of the organisation meets on 10 June 2013. Elections will take place. The AGM will be followed by a series of sessions on 11 and 12 June 2013. Pax Christi Germany is hosting the event which will take place in Berlin. ■

International Peace Bureau

The International Peace Bureau is planning a seminar on peace history in Mons/Bergen in Belgium, 23 – 24 May 2013. The seminar will be followed by the IPB Board meeting in which Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat participates. The Board meeting is 25 and 26 May 2013. ■

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

Click [here](#) to view the International Calendar of upcoming events.

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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](#). ■