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GLOBAL

International Peace Bureau Triennial Gathering

Every three years the International Peace Bureau (IPB) holds a special gathering to bring together members and supporters and to discuss the challenges facing us as peace movements in an unstable and over-militarised world. Pax Christi International is a member of IPB. This year, IPB meets in Stockholm from 13 – 15 September 2013 to explore the issues of military intervention (and the alternatives) and the economy of war. This year's event is entitled: "The World is Over-Armed, and Peace is Under Funded" (a quote from Ban Ki-Moon).

Apart from the conference itself, a special evening is arranged – together with the Nobel Museum – with Nobel laureate Jody Williams, and Terumi Tanaka of the A & H Bomb survivors' movement; and another evening on whistleblowing at which the IPB will award this year's [MacBride Peace Prize](#) to a representative of Bradley Manning. Among the venues will be the [Nobel Museum](#), where IPB's photo exhibition 'Making Peace' is being shown.

On the first day of the gathering, IPB will hold the Triennial IPB Assembly at which the process of electing new officials will be concluded. Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Pax Christi Secretariat is a Board member of IPB and will attend. For more information, see: www.ipb.org. ■

AFRICA

D.R. Congo's peace process

According to Broederlijk Delen and Pax Christi Flanders, the Congolese opposition and civil society need to be involved in the preparation of fair, transparent and peaceful elections in 2016. A possible review of the constitution might give the opportunity to the current president Kabila to be elected for another term and that does not seem to be a good signal for the democratic process in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Nadia Nsayi, Congo Desk at Broederlijk Delen and Pax Christi Flanders, recently visited the Great Lakes region. In her report, Nadia highlights the importance of continuing the peace process. Read more in Dutch [here](#). ■

AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN

US religious and civil rights groups urge Obama to sign Arms Trade Treaty

As the UN plans to meet in September, leaders from 33 US organisations, among them two Pax Christi International member organisations, i.e. Pax Christi USA and Maryknoll Global Concerns, joined together in urging President Obama to sign the treaty without further delay. An effective Arms Trade Treaty would establish common binding standards that must be applied to assess international weapons transfers and would stem the flow of illegal weapons and ammunition at the international level. Read the full text of the letter [here](#). ■

50th Anniversary of the March on Washington

August marked the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his famous “I have a dream” speech. To continue the struggle for equality and justice, a large coalition of groups – including two Pax Christi International member organisations, Maryknoll and Pax Christi Metro DC-Baltimore, held a “National Action to Realize the Dream March” on 24 August at the Lincoln Memorial, followed by a walk to the Martin Luther King Memorial. Read more [here](#). ■

27th Pilgrimage of the Earth, Faxinal, Brazil

On 18 August, Pax Christi member Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT) invited communities in Brazil to the 27th Earth Pilgrimage of Paraná, which took place in the municipality of Faxinal (Paraná). CPT celebrated the struggles, achievements, victories and challenges of rural young people as an initiative to sow hope. Read more [here](#) (in Portuguese). Prior to this, CPT along with several other organisations, had also sent a letter to Pope Francisco regarding the reality of poor people in rural Brazil and highlighting the daily struggles of those fighting for their rights in Brazil's rural communities. Read more [here](#) in Portuguese. ■

Violence in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince

Haiti-based Pax Christi member National Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace recently issued its 47th report on violence in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince. The main goal of the Commission is to create a lasting resolution to decrease outbreaks of violence. The report highlights the lack of initiatives on disarmament and

the availability of weapons in many neighborhoods. The police are not yet able to ensure the security of the country and are absent in many neighborhoods and communal sections. This report also includes some reflections on forensics which is almost non-existent in the country. Over the last ten years, at least 8,549 people lost their lives in uncertain circumstances. Proper investigation of these crimes is deemed critical to determine how these people died. To read the report, click [here](#). ■

Mining projects in Colombia

On 28 July, the inhabitants of Piedras, a small farming town, voted against the mining projects of Anglogold Ashanti Colombia (AGA) in a local referendum. Only 24 votes out of a total of 3,100 were in favor of AGA. Regardless of popular will, the national government has hidden behind the argument that only the national government can decide the fate of mining projects. The Decree 0934 of the National Mining Agency confirms this position. IKV Pax Christi Netherlands and other organisations are accompanying the citizens of Piedras in their capacity to carry out joint inspections with the Comptroller General of the nation. IKV Pax Christi is also promoting dialogue between communities and authorities and is monitoring the impact of La Colosa, the third largest mining project of AGA in Colombia, in terms of the environmental and safety risks in these communities. For more information, click [here](#). ■

Pax Christi Houston participates in memorial for Hiroshima-Nagasaki victims

On 4 August, members and friends of Pax Christi-Houston, Dominican Sisters of Houston, Maryknoll, Brothers and Priests of

Houston, Rothko Chapel, and The Houston Peace and Justice Club walked in procession in a "March of the Dead", as a memorial to those killed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. A prayer vigil for the abolition of nuclear weapons was held at the Rothko Chapel. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Pope John XXIII's encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, and the 30th anniversary of the US Catholic Bishops' Letter on War and Peace which warns against nuclear weaponry and the arms race. Read more [here](#). ■

ASIA - PACIFIC

20th Anniversary of Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand

On 21 August, Pax Christi Aotearoa/New Zealand celebrated its 20th anniversary. Since its inception, in 1993, Pax Christi Aotearoa/New Zealand has been committed to active nonviolence; peace spirituality, including Maori spirituality; and respectful intercultural work. Over the years, Pax Christi Aotearoa/New Zealand has accompanied vulnerable communities, particularly in East Timor, West Papua and elsewhere in Asia and the Pacific, contributing tremendously to the fulfillment of Pax Christi's mission for peace and reconciliation, respect for human rights and social justice.

Pax Christi Aotearoa/New Zealand has also been at the forefront of international efforts in support of nuclear disarmament, and – through its overall work – has made significant contributions to a more peaceful and just world. Pax Christi International addressed a [letter of congratulation](#) Pax

Christi Aotearoa/New Zealand on their 20th anniversary. ■

Cambodia: workshop promotes reconciliation in the lives of refugees

The issue of reconciliation has always been a concern for Pax Christi member Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Asia Pacific. Over the past five years the organisation has sought to mainstream reconciliation into all its work. JRS partnered with the US University Boston College to co-sponsor a reconciliation workshop in Siem Reap, Cambodia in late June. Participants produced a corresponding draft document articulating the principles of reconciliation underlying the JRS programming. The final version will be published this autumn. Read more [here](#).

Jesuit Refugee Service to withdraw from Timor-Leste by the end of 2013

Jesuit Refugee Service Asia Pacific plans to withdraw from Timor-Leste in 2013 having provided social and livelihoods support to displaced people for the past seven years. A new development organization run by the Jesuit Church - Jesuit Social Services - will open up in its place. The JRS mandate is geared towards assisting communities in need of aid and accompaniment while displaced from their lands. Read more [here](#).

30th Justice Sunday observed across India

Since 1983, the Catholic Church in India has been customarily observing the Justice Sunday on the Sunday following the celebration of India's Independence Day. According to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, the objective of the Justice Sunday observance is "to make individuals and institutions sensitive to the realities of society and to respond to the

demands of justice". This year, Justice Sunday was observed on 18 August all over the country by the Catholic faithful in India. The Sunday liturgy's theme was „Peace on Earth in Justice". Through appropriate homilies, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church in India encouraged and enabled the faithful to reflect on the dire need for peace and justice in the country as well as in the world at large. Read more [here](#). ■

Safeguarding Japan's Constitution

Japan's prime-minister, Shinzo Abe, and his party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), are attempting to revise Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, also known as the "peace clause", so that Japan may have the right to maintain a military for defensive purposes. For many years, Japan has stood as an example of highly developed nation committed to peace without relying on military strength. The revision is likely to change this. Other constitutional provisions are being reviewed in a way that will dramatically compromise the basic freedoms of the people. Read the latest developments on this issue [here](#).

Pax Christi International is deeply concerned about efforts to revise Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution. Click [here](#) to download Pax Christi International's statement on Article 9. ■

Pax Christi Australia National Assembly

Pax Christi Australia held its national assembly on 23-24 August. The theme of this year's event was "Peacemaking, An Alternative Narrative!" Read more [here](#). ■

MIDDLE EAST

Dialogue is the only way towards an end of the violence in Syria

Pax Christi International is deeply concerned about the latest events in Syria, and calls for urgent diplomatic efforts to stop the flow of arms to both sides and to all militant groups and to bring all stakeholders in the conflict to the negotiating table. Pax Christi urgently calls religious leaders - regardless of the specific community to which they belong - to use their moral authority to speak clearly and with urgency in private and in public for an end to violence; to strongly call for a political solution to the armed conflict; to support the creation of zones of non-violence; and to promote active campaigns of prayer, non-cooperation and public witness for an immediate end to the violence in Syria. The full text of the statement can be accessed [here](#). ■

Pax Christi International deeply concerned about latest events in Egypt

Pax Christi International and its member organisations are deeply concerned about the violent turn of events in Egypt and call for an immediate end to violence from all sides. We stand in solidarity with all victims of violence and their relatives, as well as with our brothers and sisters from affected churches. We also express our solidarity with the Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services, Member Organization of Pax Christi International in Cairo. Read more [here](#). ■

World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel

This year's World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel (WWPPI) takes place from 22 to 28 September 2013. This annual observance of a week of prayer, education, and advocacy is an initiative of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF) of the World Council of Churches and is supported by Pax Christi International. It seeks to promote an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine and a just peace for all in Palestine and Israel. This year, the Jerusalem Inter-Church Centre, in partnership with the PIEF, invites you to take part in a Holy Land pilgrimage tour to Palestine during World Week for Peace. Further information about this pilgrimage, including itinerary details, can be found [here](#).

An [Educational and Advocacy Resource](#) on Jerusalem is being provided by the International Working Group of WWPPI. This document contains background material, current information, theological reflections, and suggestions for advocacy for each day of the week. ■

Pax Christi Flanders: Palestine workshop

Amnesty International, Broederlijk Delen, Oxfam World Shops and Pax Christi Flanders are organising a Palestine Workshop on 27 September 2013. Each organisation will bring a real story or testimony from people whom they met, for whom they stand or with whom they work. Participants are involved in an interactive way. For more information, see the event website [here](#) or download the event poster [here](#). ■

EUROPE

Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles: security against insecurity – a geopolitical perspective

Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles recently published an analysis entitled "Security against insecurity: a geopolitical perspective." This takes a tactical approach to understanding the dynamics between security and insecurity in society by identifying and assessing factors of "risk" in the world such as unemployment, violence, disease, disabilities, and world disasters. Read the complete analysis [here](#) in French or visit the Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles website [here](#). ■

"Time for Action" - A British response to Kairos Palestine

On 25 August, "Time for Action", a British response to the [Kairos Palestine document](#) was launched at the Greenbelt Arts Festival, in Cheltenham. "Time for Action" is a call to British Christians to be involved in furthering a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis. It explains why British Christians have a particular responsibility towards the situation in Israel and Palestine and why there is an urgent need for them to be involved in supporting the call of the Palestinian church for international action.

It has been put together by British Christians, including Pax Christi UK, from a wide variety of traditions whose experience of visiting Israel and Palestine has compelled them to respond to the challenge made by Palestinians Christians in the Kairos Palestine document. Read more [here](#). ■

Goodbye to Bishop van Luyn

On 16 September, Pax Christi Netherlands will say goodbye to Msgr. Ad van Luyn, Bishop President of Pax Christi Netherlands for the past 19 years. A seminar on the meaning of a “United Europe” will be held on this occasion. Keynote speaker will be H.E. Herman Van Rompuy, President of the Council of the European Union. The ceremony will take place in Utrecht, Netherlands. Pax Christi International will attend the event. ■

DISARMAMENT/ DEMILITARISATION

Standardise Biosecurity – Pax Christi Statement to the UN

Pax Christi International delivered a statement at the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Meeting of Experts which took place in Geneva from 12 to 16 August 2013. The statement entitled “Standardise Biosecurity” addressed three standing agenda items (1) cooperation and assistance; (2) developments in the field of science and technology related to the Convention; (3) strengthening national implementation; as well as the biennial item of how to enable fuller participation in the Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs). Trevor Griffiths, delegate of Pax Christi International at the United Nations in Geneva, presented the statement on 12 August 2013. Read the statement in full length in [English](#) and [German](#). ■

Pax Christi International to attend Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) Conference

On 27 September 2013, the Conference on Facilitating the Entry-Into-Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Article XIV Conference) will be held at the UN in New York. Article XIV Conferences are opportunities for urging states with active nuclear weapon research programmes and test sites to take actions that would reinforce the CTBT and support its goals, such as refraining from activities at test sites that might be construed as CTBT violations, halting research, development and production of nuclear warheads based on modifications of existing designs, that give them new military capabilities.

Beth Begley, Pax Christi International's UN Representative in New York, will attend. ■

High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament

On 26 September 2013, the UN General Assembly will host a high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament. Pax Christi International will be represented by Beth Begley, delegate of Pax Christi International at the United Nations, and Alexandra Hiniker and Wouter Kolk from IKV Pax Christi Netherlands. ■

Pax Christi at the Geneva Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament

On 21 August, Susi Snyder, Programme Manager on Nuclear Disarmament at IKV Pax Christi Netherlands addressed the UN General Assembly Open Ended Working Group on taking forward proposals for multilateral nuclear disarmament. In her intervention, Ms. Snyder stated that a provision on prohibiting financing for nuclear weapon producers should become part of an international treaty banning on nuclear weapons, and asked for this aspect to be

considered during the treaty negotiations. The full text of the intervention can be found [here](#). ■

HUMAN RIGHTS

Pax Christi Austria calls for an end to Pakistani refugee deportation

Pax Christi Austria declares that the deportation of Pakistani refugees from Austria to their “homeland” is a violation of human rights. Deportation should stop immediately and human solutions should be sought for those affected. Read more [here](#) in German. In this context, Pax Christi Austria reiterates its support for the demands of the platform “Against barbarity” and calls on all Austrians to sign the petition [here](#). ■

JUST WORLD

Post-2015 Education Agenda

The First NGO/UNESCO International Forum on Education entitled “Which Education Goals for Tomorrow’s Citizens of the World: Is Quality Enough?” will be held on 23 September at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France and will bring perspectives from higher education and civil society to feed reflection on the post-2015 education agenda. ■

Advancing Regional Recommendations on Post-2015

On 25 September Heads of State and Government will gather at a UN General Assembly Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to take stock of

progress and renew commitment toward achieving the MDGs. They will also advance the planning towards a cohesive and integrated post-2015 sustainable development agenda. In preparation for this event, a dialogue between civil society, governments and UN representatives will be convened on Sunday, 22 September 2013. It will provide an opportunity for civil society and Member States to have a meaningful exchange on critical regional issues and policy recommendations looking forward to the next global development agenda. ■

PEACE EDUCATION

Peace Philanthropy and Furthering Peace Education

Pax Christi International will attend the international symposium, “Celebrating Peace Philanthropy and Furthering Peace Education – In the Footsteps of Andrew Carnegie”, which takes place in The Hague on 2-3 September. This symposium is part of the celebrations for the 100th anniversary of the Peace Palace in The Hague and it’s organised by the International Network of Museums for Peace (INMP) in cooperation with the Carnegie Foundation. Visit the [Peace Palace centenary website](#) for more information about all events celebrating this special anniversary. ■

Pax Christi International to attend UN High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace

Pax Christi International will attend the United Nations High Level Forum on the Culture of Peace, which takes place on 6 September, at the UN Headquarters in New York. This High Level Forum is an opportunity

for the civil society to discuss ways and means to promote the Culture of Peace. A special focus will be on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Culture of Peace adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1999. The event is structured around three panel discussions: "The role of interfaith cooperation in promoting a global Culture of Peace", "The Culture of Peace as the agenda for a new global civilization: Where are we now?" and "Strategies for advancing implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Culture of Peace: What we need." ■

Preparatory meeting for Peace Event Sarajevo 2014

The year 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of World War I. This can be seen as a symbolic date for a century of a "Culture of War and Violence" with two world wars and numerous regional wars - among them the one in the former Yugoslavian countries in the 1990's when Sarajevo suffered from the siege of the city in the "last war in Europe" - as well as for the global dominance of structural and cultural violence. But the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century have also seen a worldwide increase in nonviolent activities and achievements as an alternative to war and violence, for global and social justice, human rights, peace and reconciliation.

Against this background, Sarajevo will host a Peace Event: "From a World of War and Violence to a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence", on 6-9 June 2014. Two preparatory meetings for this event took place in September 2012 and March 2013, respectively. A third preparatory meeting is scheduled for 6-9 September in Sarajevo to discuss programme details and other

arrangements. Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat and Katarina Kruhonja former Pax Christi Board member from Croatia will attend this meeting. For further details, see: www.peaceeventsarajevo2014.eu ■

Annual Peace Weeks

Peace Weeks are a unique model for advancing peace education in a local context. Many Pax Christi Member Organisations plan peace weeks in their local contexts often working closely with like-minded organisations and local groups.

This year, the annual peace week of IKV Pax Christi Netherlands takes place from 21 to 29 September. The theme chosen for 2013 is "Act for Peace: together we support nonviolent peace activists in Syria". For further details, visit: www.ikvpaxchristi.nl.

The annual peace week of Pax Christi Flanders takes place from 21 September to 2 October. This year's topic is "Diversity in the public sector". The "Time To Go" Campaign against nuclear weapons will also part of the 2013 peace week. For further details, visit: www.paxchristi.be. ■

PEACE SPIRITUALITY

50th anniversary of the episcopal ordination of Bishop Luigi Bettazzi

On 6 October, Pax Christi Italy celebrates the 50th anniversary of the episcopal ordination of Bishop Luigi Bettazzi, former Pax Christi International president and current president of Pax Christi Italy. A special religious celebration will take place

in the Cathedral of Ivrea, Turin, on this occasion. Participation is open to everyone. For more details and practical arrangements, contact Pax Christi Italy at info@paxchristi.it. ■

ADVOCACY

Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN

Beth Begley, Pax Christi International representative at the United Nations in New York was nominated as Secretary of the Bureau of the Committee of Religious NGOs at the United Nations, effective September 2013.

Sign the petition: Don't let Syria Down

Pax Christi International has joined a petition launched by Oxfam International calling on U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin to make the long-promised Syria peace talks a reality. Signatories to this petition are calling for peace talks to happen urgently and for participation from all parties to the conflict, in order to make talks a success. To sign the petition, click [here](#). ■

Sign the petition: Act for Iraq

The public health legacy from environmental contamination caused by the Iraq War over the past ten years is a huge challenge for the future of the country. Research undertaken by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Iraqi Ministry of Health (MoH), reportedly indicates an increase in the numbers of birth defects in areas that were subject to heavy fighting in 2003. It is extremely important for the Iraqi people that this data is published in

a swift and transparent manner. This is a crucial first step in helping to investigate, and ultimately reduce, the rates and distribution of birth defects in Iraq.

As member of the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), Pax Christi International is supporting the petition urging the WHO and the Iraqi MoH to act for Iraq and release birth defect data. Show your support, sign the petition [here](#). ■

PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL IN THE MEDIA

Pax Christi International Secretary General José Henríquez was interviewed by the Vatican Radio on the role of the international community in finding a solution to the conflict in Syria. Read more [here](#) (in English).

Pax Christi's plea for an internationally binding treaty on nuclear weapons was featured in KerkNet Nieuws in [Dutch](#) and [Flemish](#). ■

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

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

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