



Pax Christi International
Statement on the decision by the International Court of Justice (ICJ)
Brussels, January 31st, 2024

While it applauds the decision by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Pax Christi International remains steadfast in its call for an immediate ceasefire and the safe return of all hostages. The staggering loss of life and unfathomable misery visited upon the innocent Gazan population, nearly half of whom are children, must end now.

In a legally binding order, the ICJ requires Israel to:

1. *take all measures to ensure that acts deemed genocidal under the Genocide Convention do not take place in Gaza;*
2. *ensure that its military does not commit genocidal acts;*
3. *prevent and punish genocide incitement and rhetoric;*
4. *enable and facilitate the provision of basic services and humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza;*
5. *prevent destruction and preserve evidence of genocide in its military operations, and*
6. *report to the court within one month, informing the court of its compliance with today's preliminary measures order, and in response to South Africa's genocide complaint.*

As articulated in Articles I and IV of the Genocide Convention, State Parties to the convention have an obligation to prevent and punish the crime of genocide. **Pax Christi International joins the call by leading humanitarian and human rights organisations "to halt the transfer of weapons, parts and ammunition to Israel and Palestinian armed groups while there is a risk they are used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law."** To stop the killing, maiming, and destruction the flow of arms to either side must be halted immediately.

We are deeply concerned by reports that twelve UNRWA employees, 0.09% of its workforce in Gaza, have been implicated in the barbaric attack of 7 October. A thorough, independent, and transparent investigation of these alleged actions by the UN Office of Internal Oversight has been arranged. We reiterate that Hamas and all those who planned and executed the attack must be punished to the full extent of the law. **However, Pax Christi International understands that UNRWA is the lifeline to the 1.7 million refugees in Gaza** who depend on UNRWA for their survival. The tireless work of UNRWA's 13,000 workers in Gaza, who have lost over 150 of their colleagues and suffered personal losses and displacement, must continue with the full support of the international community. **To undermine its work is to collectively punish a suffering, innocent population by denying them the delivery of the most basic life-sustaining aid.**

Pax Christi International strongly supports all efforts to stop the violence which has killed over 26,000 people and injured more than 65,000 in 115 days of hostilities. The world is witnessing the unthinkable. **It is imperative that the international community exert all its power and leverage to end this carnage and take decisive diplomatic action towards a lasting peace built on justice. Anything less will be seen by history as complicity.**

We call on all governments to:

- call for an **immediate ceasefire**,
- demand the **safe release of hostages** being held by Hamas and other militant groups as well as those individuals incarcerated by Israel without any due process,
- **immediately reinstate all funding for UNRWA** to avert a catastrophic crisis,
- **review their economic ties to Israel and suspend defence partnerships**,
- institute a **two-way embargo** of all military equipment and support,
- insist through **diplomatic action the assurance of access to all humanitarian aid**, including a review of dual-use items.