



## **Catholic church leaders' statement welcoming the new UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons**

We, Catholic church leaders from around the world, welcome the entry into force on 22 January 2021 of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We are encouraged that a majority of UN Member States actively support the new treaty through adoption, signatures, and ratifications. It is fitting that the Holy See was among the first states to join the accord in 2017. In addition, public opinion surveys worldwide demonstrate the global conviction that nuclear weapons must be abolished. The worst of all weapons of mass destruction has long-since been judged to be immoral. Now it is also finally illegal.

We are concerned by the continued risk to humanity that nuclear weapons could be used and by the resultant catastrophic humanitarian consequences. It is heartening that this new treaty is based on a growing body of research about the catastrophic humanitarian and ecological consequences of nuclear attacks, tests, and accidents. Two examples that speak to all people are the disproportionate impacts of radiation on women and girls and the grave effects on Indigenous communities whose lands have been used for nuclear tests.

We, the undersigned, support the leadership Pope Francis is giving to nuclear disarmament. During his historic visit to the bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in November 2019 the pope condemned both the use and the possession of nuclear weapons by any state. Peace cannot be achieved through "the threat of total annihilation," he said. Pope Francis urged support for "the principal international legal instruments of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons." Prior to his visit, the Conferences of Catholic Bishops in Canada and Japan urged their governments to sign and ratify the new treaty.

Like them, some of us are from countries allied with a nuclear power or that have nuclear arsenals. Surely, in this era of increasing global interdependence and vulnerability, our faith invites us to seek the common and universal good. "We are all saved together or no one is saved," the Pope's new encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* says. "Is it possible for us to be open to our neighbors within a family of nations?" it asks. International cooperation is

essential for addressing the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, the gap between rich and poor, and the universal threat of nuclear weapons.

No matter where we are from, we join in urging governments to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We thank those who have already done so and we urge them to invite other countries to join the treaty as well.

We invite fellow church leaders to discuss and deliberate about the significant role the church can play in building support for this new international norm against nuclear weapons. It is especially important for national and regional bishops' conferences as well as Catholic institutions and foundations to review whether church-related funds are invested in corporations and banks involved in producing nuclear weapons. If this is the case, then take remedial action by ending existing financing relationships and look for ways for disinvestment.

We believe that God's gift of peace is at work to deter war and overcome violence. Thus, on this historic day, we congratulate members of the Catholic Church who for decades have been at the forefront of grassroots movements to oppose nuclear weapons and Catholic peace movements which are part of the Nobel Prize-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

## **Signatories**

Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of the Archdiocese of Luxembourg, President of Pax Christi Luxembourg

Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti of the Archdiocese of Perugia-Città, President of the Italian Bishops' Conference

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon of the Archdiocese of Liverpool, President of Pax Christi England & Wales

Archbishop Giovanni Ricchiuti of the Diocese of Altamura-Gravina-Acquaviva delle Fonti, President of Pax Christi Italy

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, President of Pax Christi Philippines

Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami of the Archdiocese of Nagasaki, President of the Japanese Bishops' Conference

Archbishop González Nieves of the Archdiocese of San Juan, Puerto Rico

Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta of the Archdiocese of Panama

Bishop Emeritus Marc Stenger of the Diocese of Troyes, France, Co-president of Pax Christi International

Bishop Hubert Herbreteau of the Diocese of Agen, President of Pax Christi France

Bishop Peter Kohlgraf of the Diocese of Mainz, President of Pax Christi Germany

Bishop Gerard de Korte of the Diocese of Den Bosch, The Netherlands  
Bishop Lode Van Hecke of the Diocese of Ghent, Belgium  
Bishop Emeritus Luigi Bettazzi of the Diocese of Ivrea, former President of Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Italy  
Bishop William Nolan of the Diocese of Galloway, Scotland  
Bishop Brian McGee of the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles, Scotland  
Bishop Joseph Toal of the Diocese of Motherwell, Bishop President of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund  
Bishop John Stowe of the Diocese of Lexington, President of Pax Christi USA  
Bishop Robert McElroy of the Diocese of San Diego, USA  
Bishop Terry Brady of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia  
Bishop Emeritus Peter Cullinane of the Diocese of Palmerston North, President of Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand  
Bishop Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama of the Diocese of Hiroshima, Japan  
Bishop Wayne Berndt of the Diocese of Naha, Japan  
Bishop Bernard Taiji Katsuya of the Diocese of Sapporo, Japan  
Bishop Paul Daisuke Narui of the Diocese of Niigata, Japan  
Bishop Timothy Yu of the Archdiocese of Seoul, South Korea  
Bishop Allwyn D'Silva of the Archdiocese of Bombay, India  
Bishop Kevin Dowling of the Diocese of Rustenburg, former Co-president of Pax Christi International, South Africa

## **Australia**

Reverend Peter Smith of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Justice & Peace Promoter of the Justice and Peace Office  
Reverend Bernard McKenna, Councilor to the Superior General of the Society of Mary (Marist)  
Reverend Claude Mostowik, President of Pax Christi Australia  
Ms. Pam Nair, Secretary of Pax Christi Queensland  
Dr. Sandie Cornish, Director of the Office for Social Justice of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

## **Austria**

Dr. Wolfgang Palaver, President of Pax Christi Austria  
Dr. Meinrad Schneckenleithner, Vice-president of Pax Christi Austria  
Mr. Adalbert Krims, Vice-president of Pax Christi Austria

## **Belgium**

Reverend Mathias Parret of the Pastoral Unity Our Lady of Peace Ypres and Ypres Belgian City of Peace  
Reverend Paul Lansu of the Diocese of Antwerpen, Board Member Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Flanders  
Brother Michel Coppin, Provincial Superior of the Salvatorians Belgian Province

Mrs. Annemarie Gielen, Director of Pax Christi Flanders  
Mr. Wim Vandewiele, President of the Board of Pax Christi Flanders  
Ms. Josianne Gauthier, Secretary General of the International Family of Catholic Social Justice Organisations (CIDSE)  
Ms. Greet Vanaerschot, Secretary General of Pax Christi International

## **Canada**

Mrs. Vololonirina Ranjarivelo, Vice-President of the Board of Antennes de Paix Montréal  
Mrs. Rosemary Keenan, Director of Pax Christi Toronto

## **Colombia**

Sister Constanza Arango, Coordinator JPIC Commission of the Conference of Religious of Colombia

## **Democratic Republic of Congo**

Reverend Georges Kalenga, Deputy General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of the Democratic Republic of Congo

## **France**

Mr. Alfonso Zardi, Executive Vice-President of Pax Christi France  
Sister Lara Noelia, Country leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours

## **Germany**

Ms. Christine Hoffmann, Secretary General of Pax Christi Germany  
Mr. Martin Pilgram, Chair of Pax Christi Munich  
Sister Lydia Liong, General Superior of the Congregation of Sisters of Divine Providence

## **Italy**

Reverend Paul Graham, Coordinator JPIC Commission of the Augustinians  
Reverend Antonio Porcellato, General Superior of the Society of African Missions  
Reverend Krzysztof Pachut, General Counsel of the Society of African Missions  
Sister Sheila Kinsey, Executive Co-Secretary of the JPIC Commission of the Union of Superiors General (USG) and International Union of Superior Generals (UISG)  
Reverend Amado Picardal, Executive Co-Secretary of the JPIC Commission of USG-UISG  
Reverend Thomas Smolich, International Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service  
Sister Pauline Macharia, Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Loreto Sisters

Sister Marinez Capra, International Coordinator of the Network of JPIC of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Reverend Andre Claessens, President of the Africa - Europe Faith and Justice Network

Brother Alberto Parise, Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Comboni Missionaries

Sister Veronica Openibo, Superior General of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

Sister Mario Abzalón Alvarado Tovar, Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart

## **Kenya**

Sister Teresia Wamuyu (IBVM), Co-president of Pax Christi International

## **Peru**

Mr. Walter Powosino Gavilano, Secretary General of Pax Christi Peru

## **Rwanda**

Reverend Théogène Iyakaremye of the Archdiocese of Kigali, Founding Chaplain of Saint Charles Lwanga Youth Association

## **Scotland**

Ms. Marian Pallister, Chairperson of Pax Christi Scotland

Mr. Alistair Dutton, Director of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF)

## **South Korea**

Reverend Junhee Jeon, Director of Pax Christi Korea

Mrs. Eunmee Park, Standing Representative of Pax Christi Korea

Reverend Dong-ho Park of the Archdiocese of Seoul

Reverend Jijong Sang of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Yongtae Kim of the Diocese of Daejeon

Reverend Kim Tae Won of the Diocese of Chengju

Reverend Seong-hoon Jeong of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Osoon Kwon of the Diocese of Chuncheon

Reverend Yousun Hong of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Sinsoon Kim of the Diocese of Seoul

Reverend Jongweon Lee of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Sister Hae Young Choi, Provincial Leader of the KOC Province of the Society of the Sacred Heart

## **Spain**

Reverend Alejandro Moral Anton, Prior General of the Augustinians

## **Tanzania**

Reverend Feliz Mushobozi, Provincial Secretary of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (CPPS), Province of Tanzania

## **The Netherlands**

Abbot Bernardus Peeters, President of the Dutch Conference of Religious  
Ms. Anna Timmerman, General Director of PAX Netherlands  
Mr. Ad van der Helm, President of The Hague Council of Churches  
Mr. Peter van Hoof, Director of the Dutch Bishops Lenten Campaign

## **The Philippines**

Dr. Loreta Castro, President of Pax Christi Philippines and Executive Director of the Center for Peace Education, Miriam College  
Sister Maria Marissa Viri, President of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines

## **Togo**

Reverend Baalaboore Callistus of the Missionaries of Africa

## **United States**

Sister Carol Zinn, Executive Director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious  
Sister Antoinette Gutzler, President of Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic  
Reverend Raymond Finch, Superior of Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers  
Sister Patricia McDermott, President of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
Sister Elaine Davia, President of the Sisters of Bon Secours  
Sister Mary Anne Power, Provincial Leader of the Congregation of Notre Dame of Blessed Sacrament Province  
Sister Darleen Mayo, Member of Province Leadership Team of the Congregation of Notre Dame  
Ms. Christina Leaño, Associate Director of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM)  
Ms. Amy Echeverria, International Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Missionary Society of St. Columban  
Mr. Johnny Zokovitch, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA  
Mr. Ted Miles, Executive Director of Maryknoll Lay Missioners  
Ms. Susan Gunn, Director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns