



Pax Scotia

Issue 22

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War and Peace - a 21st century take

Pax Christi Scotland is concerned that the war in Ukraine will affect the momentum of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Moscow's threats to use such weapons of mass destruction offered the nine 'nuclear nations' the opportunity to push the 'deterrent' argument.

The war in Ukraine offers another cause for great concern. The UK government's botched plans to aid Ukrainian refugees highlights the hostile environment engendered for *all* asylum seekers by the Home Office.

Pax Christi Scotland chair **Marian Pallister** reflects on the situation.

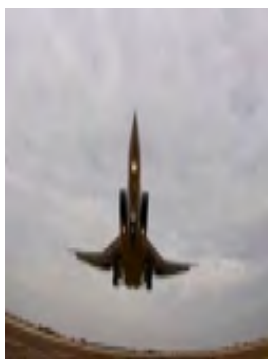


Asylum seekers - at the mercy of Home Secretary Priti Patel

The bomb, a tear falling from its metallic eye, is more than just a bomb.

It is a surrender of sanity, a longing for the darkness and the calm.

David Krieger, *Nuclear Age Peace Foundation president*.



The humanitarian effects of any war are devastating. The effects of a nuclear war are unimaginable.

But were there to be survivors, would we treat them with kindness? Would we welcome them from the hell on which such an obscenity had been unleashed? Would we tend their emotional and physical wounds?

And if the answer is 'yes', why are we not doing the same for today's survivors of conflicts?

Pope Francis has said of the refugee situation 'We are in the age of walls and barbed wire...Let us stop this shipwreck of civilisation.'

No apologies for this edition's concentration on war and refugees. May we work together to stop the shipwreck.

Peace be with you...

I have missed the physicality of the sign of peace, but two years of keeping our distance means that in my parish, we are all now used to bowing our peace to each other, hands clasped in prayerfulness.

It reminds me of our brothers and sisters in Japan for whom this gesture is an everyday respectful greeting. And then, of course, the word 'peace' conjures up images of the most hideous act of war - the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Can there really be nine world leaders who can still contemplate the use of weapons of mass destruction - now 300 times more powerful than the bombs dropped in 1945?

Clearly the answer to that is 'yes'. Even as the 61 nations that have ratified the TPNW make preparations for the first meeting of states parties since this treaty came into force in January 2021 - not to mention those countries that have signed the treaty but not yet ratified it, plus a host of peace campaigners - President Putin rattles his nuclear sabres and NATO countries rattle theirs back at him.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is the first legally binding international agreement to comprehensively prohibit nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal is the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It was adopted on 7 July 2017, opened for signature on 20 September 2017, and entered into force on 22 January 2021.



First steps to ridding Scotland of Trident?

*After several postponements, the first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) will take place in Vienna from 21 to 23 June 2022. **Bill Kidd**, Convenor of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Nuclear Disarmament will be there. Here he shares his hopes for the Conference*

I will be pleased and honoured to attend the 1 MSP in Vienna in my role as Convenor of the Scottish Parliament CPG on Nuclear Disarmament, and hope to contribute a Scottish perspective on the TPNW and our ideas on how the Treaty can be developed and enhanced by means of the removal of Trident from Scotland's land and waters.

The 2017 UN Conference

I attended the UN Conference on the TPNW in New York in 2017 when the debates were held and the Treaty vote was 122 votes for, 1 vote against and 1 abstention. I was privileged to present the Conference President, Ambassador Elaine Whyte Gomez with a letter of support for the aims of the TPNW from FM of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon MSP and this was graciously accepted with a note of welcome and gratitude.

Along with other Scottish CND colleagues in attendance I spoke at side-events and attended in the UN Chamber when the speeches from Member States from across the world were made; and we were in attendance when the vote was taken to the great enthusiasm of delegates and civil society alike.

Weapons of Mass Murder

As the number of states ratifying the TPNW grows, and knowledge of its existence and aims spreads through populations internationally, I believe that there will be a popular movement across the world, which will be reflected in the nuclear weapon armed states, to call for the abolition of these weapons of potential mass-murder. I think that we in Scotland have to play our part in this by pushing evermore strongly on getting Trident out of our country and in doing so leading to the end of the so-called British Nuclear Deterrent.



The Vienna Conference

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was signed in 2017.



The next step was to have the TPNW ratified - countries have to sign up to show they are serious.

On 22 January 2021, Cambodia deposited its instrument of ratification with the UN secretary-general, becoming the 52nd state party – and the TPNW entered into force globally.



According to the Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor, As of 19 May 2022, the TPNW has 61 states parties while a further 28 states have signed but not yet ratified.

Thus, in total, 89 states (or 45% of all states) are either states parties or signatories to the Treaty. This means that we are approaching a situation where half of all states will have accepted binding obligations in international law under the TPNW.



Six people from Pax Christi International's Nuclear Weapons Ban Working Party will attend the First Conference of States Parties to the TPNW (Pax Christi Scotland has a voice on the Working Party).

The UK, of course, is one of the nine 'nuclear nations' opposed to the TPNW and is committed to increasing its spend on Trident. The Scottish Government oppose nuclear weapons, as does the Scottish Bishops' Conference.



Peace Treaty, Peace Camp - Who's listening? Who's acting?

In 2017, ICAN (the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its work "to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and its "ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons".

Based in Switzerland, ICAN's international structure consists of partner organisations, an international steering group and an international staff team. Pax Christi Scotland is proud to be a partner organisation.

*We thank **Ruth Rohde**, ICAN Policy and Research Intern, for this exploration of the significance and expected outcomes of the first Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW.*

As recent Russian threats of nuclear weapons use have made painfully clear, the world urgently needs an inclusive, reality-based plan to get rid of these tools of our own destruction once and for all. This is why, in 2017, 122 countries voted in the UN general assembly to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). And this is why 86 countries have signed on to the treaty, and 61 countries have ratified it. In June of this year, the state parties to the treaty are gathering in Vienna for the historic inaugural meeting of state parties (1MSP) to the TPNW. Civil society organisations, coordinated by ICAN, will participate at the conference as observers. Aiming to be the most inclusive nuclear weapons treaty meeting, the 1MSP will be accompanied by a number of exciting events, including the ICAN Nuclear Ban Forum, a conference on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, a Youth MSP, and much more.

But beyond showing global commitment to abolition, what can we expect from the 1MSP in terms of concrete outcomes?

Addressing nuclear harm with affected community involvement

The TPNW is unique in its focus on victim assistance and environmental remediation. ICAN is pushing for states to agree on initial actions and structures to address harm done by nuclear-weapons use and testing. These should centre on affected communities. States should commit to work with affected communities and other stakeholders, including considerations of gender, age, race, disability, and socioeconomic-status.



A push for universalisation and deadlines for nuclear weapons destruction

ICAN recommends that state-parties to the TPNW adopt a plan of action to implement concrete actions toward universalisation, that is, to adopt strategies to bring other states on board with the TPNW. Additionally, states will likely agree on specific deadlines for the destruction of nuclear weapons and the removal of foreign nuclear weapons for future state parties should they have hosted nuclear weapons on their territory.

Creating a scientific advisory body

ICAN is promoting the establishment of a scientific advisory body for the TPNW, that should report on the risks and consequences of nuclear weapon use, and assist with treaty implementation.

Centering gender, race, and diversity

ICAN encourages states to diversify their offices dealing with disarmament and support continued studies on the gendered and racialized impacts of all nuclear weapons activities, including patriarchal notions about security that underpin nuclear weapons possession.

The Vienna conferences will be a big push toward making a nuclear-free world a reality. If you are as excited for it as we are, there is still time to sign up for many of the events happening in nuclear ban week 18-23 June in Vienna and to encourage your government to participate positively too. Many events can also be joined online. You can register here: <https://vienna.icanw.org/>



FASLANE peace camp - 40 years old in June

Faslane Peace Camp is celebrating 40 years of Activism this year from June 10-12. Expect a weekend suitable for all walks of life. Bands include *Alternative* and *The System*, who played at the camp back in the 1980s, and there will be folk music interludes.

You can join workshops such as sustainable banner making and online security during actions. There will be vegan food, multiple artisan beers, as well as an Indian fire ceremony and talks from previous and current campers and others sympathetic to the cause. Anyone is welcome as long as they can bring a tent!

Our website

Blogs, podcasts, past and future events – these are all on our Pax Christi Scotland website. All newsletters are archived there. You can pay your annual membership fee on the Membership page and make donations. Please explore and share:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org/>

Continued thanks to webmaster Chris Boles of Caledonian Computers:

<https://www.caledoniancomputers.com/>

Membership Reminder

Easiest method? Pay on the membership page of our website.

If you pay by online banking, please give your name to identify your payment.

If you wish to pay by cheque, send to the address below, cheques payable to Pax Christi Scotland.

You can also make regular donations on our 'donate' page - thank you.

Membership fees are £10 for waged, £5 for unwaged.

Explore the website for all our activities:

<https://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

Where to find Pax Christi Scotland:

<http://www.paxchristiscotland.org>

[@PaxScotland](https://www.facebook.com/PaxChristiScotland)

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Snail mail:

Pax Christi Scotland
c/o Xaverian Missionaries
Calder Avenue
Coatbridge ML5 4JS

YouTube Channel

You can find recordings of all our events at:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCcmLpQv27Py_ul14szp95g

Click on the word 'Subscribed' and you will be informed whenever a new recording is posted.

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Challenging the Hostile Environment

Conflicts and natural disasters have made almost 60 million people to flee within their own countries in the last year, and as UN Secretary General António Guterres told the UN Security Council at the end of May, conflicts are bringing the world to the "brink of mass hunger", adding "When war is waged, people go hungry."

This has added to the refugee situation worldwide, and the UK Government's reaction has been increasingly hostile. What many see as the most inhumane of clauses were passed in the Nationality and Borders Bill, and the Home Office scheme to send asylum seekers to Rwanda has been condemned.

On Monday, June 13, Pax Christi Scotland will host an online event in which we will hear challenges to that hostile environment from three eminent speakers.

** Dr Sophie Cartwright is Senior Policy Officer at the Jesuit Refugee Service UK. She will bring us up to date on just how hostile the UK Government has made the legislation surrounding those seeking sanctuary.*

** Brendan Woodhouse is a firefighter. In May he received the Solidarity Medal from the Fire Brigades Union. He will explain his lifesaving work with refugees in the Mediterranean where he has carried out 10 volunteer missions with crews on rescue boats.*

** Sabir Zazai is chief executive of the Scottish Refugee Council. He arrived in the UK in 1999 as a refugee from Afghanistan and his work reflects his own experiences. He will share his thoughts on how we can all challenge the hostile environment for refugees.*

To join this important discussion and have your say, register at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUoce-ggTlvHtXv2kMBHKhpxCa7GcOOANxh>

The recording of our online event, 'The Journey to Peace: Bringing Women in From the Margins', is now available on the Pax Christi Scotland YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6C60aPLH8F4&t=112s>

If you live in the central belt, the next meeting for women affected by separation and divorce will take place on Friday 10th June in St Patrick's church hall, Dumbarton at 6.00pm. All new members are welcome to this confidential peer support group.

Or - you can reach the group through the following:

Twitter: @GAWomenSupport

Facebook: Faith Living (Archdioceses of Glasgow)

email: glasgowarchdiocesewomensgroup@gmail.com (Email this address for advice if you would like to start a group elsewhere in Scotland)