



Pax Scotia

Issue 37

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Lawyer Delia Chatoor is a member of the Caribbean Climate Change Network, & a retired member of Trinidad and Tobago's diplomatic service



The New Agenda for Humanity

At its meeting on 11 December 2008, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) agreed to the annual recognition of August 19 as World Humanitarian Day. This annual event has been granted that recognition in order to pay tribute to humanitarian workers who “*risk their lives*” to assist those in need and to formulate programmes calling for a more humane world.

In 2016, world leaders met in Istanbul for the World Humanitarian Summit at which decisions were adopted to support calls for the **New Agenda for Humanity** and to commit to the adoption of definitive action “*to reduce suffering and deliver better care for the millions of people in need of humanitarian assistance.*”

The lofty recommendations were meant to demonstrate the reality that we are all indeed members of the global family with the responsibility to ensure that the vulnerable would be cared for and that no one would be left behind.

The international community, however, has had to face the ever growing impact of climate change, ongoing and new threats to international peace and security, and socio-economic challenges. Humanitarian workers are being overwhelmed by the reduction in financial resources to facilitate the realistic implementation of programmes. National budgets are also under serious strains as funds have to be allocated to emergency response, disaster preparedness and mitigation.

It has also become obvious that humanitarian crises place additional burdens on processes which engender respect for and implementation of various facets of International Law and can range from alleged breaches of International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights Law, refugee law, and environmental law, to identify a few.

For any form of humanitarian assistance to be achievable,

international co-operation is critical and essential. The saying that “*no man is an island*” is relevant with the role of the United Nations and its supporting specialised agencies, commissions, committees, bodies being pivotal. To this must be added the strengthening of partnerships with civil society and other international bodies such as ecclesial agencies.

World Humanitarian Day (August 19) is, therefore, meant to increase public awareness of the necessity to facilitate assistance to bodies and staff involved in their work. Special honour must be extended to the millions of humanitarian actors who give of their time, talent and treasure and at times their lives. The co-ordination of good-neighbourliness must be accorded pride of place.

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), a lawyer asked Jesus “*who is my neighbour?*” Through the Parable, Jesus showed the importance to love and care for each other. This goes beyond the religious persuasion, nationality, ethnicity or the social status of those in need. The commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit must continue to be implemented so that the most vulnerable and the millions at risk would be in a position to survive.

The 2022 United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Report, **Global Trend Report**, noted that “*at the end of 2022, 108.4 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights abuses and events seriously disturbing public order.*”

Humanitarian support at such times must, therefore, be guided by the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence. On World Humanitarian Day we recognised those global challenges. Now let us continue to pay tribute to all humanitarian personnel who offer themselves to the service of humanity. **Delia Chatoor**



**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

The Season of Creation runs from September 1 (World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation) to October 4 (Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi). The theme this year is 'Let Justice and Peace Flow'. The Pope Francis film 'The Letter' (see it on YouTube) shows us graphically why caring for our common home is so important. Migration, conflict and environmental disaster are our responsibility. Here Kim Pratt adds still more evidence...



Taking Climate Responsibility

Kim Pratt is Circular Economy Campaigner of Friends of the Earth Scotland, covering the environmental impacts of material consumption & waste policies & how these must be embedded into the climate justice movement. She works with community groups & other environmental organisations to influence the development of a circular economy. She is a regular guest lecturer at Edinburgh & Strathclyde universities.

The world must transition away from fossil fuels to stop climate breakdown. Many countries, including Scotland, are responding to this challenge by replacing their fossil fuel-based energy systems with renewable ones. To do this, millions of tonnes of materials, sometimes known as transition minerals, such as lithium, copper and rare earth minerals, will be needed. In our haste to obtain sufficient quantities of these materials, the social and environmental harm created by extracting and producing them is being ignored. Friends of the Earth Scotland's new report '**Unearthing Injustice**' raises awareness of the hidden impacts of transition minerals and considers what can be done to ensure we do not replace one environmental justice crisis with another.

Transition minerals are mined and then processed in complex global supply chains that often start in the Global South. Mining creates conflict because it must happen in a fixed place, where natural systems and local communities are already established.

These are some examples of how mining is linked to human rights abuses:

- *Chile is the second largest producer of lithium in the world and mining companies operating here have been accused of worker rights abuses, corruption and*

hoarding precious water resources.

- *Over 60% of the world's cobalt, used in the rechargeable batteries of mobile phones, laptops and electric cars, comes from the Democratic Republic of Congo, where children as young as seven can be involved in mining.*

- *Steel used in Scottish wind turbines is likely to include significant amounts of iron ore from Brazil, where there have been two major tailing dam disasters in the last decade. A 2019 disaster in Minas Gerais killed at least 244 people.*

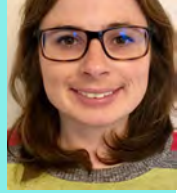
Across the world, governments and mining companies are failing to meet their responsibilities to protect human life and the environment.

As the demand grows exponentially for the materials that are needed for the energy transition, supply is beginning to fail. Some experts are predicting shortages of lithium by 2025. Governments have begun to stockpile transition minerals, which is escalating international tensions and increasing demand further.

A more just and sustainable solution would be to minimise our need for transition minerals. Of course, we must move away from fossil fuels, but by improving things like our transport system we can do this in a better way.

For example, instead of replacing Scotland's 2.5 million petrol and diesel cars with the same number of electric cars, we need to improve public transport so that fewer people need

**Kim Pratt, author
& Circular
Economy
Campaigner of
Friends of the
Earth**



cars. This will cut carbon emissions and material use at the same time. The **Unearthing Injustice** report found that if Scotland increased the proportion of journeys done by public transport, its lithium requirements could be cut by 30%. Scotland should not take more resources than it needs and, when resources are taken, this should be done in a way that minimises harm. Scotland now has a chance to take responsibility for its global impacts and show leadership on how to change the way materials are used. In June 2023, the Scottish Government published a draft law, the **Circular Economy Bill**, which aims to make Scotland's material use more sustainable. The Scottish Parliament will now review the bill over the next year and have a chance to make changes to the proposed law.

You can help us to change this by pledging to take action on Scotland's Circular Economy Bill (<https://act.foe.scot/pledge-take-action>). Friends of the Earth Scotland will send you suggestions of how to put pressure on Scotland's MSPs as the Bill makes its way through parliament.

Kim Pratt

FoE latest report:

Unearthing injustice:

**A global approach
to transition minerals**

By Jake Simms & Andy Whitmore, with contributions from Kim Pratt.

<https://foe.scot/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Unearthing-Injustice.pdf>



Pax Christi Scotland's Focus: Why Palestine and Israel? Why now?

Anne-Marie Clements is a member of the Pax Christi Scotland executive committee and we are pleased to tap into her up-to-date knowledge of the situation in the Holy Land. Here she reflects on Pax Christi Scotland's focus this summer on that situation and her own input to resources for our members as we continue to campaign for dialogue and peace.

During the academic year 2022 – 2023 I participated in the *Peace Advocacy Fellowship* programme at The Balfour Project, a charity that in acknowledging Britain's historical legacy and subsequent continuing responsibility in both Israel and Palestine works through education and advocacy to advance peace, justice, and equal rights for all people who call the area home.

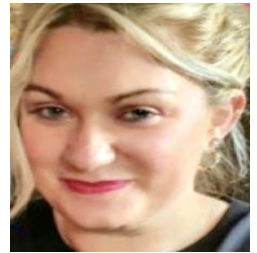
Their Fellowship programme is an opportunity for postgraduate students to make a tangible contribution to the organisation's work through designing and delivering a project on a topic of their choosing. During my interview for the programme, one of the Trustees asked me a question that I have continued to reflect on when advocating for justice and peace in the region: "There are many ongoing conflicts in the world, why do you think so much attention is given to Israel and Palestine? Why should we focus on this area?"

Pax Christi Scotland held an online event in June entitled *The Holy Land – Seeking a nonviolent future*. We heard the experiences of living in, volunteering in, and being a native of the Holy Land from three guest speakers (recording available on our website). We will host another event in September - *The View From the Occupied Territories*, when we will hear from a former Israeli soldier who will share his testimony of serving in the occupied Palestinian territories and why he now campaigns to end the occupation. (see page 4 for a registration link).

Ahead of this event, we have also published a blog by Anne Dobbing, a fellow member of Pax Christi Scotland's executive committee, detailing her personal reflections on research she and I have undertaken into the ongoing violence and unrest in the region. At this time of increasing focus from Pax Christi Scotland on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, some of you may be asking the same questions that were put to me during my interview with The Balfour Project.

As a member organisation of Pax Christi International, we of course share its mission to promote peace, respect of human rights, justice, and reconciliation throughout the world. All these are severely lacking in the context of Israel and Palestine: we see human rights abuses committed regularly by the Israeli authorities across Gaza and the West Bank, and often by Hamas in Gaza and by the Palestinian Authority, too.

**Anne-Marie
Clements, Pax Christi
Scotland executive
committee member**



We see injustice and the absence of peace in violent attacks perpetrated by both Israelis and Palestinians, in the separation wall and its check points, in home demolitions, and in the military detention of children.

Reconciliation seems non-existent as both parties are often steadfast in their fear that both their existence and identity is threatened by the presence of the opposing group. So, as an organisation striving to advance peace, justice and reconciliation, we make no excuse for our focus on this area of our common home where our ideals are absent.

As citizens of the UK, we also must acknowledge the one thing both Israelis and Palestinians often agree on - that the instigation of the conflict can be blamed on the British. There is therefore a legacy of responsibility that Britain bears to work towards peaceful resolution, justice, and reconciliation for all Israelis and Palestinians. To explore this position further and to offer an understanding of the conflict in its modern form, Pax Christi Scotland will shortly produce a document entitled *Start Here: A Guide and Resources to Understand the Conflict in Israel and Palestine*. In the meantime, please catch up with *The Holy Land – Seeking a nonviolent future*, register for *The View From the Occupied Territories*, and continue to pray and campaign for peace in the land that is holy for so many of us. **Anne-Marie Clements**

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 Websites:

<https://www.caledonianwebsjtes.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)

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

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/@paxchristiscotland>

[@paxchristiscotland](https://www.youtube.com/@paxchristiscotland)

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

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The View From the Occupied Territories

Our event on September 7 is very different to the one we held in June (see the recording on our website). The time will be given to a young man who is bravely speaking out in the hope of bringing peace to Israel and Palestine - and of course, there will be time for your own questions.

Luiz Aberbuj is a 31-year-old Brazilian who studied at Jewish school in Brazil, was involved in the Jewish community in Porto Alegre, and frequented the synagogue there. He says, 'Israel has always been present in my life.'

And so, in 2011, when Luiz was 18 years old he visited Israel for the first time as part of a gap year programme called *Preparation Year for Young Leadership Abroad*. Two years later he decided that he wanted to go back to Israel, this time to stay.

This meant enlisting in the Israel Defence Forces and he was proud to be the first in his family to join the Israeli army. He served for two years in the infantry's Kfir Brigade. After his service, however, he decided to give his testimony to Breaking the Silence and join the struggle against the occupation and human rights abuse in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Breaking the Silence is an Israeli non-governmental organisation established in 2004 by veterans of the Israel Defence Forces. It is intended to give serving and discharged Israeli personnel and reservists a means to confidentially recount their experiences in the Occupied Territories.

Luiz is now Jewish Diaspora Educational Coordinator of Breaking the Silence. He believes that the military rule and occupation of Palestinian territories are inherently immoral and are the biggest threat to Israel's democratic future. He says "By working together to break the silence, we can help people see the reality for themselves and change the reality on the ground."

You can hear Luiz's testimony at 7pm UK time on September 7. Register for the **The View From The Occupied Territories** at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82913281456>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with a link.

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Christian Climate Action is holding a pilgrimage on September 9 from 1pm to 3pm in Glasgow. Meeting at McLennan Arch, Glasgow Green @1pm. Walking to the gates of COP 26 at Finnieston St, pausing to reflect on how the climate emergency is affecting us, the next generation and those most vulnerable. More information from scotlandcca@gmail.com or register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/688562477907?aff=oddtcreator>

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Commemorating Hiroshima & Nagasaki

Throughout Scotland, parishes of all denominations remembered the devastation caused by the first atomic bombs 78 years ago.

Members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Pax Christi Scotland, with local Quakers and some of the congregation of St. Anne's Episcopal/Methodist church in Dunbar came together for an outdoor vigil.

The words Pope Francis offered when he was in Japan were read, as was the statement from the Scottish Catholic Bishops condemning weapons of mass destruction.

