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## GLOBAL

### International Peace Bureau on Women Peacemakers

On 20 January, the International Peace Bureau (IPB), of which Pax Christi International is a member, released a statement calling on the UN, governments and regional and local bodies to implement decisions on the importance of women's full participation in peacebuilding. In particular, the statement focuses on the urgent need to bring the strongest peace-promoting women of Syria into the process for peace. Read the full statement [here](#). ■

## AFRICA

### New agreement on the cessation of hostilities in South Sudan

On 30 January, the Government of South Sudan and the Cobra Faction of South Sudan Democratic Movement/Defence Army reached an agreement on the cessation of hostilities. Mediation talks took place in Addis Ababa with the facilitation of the Church Leaders Mediation Initiative, whose chairperson, Emeritus Bishop Paride Taban, is also founder of the Pax Christi International member organisation Holy Trinity Peace Village Kuron. Bishop Taban said the agreement is an important step to restore peace in the communities affected by the conflict. He also urged South Sudan's political leaders to be transparent, accountable and to refrain from embracing ethnicity and nepotism. He called on the parties to concentrate on massive energies

to eradicate poverty and give peace a chance. Read more [here](#). ■

### Pax Christi International statement on the conflict in the Central African Republic

On 24 January, Pax Christi International issued a statement calling on all parties involved in the violent conflict in the Central African Republic (CAR) – one of the 10 poorest countries in the world with a population close to 4.5 million people – to put an end to the suffering of the people and to restore human security and the Rule of Law throughout the country. The international community is urged to provide all necessary humanitarian assistance and support political and religious leaders in their efforts of restoring peace and reconciliation. Access the statement in full length in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [German](#) and [Italian](#). ■

## AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN

### Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns petition: "Support freedom, not occupation"

US-based Pax Christi Member Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns calls on all US citizens to ask their senators and government representatives to support the US policy working for the end of the Israeli occupation in Palestine. The Maryknoll Office draws attention on various events organised by churches in the US and in Palestine to end the long-term violence infringed on the Palestinian people. Read more [here](#). To sign Maryknoll's petition "Support freedom, not occupation", click [here](#). ■

## **US organisations urge legal support for immigrant detainees and torture survivors**

Two US-based Pax Christi member organisations, Pax Christi USA and the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, call on the US Department of Justice to expand Legal Orientation Programme (LOP) services to all immigrant detention facilities in the country, and to ensure that legal counsel is available to torture survivors and other vulnerable immigrants, without discrimination. Take action now! Sign the [petition](#) of the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC). For additional details, click [here](#). ■

## **Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns signs a letter directed to US President Barack Obama**

On 17 January, 2014, Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, Pax Christi Member Organisation, joined 15 other organisations in signing a letter addressed to US President Barack Obama urging the US to prioritise peace in Syria and the Middle East. The letter was sent ahead of the Geneva II Peace Talks on Syria which started on 22 January 2014. Read the letter [here](#). ■

## **Pax Christi USA calls for restoring the Voting Rights Act**

In June 2013 the US Supreme Court gutted a major provision of the Voting Rights Act, making it easier for states to increase barriers to voting. In response to that, a bipartisan group of Congressmen introduced a bill to fix some of the holes created by the Supreme Court.

Pax Christi USA considers this well-intentioned bill is a start, but is nevertheless concerned about some aspects of this

legislation which falls short of protecting the voice of every American at the ballot box. US citizens are invited to contact their Congress members and demand a strong bill to restore the Voting Rights Act. To take action, click [here](#). For details, click [here](#). ■

## **Serpaj Chile on International Court of Justice decision regarding maritime borders between Chile and Peru**

Pax Christi member Servicio Pax y Justicia of Chile (Serpaj) released a statement highlighting the importance of finding a peaceful solution to border conflicts in Latin America. On 27 January, the International Court of Justice in The Hague has released a final decision regarding the maritime borders that Peru and Chile are disputing, a decision that, according to Serpaj representatives, should be respected and used to improve political, economic and cultural relationships between the two nations. To read the statement in Spanish, click [here](#). For the Court decision on this issue, [click here](#). ■

## **Comissão Pastoral da Terra denounces unlawful destruction of peasant homes**

Comissão Pastoral da Terra, Pax Christi member in Brazil, denounces the unlawful demolition of peasant homes in Belo Horizonte. These demolitions have been made without a court order and, as a result, many families have been evicted and exposed to inclement.

However, despite the tense atmosphere, families who had their shacks overthrown are rebuilding them in a show of strength and will to continue on their earth. To see the pictures and read the full article in Portuguese, click [here](#). ■

## Serpaj on social reintegration of young detainees

Pax Christi member Serpaj of Chile conducted a psychosocial project called "Luis Cárdenas Vásquez de Serpaj Antofagasta" under the theme "Liberarte, imaginación sin fronteras". The aim was to enable young detainees detained in the Antofagasta Penitentiary Centre a smooth reintegration into society. The project ran a workshop in which detainees could express their feelings and emotions through art, specifically, through the creation of mosaics in various different shapes. To learn more about this initiative, click [here](#) (in Spanish). ■

## Serpaj Curicó holds "Playing for peace and non-violence" football championship

On 15 January, Pax Christi member Serpaj of Chile organised a 2nd championship of youth football called "Playing for peace and non-violence". The main goal of this activity is to create spaces for kids and teenagers to coexist peacefully in a healthy environment. To learn more about this initiative, click [here](#) (in Spanish). ■

## ASIA - PACIFIC

### CBCI India against corruption

The Justice, Peace and Development Commission of India (CBCI), a Pax Christi member organisation, launched an appeal in connection to the national elections to be held in May. CBCI calls on all Christians to demonstrate social commitment for a just and peaceful India, and invites all citizens to "be aware of the law and also the duty to use their vote to promote the common good", choosing politicians "who

demonstrate integrity and wisdom, who work against all forms of injustice and tyranny, against intolerance", dedicating themselves to the service of all" with sincerity, fairness and charity". Read more [here](#). ■

### National Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of India publishes book

National Commission for Justice, Peace and Development of India, Pax Christi Member Organisation, published 50 Golden Quotes On Human Dignity. See the book [here](#). ■

## MIDDLE EAST

### Syrian and Iraqi contributions to EU policy

On 13 February, the Dutch peace organisation PAX (formerly IKV-Pax Christi Netherlands) will bring a delegation of Syrian and Iraqi civil society representatives to Brussels to discuss with EU policy makers and civil society representatives the need to promote citizenship as a way to not only aim at the protection of rights of people in a conflictual and threatening situation, but also to have a mitigating effect on the conflict itself. The event is entitled seminar "We are all Citizens - A Syrian and Iraqi contribution to an active EU policy on preventing sectarian violence and promoting Freedom of Religion and Belief". The Pax Christi International Secretariat will be represented by Fr. Paul Lansu. ■

### Pax Christi International statement on the Cremisan Valley

On 28 January, Pax Christi International issued a statement calling for justice to be upheld in the Cremisan Valley, near

Bethlehem, where Israel plans to build a wall on the land of 58 Christian families. Pax Christi urges governments to call on Israel to respect the livelihoods of the people of the parish of Beit Jala and prevent the further expropriation of their land and houses. Pax Christi's statement came ahead of the Israeli Supreme Court Hearing on the construction of a separation wall in the Cremisan Valley. On 29 January, the Supreme Court of Israel has postponed the verdict on the route of the separation wall.

Read the full statement in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [German](#) and [Dutch](#). ■

### **Pax Christi Austria Statement on Syria**

On 25 January, Pax Christi Austria issued a statement on Syria. The Austrian section of Pax Christi welcomes the Geneva II peace talks on Syria and hopes that this will pave the way to a just and sustainable peace for the Syrian people. While stressing that a military option for Syria is completely out of the question, Pax Christi Austria calls on governments of the EU member states, and in particular on the Austrian government, to increase humanitarian assistance for Syrian refugees and to grant temporary asylum to Syrians whose lives have been so tragically disrupted by the war.

The Austrian government is being called upon to – at least - double the quota of Syrian asylum seekers intake and to speed up the administrative procedures related to the approval of asylum requests. Read the full statement [here](#). ■

### **Women Lead to Peace**

Several women's organizations launched the "Women Lead to Peace" campaign, a global alliance calling for an immediate

ceasefire in Syria. The group meet in Montreux from 20-22 of January. Pax Christi International co-president Marie Dennis attended. Read more [here](#). ■

### **Syrian Conflict: What Role for Women?**

On 17 January, the UN Security Council held a *closed arria* formula meeting, organised by Luxembourg and the UK, focusing on women's participation in resolving the Syrian conflict. Panelists included representatives of the Syrian Women's League, Syrian Women's Network and the Syrian Women's Coalition for Democracy.

The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss how to strengthen women's full and equal participation in talks on Syria's future and get recommendations on how the Council should approach and support both the participation and protection elements of the women, peace and security agenda in its Syria-focused work. For further details, [click here](#). ■

### **Pax Christi International signs onto Syria Letter for President Obama**

Ahead of the Geneva II peace talks on Syria on 22 January, Pax Christi International joined a group of 17 Christian communions and organisations addressing a letter on Syria to US President Barack Obama.

The letter appealed on the US and other involved countries to prioritise peace over their own geopolitical agendas; to stop supplying weapons to any armed actor; to press for a cease-fire; to support civil society organizations committed to peace; and to work vigorously towards a political solution. Read more [here](#). ■

## **An urgent call to action for a just peace in Syria**

On 15-17 January, the World Council of Churches (WCC) convened a high level Christian-Muslim ecumenical consultation on Syria to explore the role of religious leaders for peace and reconciliation in Syria ahead of the Geneva II Conference scheduled for 22 January. The final WCC consultation statement for the Geneva II talks was presented to Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations-Arab League joint representative for Syria, on 20 January. This statement is available in [English](#) and [German](#). WCC consultation participants also addressed their urgent call to action for a just peace in Syria to [US Secretary of State, John Kerry](#). Pax Christi International was represented at the WCC consultation by co-President Marie Dennis. ■

## **2014 Holy Land Coordination Meeting**

The 2014 Holy Land Coordination meeting, which took place from 11 to 16 January, brought together the Assembly of Catholic Ordinaries of the Holy Land together with bishops from North America, Europe and elsewhere. The aim of the visit was to gain deeper awareness of the social, political and ecclesial realities in the Holy Land with a view to supporting work for justice and peace more effectively; supporting the efforts of the local Church, through the work of Catholic organisations; and finally supporting the mission of the Apostolic Nuncio, in particular with regard to fundamental and basic agreements. Pax Christi International was represented at this meeting by Fr. Paul Lansu. For further details, [click here](#). The final statement issued by the 2014 Holy Land Coordination meeting is available [here](#). ■

## **The “Wall Museum” – Palestinian Stories on the Wall in Bethlehem**

Rania Murra, director of the Arab Educational Institute (AEI) and member of the international board of the peace movement Pax Christi, and Dr. Toine van Teeffelen, head of education at AEI and an anthropologist and guide based in Bethlehem, have recently issued an article on “The Wall Museum –Palestinian Stories on the Wall in Bethlehem”. Read more [here](#).

## **Pax Christi International signs onto statement against new Iran sanctions**

On 14 January, Pax Christi International joined a group of 71 peace, security, and faith groups to sign onto a joint letter urging US Senate to oppose new Iran sanctions legislation. Read more [here](#). ■

## **EUROPE**

### **IKV-Pax Christi Netherlands name change**

The Dutch section of Pax Christi, formerly IKV-Pax Christi Netherlands, has recently been renamed as PAX. For details, visit their new website: <http://www.paxforpeace.nl> ■

### **Pax Christi Austria organises Roma Ball**

On 31 January, the Austrian section of Pax Christi, in collaboration with the Roma Tirol Platform and the Education Centre of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Innsbruck, organised the second edition of the Roma Ball for the benefit of the Vinzenz Community Waldhüttl. The Vinzenz Community Waldhüttl, Innsbruck is a housing project for “people without a home”, a community house for Roma, asylum seekers,

pilgrims and young people who, regardless of their will, find themselves with no place to call "home". The project aims to provide these people with temporary accommodation and the opportunity to meet other people alike. Secretary General of Pax Christi Austria, Josef "Yusuf" Windischer, is one of the initiators of this project. Read more [here](#) (in German). ■

### **[Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej issues letter of support for Ukraine](#)**

Warsaw-based Pax Christi member KIK – Klub Inteligencji Katolickiej (Club of Catholic Intelligentsia) has issued a statement in connection with the recent acts of violence committed by the Ukrainian authorities against their own citizens. The Board of the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia in Warsaw wishes to express its support for those who despite provocations, peacefully struggle for the common good, and for the entire Ukrainian society in its endeavour to establish democratic rules of life and enter the way leading to the United Europe. Download full statement in: [English](#), [Polish](#) and [Ukrainian](#). ■

### **[Petition to stop recruitment of 16 year olds into the UK Armed Forces](#)**

Pax Christi UK has initiated a petition addressed to the UK Ministry of Defence to stop the recruitment of 16 year olds into the UK Armed Forces. The UK remains the only EU country to recruit 16 year olds into the military and one of very few EU countries to recruit 17 year olds. The UN and the UK Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights have requested that the UK reconsider its policy of recruitment of children into the military, that ethnic minorities and children of low-income

families are not targeted, that parents are included in the process from the outset and that the limited discharge rights for child soldiers are reviewed. The petition will be handed to the Ministry of Defence in April 2014. To sign this petition, [click here](#). ■

### **[Pax Christi UK rolls out First World War Peace Plans](#)**

Over the coming months, Pax Christi UK along with other UK peace groups will be preparing events and creating resources to ensure that the World War I commemorations reflect the need for repentance and forgiveness and lead to a commitment to future peacemaking.

Some of the resources already available include: [Commemorating the First World War: appropriate responses for peacemakers](#) and [Opposing World War One: Courage and Conscience - an information briefing about conscientious objection and peace activism in the First World War](#). In addition, numerous commemoration events are planned across the country. For details, click [here](#). ■

### **[EU's post-2014 migration and asylum policy](#)**

In a recent statement, the European NGO Platform on Asylum and Migration (EPAM), of which Pax Christi International is a member, sets out key priorities and recommendations for the future of the European migration and asylum policy, which will succeed the current Stockholm Programme at the end of 2014, and calls upon all actors involved to work for the creation of an open and inclusive Europe. To read more about the key priorities and recommendations put forward by EPAM, [click here](#). ■

## DISARMAMENT/ DEMILITARISATION

### PAX Netherlands on nuclear weapons

On 27 January, PAX Netherlands and the Red Cross organised a debate on nuclear weapons. Experts and politicians discussed "What if the bomb falls on Rotterdam?" – a scenario outlining what would happen if attackers get their hands on a nuclear bomb and bring it to explosion in Europe's most important port. Read more [here](#). ■

### Pax Christi Germany calls for national policy changes restraining arms exports

Pax Christi Germany and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) call for policy changes at national level to restrict German arms exports to areas of tension and dictatorship. In particular, the two peace organisations urge the German government to oppose the expected transfer of ships for the Israeli navy and the Leopard tanks to Saudi Arabia. Read more [here](#). In a recent interview for Radio Domino, Wiltrud Rösch-Metzler, vice-president of Pax Christi Germany and member of the Pax Christi International Board, explains why Germany should review its arms export policy. Listen to the audio recording in German [here](#). ■

## HUMAN RIGHTS

### Pax Christi Italy's Renato Sacco about forgotten conflicts and human rights infringements

In the latest issue of the magazine "Mosaico di pace", Pax Christi Italy's Renato Sacco talks about ongoing conflicts in the world that seem to have been forgotten. Sacco, who is national coordination of Pax Christi in Italy, blames the Italian national broadcasting company RAI for being culpably silent by not reporting some of these conflicts. He also points to the numerous acts of racism and hate towards immigrants and people of other ethnicities that occurred in Italy since the beginning of the year. To read the full article in Italian, please click [here](#). ■

### Comissão Pastoral da Terra against slave labour

Brazilian Pax Christi member Comissão Pastoral da Terra started a campaign to fight slave labour in Brazil together with Repórter Brasil and Walk Free. The campaign seeks to mobilise support to demand Congress approval for a Proposed Constitutional Amendment of Slave Labour in order to combat this practice that violates human rights. To learn more about this campaign, click [here](#) (in Portuguese). ■

### Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights presents the 'Krunoslav Sukić' award

At the end of 2013, the Centre for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights, a Pax Christi International Member Organisation in Croatia, organised the 5th edition of the 'Krunoslav Sukić' award for the Promotion of Peacebuilding, Nonviolence and Human Rights. The Award was granted to Veselinka Kastratović and Barbara Matejčić. Guests from all over the country attended the ceremony expressing appreciation to the 2013 laureates. Read the full article [here](#). ■

## HUMAN SECURITY

### Responsibility to Protect: the role of civil society organisations

On 24 January, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), of which Pax Christi International is a member, organised a meeting on future challenges related to the implementation of UN's Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) agenda, and the role of international actors, including civil society organisations, in providing assistance to atrocity prevention initiatives (pillar II of the RtoP framework). Christi International was represented at this meeting by Fr. Paul Lansu. ■

## JUST WORLD

### World Day of Social Justice

The World Day of Social Justice will be celebrated on 20 February. This is an annual UN-proclaimed celebration whereby Member States are invited to devote the day to promoting national activities for poverty eradication, the promotion of full employment and decent work, gender equity and access to social well-being and justice for all. Read more [here](#). ■

### United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) on sustainable development

UN-NGLS is delivering a series of policy briefs to the UN General Assembly Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) presenting civil society recommendations on the subjects in focus

during their sessions. Their latest policy brief focusing on Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality is available [here](#). This and other topics will be discussed during the [eighth session of the OWG](#), which will take place from 3-7 February. All UN-NGLS policy briefs for the OWG can be found [here](#). ■

## PEACE EDUCATION

### Pax Christi Germany "Learning for Peace" Campaign

Pax Christi Germany has initiated a campaign against the militarization of schools and colleges. Entitled "No arms industry and no military in educational institutions", the campaign aims to collect signatures in support of an education system and a society based on solidarity and reasoning rather than on military enforcement of political and economic interests. Pax Christi Germany further calls for the civilian orientation of universities, notably with regard to science and research, to be enshrined in the German legislation. To learn more about this campaign, including how to get involved, visit:

[www.lernenfuerdenfrieden.de](http://www.lernenfuerdenfrieden.de) ■

### 27 January: International commemoration day in memory of Holocaust victims

In 2005 the United Nations adopted a resolution declaring 27 January as an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. The resolution requested the United Nations Secretary-General to establish an outreach programme on the "Holocaust and the United Nations", as well

as institute measures to mobilise civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education to help prevent future acts of genocide. For more details, visit:

<http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance> ■

### **Pax Christi Luxembourg exhibition on Palestina**

On 24 January, Pax Christi Luxembourg in collaboration with Comité pour une Paix Juste au Proche-Orient launched the exhibition "Nakba - Exodus and expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 and contemporary Palestinian realities". For more details, visit: [www.blog.paixjuste.lu](http://www.blog.paixjuste.lu) ■

## **PEACE SPIRITUALITY**

### **World Interfaith Harmony Week**

The World Interfaith Harmony Week, taking place every year during the first week of February (3-9 February), is an annual UN observance established in 2010 as a way to promote harmony between all people regardless of their faith. The UN General Assembly encourages all States to support during that week the spread of the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill in the world's churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other places of worship, on a voluntary basis and according to their own religious traditions or convictions. Read more [here](#). ■

### **Pax Christi UK celebrated Peace Sunday**

Parishes across the UK celebrated Peace Sunday on 19 January, an annual celebration when the Catholic Church in England and Wales reflects on the Pope's

World Peace Day Message. Since 1968, Pax Christi UK has provided liturgy and reflection materials to encourage all parishes in the country to mark the day. Read more [here](#).

### **Pax Christi UK at Justice and Peace Conference in Liverpool**

To mark Peace Sunday, the Liverpool Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission held their annual memorial lecture at the Liverpool Archdiocesan Centre for Evangelization, on 19 January. This year's theme was: "And what did we learn? The challenge to peacemakers commemorating the First World War". During her presentation, Pax Christi UK Secretary General Pat Gaffney highlighted the less known work of peacemakers of that time, as well as some of the challenges for the peacemakers of our time. Read more [here](#). ■

### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, organised by the World Council of Churches, was celebrated between 18-25 January in congregations and parishes all over the world. This year theme was: "Has Christ been divided? (1 Cor 1:1-17)". An overview of this year's celebrations and further resources are available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [German](#). ■

### **Diocesan Justice, Peace and Creation Committee announces Kerry Person of The Year 2014**

On 13 January, the Diocese of [Kerry](#), a Pax Christi Member Organisation in Ireland, nominated Fr Michael Murphy as Person of the Year 2014. Fr Murphy, an 88-year-old priest, who has been an inspirational figure in the Tidy Towns movement, is affectionately known throughout

the country as 'Father Tidy', and is still actively involved in an organised, voluntary litter-collecting programme in Killarney. Read more [here](#). ■

## ADVOCACY

### PAX Netherlands holds meeting on Syria

On 28 January, PAX Netherlands held a meeting in Brussels with one of their long-term Syrian partners, the Aidoun group, to address the situation in Syria's Yarmouk refugee camp. The Aidoun group is a politically independent civil society group in Syria that was established in 2000 to advocate for the right of return of the Palestinian refugees. Since the start of the uprising, Aidoun has been involved in emergency support to the Palestinians and Syrian IDPs in the Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, mainly through their network of active youth throughout the country. Pax Christi International was represented at this meeting by Fr. Paul Lansu. ■

### NGO Committee on Peace Meeting

The NGO Committee on Peace, a forum of international NGOs representatives accredited at the UN, of which Pax Christi International is a member, met on 22 January, in Vienna. Topics addressed included: special events and commemorations for 2014, e.g. World War I (100 years), World War II (75 years), fall of the Berlin Wall (25 years), and the Peace Event Sarajevo, 6-9 June 2014. Franz Schnecklenleithner Pax Christi delegate at the UN in Vienna took part in the meeting. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 26 March 2014. ■

## PAX CHRISTI IN THE MEDIA

Pax Christi International's appeal for justice for families in Cremisan Valley was featured by:

[ICN – Independent Catholic News](#)

[THE TABLET: The International Catholic News Weekly](#)

Pax Christi International's Statement on the situation in the Central African Republic was featured by:

[ICN – Independent Catholic News](#) (English)

[APIC – Agence de Presse Internationale Catholique](#) (French)

[Radio Vaticana](#) (Italian)

[Rádio Vaticano](#) (Portuguese)

[Kerknet Niews](#) (Dutch)

[Agenzia Fides](#) (Italian)

Pax Christi International's contribution to the World Council of Churches (WCC) Ecumenical Statement for the Geneva II Talks was featured by:

[Ecumenical News](#)

[ICN – Independent Catholic News](#) ■

## INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

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

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