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GLOBAL

International Representation of Pax Christi International in 2016

Pax Christi International has had Special Consultative Status at the United Nations since 1979. Through its representative status with international bodies such as the United Nations (ECOSOC), UNESCO (Operational Relations), the European Union, the African Union, and the Council of Europe, Pax Christi International brings the experiences and concerns of its members in the Global Network to the international arena. Read [here](#) the names of the Pax Christi International representatives in 2016. ■

Marie Dennis receives Public Peace Prize

Pax Christi International sent the heartiest congratulations to its co-president Marie Dennis, who received the Public Peace Prize 2016. Marie earned “the greatest number of supporting gestures overall, from a largely international audience” and was one of the winners in the category “Global Peace and Reconciliation internationally-reputed Peacemakers”. We thank everyone for their support. You can read the messages endorsing Marie [here](#). ■

54th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development

On 3-12 February, a Pax Christi International delegation including Pax Christi’s UN representatives (Mary Yelenick, Abigail Abysalh Metzger, Cheryl Morrissey), a representative for the UN Department Public Information/NGO (Beverly Johnstone) and a

Pax Christi Metro New York Board member (Fr. James Noonan) will attend the 54th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development in New York City. The event’s theme is 'Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world'. Read more [here](#). ■

AFRICA

Burundi: Pax Christi International member on nonviolent communication

The Episcopal Justice and Peace Commission in Burundi recently published an article about their nonviolent communication program for schools which was launched in 2014. To maintain the program, two people from each school are chosen to receive a deeper training so that they can lead self-organised nonviolent communication workshops at their schools. Read more in French [here](#). ■

Petition: "Choose Peace! Disarm Eastern Congo"

Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen will hand over their petition on Eastern Congo to politicians in March 2016. The Pax Christi section encourages everyone to join the supporters, sign the petition or launch their own petition campaign. The petition promotes five recommendations to give lasting peace in DR Congo, which is needed more than ever during this year’s elections. Download the petition form to launch your own petition action [here](#) or fill in the online petition [here](#) until the end of February. ■

- PAX Netherlands' publication: [Scenarios for South Sudan in 2020](#), January 2016 ■

AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN

USA: Vigil for victims of gun violence

The Sisters of Mercy, a member organisation of Pax Christi International, along with 16 other faith communities, co-sponsored the “Interfaith Prayer and Remembrance Vigil” in Burlington, Vermont on 13 December, 2015. The vigil for the victims of gun violence nationwide was part of a series of similar events in conjunction with the third annual commemoration of the Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting. The Sisters of Mercy’s Institute Justice Team has issued a [statement](#) in support of recent gun safety measures implemented by the Obama administration. Read more [here](#). ■

Guatemala: Member supports investigation into genocide

Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, the Pax Christi member organisation in Guatemala, is one of many organisations that have endorsed a letter in regards to the on-going investigation of military-endorsed genocide perpetrated during the civil war. The letter emphasizes “the urgent need for an independent and impartial process to unfold, guaranteeing due process, free from any interference by other state agencies, democracy and [joint] efforts to ... maintain and protect judicial independence with the support of the highest authorities ...” Read more in Spanish [here](#). Pictures: [here](#) ■

USA: Call to action – Don’t vote for Israeli settlements

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC), a member organisation of Pax Christi, urges voters in the U.S. to tell their members of Congress to reject House Resolution 567 which “supports illegal Israeli settlements by conflating the occupied territories with Israel [... The resolution] opposes recently adopted European Union (EU) guidelines that call for products made in Israeli settlements to be labelled as coming from settlements [...], rather than labelled ‘Made in Israel.’” Read more [here](#). ■

ASIA - PACIFIC

Indonesia: Act of terror overlaps International Consultation of Multi-religious Humanitarian Action

Pax Christi International extends its sympathy and stands in deep solidarity with the victims of terrorist attacks in Jakarta on 14 February and also reiterates its position: “[Terror will not prevail](#)”. The International Consultation on Multi-religious Humanitarian Action, co-organised by Religions for Peace, was held in Jakarta on 13-14 January; Fr. Neles Tebay, Pax Christi International board member, spoke at the conference on the key contributions of interfaith cooperation to tackle violent extremism, address the refugees and migrant crisis, and respond to disasters. Read more [here](#). ■

Philippines: Pax Christi-Pilipinas supports Bangsamoro Basic Law

In December 2015, Pax Christi Pilipinas and Miriam College members went to Congress asking lawmakers to sign onto a statement of support for the legislation of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) that will recognize the aspirations of the Bangsamoro people in Mindanao. When Congress resumes in mid-January this year, Pax Christi members in the Philippines will continue to call for upholding the inherent right to self determination of the Muslims in Mindanao. ■

Russia: Tensions in North Caucasus

Pax Christi Flanders and Assolihoen, an Islamic cultural association of Ingush people in Belgium, are concerned about the continuing tensions in Ingushetia (North Caucasus, Russia). The dichotomy between the Salafist mufti of the republic and the moderate imam Tsjoemakov affects a large part of the population and could turn into bloodshed. The organisations wrote a joint [letter](#) to Belgium's Minister of Foreign Affairs outlining the situation and are planning a campaign to draw attention to the case. Read more [here](#). ■

EUROPE

Germany: Munich's International Peace Conference

Pax Christi Munich is co-organising Munich's 14th International Peace Conference, which will be held 11-14 February. "Make Peace and Justice – NO to war" is this year's subject, including lectures on the BRICS countries, international fora on caliphates and Palestine

and expert hearings. Download the program of the conference [here](#) or read the greeting address from Pax Christi International in [English](#) or [German](#). ■

United Kingdom: Peace Sunday 2016

On 17 January, Pax Christi UK members organised the Peace Sunday 2016 celebration, which included vigils, prayer services, information stalls, a lecture on the Peace Day theme 'Overcome indifference and win peace' and the UK's nuclear weapon programme 'Trident', as well as exhibitions in England and Wales. Besides the various events, several parishes also held collections for Pax Christi's work. Read more about the events [here](#). ■

Italy: Pax Christi Italy joint New Year Eve's peace march

Pope Francis made particular mention of the march that took place New Year's Eve on occasion of the Catholic World Day of Peace in the city of Molfetta (Italy); he said: "It is good to know that many people, especially young people, have chosen this way of ringing in the New Year." The march was sponsored by the Italian Bishops' Conference, Caritas Internationalis, Pax Christi Italy and Catholic Action. Read about the march on [Pax Christi Italy's website](#) or on the [Vatican Radio's website](#). ■

Germany: Soldiers encouraged to individual proof of conscience

Pax Christi Germany released an open letter to German soldiers of the Syria contingent, urging them to consider if participating in the military mission in Syria aligns with their consciences. "Those who do not share our

pacifist perspective must at least justify when they want to override the prohibition to kill civilians”, said the spokesperson for Pax Christi Germany’s commission for peace politics. Otherwise every soldier is entitled to demand another position of his/her employer. Read more in German [here](#). ■

MIDDLE EAST

Syria: Pax Christi International: Support the political process

On 29 January, Pax Christi International published a statement entitled: “Support the beginning of a political process in Syria”, referring to Geneva’s peace talks, which started on 29 January. Pax Christi International supports the UN Security Council resolution and also urges that the use of banned weapons be ended; all parties stop supplying weapons to fighting factions in Syria; a carefully monitored ceasefire is placed and that humanitarian access to all in need inside Syria be given the highest priority. Read the statement

in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Italian](#), [Arabic](#) and [German](#). ■

Statement of Holy Land Coordination 2016

From 6-14 January, Fr. Paul Lansu, Pax Christi International policy advisor, attended the Holy Land Coordination 2016, which was organised by Catholic bishops from across Europe, North America and South Africa. A final statement, “You are not forgotten,” has been published; it encourages the people in Gaza, Beit Jala, Jordan and all Israelis and Palestinians to seek peace, and not to lose hope. “With a promise

of active solidarity, we make our own the prayer of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*: ‘O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.’” Read the statement in [English](#), [German](#), [French](#) or [Spanish](#).

Listen to an interview of Fr. Paul Lansu at the Vatican Radio on the pilgrimage and Pax Christi International’s contribution to peace and reconciliation in this region [here](#). ■

Syria: Pax Christi France and PAX Netherlands call attention to alarming situation in Madaya

Pax Christi France and PAX Netherlands are calling attention to starvation in Madaya and other cities besieged mostly by the Syrian army and its allies. PAX Netherlands recently published its Syria Alert XVIII which calls for political effort to enforce international law and break the sieges. Pax Christi France urges that humanitarian aid needs to be followed by UN Security Council decisions to end the civil war. Read more from [Pax Christi France](#) or [PAX Netherlands](#). ■

Pakistan: Statement on bombing at Bacha Khan University

After the attack on the Bacha Khan University in Charsadda (Pakistan) on 21 January, the National Commission for Justice and Peace of Pakistan, a member organisation of Pax Christi International, immediately published a statement: “It is essential that the government takes the necessary measures to ensure the safety of all educational institutions in order to protect those who work in order to form a better Pakistan.’ The Commission expresses the closeness of the Catholic Church

to the people of Charsadda in times of pain and has asked to bring the perpetrators to justice.” Read more [here](#). ■

ADVOCACY & CAMPAIGNING

Discover Israel and Palestine!

Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen are organising a peace journey especially for young people to Israel and Palestine from 9-18 September, 2016. The trip includes insights into the history of the region, meetings with human rights activists, local youth and peace organisations, as well as visiting inspiring projects for a better understanding of the conflict. Attendance at the preparatory weekend on 27/28 August is strongly recommended. Click [here](#) for more practical information. Registration is open until 31 March.

The date is not convenient to you? On 18-30 September, 2016 Pax Christi Germany is also organising an encounter travel to the Middle East (West Bank, Jerusalem). Registration deadline is on 15 June. Read more [here](#). ■

Palestine: Arts challenging 50 years of occupation

The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Pax Christi International member organisation, extends an invitation to artists worldwide: “In just a year’s time, in 2017, the occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza will have lasted 50 years. To commemorate this symbolic year and to give momentum to the public challenge of occupation and the demand for the implementation of the legal

rights of the Palestinian people, AEI and Palestine Link make an appeal to artists worldwide to prepare a performance or artistic product about the theme of ‘occupation’.” Read more [here](#). ■

Colombia: “Still buying blood coal?”

PAX Netherlands recently held a protest against the lack of responsibility in the coal supply chain at the entrance of energy utility Essent’s headquarters in Den Bosch, Netherlands. “According to PAX very little concrete improvements have been realized for the victims of violence in the mining region of Cesar[, Colombia]. [...]The action outside the conference venue reminded the participants that as long as there is no remedy for the victims, the issue of blood coal nor the protests by civil society will go away.” Read more [here](#). ■

HUMAN RIGHTS

Pax Christi USA opposes raids to deport Central American families

Pax Christi USA signed an open letter to President Obama expressing opposition to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s plans to conduct nationwide raids to round up and deport undocumented Central Americans. The open letter urges the president to offer greater protection to the migrants, many of whom are fleeing violence. As of 31 December over 150 organisations had endorsed the letter, which was initiated by the American Immigration Lawyer Association ([AILA](#)). Read more [here](#). ■

Comissão Pastoral da Terra on modern slave labour

Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT), a Brazilian member organisation of Pax Christi International, is concerned about the Brazilian government's decision not to publish the updated "Dirty list" (a list with all the names known as slave-owners) at the end of 2015. The coordination of CPT's campaign "De olho aberto para não virar escravo", Brother Xavier Plassant, compiled an analyses on modern slave labour in Brazil. Read more [here](#). ■

DISARMAMENT

Pax Christi UK cosponsors Transform Now Ploughshares speaker

On 23 January, at the invitation of Pax Christi UK and the Birmingham (England) Catholic Worker, Sister Megan Rice spoke about the 2012 Transform Now Ploughshares action, when she and two other Christian peace activists (Michael Walli and Greg Boertje-Obed) caused the "biggest security breach in the history of the [USA's] atomic complex." (The New York Times) Their nonviolent direct action shut down a nuclear weapon plant in Tennessee for two weeks; Sr. Megan, Michael and Greg spent two years in prison as a result. Read more [here](#). ■

Italy: Pax Christi Tradate's lecture "War, who benefits?"

On 29 January, Pax Christi Italy's office in Tradate hosted a lecture entitled "War, who benefits? – 100 Years of useless violence" which focusses on the time scope 1915 – 1945 – 2015. The project was initiated by Insieme

Donna (Women together), Centro Culturale Eugenio Peri and ANPI – Sezione di Caronno Pertusella. Read more [here](#). ■

PEACE EDUCATION & PEACE SPIRITUALITY

Belgium: Exhibition "What if we dare peace?"

On 20 February, Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles will co-organise a visit to the exhibition "Et si on osait la paix" (What if we dare peace?) in Liege, which gives tribute to Belgians peacemakers such as the Nobel Peace Prize winner Dominique Pire, Henri La Fontaine and August Beernaert. Transport from Brussels is arranged and registration is open until 10 February. Read more [here](#). ■

Pax Christi UK: Nonviolence workshop focuses on Pax Christi icon

From 18-24 January, the Pax Christi icon, "Christ is our reconciliation," was displayed at St. Andrew's church and was the focus of the [Hertford Festival of Peace and Reconciliation](#). During the festival, Pax Christi UK offered a workshop entitled: "Nonviolence: Great idea! But how?" The icon was made for Pax Christi International at the Monastery of St John in the Desert, near Jerusalem. It depicts many of the stories of forgiveness shared by the Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Read more [here](#). ■

PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL IN THE MEDIA

[Pax Christi works for peace and reconciliation in Israel, Palestine,](#)

Vatican Radio, 12 January 2016

[New Year Peace Prayer Service,](#)

City Pulse, 1 January 2016



RESOURCES FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- Fr. John Dear (Pax Christi USA Ambassador): [Lenten Reflections 2016: Following Jesus on the Path of Nonviolence](#), January 2016
- Life&Peace Institute Sweden: [Horn of Africa Bulletin](#), Vol. 27 Issue 6, November-December 2015
- Marie Dennis (co-president of Pax Christi International): [Syria Crying Out for Nonviolent Solutions](#), 1 January, 2016
- Pax Christi USA Booklet: [Lent 2016 – Everything is Grace](#)
- Pax Christi USA Reflection: [Bring your concerns to Jesus, then do what he says](#), by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace
- Pax Christi USA Reflection: [Everyone is a son or daughter of God](#), by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace
- Pax Christi USA Reflection: [The Cross and the call to reconciliation](#), by Tom

Cordaro Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace

- Pax Christi USA Reflection: [The United States is having an identity crisis](#), by Joan Chittister, osb Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace
- Pax Christi USA: On the line: [January 2016 edition](#),
- Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles: [L’histoire colonial belge](#) (RCF radio interview), 11 December
- Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles: [Le complotisme : une idéologie de l’oppression](#), January 2016
- Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles: [Xénophobie, racisme, discriminations ... De quoi parle-t-on?](#) January 2016
- PAX Netherlands: [Syria Alert issue XVIII - Over a million Syrians under siege](#), January 2016
- SIPRI and PAX Netherlands: [Scenarios for South Sudan in 2020](#), January 2016



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Online Volunteer Translators

Pax Christi International is looking for online volunteers to translate and/or proofread its monthly newsletter as well as occasional advocacy documents and statements pertaining to human rights, human security, disarmament, demilitarization, just world order, religion and violent conflict, from/into: English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Russian, Arabic, etc. For details, click [here](#). ■

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

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

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