



January 10, 2018

The Honourable Nebenzia Vassily Alekseevich  
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to the United Nations  
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Reference: UN Security Council Briefing “Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: Confidence building measures”, 18 January 2018.

Excellency,

Pax Christi International<sup>1</sup> is concerned about increasing risks and threats to use weapons of mass destruction, and welcomes the attention of the UN Security Council for further confidence building measures that can facilitate non-proliferation and disarmament. As all weapons of mass destruction are prohibited by international treaties, it is imperative to seize this opportunity to highlight the urgent need to respect international law by joining and implementing these instruments and to seek all opportunities to protect the norms they reinforce against the possession, use and testing of weapons of mass destruction.

It is our collective responsibility to prevent the humanitarian harm caused by weapons of mass destruction, and we are confident your delegation takes this responsibility seriously. Towards that end, we encourage your support during the Security Council meeting ‘Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: confidence building measures’ scheduled for 18 January 2018 for the following confidence building measures:

- To seize the opportunity of this meeting to support the urgent and full implementation of these instruments and signal your intention to join if not already done so: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (1972), The Chemical Weapons Convention (1992), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (1996), and the Treaty on the

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<sup>1</sup> Pax Christi International has several member organisations in the Russian Federation: Interchurch Partnership Apostolic City – Nevskaya Perspective, Regional Civic Initiative – Right to Life and Human Dignity, Soldiers’ Mothers St. Petersburg and House of Peace and Non-violence.

Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (2017), all explicitly prohibit the possession, testing and use of weapons of mass destruction.

- To speak in favour of all of the regional nuclear weapon free zone treaties, and for nuclear armed states to be encouraged to adopt the relevant protocols through which they undertake legally binding commitments to not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons.
- To denounce nuclear threats, as any use of weapons of mass destruction causes catastrophic humanitarian harm, and strongly encourage diplomacy and dialogue for the peaceful resolution of tensions. Any use, testing or threat of use, should be firmly condemned by the UN Security Council and all UN Member States. Recent threats to use WMD are incompatible with the grave responsibility for international peace and security borne by the members of the council.

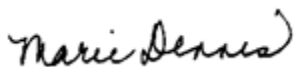
In the words of Pope Francis on the occasion of the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (2014)<sup>2</sup>: “The security of our own future depends on guaranteeing the peaceful security of others, for if peace, security and stability are not established globally, they will not be enjoyed at all.”

It is our hope that your country will, as a member of the UN Security Council, take advantage of this briefing to clearly and strongly reinforce the global norms against the use, possession and testing of all weapons of mass destruction.

Sincerely,



Greet Vanaerschot  
Secretary General  
Pax Christi International



Marie Dennis  
Co-President  
Pax Christi International

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<sup>2</sup> The declaration of 2014 is available on this website: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2014/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141207\\_messaggio-conferenza-vienna-nucleare.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20141207_messaggio-conferenza-vienna-nucleare.html)

*Pax Christi International is a Catholic peace movement with 120 member organisations worldwide promoting peace, respect for human rights, justice and reconciliation. The nuclear weapons ban treaty is one of its advocacy priorities. Pax Christi International is a member of the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).*