

AFRICA

IKV Pax Christi in South Sudan

On 9 July 2011, South Sudan became an independent country. One year on, Nico Plooier of IKV Pax Christi Netherlands visited South Sudan and presented the pastoral letter of Catholic and Anglican Archbishops. IKV Pax Christi and 150 other civil society organisations started a campaign urging Sudan and South Sudan to settle disputes on oil, border conflicts and other unresolved issues. For more information visit <http://www.wechoosepeace.org>

The European Union must insist that Rwanda end its involvement in the DR Congo conflict

The European network for Central Africa (EurAc) calls on the European Union and its Member States to insist that Rwanda end its involvement in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). By supporting armed groups, Rwanda prolongs the violence and insecurity in the DRC. Pax Christi International is a member of EurAC. To read the text of EurAC's communication, click here for the English version [2012-0278-en-af-AC](#) or [2012-0278-fr-af-AC](#) in French.

Ex-combatants Project Considers Next Steps

Organisers of a project to help reintegrate former fighters gathered recently in the Great Lakes region of Africa to evaluate final project results and to plan the next phase. The evaluation session took place from the 23- 26^{May} 2012 at the Centre Spirituel Kiriri in, Bujumbura, Burundi.

Since 2010, Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Flanders have joined together in supporting the formation of 'Listening Communities' to accompany ex-combatants as they transition back to civilian life. Over this period, the project has engaged more than 100 men and women in 10 locations. It has also facilitated links to local community leaders and stimulated the creation of small-scale ex-combatant associations. For more information on this project, contact africa@paxchristi.net.

AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN

Coordination Meeting on Extractives in Colombia and Peru

On 28 June 2012, Martha Inés Romero, Latin America Regional Coordinator of Pax Christi International met with Marianne Moor, Colombia Coordinator of IKV Pax Christi Netherlands; Michel Uiterwaal, Advisor on Extractives, Human Rights and Conflict; and with Miguel Galvis, Colombia Local Coordinator. Martha Inés shared the Regional Plan and the project for 2012 of Pax Christi International. Marianne and colleagues presented the strategy for Colombia and their experience with extractives in Peru. The strategy provides useful information for the process Pax Christi International is developing on the issue on extractives, war and communities' rights.

On Extractive Companies in Peru

Pax Christi Peru has supported the statement from the Catholic Church and other social actors in which it denounces human rights violations in the Espinar Province. After weeks of civilian strike against extractives companies that have contaminated water and ignore communities' rights, there have been widespread abuses from state forces: murders, wounded people, arbitrary detentions etc. An agreement is expected amongst communities, national and local government and companies to establish a formal dialogue in which parties explain their positions and the common good will be above private interests. Read the statement in Spanish at [2012-0267-sp-am-HS](#).

On Water Rights in Department of Cajamarca, Peru

Organizations and social movements in the Department of Cajamarca in Peru have conducted peaceful protests in defence of water rights that are threatened by the installation of the Conga mining project by Minera Yanacocha/Newmont Mining Co. On July 9, 2012, a letter/statement was delivered to President Ollanta Humala by human rights, social and environmental justice organisations including Pax Christi International. This letter/statement highlights grave concerns of violations of human rights in the department. Read the letter at <http://vivatinternational.org/blog/2012/07/19/ngos-urge-the-peruvian-government-to-stop-suppressing-community-opposition-to-newmount-mining/>

Recognition for work on Torture in Chile

Servicio Paz y Justicia, Serpaj, Member Organisation of Pax Christi International in Chile, has received the Medal Helmut Frenz by the Ethical Commission against Torture - CECT, for its work on Justice and Education for Peace and Active nonviolence, especially with grassroots communities.

Torture Report in México

The Centro Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, Frayba, Member organisation of Pax Christi International in Mexico produced a document in June 2012 about Torture in Mexico, in which Frayba denounces impunity: from 11 cases presented in 2010, only one of them received judgment. Read the report in Spanish at [2012-0266-sp-am-HR](http://www.vivatinternational.org/blog/2012/06/26/2012-0266-sp-am-HR).

25th Annual Peace Week in Colombia

Pax Christi International supports the 25th Annual Peace Week in Colombia which will take place from 9 – 16 September 2012. The content of the Week will be presented on 9th August before the press and on 10th August before the general public. The Peace Week is a collaboration of REDEPAZ, Member Organisation of Pax Christi International, in strong collaboration with Pastoral Social of the Catholic Bishops' Conference. Read the brochure with programme in Spanish at [2012-0284-sp-am-PB](http://www.vivatinternational.org/blog/2012/08/02/2012-0284-sp-am-PB).

Human Rights Violations in Cauca, Colombia

On 26 July 2012, the Co-Presidents of Pax Christi International expressed concern over the human rights violations in the department of Cauca in Colombia. In recent weeks several civilians have been injured and thousands have been forcibly displaced as the armed conflict between the security forces and the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC) escalates in Cauca Department, Southern Colombia. Read the letter in Spanish at [2012-0294-sp-am-HS](http://www.vivatinternational.org/blog/2012/07/26/2012-0294-sp-am-HS).

International Service for Peace in Chiapas, Mexico

SIPAZ, the International Service for Peace is an international observation programme created in 1995 to monitor the conflict in Chiapas, Mexico after the Zapatista uprising in 1994. SIPAZ supports the search for nonviolent solutions and assists in peace building efforts and dialogue between the actors involved in the conflict in Chiapas. Pax Christi International is a member and Martha Inés Romero, the Latin America & Caribbean Regional Coordinator of the International Pax Christi Secretariat is a member of the board. The General Assembly of SIPAZ will take place from August 16-21, 2012. For more information visit www.sipaz.org.

Field Visits and Seminars

Martha Inés Romero, Latin America & Caribbean Regional Coordinator will participate in field visits and workshops on active nonviolence with different Pax Christi International Member Organisations. The organisations are the Centro Dominicano de Asesoría e Investigación in the Dominican Republic and with the Commission Episcopale Nationale Justice et Paix and Pax Christi Port-au-Prince in Haiti (July 2012); with Frayba in Mexico (11 – 15 August); with Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo in Guatemala (23 – 25 August); with Tutela Legal in El Salvador (26 – 29 September); with Pax Christi Puerto Rico (2 – 5 September); with Pastoral Land Commission in Brazil (17 – 21 September); with Serpaj in Chile (23 – 25 September); with Pax Christi Peru (26 – 28 September).

2012 Teacher of Peace Award

Pax Christi USA has recognized the life and witness of Ruben Garcia, naming him the 2012 recipient of the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award. The first recipient of the award in 1978 was Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement. Pax Christi USA has since recognized some of the most significant U.S. Catholic activists for peace and justice of the past three decades, including actor Martin Sheen; poet and priest Daniel Berrigan, S.J.; and 'Dead Man Walking' author Sr. Helen Prejean, C.S.J. Ruben Garcia is one of the founders and the current director of Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas.

ASIA & PACIFIC

INTERNATIONAL DAY SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF TORTURE

On June 26, 2012, the Human Rights Office in Kandy, Sri Lanka, a Member Organisation of Pax Christi International held a silent protest with families and the victims of torture to commemorate the International day in support of the Torture victims campaign against Torture. Read a report with pictures at www.hrokandy.blogspot.com

Tamils seen as a Minority in their own Country

On July 4, 2012, Pax Christi Germany issued a press release about the renewed discriminatory measures against the Tamil population, in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The Bishop of Mannar is talking about a renewed war against the Tamils in this part of the country. For more information on this topic, read in German at www.paxchristi.de.

MIDDLE EAST

Creating a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East

Pax Christi International strongly supports the creation of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East as a significant contribution to a nuclear weapons free world. Pax Christi International urges all stakeholders to encourage negotiations towards a binding international treaty that would abolish such weapons definitively. Read the statement of Pax Christi International issued on 11 July 2012 in English at [2012-0242-en-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0242-en-me-SD), French [2012-0242-fr-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0242-fr-me-SD), Spanish [2012-0242-es-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0242-es-me-SD) and German [2012-0242-de-me-SD](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0242-de-me-SD). Member Organisations are invited to further distribute the statement in their country.

Pax Christi Italy on Iraq

On 23 July 2012, Pax Christi Italy issued a press release related the latest violence occurring in Iraq. They also focus on the situation of the Christian minorities in the country and speak out a message of solidarity with the Muslims who are dedicated to Ramadan. For more information on the press release read here in Italian at [2012-0291-it-me-HS](http://www.paxchristi.org/2012-0291-it-me-HS)

EU - Israel Association Council

Deborah Casalin (CIDSE) and Brigitte Herremans (Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen) published an op-ed in Open Democracy on the occasion of the EU-Israel Association Council held on 24 July 2012. The op-ed states that there will be no DEUS EX MACHINA to save the two state solution: "Europe has created dangerous expectations by reinforcing Israel's belief that it can continue to expand settlements and effectively annex occupied territory without any real consequences. As long as European leaders do not send a strong signal - beyond statements - that violations of international humanitarian law and human rights are unacceptable, they are contributing to the degradation of the international legal order." For more information, read the op-ed below: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/brigitte-herremans-deborah-casalin/europe-rewards-israel-unconditionally-how-does-this-advance-peace>

DISARMAMENT AND DEMILITARISATION

Handover ATT Declarations and Petition to Ban Ki-moon

Control Arms Campaigners, Pax Christi International and other organisations are calling on political leaders to agree on a strong Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in New York, with common standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms and ammunition. For the past few months around the world, campaigners, religious leaders, medical professionals and parliamentarians have been collecting signatures and support for a bullet proof ATT.

On 3 July 2012, representatives of the global civil society, including delegates of Pax Christi International met with UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon to hand over the petition and three declarations: parliamentarian, interfaith and medical professionals. Watch the handover ceremony on YouTube:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwWTtHJ_S7c&feature=youtu.be.

See photo's at:

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10151749769231988&set=a.94229026987.86401.12082541987&type=1&theater>.

More at www.controlarms.org

Strong Plea for Effective Rules to Regulate the Arms Trade

On 11 July 2012, Civil Society delegates were able to deliver a speech at the Diplomatic Conference for an Arms Trade Treaty in New York. One of the speakers was Jasmin Galace of IANSA and the IANSA Women's Network (PHILIANSA). Jasmin also spoke as a member of Pax Christi International in the Philippines and said the following:

"I am a member of Pax Christi International, and members of this faith-based organization from South Sudan to El Salvador, Haiti to Iraq, Mexico to the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United States of America, have seen how conventional weapons have been used to commit human rights violations. Whether these weapons circulate during or in the wake of war and violent conflict; they are collected and used by violent gangs and organized crime; or their proliferation is driven primarily by lucrative profits, the cost in human life and misery is unconscionable. The specific impact on women and children is especially egregious, as is the diversion of resources needed to protect human life and human rights and the natural world."

Read the full statement in English at [2012-0280-en-gl-SD](http://www.controlarms.org/2012-0280-en-gl-SD), French at [2012-0280-fr-gl-SD](http://www.controlarms.org/2012-0280-fr-gl-SD) and German at [2012-0280-de-gl-SD](http://www.controlarms.org/2012-0280-de-gl-SD).

Religious leaders say Arms Trade Treaty must regulate ammunition

Christian leaders representing organizations of some 90 percent of the world's two billion Christians have issued a joint appeal to the 194 governments currently negotiating the first global Arms Trade Treaty: Keep ammunition in the treaty. Proposals on the negotiating table would ban arms sales for genocide, war crimes and grave human rights violations. Almost all of the 194 states involved recognize that the arms and ammunition most often used in these crimes must be included in the treaty.

Churches and their members witness the human costs of unlawful armed violence every day, as victims are brought to church hospitals and church graveyards in different parts of the world. In a joint statement issued on 20 July 2012 representatives of the World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, Pax Christi International and Caritas stated "The Arms Trade Treaty must regulate the ammunition that strikes them down".

A minority of countries including major powers insist that the treaty not regulate ammunition. "There is no way ammunition can be omitted from the long-overdue regulation of a trade that has brought such suffering and death to millions of people," the church leaders declared at the half-way point in sensitive, month-long UN treaty negotiations. Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International is one of the signatories of the statement.

The moderator of the World Council of Churches Central Committee, the Rev. Dr Walter Altmann, is leading the ecumenical delegation at the [UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty](#) in New York. The WCC [campaign for a strong and effective Arms Trade Treaty](#) involves some 70 member churches and related organizations in 35 countries.

[Read the full text of the joint statement](#)

Breaking the Nuclear Chain

Breaking the Nuclear Chain is a new campaign to inform, motivate and activate people to prevent the looming humanitarian catastrophe represented by the nuclear chain – from uranium mining, to power, weapons and to nuclear waste. It is an initiative of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), IKV Pax Christi Netherlands and Peace Boat.

The modernization of nuclear weapons, the tragedy at Fukushima and the devastation at Jabiluka among other disasters are dreadful reminders that have convinced NGOs of the necessity to address the whole nuclear chain. To do this, emphasis will be on people especially those who have been affected by nuclear weapons, uranium mining, nuclear exports, nuclear power and nuclear waste; as well as those who are working to disrupt this lacerating chain. The participating organisations are collecting [testimonies](#) of affected people and making these testimonies available to a broad audience in the hope of drawing a human face on the often abstract debate on nuclear issues.

Biosecurity for Everyone: Meeting of Experts Biological and Toxin Weapons

The Chairman of the Meeting of Experts and the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in 2012 has given NGOs the opportunity to make statements at the Meeting of Experts that took place in Geneva from July 16-21, 2012. On 16 July 2012, Enrique Sierra, delegate of Pax Christi International at the United Nations, presented a submission entitled “Biosecurity for Everyone.” Pax Christi International strongly believes that international treaties including the BTWC are valuable instruments for protecting human life and dignity anywhere in the world. Read in English at [2012-0261-en-gl-SD](#). More at <http://www.opbw.org/>

Pax Christi International on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2012

Pax Christi International issued a message on the occasion of the annual manifestation in commemoration of the victims of the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Vienna on 6 August 2012. Each year, Pax Christi International members around the world remember the horror and mourn the lives lost in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, 1945. Pax Christi International joins in spirit with all those who plead for an end to the nuclear madness that has threatened the survival of people and our planet for so many decades. Read the message in [2012-0262-en-gl-SD](#).

HUMAN RIGHTS AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

United Nations on Death Penalty

On 3 July 2012, Beth Begley, Representative of Pax Christi International at the United Nations in New York attended a global panel meeting on “Moving away from the death penalty; Lessons from national experiences.” Member States such as Burundi and Guatemala exchanged experiences on the abolition on the death penalty. Panellists also focussed on the human dimensions of the application of the death penalty in States retaining it. For more information e-mail newyork@ohchr.org

HUMAN SECURITY AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

Rio +20 Brasil

Via Campesina – a global network conformed by institutions and individuals who fight for land rights and the Pastoral Land Commission, CPT, a Pax Christi International member organisation in Brazil, produced a statement in the People's Summit and the Rio+20 Conference. According to the statement, ‘the Conference failed because of the lack of commitment on what was proposed 20 years ago’. "Green economy" intends to marketing

life, they said. On the other side, social movements met together in the People's Summit to reflect, debate and propose alternatives and new alliances to resist and promote knowledge about alternatives for a new world order.

Water shortages in Camp Liberty, Iraq

A letter dated 20 July 2012 addressed to Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, has been forwarded by Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International, concerning water shortages in Camp Liberty, Iraq. Pax Christi International has learned that 2000 Ashraf residents have been transferred to Camp Liberty, yet infrastructure that meets humanitarian standards, particularly the water system, has not been provided. Water shortages have resulted in a dreadful situation for the residents of the camp, who are using their own water tankers to bring water from an outlet 2Km from the camp. Pax Christi International requests that the Secretary General urgently interfere in this vital and humanitarian matter to urge the Government of Iraq to connect Camp Liberty to the Baghdad water network as soon as possible according to its promise and with the funding of the residents. Read the letter in [2012-0287-en-me-HS](#).

PEACE BUILDING

Living Differences Allows Space for Peace to Grow

On July 13, 2012, Mark Barwick of the Pax Christi International Secretariat participated in a consultation on European policy on religious diversity and discrimination. The event was organised by a Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe (CEJI), which conducts anti-discrimination training in many European countries through its programme called 'Belieforama.'

Belieforama addresses social conflicts through training and facilitation that seek to transform the way that diversity of religion and belief is experienced in society. The organisation has recently concluded a major survey of training participants to assess the training's wider impact on communities and society in Europe. The findings of this study will be presented later this year at a policy brief in Brussels.

Pax Christi International is also engaged in a programme called 'Living Our Differences: Confronting Violence in a Diverse World.' For more information on this programme, contact mark.barwick@paxchristi.net or on Belieforama <http://www.belieforama.eu/>

NON-VIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

International Seminar on Non-violence

The Committee in Colombia in charge of organising the International Seminar on Nonviolence has invited Pax Christi International to be part of the event. Marie Dennis, Co-President, is invited as a lecturer on the issue of Spirituality and Nonviolence in the work of Pax Christi International around the world. Martha Inés Romero, Latin America Regional Coordinator of Pax Christi International is also involved in the seminar. The event has been supported methodologically and thematically by GIZ – a German governmental agency. The seminar takes place from 25 – 28 September 2012.

DEVELOPING PEACE SPIRITUALITY AND PEACE THEOLOGY

Prayer Vigils during ATT Diplomatic Conference in New York

Faith based organisations, including Pax Christi International active during the Diplomatic Conference in New York held prayer vigils in favour of a strong and robust ATT. On 3 July 2012, participants gathered in the Tillman Chapel, Church Center for the United Nations, by focussing on what's at stake through a short vigil. Marie Dennis, Co-President, and Beth Begley, Main Representative of Pax Christi International, as well as members of Pax Christi Metro New York participated in this event. On weekdays, different religious groups have been invited to lead a 15 minute vigil at the Isaiah Wall. The opening vigil on 3 July was conducted by delegates of Pax Christi International. Follow the vigil on You Tube here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UcAmUCG_VD4&feature=youtu.be

Theme for '13 Peace Day Drawn From Beatitudes

Pope Benedict XVI chose "Blessed are the Peacemakers" as the theme for the 46th World Day of Peace, to be celebrated 1 January 2013. In a statement, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace announced the theme and noted that the papal message for the day will include the topic of religious freedom. "The annual message of the Pope, in the complexity of the present time, will encourage everyone to take responsibility with regard to peace-building."

"The Message will embrace, therefore, the fullness and diversity of the concept of peace, starting from the human being: inner peace and outer peace; then, highlighting the anthropological emergency, the nature and incidence of nihilism; and, at the same time, fundamental rights, in the first place freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of religion. The Message will offer, as well, an ethical reflection on some measures the world is going to take to contain the financial and economic crisis, the educational crisis, the crisis of the institutions and politics, which is also - in many cases - a worrying crisis of democracy.

The Message will also look at the 50th Anniversary of Vatican Council II and of the Encyclical Letter by Pope John XXIII, 'Pacem in Terris', according to which the primacy is always for human dignity and freedom, for the building of an earthly city to the service of every person, without any discrimination, and directed to the common good which is based on justice and true peace. Pax Christi International invites all its Member Organisations to work with the annual message for the World Day of Peace.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION

Meeting the Pax Christi International Volunteers at the United Nations in New York

On 1 July 2012, Marie Dennis, Co-President, and Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Pax Christi Secretariat in Brussels, met the volunteer delegates of the movement at the United Nations in New York. They met with Elisabeth Begley, Main Representative, Madeline Labriola, Cheryl Morrissey, Patrick Ryan and (partly) Mary McDonald. The topics discussed ranged from communications, representation, collaboration, priorities and strategies. They met on the occasion of the opening of the Diplomatic Conference of the UN on Arms Trade Treaty that took place in New York from July 2 – 27, 2012.

NETWORKING

New IFOR Coordinator Confers with Pax Christi International

Francesco Candelari of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) visited the Pax Christi International Secretariat on June 28th. Mr Candelari became the International Coordinator of the organisation earlier this year. The potential for greater collaboration between the two faith-based peace movements was discussed and common points were shared.

Founded in 1919 in response to the horrors of war in Europe, IFOR has promoted the vision of a world without war and the belief that love in action has the power to transform unjust political, social and economic structures. To read more about the vision and mission of IFOR, visit this link <http://www.ifor.org/mission.htm>.

Discovering Faith today

The 16th International Congress of Renovabis is taking place in Freising, Germany from 30 August - 1 September 2012. The theme of this year Congress is "Discovering Faith today; New Ways of Evangelisation in Europe." Fr. Paul Lansu of the Pax Christi Secretariat International will attend this meeting. For more information visit www.renovabis.de

Council on Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament

The Annual International Conference of Council on Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament takes place in the Old Abbey of Kortenberg, Belgium from 31 August – 4 September 2012. The theme of this year is “Just War, Humanitarian Intervention and Current International Conflicts.” Fr. Paul Lansu is member of the Core Group in planning the conference and will participate in this event. For more information e-mail: smitwim@hotmail.com.

EurAC Announces Appointment of New General Secretary

The European Network for Central Africa (EurAC) announced last month the appointment of the organisation’s new General Secretary, Donatella Rostagno. Ms Rostagno who was EurAC’s Policy Officer, was selected to fill the post after a careful recruitment procedure.

EurAC brings together 46 organisations from 12 different European countries, including Pax Christi International, that actively work in Central Africa. For more information on EurAC, consult its website at www.eurac-network.org.

Meeting with CIDSE

A delegation of Pax Christi International lead by Marie Dennis, Co President, met with the Secretary General of CIDSE, Bernd Nilles, in Brussels on 17 July 2012. Both organisations gave an overview of the latest developments and initiatives and discussed possible issues for further collaboration. More about CIDSE at www.cidse.org