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## **Pax Christi International Congratulates ICAN on the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize**

*States should take it as momentum to sign and ratify the  
new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*

(Brussels, 6 October 2017)

Pax Christi International is very pleased that the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has been recognised through the Nobel Peace Prize for its many years of striving to draw attention to the disastrous humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and for its admirable work in achieving the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted at the UN this July. The treaty bans the use, threat of use, production, development, stationing, and testing of nuclear weapons.

ICAN, which is celebrating its ten-year anniversary this year, is a coalition of non-governmental organisations in one hundred countries. Pax Christi International, as well as its member organisations around the world, are part of the campaign, participating in national and international advocacy with governments and involving national and international church leaders.

“The winning of the Nobel Peace Prize is high praise for ICAN’s achievements towards a world free of nuclear weapons as well as a signal to UN states to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as soon as possible,” said Greet Vanaerschot, Secretary General, Pax Christi International. “Once the treaty has been ratified by 50 states, the treaty will enter into force, so we hope that this prize can give the necessary push for more states signing and ratifying the treaty.”

Our movement is encouraged that with this award the Norwegian Nobel Committee is also recognising the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the hibakusha – and victims of nuclear test explosions around the world. The survivors are a unique and deeply inspiring voice for everyone involved in ICAN, including the membership of Pax Christi International. The award amplifies the survivors’ insistent calls for urgent action.

The nuclear armed states have a responsibility to also take steps towards attaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

“The decision by two-thirds of UN members to ban nuclear weapons because of their indiscriminate impact reinforces the urgent need for collective action. Now it’s time for nuclear armed states to join this historic process,” Vanaerschot continued.

The winning of the Nobel Peace Prize gives ICAN great stimulus to continue to strive for the signing and ratification of the new UN treaty, to find ways to raise the ban constructively with its opponents and to follow up on its implementation once the treaty enters into force. There is still a lot of work ahead, so the winning of the Nobel Peace Prize by ICAN comes at a very timely moment.

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*Pax Christi International is a Catholic and faith-based peace movement with 120 member organisations worldwide promoting peace, respect for human rights, justice and reconciliation. The strive for a new UN nuclear weapons ban treaty is one of our advocacy priorities.*