



Catholic church leaders' statement welcoming the new UN treaty to ban nuclear weapons

We, Catholic church leaders from around the world, welcome the entry into force on 22 January 2021 of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We are encouraged that a majority of UN Member States actively support the new treaty through adoption, signatures, and ratifications. It is fitting that the Holy See was among the first states to join the accord in 2017. In addition, public opinion surveys worldwide demonstrate the global conviction that nuclear weapons must be abolished. The worst of all weapons of mass destruction has long-since been judged to be immoral. Now it is also finally illegal.

We are concerned by the continued risk to humanity that nuclear weapons could be used and by the resultant catastrophic humanitarian consequences. It is heartening that this new treaty is based on a growing body of research about the catastrophic humanitarian and ecological consequences of nuclear attacks, tests, and accidents. Two examples that speak to all people are the disproportionate impacts of radiation on women and girls and the grave effects on Indigenous communities whose lands have been used for nuclear tests.

We, the undersigned, support the leadership Pope Francis is giving to nuclear disarmament. During his historic visit to the bombed cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in November 2019 the pope condemned both the use and the possession of nuclear weapons by any state. Peace cannot be achieved through "the threat of total annihilation," he said. Pope Francis urged support for "the principal international legal instruments of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons." Prior to his visit, the Conferences of Catholic Bishops in Canada and Japan urged their governments to sign and ratify the new treaty.

Like them, some of us are from countries allied with a nuclear power or that have nuclear arsenals. Surely, in this era of increasing global interdependence and vulnerability, our faith invites us to seek the common and universal good. "We are all saved together or no one is saved," the Pope's new encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* says. "Is it possible for us to be open to our neighbors within a family of nations?" it asks. International cooperation is

essential for addressing the Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, the gap between rich and poor, and the universal threat of nuclear weapons.

No matter where we are from, we join in urging governments to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We thank those who have already done so and we urge them to invite other countries to join the treaty as well.

We invite fellow church leaders to discuss and deliberate about the significant role the church can play in building support for this new international norm against nuclear weapons. It is especially important for national and regional bishops' conferences as well as Catholic institutions and foundations to review whether church-related funds are invested in corporations and banks involved in producing nuclear weapons. If this is the case, then take remedial action by ending existing financing relationships and look for ways for disinvestment.

We believe that God's gift of peace is at work to deter war and overcome violence. Thus, on this historic day, we congratulate members of the Catholic Church who for decades have been at the forefront of grassroots movements to oppose nuclear weapons and Catholic peace movements which are part of the Nobel Prize-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Signatories

Patriarch Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem

Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich of the Archdiocese of Luxembourg, President of Pax Christi Luxembourg

Cardinal Gualtiero Bassetti of the Archdiocese of Perugia-Città, President of the Italian Bishops' Conference

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon of the Archdiocese of Liverpool, President of Pax Christi England & Wales

Archbishop Giovanni Ricchiuti of the Diocese of Altamura-Gravina-Acquaviva delle Fonti, President of Pax Christi Italy

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, President of Pax Christi Philippines

Archbishop Joseph Mitsuaki Takami of the Archdiocese of Nagasaki, President of the Japanese Bishops' Conference

Archbishop González Nieves of the Archdiocese of San Juan, Puerto Rico

Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta of the Archdiocese of Panama

Bishop Emeritus Marc Stenger of the Diocese of Troyes, France, Co-president of Pax Christi International

Bishop Hubert Herbreteau of the Diocese of Agen, President of Pax Christi France

Bishop Peter Kohlgraf of the Diocese of Mainz, President of Pax Christi Germany

Bishop Gerard de Korte of the Diocese of Den Bosch, The Netherlands
 Bishop Lode Van Hecke of the Diocese of Ghent, Belgium
 Bishop Emeritus Luigi Bettazzi of the Diocese of Ivrea, former President of Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Italy
 Bishop William Nolan of the Diocese of Galloway, Scotland
 Bishop Brian McGee of the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles, Scotland
 Bishop Joseph Toal of the Diocese of Motherwell, Bishop President of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
 Bishop John Stowe of the Diocese of Lexington, President of Pax Christi USA
 Bishop Robert McElroy of the Diocese of San Diego, USA
 Bishop Terry Brady of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia
 Bishop Emeritus Peter Cullinane of the Diocese of Palmerston North, President of Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand
 Bishop Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama of the Diocese of Hiroshima, Japan
 Bishop Wayne Berndt of the Diocese of Naha, Japan
 Bishop Bernard Taiji Katsuya of the Diocese of Sapporo, Japan
 Bishop Paul Daisuke Narui of the Diocese of Niigata, Japan
 Bishop Timothy Yu of the Archdiocese of Seoul, South Korea
 Bishop Allwyn D'Silva of the Archdiocese of Bombay, India
 Bishop Kevin Dowling of the Diocese of Rustenburg, former Co-president of Pax Christi International, South Africa

Australia

Reverend Peter Smith of the Archdiocese of Sydney, Justice & Peace Promoter of the Justice and Peace Office
 Reverend Bernard McKenna, Councilor to the Superior General of the Society of Mary (Marist)
 Reverend Claude Mostowik, President of Pax Christi Australia
 Ms. Pam Nair, Secretary of Pax Christi Queensland
 Dr. Sandie Cornish, Director of the Office for Social Justice of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Austria

Dr. Wolfgang Palaver, President of Pax Christi Austria
 Dr. Meinrad Schneckenleithner, Vice-president of Pax Christi Austria
 Mr. Adalbert Krims, Vice-president of Pax Christi Austria

Belgium

Reverend Mathias Parret of the Pastoral Unity Our Lady of Peace Ypres and Ypres Belgian City of Peace
 Reverend Paul Lansu of the Diocese of Antwerpen, Board Member Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Flanders
 Brother Michel Coppin, Provincial Superior of the Salvatorians Belgian Province

Mrs. Annemarie Gielen, Director of Pax Christi Flanders
Mr. Wim Vandewiele, President of the Board of Pax Christi Flanders
Ms. Josianne Gauthier, Secretary General of the International Family of Catholic Social Justice Organisations (CIDSE)
Ms. Greet Vanaerschot, Secretary General of Pax Christi International

Canada

Mrs. Vololonirina Ranjarivelo, Vice-President of the Board of Antennes de Paix Montréal
Mrs. Rosemary Keenan, Director of Pax Christi Toronto

Colombia

Sister Constanza Arango, Coordinator JPIC Commission of the Conference of Religious of Colombia

Democratic Republic of Congo

Reverend Georges Kalenga, Deputy General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference of the Democratic Republic of Congo

France

Mr. Alfonso Zardi, Executive Vice-President of Pax Christi France
Sister Lara Noelia, Country leader of the Sisters of Bon Secours

Germany

Ms. Christine Hoffmann, Secretary General of Pax Christi Germany
Mr. Martin Pilgram, Chair of Pax Christi Munich
Sister Lydia Liong, General Superior of the Congregation of Sisters of Divine Providence

Italy

Reverend Paul Graham, Coordinator JPIC Commission of the Augustinians
Reverend Antonio Porcellato, General Superior of the Society of African Missions
Reverend Krzysztof Pachut, General Counsel of the Society of African Missions
Sister Sheila Kinsey, Executive Co-Secretary of the JPIC Commission of the Union of Superiors General (USG) and International Union of Superior Generals (UISG)
Reverend Amado Picardal, Executive Co-Secretary of the JPIC Commission of USG-UISG
Reverend Thomas Smolich, International Director of the Jesuit Refugee Service
Sister Pauline Macharia, Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Loreto Sisters

Sister Martinez Capra, International Coordinator of the Network of JPIC of the School Sisters of Notre Dame

Reverend Andre Claessens, President of the Africa - Europe Faith and Justice Network

Brother Alberto Parise, Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Comboni Missionaries

Sister Veronica Openibo, Superior General of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus

Sister Mario Abzalón Alvarado Tovar, Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart

Kenya

Sister Teresia Wamuyu (IBVM), Co-president of Pax Christi International

Peru

Mr. Walter Powosino Gavilano, Secretary General of Pax Christi Peru

Rwanda

Reverend Théogène Iyakaremye of the Archdiocese of Kigali, Founding Chaplain of Saint Charles Lwanga Youth Association

Scotland

Ms. Marian Pallister, Chairperson of Pax Christi Scotland

Mr. Alistair Dutton, Director of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF)

South Korea

Reverend Junhee Jeon, Director of Pax Christi Korea

Mrs. Eunmee Park, Standing Representative of Pax Christi Korea

Reverend Dong-ho Park of the Archdiocese of Seoul

Reverend Jijong Sang of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Yongtae Kim of the Diocese of Daejeon

Reverend Kim Tae Won of the Diocese of Chengju

Reverend Seong-hoon Jeong of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Ozoon Kwon of the Diocese of Chuncheon

Reverend Yousun Hong of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Reverend Sinsoon Kim of the Diocese of Seoul

Reverend Jongweon Lee of the Diocese of Uijeongbu

Sister Hae Young Choi, Provincial Leader of the KOC Province of the Society of the Sacred Heart

Spain

Reverend Alejandro Moral Anton, Prior General of the Augustinians

Tanzania

Reverend Feliz Mushobozi, Provincial Secretary of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (CPPS), Province of Tanzania

The Netherlands

Abbot Bernardus Peeters, President of the Dutch Conference of Religious
Ms. Anna Timmerman, General Director of PAX Netherlands
Mr. Ad van der Helm, President of The Hague Council of Churches
Mr. Peter van Hoof, Director of the Dutch Bishops Lenten Campaign

The Philippines

Dr. Loreta Castro, President of Pax Christi Philippines and Executive Director of the Center for Peace Education, Miriam College
Sister Maria Marissa Viri, President of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines

Togo

Reverend Baalaboore Callistus of the Missionaries of Africa

United States

Sister Carol Zinn, Executive Director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Sister Antoinette Gutzler, President of Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic
Reverend Raymond Finch, Superior of Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers
Sister Patricia McDermott, President of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Sister Elaine Davia, President of the Sisters of Bon Secours
Sister Mary Anne Power, Provincial Leader of the Congregation of Notre Dame of Blessed Sacrament Province
Sister Darleen Mayo, Member of Province Leadership Team of the Congregation of Notre Dame
Ms. Christina Leaño, Associate Director of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM)
Ms. Amy Echeverria, International Coordinator of the JPIC Commission of the Missionary Society of St. Columban
Mr. Johnny Zokovitch, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA
Mr. Ted Miles, Executive Director of Maryknoll Lay Missioners
Ms. Susan Gunn, Director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns