

Joint Interfaith Statement on the 75th Anniversary of the Atomic Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

6 August 2020

As a wide coalition of faith-based communities from around the world, we have committed to speaking with one voice that rejects the existential threat to humanity that nuclear weapons pose. We reaffirm that the presence of even one nuclear weapon violates the core principles of our different faith traditions and threatens the unimaginable destruction of everything we hold dear. Nuclear weapons are not only a future risk, their presence here and now undermines the ethical and moral foundations of the common good. We call for your commitment to a world that is more peaceful, safe, and just—a world only possible with the elimination of nuclear weapons.

August 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—attacks which devastated these cities causing up to 213,000 deaths by the end of 1945 and many more in the following years. The attacks inflicted excruciating pain and suffering on both humans and the environment.

We are grateful for the global hibakusha, survivors, who have courageously borne witness, often in the face of intimidation and the recurring tragedy of loss and illness. We must meet the courage of the survivors with our own. We must abolish nuclear weapons forever.

We lament the racism and colonialism that drove the nuclear-weapon States to test their weapons on the communities that they deemed expendable, lives far away from their own, lives that mattered less, lives that were taken in pursuit of destructive power for a few. We acknowledge the immense suffering, oppression and exploitation faced by the Indigenous communities around the world whose bodies, lands, waters and air have served as the testing grounds for the ambitions of those who dominate with force.

Few who believe in the disingenuous notion of nuclear deterrence have witnessed or experienced the devastation of these weapons in their own communities. After seventy-five years we can see that nuclear weapons have not brought an end to war. Nuclear weapons do not create peace, rather they intensify the scourge and threat of war in our world, lives and communities. Because they are designed to cause massive and indiscriminate destruction, because they siphon precious resources that are needed to meet human needs and protect our shared planet, and because they enforce and sustain a global system based on domination and unending violence, the existence of nuclear weapons fundamentally contradicts the principles of any moral, religious and ethical system that values life.

Whilst many of our lives and imaginations might be far removed from memories of “hell on earth” and the legacies of environmental impacts, shattering health conditions and trauma wrought in a nuclear explosion, the impacts of the current global health crisis have given us all a glimpse into how life would change in the event of a nuclear explosion. Like the COVID-19 pandemic, the health, environmental and economic consequences would not be contained in space or time. Nuclear tests and accidents have

revealed that radiation spreads through the atmosphere, oceans, plants, animals, and whole human populations. Our economies, production chains and ability to grow food would be severely disrupted.

Many have consigned the stories of the horrors of this time to our distant past—stories only to be revisited when certain leaders deem it necessary to remind their citizens what others might do to them if they give up their own nuclear capacities. But we will not forget or ignore the powerful witness of those affected by developing, testing and using nuclear weapons. We are committed to ending nuclear weapons forever to honor the global hibakusha and to save our children, grandchildren, and future generations from experiencing what they suffered. As we build a world where equality, peace and justice are abundant for all, there is no place for nuclear weapons in our shared future.

Despite commitments made—including under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)—nuclear-weapon States have continued to maintain and develop their nuclear arsenals, while other States have worked to acquire them.

Despite our clear-eyed awareness of the dangers of the present moment, we are united in our irrepressible belief that change for the good is possible—in individual lives and in our world. We know that in the most dangerous and threatening times, human beings are capable of cooperation, creative problem-solving and mutual trust. Indeed, the existence of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) itself reaffirms that hopefulness. The NPT was born out of a moment when fears about nuclear war and distrust were at a peak, and it acted as a beacon to remind nations that international collaboration was possible and that each nation's security does not demand the insecurity of others, but rather is contingent upon the security of all. We find ourselves again in such a moment in which the reaffirmation of international norms and the embrace of the NPT's ultimate promise—abolition—must be realized.

In 2017, this goal of abolition moved closer to becoming reality when the UN adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, calling for the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. Once 50 States have ratified it, it will enter into force.

We urge our governments to use the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of the only occasion that nuclear weapons have been used in conflict, to ensure that they are never used again in any circumstances. We call upon all States to join the growing community of States which have rejected nuclear weapons entirely. We appeal to you to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Endorsing Organizations

Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture (ACAT-France)

Advocacy For Justice

All Africa Conference of Churches

All Souls Nuclear Disarmament Task Force

Alliance of Baptists

American Baptist Churches, USA
American Friends Service Committee
Anglican Pacifist Fellowship
ANUVIBHA
Arbeitsgruppe 11 "Evangelium und gesellschaftliche Verantwortung" der Vereinigung Evangelischer
Freikirchen
Article 9 of the Japanese Peace Constitution in NCCJ
Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests
Awakening Art & Culture
Baltimore Nonviolence Center
Beloved Community
Birmingham (Alabama) Friends Meeting (Quaker)
BPFNA-Bautistas por la Paz
Bruderhof
Calvary Presbyterian Church
Casa Esther Catholic Worker
Casa Maria Catholic Worker
Catholic Peace Ministry
Catholic Shrine of the Immaculate Conception
The Catholic Worker
CCFD-Terre Solidaire
Center for Peace Education - Miriam College
Centre for Applied Buddhism
Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
Christian Conference of Asia
Christians for Peace Newcastle (Australia)
Church and Peace e.V.
Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations
The Church of Scotland
Cleveland Nonviolence Network
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Columbia, MO Catholic Worker
Comisión General Justicia y Paz
The Commission for Justice and Peace – Archdiocese of Malta
Committee on Social Issues of the German Baptist Union
Communauté de Grandchamp
Community of Christ
Community of Christ (British Isles)
Community of Christ Europe
Congregation de Notre Dame of Montreal
Congregation of Notre Dame USA

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S Provinces
Council of Churches in the Netherlands
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, USA
Des Moines Catholic Worker
Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India
Disciples Peace Fellowship
Dominican Sisters of Houston
Dorothy Day Catholic Worker- Washington, DC
Dutch Association 'Kerk en Vrede'
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Edmund Rice Centre
The Episcopal Church
Episcopal Peace Fellowship
Fachgruppe Gerechtigkeit, Frieden und Bewahrung der Schöpfung der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche in Deutschlnad
Faith Action Network - WA state
Faiths Forum for London
Fellowship of Reconciliation (England and Scotland)
Fellowship of Reconciliation USA
Fondazione Proclade Internazionale-onlus
Friedensnetz, Hamm
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ
Hampshire and Islands Area Quaker Meeting
Heiwa Peace and Reconciliation Foundation of New York
Help Yateem
The Hindu Temple Society of N.A.
Home for Peace and Justice
Humanists International
Institute for Mediation, Freiburg, Germany
Interfaith Council of Sonoma County
International Fellowship of Reconciliation
International Network of Engaged Buddhists
International Peace Research Association
InterReligious Task Force on Central America and Colombia (IRTF Cleveland)
Iowa CURE
Jain Network
Japanese American Religious Federation of San Francisco
Just Peace Task Force, Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana
Justice and Peace Scotland
Justice For All

Kairos Peace Community, New York, NY
Kings Bay Plowshares 7
Lake City Catholic Worker Farm
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Loretto Community
Loretto Peace Committee
Los Angeles Catholic Worker
Martha Justice Ministry, Sisters of St. Martha, Antigonish
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Berlin Komitee
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
May Peace Prevail On Earth International
Mennonite World Conference
The Methodist Church in Britain
Metta Center for Nonviolence
Michigan Poor Peoples' Campaign
More Ecumenical Empowerment Together (MEET)
Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Churches
Nevada Desert Experience
New Vision Interspiritual Seminary
Norfolk Catholic Worker
North Carolina Council of Churches
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity/Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
On Earth Peace
The Open Door Community
Orthodox Peace Fellowship
Pace e Bene and Campaign Nonviolence
Pacific Conference of Churches
Paroisse Saint François à Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique
PAX
Pax Christi - Perú
Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand
Pax Christi Australia
Pax Christi Austria
Pax Christi Dallas
Pax Christi England & Wales
Pax Christi Flanders
Pax Christi France
Pax Christi Hampton Roads
Pax Christi International

Pax Christi Ireland
Pax Christi Italia
Pax Christi Korea
Pax Christi Metro New York
Pax Christi Northern California
Pax Christi Philippines
Pax Christi Scotland
Pax Christi USA
The Peacemakers' Circle Foundation, Inc.
Peaceworkers
Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Phoenix Settlement Trust
Plum Village Community of Engaged Buddhism
Pooha-Bah Traditional Native American Healing Center
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
The Presbyterian Church of the Roses
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
The Rabbinical Seminary International
Ravidassia Community Centre
Redwood City Catholic Worker
Redwood Forest Friends Meeting
Reformed Church in America
Religions for Peace Philippines
Religions for Peace UK
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers in Britain)
Roots of Peace
Rotarians 4 Nuclear Ban
Saint Junia United Methodist Church
San Francisco Friends Meeting Peace Committee
Silsilah Dialogue Movement
Sisters of Charity Federation
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Congregational Leadership
Sisters of Charity of New York
Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, IA
Sojourners
Soka Gakkai International
Ss.Anthony and Philip Parish
SS.Francis and Therese Catholic Worker

St Peter's Episcopal Parish, Seattle, WA
St. Benedict Catholic Worker
Strangers and Guests Catholic Worker Farm
Swedenborgian Church of North America
Tariki Buddhist Therapists Forum
Temple of Understanding
Tikkun
Union for Reform Judaism
Unitarian Universalist Association
Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock
Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Santa Rosa
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
United Reformed Church (UK)
United Religions Initiative
Viva House, Baltimore Catholic Worker
Western Episcopal District AME Zion Church
Windsor Community United Methodist Church
Won Buddhism
The World Bosniak Congress
World Council of Churches
World Yoga Community