

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

KIA TAU TE RANGIMARIE KI A TAATOU KATOA / WORKING FOR PEACE FOR ALL EVERYWHERE



This month's news...



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Tēnā koutou katoa

We live in a constantly changing world; advances in technology are happening at a faster rate. In some cases, the capacity of humanity to absorb and control such technology falters. Take for example the 20-minute live streaming that the Christchurch terrorist uploaded as he went on his deadly rampage, killing 51 NZ citizens as they were praying in their mosques. The social media giant Facebook were unprepared for such action – and the world has finally taken note on the harm such platforms can do, if unregulated.

Another area of concern within technology advances is within the realm of warfare; the world is very close to being exposed to fully autonomous weapons. Technology is already pushing the barriers of ethical and moral standards – the acceptance and operation of such weaponry will clearly remove these barriers. Like, nuclear weapons and climate change, this is an issue that we need to counteract attempts to create acceptance of such weaponry has normal and accepted.

In this newsletter we also remember the outstanding contributions of Fr Neles Tebay and Sr Mary Kenny SMSM. Both have lived full lives, bringing peace and justice issues to the fore. In a sense they remind us through their lives...that our work yet is not done.

Bridget Crisp rsm

A.I. & Robotics – the Canaries in the Coal Mine

Warfare – nobody wants it, yet it exists. As advances are made in technology, particularly in the fields of artificial intelligence and robotics – concern mounts amongst peace campaigners about the use and control of such technology within the military worldwide. The focus of their concern is on the new generation of drones that are likely to be fully automated.

At present drones are in the control of a human operator. Worldwide, this is an issue, as there exists a void of an accountability and justice for civilian victims injured or killed by drones. With drones generally being operated in different countries and far removed from the reality on the ground – justice is very rarely achieved for civilians. With the likelihood of drones becoming fully autonomous this reality becomes far removed.

Concern related to the advent of fully autonomous drones is primarily around the measure of human control in selecting and identifying targets, which is the critical function of a weapons system. Fundamental questions arise primarily around control. That is, what happens when your communication links to the weapons system fails? Will there be an automatic return to base? Or, will it continue to carry out the mission without any human control or oversight at all?

This is what the Campaign to Ban Killer Robots is all about. The purpose of the campaign is to prevent the mass production of factory developed fully autonomous weapon systems by their thousands; to create a stigma and a norm against such technology so that ultimately strict legal regulation is developed ideally a ban in the form of a treaty or protocol.

The campaign is getting support from many well-known technology pioneers, like Tesla's Elon Musk. Many liken their feeling of where this technology is going to that of the chemists last century who tried to prevent the development of chemical weapons or the physicists in the development of nuclear weapons. These well-known and powerful tech pioneers are lending their support in persuading the United Nations to hold formal talks to ban the development and use of killer drones.

During 2018, talks underway at the UN's Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and later in March 2019, could not reach consensus. The majority of UN States mentioned control or ban in their statements, but a group of states (the U.S, Britain, Australia, Israel and Russia) do not support the motion. New Zealand is among the groups of nations not supporting the ban.

According to Winston Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs, international law already sets limits on 'Lethal Autonomous Weapons', notably through Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions. If an autonomous weapon cannot fulfill the requirements of proportionality, distinction and precaution in an attack – it is not lawful. The priority of the NZ Government is to see that current international law is implemented more effectively, ensuring meaningful human control.

Many campaigners consider the response by Winston Peters as inadequate and does not go far enough to halt the production of such weapons.

Source material: 'Meet the Kiwi Campaigner trying to stop the rise of killer robots' (Author Andrea Vance, May 1st 2019 Stuff www.stuff.co.nz)

Bridget Crisp



**CAMPAIGN TO STOP
KILLER ROBOTS**

To learn more about the campaign to stop killer robots go to www.stopkillerrobots.org

Councils declaring Climate Emergency – What can we hope for?

At present councils in three regions (Canterbury, Nelson and Kapiti Coast) have separately declared a climate emergency. This is an encouraging step in a shifting our thinking and unconscious living to actions that are more sustainable. The next steps these councils take, other councils who will join them and central government will ensure that serious thought and a comprehensive plan of action has been implemented to back up the public declarations.

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* has said, “Nature cannot be regarded as something separate from ourselves or as a mere setting in which we live. We are part of nature, included in it and thus in constant interaction with it. Recognizing the reasons why a given area is polluted requires a study of the workings of society, its economy, its behaviour patterns, and the ways it grasps reality. Given the scale of change, it is no longer possible to find a specific, discrete answer for each part of the problem. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions which consider the interactions within natural systems themselves and with social systems. We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.” [139]

My hope is that we see integrated plans that look at housing, system interaction between food, energy, waste disposal and transport, and where people work and play. The aim being to build into the plan, resilient and sustainable communities that have a low carbon footprint. At the same time resolving historical decisions that are impacting on quality of life (of all species) now, because of climate change. I refer to historical rubbish waste sites close to rivers and coastlines that have eroded and ended up in the sea, due to extreme climate events on the West Coast earlier this year.

Our world is changing fast, whether we are ready for it or not. We all have a part to play in adapting and changing our lifestyles now in order to have a more resilient future.

Bridget Crisp

Upcoming Event...

'My Faith & Human Rights'

The Women's Auxiliary Organisation of
the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at
New Zealand

Interfaith Conference

featuring presentations on
'My Faith & Human Rights'

Saturday 29th June 2019

2pm - 4pm

20 Dalgety Drive, Manukau

Registration is at **1.45pm**, programme
begins at 2pm followed by afternoon
tea.

RSVP by Saturday 8th June to

Rukshana Khan.

Ph: 021 730817

Email: rkkhan.amj@gmail.com

Pax Christi Mourns the Death of Fr Neles Tebay, Peacemaker.

“We have been deeply saddened to hear of the death of Fr Neles Tebay, priest of WestPapua, committed advocate for justice and peace and member of the Pax Christi International Executive. As we pray for the repose of his soul, we recall him in life, a cheerful companion, a committed champion of his people’s aspirations for self-determination and at all times, a man of peace. We had the privilege of working with him in his struggle for peace for his people in his own land and saw the trust his people put in him to represent them faithfully and with justice. At all times, no matter how fraught the situation, he managed to show a cheerful disposition and a respect for the dignity of all people. In farewelling him, we commit ourselves to carrying on his greatest wish, that his people should be free to determine their own future in their own land, at all times in the spirit of the Peace of Christ. May he rest in peace.” (Statement of Pax Christi Aotearoa-New Zealand following news of the death of Fr Neles Keadabi Tebay).

To advocate for peace is never an easy role, as was the experience of Fr Neles Tebay, advocate for peace in West Papua. Born in the highlands district of Dogiyai in 1964, Neles completed his undergraduate studies at the Fajar Timur School of Philosophy and Theology. He then took a master’s degree in pastoral care at Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines and completed a doctoral program in Missiology at the Pontifical Urbaniana University in Rome. Later in his life, he became the chairman of the same Fajar Timur School among many other roles in his search for peace. He was Vicar-General of the Diocese of Jayapura, a member of the International Board of Pax Christi (after being nominated by New Zealand) and Coordinator of the Papua Peace Network (JDP) an interfaith advocacy group.

Former missionary and long-time worker with the West Papuan Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Theo van Den Broek, noted several of Neles’ striking qualities in an 21 April obituary, saying how he had worked unceasingly to promote peaceful dialogue between his people and the Indonesian government in Jakarta. He had backed this up with a series of articles in various local and national papers, putting complex issues into simple language to increase understanding. This had led to a Papua Peace Conference in August 2011, a comprehensive Roadmap to Peace and an increase in dialogue. But it also placed Neles in the unenviable position of standing between two combatants and

having to work hard to retain the trust of both. However, his efforts were recognised internationally, leading to the award of South Korea’s prestigious Tji Hak-soon Justice and Peace Award and in opening up a discussion on Papua on international forums such as the UN and European Union. Amidst all these problems, Father Neles -and this characterizes him very much-never got discouraged and continued his call against the use of violence and his fight for the dialogue as the only dignified way towards a peaceful solution. His efforts to set up a National Commission West Papua led to an increase in dialogue and a meeting with the President in August 2017.

In summary, Father Neles struggled relentlessly to find a dignified solution to the problems. He met with support and resistance and appreciated both, not forcing his opinion, but sharing. A spokesman for the National Commission West Papua (KNPB) voiced it in his own way: “Keadabi (the pioneer) passed away. He left us the peaceful road to end the problems in Papua without killing the struggle of the Papua People”. His consistent struggle, his never decreasing trust and optimism, his disarming warm laugh and high competence have made him the man who is accepted and loved by so many people, the man who was hoped for to become the first Papuan bishop in Papua, and the man who will be missed dearly. The Papuan People are extremely proud of him, as expressed during funeral speech by his old teacher, Phillipus Degei: “we, a very traditional indigenous Papua community, often looked down at, we, we delivered this great person to Papua, Indonesia and the world”. Listening to all the people present during the ceremonies around his passing away and funeral, one extraordinary conclusion stands out indisputable: people recognize in Father Neles’ life and struggle their own ‘dream and aspiration’: being recognized and living in peace, peace, peace! That aspiration/dream is embodied in Father Neles and makes him the man to be followed, now and tomorrow!”

Kevin McBride



Photo: Pax Christi International

Memories of a Determined Woman

Kevin McBride

Last month saw the passing of Sr Mary Kenny SMSM, at 96 years of age one of the notable figures associated with the beginnings of the Pax Christi movement in New Zealand. Sr Mary was associated with our first overseas project, working in the 1990s for peace Bougainville which was involved in a bitter struggle for independence from Papua New Guinea in the 1990s. Peter Archer, one of our founding members sent us some notes on that time following news of Sr Mary's passing: "My brother Bill who was a missionary in Bougainville from 1958 to 1986 recalls Sr Mary as a determined woman (as indeed I do) who even tried to go back to Bougainville, where she had been previously stationed, when the conflict between the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and the PNG Defence Force was under way. When I was wondering how to get some medical supplies to Bougainville, she calmly informed me that it was all organised to go to the Solomons ... with Sofrana Shipping Company. Nobody could turn down Sr Kenny – she wouldn't allow it."

Because of this involvement and the connections it gave us with issues of peace in our Asia-Pacific region, she has to be regarded as one of the founding influences on our movement, a person whose own commitment to peace based on justice has set the standard for all our subsequent work in the region. May she rest in peace.



Photo: SMSM Sisters.

For a more in-depth read about the life of Sr Mary Kenny go to the SMSM website. Sr Mary's life makes an interesting read!

UN's mandate to protect Human Rights under threat.

Only 44 UN member states, out of 193, have paid their assessment fees/payments to the UN. This puts pressure on the UN to monitor and carry out vital human rights work. According to the UN Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR – Geneva), six of the UN's 10 treaty bodies have had to cancel their sessions this year due to financial reasons.

Anna-Karin Holmlund, Senior UN Advocate at Amnesty International warns that "without these funds, the UN's human rights mechanisms and international tribunals could be severely affected." The cancellation of reviews included complaints of individual victims of serious human rights violations. According to the OHCHR, this will have numerous negative consequences and seriously undermine the system of protections which States themselves have put in place over decades.

Human rights violations, particularly associated with gender and colour are on the rise throughout the world as more right-wing nationalist and authoritarian groups move into power positions within governments globally.

Source Material: 'Other News: Voices against the tide' (www.other-news.info/2019/05/uns-mandate-to-protect-human-rights-takes-another-hit/)

Bridget Crisp

Picture Reflection



"Mary Waiting"

P Doherty (2016)

Patrick Doherty, long time Pax Christi member did this painting of a young Samoan Girl in 2016.

Meditate on this painting....imagine that this young woman living in an environment where there is constant conflict and acts of violence. This could any place in the world, including NZ.

What has she seen ? What has she experienced ? What does her future look like? What influences do we have in shaping her future?

Pax Christi International announces the European Lawyers in Lesvos as recipient of the 2019 Peace Award

Pax Christi International is pleased to announce that the European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL), based in Greece, is the recipient of the 2019 Pax Christi International Peace Award. The award ceremony will be held in Brussels on 26 June.

“European Lawyers in Lesvos (ELIL) is delighted and honoured to have been chosen to receive the 2019 Pax Christi International Peace Prize,” said ELIL’s managing director Philip Worthington. “We are very grateful that our work to uphold the rule of law, protect human rights and ensure meaningful access to justice for refugees on Lesvos has been recognised in this way and hope that it will help raise awareness of the critical importance of ensuring that refugees have access to legal assistance throughout their asylum procedure.”

One of the very few providers of legal assistance on the Greek island of Lesvos (also known as Lesbos, a focal point of mass immigration into Europe), ELIL was founded in June 2016 by the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) and the German Bar Association (DAV). These organisations represent the bars and law societies of 32 member countries and 13 further associate and observer countries across Europe, and through them more than one million European lawyers.

Since that time, along with a small permanent staff, almost 150 volunteer asylum lawyers from 17 countries have provided free legal assistance to more than 9,000 people, most of whom are from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. ELIL is the largest provider of legal assistance to asylum seekers on Lesvos and is the primary provider of legal assistance to unaccompanied minors who have been incorrectly registered as adults (over 500 cases in total) and asylum seekers in detention (almost 200 cases in total). In addition to other services, ELIL also helps reunite families by assisting with family reunification applications under the Dublin Regulation.

“ELIL is engaged in relevant and critical peace and justice activism,” said Greet Vanaerschot, secretary general of Pax Christi International. “Here in Europe, we have been shocked to witness a political debate that is demonising migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, contrary to the vision of a Europe which respects human dignity and fundamental rights. It is gratifying and inspirational to see the number of lives ELIL has touched in such a short time and the number of voluntary hours they give. As people of faith, Pax Christi members believe we have a responsibility to welcome, care and advocate for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers; we celebrate ELIL and its profoundly important work.”

Established in 1988, the Pax Christi International Peace Award is funded by the Cardinal Bernardus Alfrink Peace Fund and honours contemporary individuals and organisations who make a stand for peace, justice and nonviolence in different parts of the world.

Story and photo: Pax Christi International



Worth Reading...

Listening to the People of the Land is available from Accent Publications. To order go to website: www.accentpublications.co.nz . The book is retailing for \$40.



Listening to the People of the Land

Christianity, Colonisation & the Path to Redemption

Edited by Susan Hooley

Praying for Peace is available from Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand. To order go to paxnz@xtra.co.nz . The book is available for \$20 plus postage and packaging.

Praying for Peace

A selection of prayers and reflections



PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Pax Christi is an independent Catholic social justice organisation. We work hard to address issues of peace and justice at a local, regional and global level.

If you want to know more about Pax Christi, to join meetings, or to set up group meetings in your area, please contact paxnz@xtra.co.nz or ring 09 377 5541 / 021 72994.

Pax Christi relies on volunteers & donations to enable the work to continue.

To make an online donation our a/c name and number is: Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand 03-01730353-867-00
Please contact us for a receipt.
Your support is greatly appreciated.

DIARY DATES

June 1st	Global Day of Parents
June 5th	World Environment Day
June 8th	World Oceans Day Anniversary (32 years) of NZ becoming nuclear free
June 12th	World Day against Child Labour
June 25th	Matarki begins



Editor: B Crisp rsm Promoter/Manager Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand

Newsletter template: canva.com

Front Cover and back photo: istock 502532292/VasjaKoman