

PAX CHRISTI AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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



Tēnā koutou katoa

The world is becoming a particularly dangerous place to live in.

Militarization is increasing in the Pacific as tension rises in the Western Pacific. Tension is also rising in many countries facing refugees, or illegal migration across borders; or in the case of East Jerusalem, the lack of civil liberties for Palestinian Arabs.

Into this mix, we also include the nuclear issue. It is alarming to think that most of the countries who hold nuclear weapons have turbulent relationships with their neighbours and/or other neighbours in presenting their ideology and viewpoints on trade and resources.

Those countries who do not have nuclear weapons either watch the unfolding drama with dismay, or invite such nations to set up military bases within their borders in the hope of added protection.

The *Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* is an attempt to hold off another nuclear arms race from happening from the older but still functioning *Treaty for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*.

Although the ideal is sound, many critics worldwide believe it will also go the same way as the previous treaty ...mere words with a lack of committed action. However, we need such ideals, to remind the players that the world does not solely belong to the them, and that others who do not have nuclear weapons live in the world also.

THIS MONTH'S NEWS

NZ - THE 14TH STATE TO RATIFY THE TREATY TO PROHIBIT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

AUGUST A REFLECTIVE POEM BY HELEN DOHERTY

THE GROWING INTEREST AND TENSION IN THE PACIFIC.

NEW ZEALAND - THE 14TH STATE TO RATIFY THE TREATY TO PROHIBIT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand has been a strong advocate against the possession, testing and use of nuclear weapons since our beginnings in the mid 1980s. This has included our strong support for ICAN Aotearoa New Zealand (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), one of many organisations that have rallied the New Zealand government to formally ratify the Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons on the 31st July 2018. New Zealand signs as the 14th State to have ratified the treaty.

Aotearoa New Zealand has been against nuclear weapons since the 1960s when we signed a Treaty banning atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. In 1973, New Zealand took France to the International Court of Justice to protest against its nuclear testing at Mururoa Atoll. Around the same time, New Zealand sent two frigates into the testing zone to put a stop to testing in the area. In 1983, the focus shifted to ships thought to be carrying nuclear arms resulting in protests against the USS Texas in 1983 and the USS Truxton in 1976. In 1985 the USS Buchanan was banned from New Zealand ports because it refused to declare whether it had nuclear weapons on board or not. As a result, diplomatic ties with Washington were severed. Also, in 1985, the Greenpeace protest ship "Rainbow Warrior" was bombed in Auckland harbour with the loss of photographer, Fernando Pereira.

In 1987, the New Zealand Parliament signed a Nuclear Free Zone Disarmament and Arms Control

Act, declaring itself to be nuclear free zone.

This resulted in the banning all nuclear power ships or ships carrying nuclear weapons from entering New Zealand territorial waters and resulted in New Zealand being ejected from the ANZUS agreement with the United States and Australia, its main defense treaty.

Now with the ratification of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the next key step in the campaign against disarmament and prohibition of nuclear weapons, is to encourage other Nations States to ratify this treaty. If 50 nations ratify the treaty, then it becomes actionable. The Treaty to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons strengthens the position of those not seeing any need to further develop nuclear weapons.

In the next few days, we remember the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We remember

the horror that the people of these two cities went through – the devastation and tragic loss of life. Surely, the world has no need to go through that again.

Our thanks and congratulations go out to all those who drew up and developed these treaties, to the countries who have signed and are signing them, and most importantly, to the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who continue to this day to tell their story in the hope that they can make the world a better place.

*Bridget Crisp & Kevin McBride
Pax Christ Website Statement
2nd August*

August

August in Aotearoa

Weather warming

Promise of spring

Hope in the air.

August 6 1945 Hiroshima

'Temperature ambient/'

Until 8.15 a.m. when...

Little Boy blasted out of the air

Unimaginable heat

A fiery furnace

Utter devastation

Bodies torn limb from limb

Skin flayed off naked flesh

Faces charred beyond recognition

Children crying 'Mummy Mummy'

Desperate yells of 'water' 'water'

140,000 died that day ...Many more
thereafter.

Nagasaki too three days later

'Fat Boy' descended from the sky

A second annihilation.

WHY? WHY? WHY?

Spurious reasons given

Yes war ended

But at what cost?

And still today

Nuclear proliferation

Nine nations have the 'bomb'

The world teeters on the brink.....

Yet here in Aotearoa there is hope

Spring is in the air

And we are nuclear free

A beacon to the world

Our vision of peace.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are 14,465 nuclear bombs held in the following countries:

China	280
France	300
India	130 - 140
Israel	80
North Korea	10 - 20
Pakistan	140 - 150
U.K.	215
U.S.A.	6, 450
Russia	6, 850

Thus, 92% of all nuclear bombs are held by the United States of America and Russia.

The number of nuclear weapons held by these two countries has decreased since last year, the total of nuclear weapons held at the beginning of 2017 was 14, 935.

Although numbers are decreasing, nuclear munitions of both countries are being modernized alongside the missile and aircraft delivery systems.

Source material: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2018.

www.sipri.org



95.3 MNC

Pax Christi news snippets...

Those in the Auckland Area,,, Pax Chrsti is hosting a **book club** event at the Peace Place on **August 30th**. We will be studying the Book '*Choosing Peace*' edited by Marie Dennis. Contact Bridget (bridget.crisp@xtra.co.nz) for more details.

The **David Wakim Lecture** is happening **27th September** at St Columba Centre, Ponsonby. *Deborah Manning* has been confirmed as speaker. The topic will be ' The J Word - NZ law, is justice our starting point?'

The Secretary General of Pax Christi International, *Greet Vanaerschot*, along with the *Johnny Zokovitch* (senior communications officer for Pax Christi International will be coming to New Zealand at the end of Oct /beginning of November...for more information or to offer support/resources etc please contact paxnz@xtra.co.nz

Worth Reading

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018 has been released by the United Nations. This report gives a snapshot on what has been achieved in the three years since the sustainable development goals action plan was implemented back in 2015. A copy of the report can be downloaded from www.unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2018/TheSustainableDevelopmentGoalsReport2018.pdf

The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018



The Growing Interest and Tension in the Pacific

by Bridget Crsip rsm

Over the last three months, tension has been growing in the Pacific, primarily the Western Pacific moving into area surrounding the South China Sea. The region has seen an increase in militarization with many military manoeuvres happening from large wealthy nations and emerging superpowers. The problem began when China started to build artificial islands and reefs in an area already under dispute by three other Southeast Asian Nations.

Alarm has continued to grow as satellite imagery has shown the development on these islands as potential military bases. With that in mind, the United States of America and United Kingdom, along with others, have conducted exercises in the region as well as moving military resources in closer proximity to the area. This increases tension and the political rhetoric amplifies an already volatile relationship.

There has been some discussion as to the reason behind China's recent activity to claim new territory. A theory that needs to be considered is the need to obtain control on natural resources. In this situation, it is not oil, which would be the main assumption but fish. As populations grow, and food resources become more problematic closer to home, the easiest alternative is to look to the borders and beyond. I invite you to read Johan

Bergenas article '*Like Water and Oil: Fish as a Geostrategic Resource*' (www.newsecuritybeat.org/2018/08/water-oil-fish-geostrategic-resource/) who can see the potential of a global fish war.

While the world watches the manoeuvres, spare a thought for the vulnerable communities in the area as well as in the Pacific. These communities are already under pressure with climate change, sea level rise and an increased strain on their food security. It does not help that big nations come in, make promises that may have short time gains but long-term consequences, at the same time not resolving the problems and strains they are already facing.



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.

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.

Editor: Bridget Crisp rsm
Promotor/Manager of Pax Christi Aotearoa NZ.

Diary Dates

August 30 Book Club on Choosing Peace at Emily Place, 6.30pm.

Sept 1st - Oct 4th

Season of Creation

21st Sept UN International Day of Peace.

26th Sept World Day against Trafficking of Persons.

Lumad Coloring Book - Save our Schools

Salupongan International have created a coloring book (can be considered an adult coloring book also). The proceeds of this coloring book will go towards saving the schools of the Lumad, indigenous peoples of Mindanao, Philippines. The book is \$20. For more information go to www.salupongan.org.

Next Month's newsletter will primarily focus on Season of Creation. Any contributions to the newsletter are welcome. Please email paxnz@xtra.co.nz.

Cover photo: Hiroshima Memorial (iStock); photo on pg 5 is from canva.com
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