



Newsletter nr. 181 - 1 February 2009

2009 International UN Year of Reconciliation

In this Issue

AFRICA	4
Peace and Sports Programme Africa.....	4
ASIA & PACIFIC	4
Christmas in Kandhamal, Orissa.....	4
Trauma Counselling for Victims of the Violence in Orissa.....	4
Priests and Tribals Denounce Violence in New Delhi against Indigenous People	5
Fr. Allwyn D'silva Receives Award	5
Human Chain against Terror and Violence in Mumbai	6
A Voice for Torture Victims in Sri Lanka.....	6
The Choice of Reforms in Pakistan	6
IKV Pax Christi Supports Non-Violence in Kashmir.....	7
AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN	7
International Delegation to El Salvador	7



MIDDLE EAST 8

Pax Christi International’s Deep Concern about the Devastating Situation in Gaza. 8

Human Rights Council - Special Session on Gaza 8

Prayers and Wishes for Gaza..... 8

Ecumenical Liturgy on Gaza 9

Holy Land Inter-religious Peace Convoy 9

Campaigning on Gaza in Germany 10

Campaigning on Gaza in the USA 10

Pax Christi USA: Directly from Egypt 11

Campaigning on Gaza in France 11

Campaigning on Gaza in Australia 11

Campaigning on Gaza in Austria 12

Campaigning on Gaza in Belgium 12

Campaigning on Gaza in the United Kingdom..... 13

Talk with Hamas! 13

Campaigning on Gaza in the Netherlands 14

Bringing Peace Together - A Letter to President Barack Obama..... 14

Message from CCRR in Bethlehem on Gaza 14

Analysis from Arab Educational Institute on Gaza 15

Reading Wishes and Prayers in Bethlehem 15

International Peace Bureau on Gaza 16

ICBUW Statement on Israel’s Attack on Gaza 16

Christians Mobilise for Ending Violence in and Around Gaza..... 17

World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel 4th -10th June 2009 17

Preventing and Dealing with Radicalisation: Seminar in Lebanon..... 18



Christians in Iraq.....	18
EUROPE.....	19
Balkans Forum on the Future of Multiethnic Kosovo	19
Russia - Assassinations to Veil the Truth	19
First Actions by President Barack Obama – a Positive Response	20
DISARMAMENT & DEMILITARISATION	20
Arms Trade Treaty.....	20
HUMAN SECURITY & VIOLENT CONFLICT.....	21
First World Day of Social Justice to be observed on the 20 th of February 2009.....	21
EDUCATION & YOUTH WORK FOR PEACE	21
Pax Christi Peace Education Gathering in Buckden, UK.....	21
40.000 Young People Gathered in Brussels for the Taizé Meeting	22
U Move 4 Peace in Armenia	22
Pax Christi France Organises a Weekend for Young People.....	22
DEVELOPING PEACE SPIRITUALITY & THEOLOGY	23
Annual Peace Day on “Go in Peace...!”	23
INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR	23



AFRICA

Peace and Sports Programme Africa

The Peace and Sports programme is being held in Northern Uganda (Karamoja), Southern Sudan (Eastern Equatoria and Jonglei states) and Northern Kenya (Turkana). The purpose of this long-range programme is to bring together youth warriors from cattle-raiding communities in Southern Sudan, Kenya and Uganda, and seek local solutions for conflicts, as well as ways to achieve sustainable peace and development. IKV Pax Christi is assisting the different organisations involved in this programme. For more information, please visit: www.peaceandsports.org

[TOP](#)

ASIA & PACIFIC

Christmas in Kandhamal, Orissa

The National Commission for Justice Peace and Development (NCJPD), a Member Organisation in India, has been monitoring the Christmas celebrations in Orissa, where many religious services took place in parishes and in different refugee camps. Although the innocent joy upon the faces of the children on Christmas day was clearly visible, one could still sense the emptiness, grief and tremendous loss in the faces of people in the camp. The NCJPD collected some facts and can be read in Ref: [2008-0917-en-ap-RV](#).

[TOP](#)

Trauma Counselling for Victims of the Violence in Orissa

The National Commission for Justice, Peace and Development (NCJPD), a Member Organisation in India, organised a five-day residential Training of Trainers (TOT) in trauma counselling in the state of Orissa. The training was held from the 5th to the 10th of January 2009, with the purpose of setting up mechanisms to help the people traumatised by witnessing the recent communal violence in Orissa. 27 grassroots animators and Human

Rights defenders from 9 different organisations took part in this TOT programme. The NCJPD also released the special issue of the *Just Peace!* journal on Orissa. The full document is available in Ref: [2009-0053-en-ap-RV](#)

[TOP](#)

Priests and Tribals Denounce Violence in New Delhi against Indigenous People

The Indian delegation to the World Social Forum (WSF) has denounced the Indian government for its violence against tribals, according to reports by the Asia News. Fr. Nithiya, executive secretary of the National Commission for Justice Peace and Development (NCJPD), said that India has consistently denied that it has a population of indigenous people, which in turn frees them from the international law that legitimises the right to land of the indigenous people. Fr. Xavier Jeyaraj, secretary for social action for the Jesuits used the word “developmental terrorism” to describe the violations of human rights of indigenous people by multinational companies. Further information is available in Ref: [2009-0058-en-ap-HR](#)

[TOP](#)

Fr. Allwyn D’silva Receives Award

Father Allwyn D’silva from the Documentation, Research and Training Centre (DRTC), a Member Organisation in India, was awarded the National Award for Excellence. This award was instituted by the Catholic Priests’ Conference of India (CPCI) in order to recognise the pioneering work done by the diocesan clergy in India. At a ceremony held in Mumbai on the 4th of December 2008, the CPCI showed its appreciation of Fr. D’silva’s efforts with the following statement: “Fr. Allwyn D’silva combines within himself in an exemplary way, the traditional life of a Diocesan priest and the modern life of a Human Rights activist, with his commitment for a new face of the Church of India which is dialogical in its basic attitude open to the Indian culture, oriented towards Human Rights and in solidarity with the struggle for justice.”

[TOP](#)

Human Chain against Terror and Violence in Mumbai

The Documentation, Research and Training Centre (DTRC), a Member Organisation in India, has joined the “Mumbai for Peace” campaign, which has been forged by over 40 NGOs in response to the many acts of violence and terror that the city has been subjected to in the recent past. The campaign organised a human chain in the city on the 12th of December 2008 to express its solidarity for the victims of the terror attacks in November, as well as to protest against the poor governance of their beloved city and country. People formed the human chain and held hands in unity between noon and 12:15 pm along a 100 km route that extended from Colaba and Nariman Point at the southern tip of the city all the way north to the suburbs of Muland, Deonar and Dahisar. For further information, please visit the following website: www.mumbaicitizens.com

[TOP](#)

A Voice for Torture Victims in Sri Lanka

In an interview with the Guardian Weekly, Fr. Nandana Manatunga, director of the Human Rights and Media Resource Centre (HRMC), talks about the atrocities committed by the local authorities under the guise of criminal investigations. The article also mentions the efforts of Fr. Nandana in creating a vital support system for the victims of police brutality. The HRMC is a Member Organisation in Sri Lanka. The article is available on the Guardian Weekly website at the following link:

<http://www.guardianweekly.co.uk/?page=editorial&id=876&catID=6>

[TOP](#)

The Choice of Reforms in Pakistan

The National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), a Member Organisation in Pakistan, has submitted a joint-NGO report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). This report is for the examination of the 15th-20th periodic reports of Pakistan, which will take place at the 74th session of CERD in February 2009. The report explores the human rights situation of ethnic, linguistic, religious minorities,

scheduled castes Hindus and indigenous people in Pakistan, and has been endorsed by Pax Christi International. The full report is available in Ref: [2009-0029-en-ap-HR](#).

[TOP](#)

IKV Pax Christi Supports Non-Violence in Kashmir

The Kashmir region has been a source of conflict between India and Pakistan for over sixty years. For the last fifteen years, the war in this region has yielded mainly civilian casualties, and the violence has paralysed society. Today, there are practically no independent civil society institutions in either the Indian or the Pakistani parts of Kashmir.

IKV Pax Christi has been working with the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) since 2002. This is a coalition of independent, secular, non-government organisations operating in Indian-occupied Kashmir. The coalition's objective is to stimulate growth in the civilian population's involvement in society. By participating in partnership projects, IKV Pax Christi and JKCCS support civilian non-violent activities and organisations to overcome Kashmir's political isolation, and encourages European involvement in the region. More information is available at the following link: http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/UK/below_regional_asia_kashmir.htm

[TOP](#)

AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN

International Delegation to El Salvador

Pax Christi Italy is planning an international delegation visit to El Salvador, from the 10th to the 26th of March 2009. The aim is to monitor the presidential elections taking place on the 15th of March 2009 and to commemorate the 24th anniversary of the Martyrdom of Msgr. Oscar Romero. More information is available via Alberto Vitali, e-mail: webmaster@paxchristi.it or on the following website: www.paxchristi.it. José Henriquez, collaborator with the International Pax Christi Secretariat, will also be in El Salvador on that occasion.

[TOP](#)



Pax Christi International's Deep Concern about the Devastating Situation in Gaza.

On the 7th of January 2009, Pax Christi International issued a letter addressed to Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, calling for an immediate ceasefire of hostilities in Gaza. Pax Christi International urged that the violence on both sides be strongly condemned in the most unambiguous terms, without the use of double standards or manipulation of the truth. It should be made very clear to all parties involved that the use of violence will not bring justice, peace or any lasting security to the people in the region, but will only increase fear, hatred and suffering. Pax Christi International supports the most decisive action to uphold international humanitarian law, which should be the basic framework for a solution to the conflict in Israel-Palestine. A similar letter was sent to the European Union. The full letter is available in English in Ref: [2009-0014-en-me-AC](#) and in French in Ref: [2009-0014-fr-me-AC](#). It is also available in Dutch at the following link: http://www.kerknet.be/actua/nieuws_detail.php?nieuwsID=83615

[TOP](#)

Human Rights Council - Special Session on Gaza

The Human Rights Council of the UN held a Special Session on the Human Rights Situation in Gaza on the 9th and 12th of January 2009. On the 8th of January, Pax Christi International issued a letter of concern addressed to Navi Pillay, High Commissioner. The letter is available in English in Ref: [2009-0019-en-me-AC](#). Please also visit the following link:

[http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/\(httpNewsByYear_en\)/9F3288C18C2B3F1AC125753C004EE299?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNewsByYear_en)/9F3288C18C2B3F1AC125753C004EE299?OpenDocument)

[TOP](#)

Prayers and Wishes for Gaza

In addition to the Christmas initiative entitled "Prayers and Wishes for Bethlehem", Pax Christi France invited its membership to also send wishes to the Gaza region. Gaza City

has a Christian parish, whose clergy incessantly works for reconciliation. The address to send wishes to is: musallammanuel@yahoo.com. For more information please contact Militza Ruhl at Pax Christi France, who is responsible for Lebanon, Israel and Palestine: militza.ruhl@free.fr

On the 7th of January 2009, Claudette Werleigh, Secretary General, sent a letter of solidarity in the name of Pax Christi International to Fr. Manuel Musallam, the parish priest of Gaza City. The message is available in Ref: [2009-0020-en-me-AC](#).

[TOP](#)

Ecumenical Liturgy on Gaza

At an ecumenical liturgy for peace in Jerusalem on the 4th of January 2009, former President of Pax Christi International, H.B. Michel Sabbah gave a sermon of solidarity, hope and commitment. He said that the sky of Gaza, from which bombs are falling, is the same sky as the one of Bethlehem, Palestine and the whole of mankind. He also said, "Gaza's tragedy is *our* tragedy; the tragedy of *all of us*. What we are witnessing is the destruction of mankind." Patriarch Sabbah also stressed that the radical solution does not lie in bombs, but in the uprooting of evil and the uprooting of the occupation. Then there will be peace and security. He appealed for a strong commitment of Christians to see, speak and act according to the truth and to give birth to what has been impossible so far.

[TOP](#)

Holy Land Inter-religious Peace Convoy

Pax Christi International supported an inter-religious Peace Convoy with humanitarian aid for Gaza, which was organised by the "Imams, Rabbis and Christians for Peace", who came together for their Third World Congress in Paris from the 15th to the 17th of December 2008. Please visit their website: www.imamsrabbis.org

[TOP](#)



Campaigning on Gaza in Germany

On the 28th of December 2008, the Middle East Commission of Pax Christi Germany issued a press release on the situation in Gaza. The press release is available in German in Ref: [2008-0918-ge-me-HS](#). On the 5th of January 2009, the Executive Committee of Pax Christi Germany also issued a press release on the same issue, which is available in German in Ref: [2009-0007-ge-me-HS](#).

The Middle East Commission also called upon its members to participate in the national manifestations that took place on the 17th of January 2009 in Stuttgart, Hannover, Mülhelm and Berlin. The focus of the manifestations was the UN Resolution 1860 of 2009.

On the 21st of January 2009, Bishop Heinz Josef Algermissen, bishop president of Pax Christi Germany, co-signed an appeal entitled “End the Blockade! A Ship with Medical Aid for Gaza,” saying that humanitarian aid to the Gaza should be made possible. The press release is available in German in Ref: [2009-0061-ge-me-HS](#) and in English in Ref: [2009-0061-en-me-HS](#). For more information please email: kontakt@freegaza.deor visit the website: www.freegaza.de. You can also read the appeal in German at the following website: www.paxchristi.de

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in the USA

On the 29th of December 2008 and the 5th of January 2009, Pax Christi USA invited its membership to act towards the USA government (see www.paxchristiusa.org). The Pax Christi USA petition on Gaza, which was addressed to President-elect Barack Obama, has been adopted by other Pax Christi Member Organisations as well. Please view the following link, which is in Dutch: <http://www.paxchristi.be/website/wordpress/?p=1626>

[TOP](#)

Pax Christi USA: Directly from Egypt

On the 13th of January 2009, Pax Christi USA added a few items to their webpage of resources on the crisis in Gaza. Among these, you will find the reports of Bill Quigley, a Pax Christi National Council Member and a PCUSA Teacher of Peace. At the time the crisis began, Bill was in Egypt, and constantly sent in updates from the region. Please visit www.paxchristiusa.org to read his reports. You will also find an action alert from Catholic Relief Services and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at the same website.

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in France

Msgr. Marc Stenger, bishop president of Pax Christi France, expressed his deep concern and wrote an appeal for peace co-signed by many different NGOs. The appeal is available in French in Ref: [2008-0919-fr-me-HS](#). Pax Christi France issued multiple statements on the situation in Gaza, each with increasing urgency as the suffering and the deaths continued despite the many appeals and political and diplomatic efforts. In a statement released on the 15th of January 2009 entitled “We will not keep silent”, Msgr. Marc Stenger asked for a meeting with the Israeli Ambassador and the Palestinian representative in France. The statement is available in French in Ref: [2009-0049-fr-me-HS](#). Pax Christi France also held a prayer service for peace in Gaza on the 26th of January 2009 in the Church Saint-Eustache in Paris.

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in Australia

On the 30th of December 2008, Pax Christi Australia approached the Australian government via letters, about the drastic situation in the Gaza. The letter to the acting Prime Minister is available in Ref: [2008-0920-en-me-HS](#) and the letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs is available in Ref: [2009-0005-en-me-HS](#).

[TOP](#)



Campaigning on Gaza in Austria

On the 30th of December 2008, Pax Christi Austria sent an open letter to their Prime Minister and their European Commissioner for Foreign Affairs regarding the situation in Gaza. The letter is available in German in Ref: [2008-0921-ge-me-HS](#). On the 15th of January 2009, Pax Christi Austria published materials to be used at prayer services and vigils in the parishes and communities. People have also been invited to send messages to the Gaza Parish: *Dear Friends in Gaza, many people in Austria think of you and your families in permanent prayer in these terrible days....*” The complete message is available in German in Ref: [2009-0044-ge-me-HS](#). The Austrian section also formulated a wish for peace for Israel and Palestine, which is available in German in Ref: [2009-0045-ge-me-HS](#).

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in Belgium

On the 30th of December 2008, Pax Christi Flanders commented on the situation in Gaza in the press. The article is available in Dutch at the following link: http://www.kerknet.be/actua/nieuws_detail.php?nieuwsID=83434)

On the 5th and 23rd of January 2009, Brigitte Herremans, Desk Officer of Pax Christi Flanders and Broederlijk Delen, issued an analysis of the conflict. Both documents are available in Dutch in Ref: [2009-0003-nl-me-HS](#) and Ref: [2009-0067-ne-me-HS](#).

On the 6th of January 2009, Brigitte also wrote an opinion article published in the Flemish Newspaper De Standaard. Please visit the website www.standaard.be to read the article.

Jo Hanssens, President of Pax Christi Flanders gave an interview on the 7th of January 2009, which can be read in Dutch at the following link: http://www.kerknet.be/actua/nieuws_detail.php?nieuwsID=83562.

On the 11th of January 2009, Pax Christi Flanders and Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles participated in a national manifestation in Brussels against the violence in Gaza.

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in the United Kingdom

In the spirit of hope at a time of great sadness and fear, Pax Christi UK called on Churches throughout the country to pray and act for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel. On the 6th of January 2009 Pax Christi UK issued a press release expressing deep concern over the events in Gaza. To read the press release, please click on the following link: [2009-0009-en-me-HS](#). On the 30th of December 2008, Pax Christi UK issued 'Prayers and Actions on Gaza'. Please visit the following website for more details: <http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/Wall.HTML>

On the 11th of January 2009, Pax Christi UK participated in a national manifestation against the war in Gaza that was held in London. For more information please click on the following link: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/8299>

[TOP](#)

Talk with Hamas!

“You can not solve the conflict between Israel and Palestine without talking with Hamas.”

On the 6th of January 2009, IKV Pax Christi issued a report about the failed isolation policy of Hamas. Such a policy of isolation does not help the Palestinian ambitions and certainly does not help the security needs of Israel. Hamas should be part of a political process. Recommendations were addressed to the Dutch and European Policy makers. To read the report/analysis in Dutch and English, please visit the following site and follow the download instructions: www.ikvpaxchristi.nl

In January, Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International, and Jean Stokan from Pax Christi USA met with the Obama Transition Team's Middle East policy advisor. They presented the IKV Pax Christi report “Talk with Hamas” to him. The meeting was attended by about 20 participants, including the US Bishops' Conference, the National Council of Churches, the American Islamic Society, the Council of Reform Judaism and Pax Christi International and Pax Christi USA.

[TOP](#)

Campaigning on Gaza in the Netherlands

On the 29th of December 2008, IKV Pax Christi in the Netherlands issued a press release on the ongoing war in Gaza. The article is available in Dutch at the following link: <http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/news/?v=2&cid=5&id=568&lid=1>). In the context of the Coalition United Civilians for Peace (UCP), IKV Pax Christi held a “Vigil for Gaza” on the 10th of January 2009 at the Dom Church in Utrecht. For more information please visit the following link, which is in Dutch: <http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=51723>. A petition to end the violence in Gaza has been forwarded by the UCP to the Chair of the Parliamentary Commission for Foreign Affairs on the 13th of January 2009. The press release is available in Dutch at the following link: <http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=51828>. To read the petition in Dutch please click on the following link: www.stopgeweldingaza.nl. On the 23rd of January 2009, IKV Pax Christi approached their political authorities, urging the support to end the blockade against Gaza. The press release is available in Dutch at the following link: <http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=52036>

[TOP](#)

Bringing Peace Together - A Letter to President Barack Obama

Bringing Peace Together (BPT) is a joint Palestinian-Israeli peace group dedicated to bringing real change to the lives of Palestinians and Israelis, by contributing to the dialogue and development of a just and lasting peace. IKV Pax Christi in the Netherlands is member of the BPT Coordination Team. In January 2009, the BPT wrote a letter to President Barack Obama urging him to revive the peace process. BPT formulated 5 Core Strategies to be part of new peace negotiations. The Core Strategies and the letter are available in Ref: [2009-0071-en-me-HS](#).

[TOP](#)

Message from CCRR in Bethlehem on Gaza

On the 7th of January 2009, Noah Salameh, Director of the Centre for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CCRR), a Member Organisation in Bethlehem, shared his thoughts on

the ongoing situation in Gaza. Noah expressed his protest against the use of double standards, emphasised the history and the roots of the current conflict in the long years of occupation, and said that they would much rather build their own state as adults, instead of living under occupation and depending on European aid. For more information on the work of CCRR please visit their website: www.crr-pal.org

[TOP](#)

Analysis from Arab Educational Institute on Gaza

The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Member Organisation in Bethlehem, has stated that even though they are in Bethlehem and at a distance from the conflict, their people in the West Bank are very much in solidarity with the brothers and sisters in Gaza. The AEI has provided a straightforward analysis regarding the background of the extreme violence to which the people in Gaza are now subjected. The violence is, in their view, the culmination of a system of interlocking practices of control developed by Israel over years of occupation and siege. Challenging this system in which Palestinians are contained, imprisoned, split into various geographical and social categories, and subject to arbitrary and violent treatment is essential for safeguarding basic human security. The analysis is available in English in Ref: [2009-0030-en-me-HR](#) and in German in Ref: [2009-0030-de-me-HR](#).

AEI has also organised and participated in various activities in solidarity with Gaza. Further information is available in Ref: [2009-0031-en-me-PB](#).

[TOP](#)

Reading Wishes and Prayers in Bethlehem

The annual campaign of sending prayers and wishes to Bethlehem for Christmas has been much appreciated by friends in Bethlehem. During the 2008 campaign, hundreds of messages were sent by various international partners. The AEI made use of the messages

during masses, demonstrations and vigils, as well as at the AEI weekly group meetings. To read all the messages sent to Bethlehem, please click on the following link: <http://www.aeicenter.org/ChristmasMessages2008-09/>

[TOP](#)

International Peace Bureau on Gaza

The International Peace Bureau issued a statement on the violence in Gaza, calling for intensified protests, an immediate ceasefire, conducting talks, and for the necessary humanitarian aid and support for the long term reconstruction and development process. Pax Christi International is a member of the International Peace Bureau.

For more information, please click on the following link: [2009-0033-en-me-HR](#)

[TOP](#)

ICBUW Statement on Israel's Attack on Gaza

International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW), of which Pax Christi International is a member, called for an immediate ceasefire to protect civilians caught up by the conflict. ICBUW condemns the overwhelming use of force in a crowded civilian environment.

Of additional concern are reports that indiscriminate and new weapons are being used by Israeli forces, including White Phosphorous and Dense Inert Metal Explosives (DIME). Contrary to reports by some media agencies, ICBUW is yet to see clear evidence that uranium munitions are being used in Gaza. The use of uranium weapons in a built-up civilian area would constitute a grave breach of International Humanitarian Law. For more information please visit the following website:

<http://www.bandepleteduranium.org/en/a/221.html>

[TOP](#)



Christians Mobilise for Ending Violence in and Around Gaza

International and National church organisations from across the world have sent news of their advocacy and awareness-raising work related to Gaza to the World Council of Churches. These include statements, public demonstrations and letter campaigns addressed to government officials and parliament members. They are usually accompanied by vigils and prayer services and collection of funds to support humanitarian relief work. The initiatives taken by Pax Christi International and its member organisations are also included. Please view the updated list at the following link: <http://www.oikoumene.org/?id=6549#c23029>

[TOP](#)

World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel 4th -10th June 2009

The World Council of Churches has spread an invitation to action for the upcoming World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel, which will be held from the 4th to the 10th of June 2009. This is the fourth time that the Week of ecumenical advocacy for a just and sustainable peace in Palestine and Israel is being organised. Pax Christi International and its Member Organisations will participate in the Week. Each year, the week has become stronger because more and more groups contribute their strength and commitment. With each passing year, it becomes clearer that churches committed to Israel-Palestine peace must do more of their advocacy work together. The week is anchored in the Palestinian Christian community and built by participants around the world. You are earnestly invited to take part.

The components of the Week are **PRAYER** from the Churches in Jerusalem; **EDUCATION** and awareness-raising using the message 'It's Time for Palestine' (with a focus on settlements and links to existing church resource materials); and **ADVOCACY** in political, economic, church and media contexts. For detailed information and material please visit the following website: www.worldweekforpeace.org.

If you have some more questions, please contact the main coordinator of the Week, Beatrice Merahi via email: Beatrice.Merahi@wcc-coe.org.

The Pax Christi International Secretariat urges you to kindly inform Katrien Hertog about any initiatives you or your organisation would be planning in preparation for, or during this Week. This will help us gather an overview of the actions being carried out by the global network. Katrien can be reached via email at: katrien@paxchristi.net
For more information please refer Ref: [2009-0070-en-me-IC](#)

[TOP](#)

Preventing and Dealing with Radicalisation: Seminar in Lebanon

From the 5th to the 8th of March 2009, Pax Christi International, in close cooperation with the Lebanese Association for Civil Rights, is organising a seminar on “Preventing and Dealing with Radicalisation”. The seminar will be attended by Pax Christi Member Organisations from the region and Eastern Europe, as well as by other interested organisations and individuals. During the seminar, both the participants and external experts will share their expertise. The aim is to come to a better understanding of the radicalisation and the role that civil society can play in preventing and dealing with radicalisation in a nonviolent way. The seminar will include a session on developing practical outcomes and a field visit to Lebanon. For more information, please contact Katrien Hertog via email: katrien@paxchristi.net

[TOP](#)

Christians in Iraq

A radio broadcast on the situation of Iraqi Christians was issued on Radio RCF in France on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of January 2009. The broadcast was a result of the visit of a Pax Christi France delegation that will be going to the north of Iraq in February 2009. You can listen to the broadcast in French at the following link:

http://www.rcf.fr/programme.php?id_rubrique=12&date_recherche=2009-01-16&mois=01&annee=2009

[TOP](#)



Balkans Forum on the Future of Multiethnic Kosovo

The European Policy Centre (EPC), in cooperation with IKV Pax Christi Netherlands, held a Balkans Forum meeting on *The Future of Multiethnic Kosovo* in Brussels on the 19th of January 2009.

The forum aimed to focus the debate on the current situation in the divided town of Mitrovica and the Serbian enclaves situated south of the river Ibar by examining international and local initiatives for peaceful inter-ethnic relations. Policy experts and civil society representatives from both Albanian and Serbian communities in Kosovo, as well as the EU representatives, were brought together to reflect on the future prospects for a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo, taking into account both the international environment regarding the status of Kosovo and the realities on the ground. **Daria Nashat**, Senior Programme Officer Southeast Europe, IKV Pax Christi, was one of the speakers. Jana Panakova of the International Secretariat attended. For more information, please visit the following website: www.epc.eu

[TOP](#)

Russia - Assassinations to Veil the Truth

“Russian society becomes more and more uninhabitable” was the reaction of Pax Christi Flanders in a press release dated the 21st of January 2009, following the murder of Stanislas Markelov on the 19th of January in Moscow. Markelov was a lawyer and human rights defender in Russia. Corruption, exaction, torture and homicide press their impact on the Russian society and the victims cannot tell the truth. More information is available in Dutch in Ref: [2009-0062-ne-eu-HR](#).

[TOP](#)

First Actions by President Barack Obama – a Positive Response

The leadership of Pax Christi Flanders was interviewed on the 24th of January 2009 by Kerknet, regarding the first decisions taken by President Barack Obama such as the closing of the prison Guantanamo in Cuba. The interview is available in Dutch at the following link http://www.kerknet.be/actua/nieuws_detail.php?nieuwsID=83846

[TOP](#)

DISARMAMENT & DEMILITARISATION

Arms Trade Treaty

At the UN General Assembly on the 24th of December 2008, 133 states voted in favour of an Open-Ended Working Group on the Arms Trade Treaty. Only the United States voted against. Zimbabwe, which voted against during the First Committee discussions in October, voted in favour this time. There were 19 abstentions, including China, Egypt, India, Iran, Pakistan and Russia. Many states were absent due to delays in the voting process and the proximity to the Christmas holidays. The omnibus resolution setting the schedule of the UN small arms meetings for the next 6 years was approved 181 to 1, with the US voting against. More information is available at the following website:

www.un.org/ga/63/resolutions.shtml

Pax Christi International had issued an advocacy package on the Arms Trade Treaty in November 2008.

[TOP](#)

HUMAN SECURITY & VIOLENT CONFLICT

First World Day of Social Justice to be observed on the 20th of February 2009

At its sixty-second session, in November 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the 20th of February as World Day of Social Justice. The day is to be observed for the first time in 2009.

Member states were invited to devote this special day to the promotion of concrete national activities. This is to be done in accordance with the objectives and goals of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalised world." Member Organisations of Pax Christi International are invited to highlight that day in their activities. For more information visit: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/ifsd/SocialJustice.pdf>

[TOP](#)

EDUCATION & YOUTH WORK FOR PEACE

Pax Christi Peace Education Gathering in Buckden, UK

Between the 12th and 14th of December 2008 a Peace Education Gathering took place in Buckden, England. It was organised by Pax Christi UK, where seven representatives from different Pax Christi Member Organisations in Europe dealing with youth and peace education came together. The countries represented were Belgium, France, the UK and Germany. Jana Panakova represented the International Secretariat at the gathering. Participants shared experiences, resources, successful stories, ideas and games and brainstormed about possible areas of cooperation and about the role of the International Secretariat in this context.

[TOP](#)

40.000 Young People Gathered in Brussels for the Taizé Meeting

The 31st meeting of European Youth was organised by the Taizé community in Brussels from the 29th of December 2008 to the 2nd of January 2009. More than 40.000 young people from all corners of Europe gathered here to share, pray, sing and reflect together on *'how to build the Europe of trust'*. Pax Christi International used this opportunity to organise a workshop for youth entitled *'Responding to the situations of war or social conflict, creating peace in the world and in us'*. Two members of the Pax Christi International Secretariat, Jana Panakova and Victry Anya, offered the participants a reflection on how we perceive conflicts, to what degree we are influenced by the way conflicts are dealt with on the global scale and what is the role of the media in this connection. A student from Amsterdam, Thomas Van der Molen, acquainted with IKV Pax Christi Netherlands, came to talk about his experience from Kashmir, where he has carried out research on the non-violent dissent of local young people.

[TOP](#)

U Move 4 Peace in Armenia

Delegates of the youth section of Pax Christi Flanders, "U Move 4 Peace" met with partner organisations in Armenia to start programmes in peace building. An international workshop will take place in September 2009 on peace building and conflict prevention. For more information please email: um4p@yahoo.com

[TOP](#)

Pax Christi France Organises a Weekend for Young People

The Pax Christi France Youth Section is organising a national weekend for young people between 18-35 years of age. This youth gathering will take place in Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris, on the 14th and 15th of February 2009. The principal aim of the weekend is to support and activate young people to become messengers of peace. The 2-day programme includes workshops, prayers, games, learning, sharing and of course - lots of fun. For more information, please visit the following website: <http://paxchristi.cef.fr>.

[TOP](#)



DEVELOPING PEACE SPIRITUALITY & THEOLOGY

Annual Peace Day on “Go in Peace...!”

The Catholic University of Leuven, in collaboration with Pax Christi Flanders, is planning their annual peace day with the title “Go in Peace...!”. The main theme is on how to deal with conflicts in pastoral work from a faith and ethical perspective. Sessions will be held on issues such as “Christian NGOs and their Role in Conflict Mediation,” “Conflicts in the Church from the Perspective of Social Identity,” and “Church, Power and Conflicts.” For more information please e-mail: Frieda.Boeykens@theo.kuleuven.be

[TOP](#)

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

Click here to view the International Calendar of upcoming events:

<http://storage.paxchristi.net/calendar.pdf>.

To unsubscribe from this list contact library@paxchristi.net or write to us at:

Pax Christi Newsletter
Pax Christi International
21 Vieux Marché aux Grains
B-1000 Brussels,
Belgium.

Pax Christi is the International Catholic Peace Movement with members worldwide

For more information visit our website: www.paxchristi.net

[TOP](#)