



Newsletter nr. 182 - 1 March 2009

## 2009 International UN Year of Reconciliation

In this Issue

<b>OBITUARY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Former President of Pax Christi Flanders Passes Away .....	4
<b>AFRICA</b> .....	<b>4</b>
DR Congo: Advocacy towards the Canadian Government for Effective Intervention .....	4
Pax Christi International's Concern over the Crisis in Zimbabwe .....	4
The Ecumenical Zimbabwe Network .....	5
<b>AMERICAS &amp; CARIBBEAN</b> .....	<b>5</b>
CPT at World Social Forum.....	5
Report from Haiti - Violence in the Capital and the Upcoming Elections .....	6
International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons in Costa Rica.....	6
Tourism Helps the Process for Democratisation in Cuba.....	7
Expenditures of the Guatemalan Government .....	7
Human Rights Abuses in Guatemala.....	7
<b>ASIA &amp; PACIFIC</b> .....	<b>8</b>



New - E-news from Asia-Pacific.....	8
Six Month Report by IDEAS .....	8
Class, Nation and the Philippines.....	8
158 <sup>th</sup> issue of Hotline Newsletter, Bangladesh.....	9
Pax Christi Australia Urges Government to Withdraw Troops from Afghanistan.....	9
<b>MIDDLE EAST .....</b>	<b>9</b>
NGOs Demand an End to the Gaza Closure .....	9
Pax Christi USA’s Call for Humanitarian Assistance in Gaza.....	10
Towards Another German Middle East Policy .....	10
Reason of State and International Laws .....	11
Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum .....	11
Spirit of Sumud – A Cultural Tourism Programme .....	11
Candle Lighting in Solidarity with Gaza and for a Just Peace .....	12
Pax Christi UK Delegation to Israel and Palestine .....	12
Prayer Network with the World Council of Churches .....	13
A Code of Conduct for Tourism in the Holy Land.....	13
Halting Arms Transfers to Israel and Palestine .....	14
Searchers of Peace in France .....	14
The Humanitarian Situation in Iraq: Discussion with a UNHCR Representative.....	14
Pax Christi Australia Protests against the Repression of Residents of Ashraf in Iraq.....	15
European Union Terrorist List and Iran .....	15
USA Speaking Tour on Iran .....	15
<b>EUROPE.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Our Future - European Integration .....	16
Joint NGO Statement on the Employer's Sanction Directive.....	16



<b>DISARMAMENT &amp; DEMILITARISATION .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Parliamentary Inquiry into Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in Australia .....	17
Day of Action against the Radar Base in the Czech Republic .....	17
Advocacy Package Concerning the US Radar Base in the Czech Republic .....	17
March 1 <sup>st</sup> Action Alert: Marking 10 Years since the Mine Ban Treaty was Enforced.....	18
CMC Global Week of Action .....	18
Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence .....	19
Nuclear Disarmament in Europe – IKV Pax Christi Netherlands.....	19
Seminar: Defence without Borders? .....	19
<b>HUMAN RIGHTS, THE RULE OF LAW AND VIOLENT CONFLICT .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Pax Christi USA on Guantanamo and Torture .....	20
Undocumented Children in Europe: Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions .....	21
Human Right to Peace Versus Racism .....	21
The UN Framework for Human Rights Education and Civil Society Participation.....	21
<b>JUST WORLD ORDER .....</b>	<b>22</b>
JPDC Commission at the World Social Forum (WSF) .....	22
A Time of Hope: Pax Christi and the Obama Presidency.....	22
<b>CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION .....</b>	<b>23</b>
SIGNIS World Congress 2009.....	23
<b>INTERFAITH AND INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION FOR PEACE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Metropolitan Kirill elected Patriarch .....	23
Living Faiths Together – Tool Kit on Inter-Religious Dialogue in Youth Work.....	24
<b>INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR .....</b>	<b>24</b>



## **OBITUARY**

### **Former President of Pax Christi Flanders Passes Away**

**Ignaaas Lindemans** passed away on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2009. Ignaaas was the President of Pax Christi Flanders from 1978 until 1988. He served as head of the research centre of the Christian Trade Union and was, along with Robert De Gendt, initiator of the Committee for European Security and Cooperation.

[TOP](#)

## **AFRICA**

### **DR Congo: Advocacy towards the Canadian Government for Effective Intervention**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2009, Antennes de Paix – a Member Organisation in Canada, in association with over 21 other Canadian-based organisations sent a letter of concern to the Canadian Prime Minister Mr. Stephen Harper, regarding the Human Right Violations and the war in the Kivu region of the DR Congo. The organisation expressed their hope that Canada will plea energetically in favour of a more efficient intervention of the international community so as to resolve once and for all the successive humanitarian tragedies from its roots. The DR Congo has been victimised by numerous instabilities and wars since the 1990's. Three major wars - the first from 1996-1997, the second from 1998-2003 and the third from 2006 till present - have devastated the country, led to the involvement of other countries like Angola, Rwanda and Uganda to name just a few, and caused over 5 million casualties. More information is available in French in Ref: [2009-0133-fr-af-HS](#).

[TOP](#)

### **Pax Christi International's Concern over the Crisis in Zimbabwe**

Zimbabwe's political, economic and now full-blown humanitarian crisis has not ceased to capture the attention of the international community. Since the presidential and parliamentary elections in March 2008, which were marked by severe political manipulation and repression by the Mugabe regime, there has not only been a terrible

violation of human rights but also a rapid meltdown of vital social services, a cholera epidemic that has claimed over 1500 lives, and the fleeing of a third of the population to neighboring countries, which has resulted in the spread of cholera to these countries.

[TOP](#)

### **The Ecumenical Zimbabwe Network**

Pax Christi International is a member of the Ecumenical Zimbabwe Network (EZN) which is a group of church agencies with partners and programmes in Zimbabwe. The EZN met for two days in Brussels on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, to effectively analyze the current situation in the country, and to coordinate concrete assistance that they could render to the Churches in Zimbabwe. Victry Anya represented the Pax Christi International Secretariat at the meeting.

The very first action by the EZN was a letter that was sent to European Institutions pointing out concrete recommendations for the upcoming events in Zimbabwe. For more information please read Ref: [2009-0156-en-af-AC](#). A series of events, including prayers and cultural activities, have also been organised by individual organisations to be carried out in various European countries during May 2009. The aim of these activities is to convey the aspirations of the Zimbabwe Churches to the International Community.

[TOP](#)

## **AMERICAS & CARIBBEAN**

### **CPT at World Social Forum**

The Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT), a Member Organisation in Brazil, took part in the 9<sup>th</sup> World Social Forum in Belem, Brazil, that was held from the 27<sup>th</sup> of January to the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2009. The World Social Forum focuses on environmental issues, the economic crisis and social problems. More than 150 countries took part in the event. CPT's involvement included workshops, dialogues, seminars, and expositions. Many of the themes that are central to CPT's work were discussed, including the eradication of slave work, studies of the effects of specific crop production in rural communities and the

conditions of life in indigenous communities. For more information on CPT's work, please visit their website: [www.cptnacional.org.br](http://www.cptnacional.org.br)

[TOP](#)

### **Report from Haiti - Violence in the Capital and the Upcoming Elections**

The Commission Episcopale Nationale Justice et Paix, a Member Organisation in Haiti, issued its quarterly analysis/report in February 2009. This 29<sup>th</sup> report covers the events that took place in October, November and December 2008. The report makes a mention of the violence taking place in the metropolitan zone of Port-au-Prince, which is the capital of Haiti. The document also includes some observations and demands addressed to the political authorities of the country. The document is available in French in Ref: [2009-0113-fr-am-HS](#). The Commission also issued a statement about the up-coming elections in Haiti that will take place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2009, in which they call for respect of ethical principles in politics. The statement is available in French in Ref: [2009-0114-fr-am-HS](#).

[TOP](#)

### **International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons in Costa Rica**

The annual International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) conference will be held from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 in San José, Costa Rica. Pax Christi International is a member of ICBUW. The conference is being organised and hosted by the San Jose Friends Peace Centre (CAP) on behalf of the ICBUW. CAP has invited representatives from government and non-governmental organisations throughout Latin American to attend, as well as experts from around the globe to discuss the effects of depleted uranium. This event is an important opportunity to raise awareness in the Americas and to take a unified stand against the use of these arms. Background information in English and Spanish and a list of confirmed speakers is available on the conference websites: <http://amigosparalapaz.org/conference> and <http://amigosparalapaz.org/conferencia>

[TOP](#)

## **Tourism Helps the Process for Democratisation in Cuba**

IKV Pax Christi Netherlands has invited Dutch tourists travelling to Cuba to take a book in Spanish or other Spanish literature with them when they visit the country. This is part of an effort to help broaden the freedom of information in Cuba, where the Cuban regime has total control over the media. Many books are blacklisted, and those available to the public are often distorted. As a result, many Cubans have started small independent house libraries with the hope to encourage reading and the sharing of information in Cuba. For more information, please visit the following website which is in Dutch:

<http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=52201>

[TOP](#)

## **Expenditures of the Guatemalan Government**

The Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (GAM), a Member Organisation in Guatemala has released a statement concerning the expenditures of the Guatemalan government for the month of January 2009. This statement focuses mainly on the amount of money spent on advertising and government publicity, and estimates the amount to be worth a month of wages for 1355 field labourers, or enough money to equip 533 different schools with a computer. GAM is committed to monitor government spending in Guatemala. More information is available in Spanish in Ref: [2009-0130-sp-am-AC](#).

[TOP](#)

## **Human Rights Abuses in Guatemala**

The Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo (GAM), a Member Organisation in Guatemala released a report concerning human rights abuses and acts of violence during January 2009. The report analyses violence against women, extrajudicial violence, kidnappings, economic rights and many other examples of human rights abuses found in Guatemalan society. The report concludes with GAM's proposals and recommendations for the government of Guatemala. More information is available in Spanish in Ref: [2009-0143-sp-am-HR](#).

[TOP](#)

### New - E-news from Asia-Pacific

The International Pax Christi Secretariat issued its first edition of the Asia-Pacific Newsletter entitled E-news from Asia-Pacific. It is hoped that through this initiative, a greater sharing of region-specific information among our partners and members in the Asia-Pacific region can be encouraged. This publication consists of two main sections: The Focus of this Month and Pax ACT. The first section is intended to provide some "food for thought" - issues to reflect upon and hopefully debate with family members, colleagues and friends. The Pax ACT section is devoted to sharing information about the Actions and Activities carried out by our Member Organisations in the region. If there are any activities, actions, campaigns or alerts that you would like to share with other active groups, please send an email to [dai.young@paxchristi.net](mailto:dai.young@paxchristi.net)

[TOP](#)

### Six Month Report by IDEAS

Initiatives in Development, Empowerment and Awareness Society (IDEAS), a Member Organisation in India, issued its six-month report for the period of June 2008 to November 2008. IDEAS was established in December 1998 and celebrates its decennial year. In the report they have introduced their shelter home "The light of hope," as well as the activities of their Non-formal Education Centres in colonies built outside the boundaries of villages. The full report is available in Ref: [2009-0108-en-ap-GE](#)

[TOP](#)

### Class, Nation and the Philippines

Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist and a principal founder of the discipline of Peace and Conflict studies, submitted a reflection on his recent visit to the Philippines for the conversation between Government panels and Parties for change in class and nation relations. The event was organised by a number of organisations including Pax Christi Philippines. In his report, Galtung diagnosed the conversation to be paralysed and insincere, and noted that this is not because the governmental panel is insincere, but because it is many-headed. In order to facilitate the peace process, Galtung makes

several points for the Government as well as for the parties involved in armed conflict. The complete document is available in Ref: [2009-0120-en-ap-HR](#)

[TOP](#)

### **158<sup>th</sup> issue of Hotline Newsletter, Bangladesh**

The Hotline Human Rights, a Member Organisation in Bangladesh, published its 158<sup>th</sup> bi-monthly newsletter for December 2008 and January 2009. The main editorial deals with the recent parliamentary election, suggesting that the government should react with different mental attitude, so as to make change effective and lasting in Bangladesh. The complete document is available in Ref: [2009-0121-en-ap-NT](#)

[TOP](#)

### **Pax Christi Australia Urges Government to Withdraw Troops from Afghanistan**

After recent media reports that the United States would request Australia to increase its troop commitment to the war in Afghanistan, Pax Christi Australia has strongly urged their government to not only resist the request, but also to withdraw the troops from Afghanistan. In the letter dated the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 to the prime minister of Australia, Pax Christi Australia pointed out that the war was degrading Australia's credibility as a genuine part of the international community, and also noted that more than 50% of the Australian population is opposed the their role in the war in Afghanistan. The letter is available in Ref: [2009-0151-en-ap-AC](#)

[TOP](#)

## **MIDDLE EAST**

### **NGOs Demand an End to the Gaza Closure**

Pax Christi International and 30 leading humanitarian, human rights and development agencies active in and concerned with the Gaza Strip, have called on the EU and its member states to do their utmost to convince Israel and other parties to end the



continuing closure of Gaza. In a letter dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2009, they urged for “all crossings into Gaza be fully and permanently open and operational, allowing unimpeded access for humanitarian personnel and supplies, commercial goods as well as movement of people”. It is argued that the severe closure of Gaza is a form of collective punishment against the 1.5 million inhabitants of Gaza, constituting a serious violation of international humanitarian law. It is unacceptable and in no one’s interest for the closure of Gaza to continue any longer. The letter is available in Ref: [2009-0118-en-me-HR](#).

[TOP](#)

### **Pax Christi USA’s Call for Humanitarian Assistance in Gaza**

At the end of January 2009, Pax Christi USA called upon its membership to contact President Obama’s Administration and urge them to influence and pressure Israel to comply with the UN Security Council Resolution 1860, which calls for "unimpeded provision and distribution throughout Gaza of humanitarian assistance, including food, fuel and medical treatment." More information is available on the website: [www.paxchristiusa.org](http://www.paxchristiusa.org)

[TOP](#)

### **Towards Another German Middle East Policy**

Pax Christi Germany in collaboration with Kooperation für den Frieden, a German network with more than 50 active NGOs, started a petition on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2009 to get strong support from individuals and organisations supporting another Middle East policy by their government. The appeal demands that the blockade of Gaza should end, and that contact with all parties involved, including Hamas, should begin. It also demands the release of political prisoners and a cease on all trade of arms to the conflict region. The German petition can be signed and downloaded at the following websites:

[http://www.ipnw.de/aktiv\\_werden/kampagnen/nahostpolitik/index.html](http://www.ipnw.de/aktiv_werden/kampagnen/nahostpolitik/index.html)

<http://www.koop-frieden.de/aktuell/nahostpolitik.pdf>

[TOP](#)



## **Reason of State and International Laws**

Pax Christi Germany's annual seminar on the Palestine-Israel Conflict will take place from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2009 at the Protestant Academy in Bad Boll in Germany. Participants will discuss the new Middle East Initiative of the German Federal Government and the present situation in the region in the context of international law. Different proposals and actions for solidarity will be presented. For registrations please email: [gabriele.barnhill@ev-akademieboll.de](mailto:gabriele.barnhill@ev-akademieboll.de)

[TOP](#)

## **Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum**

The Core Group of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum (PIEF) of the World Council of Churches met for an emergency meeting in Bethlehem, from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of February 2009. An analysis from a Palestinian perspective on the situation in Palestine after the war on Gaza was given by resource persons. The PIEF Action Plan has been reviewed in light of the new developments. The Core Group also met with delegates of the Coalition of Christian Organisations in Palestine. A statement was prepared to be adopted by the World Council of Churches. H.B. Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah, former President of Pax Christi International and Fr. Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat attended the meetings. The statement is available at:

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-february-2009/20-02-09-statement-on-the-gaza-war.html>

[TOP](#)

## **Spirit of Sumud – A Cultural Tourism Programme**

The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Member Organisation in Bethlehem, has launched a cultural tourism programme entitled "The Spirit of Sumud". The programme is designed as a tour which lasts several days, and creates an opportunity to share the unique culture of the Palestinian people, which is revealed in performances by Bethlehem's women and youth. Through drama, storytelling and music participants can experience the authentic culture of Palestine, the spirit of Sumud, and the steadfast and deep connection of the people with the land and community. It is an opportunity to gain insight into the ancient and present day lives of city dwellers, villagers, camp refugees and Bedouins, and to



experience the tradition of Moslems and Christians living together in the Bethlehem area. Groups are welcome from April 2009 onwards.

Raneen al-Arja, a staff member from AEI who is responsible for the development of the "Spirit of Sumud" has written an article in the February edition of This Week in Palestine (an issue devoted to an exploration of the theme "Sumud and Palestinian identity"). Please visit the following website to read the article:

<http://www.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?id=2693&ed=166&edid=166>

Toine van Teeffelen, the AEI development director, has written an article on "Sumud: Soul of the Palestinian People" in the same issue. Please read the article at the website

<http://www.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?id=2686&ed=166&edid=166>

James Prineas, a photographer and the designer of Palestine-family.net wrote about his Spirit of Sumud Photo Exhibit. Please see the article at the following link:

<http://www.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?catid=10&id=2700&edid=166>

[TOP](#)

### **Candle Lighting in Solidarity with Gaza and for a Just Peace**

Manal Timraz, a Palestinian from Gaza who lives in Coventry in the UK, has lost 15 members of her family in the military onslaught. She has started a campaign called: A Million Candles for Peace. The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Member Organisation in Palestine, shared in the candle-lighting vigils that took place in the UK and Gaza on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2009. At the Sumud Story House at Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem, youth, women and family groups lit candles in solidarity with the people of Gaza, and for a just peace. For more information please visit the following website:

<http://www.aeicenter.org/aei/sumud/candles2009.htm>

[TOP](#)

### **Pax Christi UK Delegation to Israel and Palestine**

A delegation from Pax Christi UK held a six-day support and learning visit to various parts of Israel-Palestine in February 2009. The group, which consisted of participants who are all involved in education for peace, was based in Bethlehem and met with Pax Christi



partners in the area, with teachers' and women's groups, and joined members of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Israel and Palestine (EAPPI), seeing their work first-hand in Hebron and Bethlehem.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, the delegation joined with partners at the Arab Educational Institute for a candle-lit vigil near the separation wall in the area of Rachel's Tomb, for peace in Israel and Palestine. This was in solidarity with a similar vigil that was held in Gaza, coordinated by Manal Timraz, a Palestinian Muslim from Gaza who lives in Coventry. Manal lost 15 members of her family in Gaza in January 2009.

Pax Christi UK encouraged members and friends to join in prayers for the delegation and for peace in the troubled territories. It was delighted at the number of people from around the country who held vigils or services on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. For more information please visit the following website: <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/8755>

[TOP](#)

### **Prayer Network with the World Council of Churches**

The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Member Organisation in Palestine, is involved in preparing for the World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel. The week of peace, which will be help from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2009, is convened by the World Council of Churches and supported by Pax Christi International. If you are interested in sharing in a prayer exchange in support for peace in Palestine/Israel, please visit the following website: <http://www.aeicenter.org/aei/archives/Activities/WorldWeekforPeace2009.htm>

[TOP](#)

### **A Code of Conduct for Tourism in the Holy Land**

The Arab Educational Institute (AEI), a Member Organisation in Palestine is a member of the Palestinian initiative for Responsible Tourism. The group, which includes a number of other Palestinian organisations, has formulated a Code of Conduct which has been developed to inform pilgrims and tourists about the reality of Palestine and Palestinians, and to seek their support in using tourism to transform contemporary injustices. The Code also aims to raise awareness of how tourism in Palestine can be transformed and enhanced to truly benefit both hosts and visitors, specially amongst Palestinian tourism stakeholders. The group believes that responsible and just forms of tourism offer

communities opportunities to share their culture, tell their stories, request solidarity and foster tolerance and greater understanding. Member Organisations of Pax Christi International are invited to distribute this Code across the world. For more information please email: [pirt@atg.ps](mailto:pirt@atg.ps). For additional background information please see Ref: [2009-0109-en-me-PB](#).

[TOP](#)

### **Halting Arms Transfers to Israel and Palestine**

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, Antennes de Paix, a Member Organisation in Canada, sent letters of concern to their Foreign Minister and the Czech Ambassador in Canada, about halting arms transfers to Israel and to Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The letter is available in Ref: [2009-0154-en-me-HS](#).

[TOP](#)

### **Searchers of Peace in France**

Pax Christi France and the Monastic Fraternities of Jerusalem in Paris are planning an evening prayer entitled “Chercheurs de paix” on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 with H.B. Michel Sabbah, Latin patriarch emeritus of Jerusalem and former President of Pax Christi International. Mgr. Marc Stenger, President of Pax Christi France will lead the prayers. More information is available at the following website: [www.paxchristi.cef.fr](http://www.paxchristi.cef.fr)

[TOP](#)

### **The Humanitarian Situation in Iraq: Discussion with a UNHCR Representative**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, one day before the provincial elections in Iraq, UNHCR and CCME (Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe) organised a meeting in Brussels for NGO’s with the UNHCR Representative in Baghdad, Daniel Endres, on the latest humanitarian developments in Iraq. Mr. Endres emphasised that the improved security in the last year does not mean that there is an equally improved human rights situation and stressed the need to focus on rule of law in Iraq. Katrien Hertog from the International Secretariat participated in the meeting.

[TOP](#)



## Pax Christi Australia Protests against the Repression of Residents of Ashraf in Iraq

In February 2009, Pax Christi Australia sent two letters urging the governments of Iraq and the United States to protest the unlawful and damaging threats against the residents of Camp Ashraf, and the members of the Peoples Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). In the letter, Pax Christi Australia expressed its deep concerns on the outrageous abuses that took place at Ashraf after the threatening statements of Mr Al-Rubaie, a senior official of the Iraqi government, and also strongly requested for the intervention of each government to stop the repressive action against the residents. More information is available in Ref: [2009-0127-en-ap-AC](#) and Ref: [2009-0134-en-ap-AC](#)

[TOP](#)

## European Union Terrorist List and Iran

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, Pax Christi Australia wrote a letter to the Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, President of the European Union, concerning the terrorist list of the EU. Pax Christi Australia is happy with the preliminary agreement of the European states to remove the Iranian opposition group, the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (PMOI) from a European Union list of banned terrorist groups. "Though long overdue, such a move would remove a grave injustice to the PMOI and the people of Iran". More information is available in Ref: [2009-0078-en-me-HS](#)

[TOP](#)

## USA Speaking Tour on Iran

Father Louie Vitale, a Franciscan priest and Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace, is conducting a nationwide speaking tour in spring 2009. Fr. Louie participated in a Civilian Diplomacy Delegation with the Fellowship of Reconciliation to meet peace and governmental leaders there. Fr. Louie was released last March after serving 5 months for his nonviolent action crossing the line at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, which is a training centre for Army Intelligence Officers in "Enhanced Interrogation" techniques, where the School of Americas torture manuals were written. Fr. Louie is a co-founder of Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service ([www.paceebene.org](http://www.paceebene.org)), where he currently works as the Nonviolent Action Advocate. If you would like to organise a speaking event for Fr. Louie, please contact Pace e Bene's tour organiser, Ken Preston, at [kenpreston@paceebene.org](mailto:kenpreston@paceebene.org).

[TOP](#)

## Our Future - European Integration

“Our Future – European Integration” (OFEI) is an exchange programme and a network of young people from Kosovo, Serbia and the Netherlands. OFEI aims to contribute to peaceful relations between (young) Serbs and Albanians through open and (self) critical dialogue regarding the past and the future. OFEI wishes to spread knowledge of the European integration process and the political situation in Kosovo and Serbia, and to stimulate more active involvement of youth regarding these issues within their own societies. For 2009, IKV Pax Christi in the Netherlands is looking for 15 new participants, 5 from each country. Three study visits will take place: in Kosovo in May; in Serbia in July; and in the Netherlands and Brussels, in October 2009. For more information please visit the website: [www.ourfuture.ikvpaxchristi.nl](http://www.ourfuture.ikvpaxchristi.nl)

[TOP](#)

## Joint NGO Statement on the Employer's Sanction Directive

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 the European Network Against Racism (ENAR), the European Women's Lobby (EWL), the Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), of which Pax Christi International is a member and SOLIDAR released a joint statement as a reaction to the EU Parliament vote on the Employer Sanctions' Directive. This Directive aims at introducing sanctions for employers of illegally staying third country nationals.

The joint statement underlines the organisations' disappointment on the compromise reached by the EU Council and the MEPs since this compromise retains the focus on the status of the migrant, rather than the exploitation by the employer. Furthermore, the NGOs are concerned that the Directive does not recognise the fact that undocumented workers have labour rights and that the priority must be to ensure such rights are enforced. In Strasbourg last Thursday, MEPs voted a package of amendments to the directive, but postponed the final vote in order to formalise their position until the next plenary session. More information is available at the following website: [www.picum.org](http://www.picum.org)

[TOP](#)

### **Parliamentary Inquiry into Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in Australia**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, Pax Christi Australia forwarded a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties of the Australian parliament, to be included in the Parliamentary Inquiry into Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. Pax Christi Australia encouraged the Australian government to take the lead with other concerned nations in promoting a Nuclear Weapons Conventions as the only way to remove the threat of the annihilation of the human race and of the planet. For more information please see Ref: [2009-0085-en-ap-SD](#).

[TOP](#)

### **Day of Action against the Radar Base in the Czech Republic**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, about 40 mayors from the region in the Czech Republic where the US radar base is to be built, Czech representatives of the non-violent movement against the radar, and peace activists from all over Europe gathered in front of the European Parliament in Brussels. Protestors wore white overalls and masks to symbolise the 'invisible' 70% of Czech society that is being ignored by a government that keeps pushing for the installation of the US radar base in the Czech village of Brdy. A similar protest took place in Florence, Berlin, Barcelona, and Buenos Aires, to list a few. A public hearing with the Czech mayors and the Members of the European Parliament followed the protest. Numerous peace organisations supported the event, including Pax Christi International. Paul Lansu and Jana Panakova from the International Secretariat took part in the protest.

[TOP](#)

### **Advocacy Package Concerning the US Radar Base in the Czech Republic**

For two years now, Pax Christi International has been supporting non-governmental organisations in the Czech Republic in their non-violent but persistent struggle against the installation of a US radar base in their country. After being informed about the planned visit of Czech mayors and NGO representatives at the European Parliament in Brussels, the International Secretariat decided to shift Pax Christi's involvement from moral support

to active advocacy. In order to provide Member Organisations with a practical tool for active advocacy, Pax Christi International has created an Advocacy Package on the Missile Defence System in the Czech Republic. The package contains an overview of the history of the Missile Defence System and detailed information about the situation in the Czech Republic. It also explains reasons for the involvement of Pax Christi International and provides plenty of concrete tips for advocacy work. The advocacy package has been distributed to all Pax Christi International Member Organisations. The Advocacy Package is available in Ref: [2009-0090](#).

Antennes de Paix, a Member Organisation in Canada, sent the letter included in the package to all the members of the Czech parliament regarding the radar base, and received one positive response from a parliamentarian. They also wrote to the Czech ambassador in Canada.

[TOP](#)

### **March 1<sup>st</sup> Action Alert: Marking 10 Years since the Mine Ban Treaty was Enforced**

The 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2009 marks 10 years since the Mine Ban Treaty was enforced in March 1999. Pax Christi members took part in the Action Alert which was held from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February to the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. The events were organised with the aim of launching a successful road to Cartagena and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Review Conference, and eventually to a Mine Free-World. Member Organisations of Pax Christi International and others were invited to take action. The advocacy package is available in Ref: [2009-0106-en-gl-SD](#). For more information, please visit the following website: [www.icbl.org](http://www.icbl.org)

[TOP](#)

### **CMC Global Week of Action**

The 30<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 marks the first Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CMC) in Dublin, and will fall during the next Global Week of Action to call on countries to ratify the treaty to bring it into force, and to ask non signatory states to sign without delay. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 Human Rights Watch and Landmine Action will release the 'Ban Policy Report' on Cluster Munitions which will provide an opportunity for media coverage and concerted national advocacy. Pax Christi International and its Member Organisations will participate in this Week of Action.

[TOP](#)

## **Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence**

The IANSA secretariat has announced that this year's Global Week of Action against Gun Violence will take place from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2009. Please save the date and watch this space for further information. Pax Christi International is a member of IANSA. More information is available at the website: [www.iansa.org](http://www.iansa.org)

[TOP](#)

## **Nuclear Disarmament in Europe – IKV Pax Christi Netherlands**

A working group of IKV Pax Christi Netherlands has written a report on nuclear disarmament as part of their preparations for an anti-nuclear campaign. The report contains inputs from some experts, including Mr. Ruud Lubbers (the Dutch Prime Minister from 1982-1994). The report was presented on the 19<sup>th</sup> of February 2009. An appeal is an integral part of the report and will form the basis for the political lobby.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2009, a workshop was held in Amsterdam. The aim was to bring together peace activists and various experts in order to analyse and discuss how we perceive the recent developments (is it truly a new momentum, and if yes: how to support and strengthen the positive tendencies?); to exchange information on ongoing campaigns and to look into possibilities to have a type of 'light co-ordination' of future activities. Members of Pax Christi Germany and France, and Jana Panakova and Paul Lansu of the International Secretariat attended.

More information on the report is available in Dutch at the following website: <http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=52601>. The introduction of Bishop Ad van Luyn is available in Dutch at the following website: <http://www.rorate.com/nws.php?id=52708>. For more information please visit the following website: [www.ikvpaxchristi.nl](http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl)

[TOP](#)

## **Seminar: Defence without Borders?**

Members of Pax Christi Wallonie-Bruxelles and Pax Christi Flanders participated in a seminar on “Defence without Borders?” which was organised by Belgian NGOs. The

programme took place in Brussels on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2009 and took place in the context of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO. The keynote speech has been given by Reiner Braun who is the coordinator of the campaign of “60 years NATO” on behalf of German peace organisations. More information is available at the following website: [www.vrede.be](http://www.vrede.be)

[TOP](#)

## **HUMAN RIGHTS, THE RULE OF LAW AND VIOLENT CONFLICT**

### **Pax Christi USA on Guantanamo and Torture**

Pax Christi USA has mobilised its membership to call and thank President Obama for his executive orders to shut down Guantanamo and the CIA “black sites,” and to end the “enhanced interrogation techniques” used by the CIA at Guantanamo and other prisons.

A number of Pax Christi USA people completed 10-day fast in January as part of the 100 Days Campaign organised by Witness against Torture and co-sponsored by Pax Christi USA. The organisations believe that in its first 100 days, the Obama Administration should signal to the world the seriousness of the country’s commitment to upholding the highest standards of human rights. For more information please visit the following website: [www.paxchristiusa.org](http://www.paxchristiusa.org)

In addition to contacting and thanking President Obama, Pax Christi members were asked to consider asking him and his administration to also take the following actions:

- Launch a Department of Justice investigation into previous use of extraordinary rendition;
- Pledge to call on Congress to repeal the Military Commissions Act, eliminate military tribunals and enable detainees access to the U.S. court system;
- Close the SOA/WHINSEC;
- Establish a formal commission to investigate the origins and evolution of the Bush Administration’s detention policies and hold architects of this system accountable, including through prosecution.

[TOP](#)

## **Undocumented Children in Europe: Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions**

The Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) has announced the launch of its publication "Undocumented Children in Europe: Invisible Victims of Immigration Restrictions." Pax Christi International is a member of PICUM. Undocumented children in Europe may be living with members of their families but can also be unaccompanied, living alone without their parents or guardians. Whatever their condition, the fact that these children are in Europe without protection through official family reunification programs or asylum processes makes them "undocumented", and as such affected by policies on irregular migration. This report aims to investigate the particular vulnerability that characterises the reality of undocumented children and analyse their specific needs and problems encountered in various European countries. The report is specifically focused on the discrimination that these children might face in accessing their basic social rights in the areas of education, healthcare and housing. The pdf version of the report can be downloaded from the PICUM website at: [www.picum.org](http://www.picum.org)

[TOP](#)

## **Human Right to Peace Versus Racism**

Pax Christi International endorsed a written statement addressed to the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council. The statement is entitled "Human Right to peace versus racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination" and addresses the concepts of tolerance, dialogue among cultures and culture of peace in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and international law. The statement is available in English in Ref: [2009-0101-en-gl-HR](#) and in Spanish in Ref: [2009-0101-sp-gl-HR](#).

[TOP](#)

## **The UN Framework for Human Rights Education and Civil Society Participation**

A joint statement on human rights education will be submitted to the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, in March 2009. The co-signed organisations (including Pax Christi International), support human rights education as a vital strategy for addressing the root causes of human rights violations and conflict. Human rights education contributes to the prevention of human rights abuses, the promotion of equality

and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system, as stated in the Commission on Human Rights resolution 2004/71. The official version of the statement in due form will be downloadable from the Human Rights Council website after the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/10session/documentation.htm>

[TOP](#)

## **JUST WORLD ORDER**

### **JPDC Commission at the World Social Forum (WSF)**

The Justice, Peace and Development Commission (JPDC) of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, a Member Organisation in India, participated in the World Social Forum 2009 held from the 27<sup>th</sup> of January to the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2009 as a part of the SAPI (South Asian Peoples' Initiative) team. The JPDC team participated in various sessions of the WSF on topics concerning Women's Rights, Globalisation, South - South Coalition networks, and Global Peace Initiatives. Additional details about the JPDC's proactive participation in the WSF 2009 are available in Ref: [2009-0125-en-ap-GE](#)

[TOP](#)

### **A Time of Hope: Pax Christi and the Obama Presidency**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2009, Marie Dennis, Co-President of Pax Christi International wrote some reflections on the election of Barack Obama as the new president of the USA. Marie analyses the different dimensions of our peace work with the different policies as expressed by President. Obama at several occasions, which includes disarmament, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, human rights, climate change and economic justice. The article is available in Ref: [2009-0129-en-am-JW](#).

[TOP](#)

## **CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION**

### **SIGNIS World Congress 2009**

Registrations for the SIGNIS World Congress 2009 are now open on the new Congress website: [www.signisworldcongress.net](http://www.signisworldcongress.net). Organised by SIGNIS, the World Catholic Association for Communication, the Congress will take place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of October 2009 on the theme “Media for a Culture of Peace – Children’s Rights, Tomorrow’s Promise” aiming to highlight how the media can contribute to the building of a culture of peace through the creative empowerment of tomorrow’s generation. SIGNIS is a partner with Pax Christi International.

The Congress programme is built around three strands: Current Global Issues on Human Rights and Children’s Rights, Emerging Perspectives on Media and Social Transformation and The Challenges of Growing Up in a Digital Age.

During the Congress, three major keynote addresses will highlight the main issues raised in the different strands. Working sessions will deepen the reflection, further elaborate and discuss how participants can engage in the creative use of media to bring about a culture of peace with and for tomorrow’s generation. About 400 communication professionals from all over the world are expected to attend the 4-day event. Delegates of Pax Christi International will attend the Congress.

[TOP](#)

## **INTERFAITH AND INTERCULTURAL COOPERATION FOR PEACE**

### **Metropolitan Kirill elected Patriarch**

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad was elected head of the Russian Orthodox Church – Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia – on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2009. He was enthroned in a ceremony in Moscow on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. Kirill has been the head of several delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church in dialogue with Pax Christi International for many years. Pax Christi International sent a letter of congratulations.

[TOP](#)

## Living Faiths Together – Tool Kit on Inter-Religious Dialogue in Youth Work

The Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe (EYCE) has launched “Living Faiths Together”. This brand new publication is a tool kit on inter-religious dialogue in youth work. EYCE and its inter-religious partners combined their expertise in the pioneer field of inter-religious youth work and wrote this special hand book in a unique, consensus-based process. Living Faiths Together is now available for download.

Living Faiths Together is being published with the support of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) and is the work of the members of the European Youth Forum’s Faith-Based Expert Group. EYCE’s partners in this group are the European Union of Jewish Students (EUJS), the Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO), the International Young Catholic Students – International Movement of Catholic Students European Coordination (JECI-MIEC), Pax Christi International, World Student Christian Federation - Europe (WSCF-E). Further contributions to the Tool Kit came from the European Peer Training Organisation (EPTO) and the International Federation of Catholic Parochial Youth Movements (FIMCAP).

[Download “Living Faiths Together” \(PDF\)](#). For more information in the kit please visit the following website:

[http://www.eyce.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PagEd&file=index&topic\\_id=15&page\\_id=833](http://www.eyce.org/modules.php?op=modload&name=PagEd&file=index&topic_id=15&page_id=833)

[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](mailto: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](http://www.paxchristi.net)

[TOP](#)

