

Nagasaki Appeal for PEACE

August 10, 2024




Catholic PEACE Forum
Nagasaki, Aug. 10, 2024

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We, the participants of Nagasaki Catholic Peace Forum (CPF) in-person and virtually held on August 10, 2024 under the theme “Just and Sustainable Peace without Nuclear Weapons in Northeast Asia and Worldwide – Role of Catholic Church and Pax Christi Peace Movement”,

- 1) Deeply Concerned about the ongoing military conflicts and wars in Ukraine, Palestine (Gaza), Myanmar and elsewhere, and the enormous humanitarian toll they are taking on civilians,
- 2) Concerned about the anti-peace and unethical use of ‘artificial intelligence’ (AI), which Pope Francis highlighted in his message for the World Day of Peace on 1 January 2024,
- 3) Concerned about the other non-traditional security threats such as climate crisis, climate-related disasters, debt crisis, food and energy shortages and their severe negative impacts on the lives of people, especially those in developing countries,
- 4) Recognising the lasting impact of the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, in particular on the hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilian hibakusha and surviving victims of several nationalities, including Koreans,
- 5) Reaffirming its full support for the ‘Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons’ launched by the five bishops of Japan and the United States on 9 August 2023 on the 78th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Nagasaki,
- 6) Recalling the joint statement issued on 1 October 2023 by Pax Christi Korea and Pax Christi USA on the Camp David Declaration of 18 August 2023 by the heads of state of the United States, Japan and the Republic of Korea,
- 7) Recalling the message of Pope Francis to the members of Pax Romana IMCS and ICMICA on the occasion of their centenary on 22 October 2022, namely the encouragement to be agents of social change to create a more inclusive, harmonious and sustainable world,
- 8) Recalling the Nagasaki Citizens’ Peace Charter resolved by the Nagasaki City Council on March 27, 1989,
- 9) Inspired by the Nagasaki Peace Declaration by Suzuki Shiro, Mayor of Nagasaki and Pledge for Peace, Mise Seiichiro, atomic bomb survivor representative presented at the 79th Nagasaki Peace Ceremony on August 9, 2024,
- 10) Welcoming the commitment to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament expressed by Pope Francis during his visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in November 2019,
- 11) Inspired by the tireless efforts and leadership of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, including through nuclear disarmament,
- 12) Looking forward to the positive outcomes of the United Nations Summit on the Future (SOTF), which will take place in New York on 22-23 September 2024, with the aim of

promoting peace and human security,

- 13) Looking forward to the fruitful outcome of the second plenary session of the Synod of the Synodalitas in Rome in October 2 to 27, 2024,
- 14) Welcoming Pope Francis' proclamation of the Jubilee Year 2025,
- 15) Welcoming the hosting of the World Youth Day (WYD) in Seoul in 2027,

We have identified the following challenges as an agenda for our common action;

- 1) Militarisation, arms race and disarmament
- 2) Peace treaty between the conflicting parties on the Korean Peninsula
- 3) Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)
- 4) North East Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NEANWFZ)
- 5) Reconciliation between the nations and peoples of the countries of past conflicts

1) Militarization, Arms Race and Disarmament

Over the past decades, Northeast Asia has witnessed significant military buildup among regional powers such as China, Japan, South Korea, and North Korea. The Korean Peninsula, in particular, has been a hotspot for military tensions.

We urge all political leaders in the region to freeze or reduce military budgets and redirect those funds towards initiatives that address climate change and issues related to human security and disaster prevention. This would not only enhance regional security by reducing the risk of armed conflict but also build resilience against natural disasters, benefiting all countries in the region.

2) Peace Treaty Among Parties to the Conflicts on the Korean Peninsula

The Korean War ended with an armistice agreement, not a peace treaty, leaving the Korean Peninsula technically in a state of war. Despite numerous diplomatic efforts, military tensions between North and South Korea persist, often exacerbated by military provocations and nuclear threats. Various summits and negotiations have aimed to address these issues, but a formal peace treaty has yet to be realized.

We urge the political leaders in the region to negotiate and sign a peace treaty among the involved parties, including North Korea, South Korea, China, and the United States. This treaty would formally end the Korean War, pave the way for reconciliation and diplomatic relations, and establish a framework for lasting peace on the peninsula.

3) Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)

Adopted in 2017 and entered into force in January 2021, the TPNW aims to comprehensively ban nuclear weapons and promote disarmament. North Korea's nuclear weapons program poses a significant threat to regional and global security. Other global powers, like China, Russia and USA, also possess substantial nuclear arsenals. As of now, about less than 100 countries have signed and ratified the TPNW, but key nuclear-armed states and their allies have not.

We urge all political leaders in the region, including nuclear-armed states and their allies, to ratify and implement the TPNW. This would contribute to global nuclear disarmament efforts and reduce the risk of nuclear conflict in Northeast Asia.

4) Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NEANWFZ)

Common Security concept emphasizes mutual security guarantees and cooperative approaches to addressing security threats, rather than unilateral military measures. A proposed treaty to establish Northeast Asia as a nuclear weapons-free zone, thereby banning the development, possession, and deployment of nuclear weapons in the region. Similar zones and country exist in Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia and Mongolia demonstrating the feasibility of such agreements.

We urge political leaders in the region to promote the establishment of a NEANWFZ, underpinned by a common security framework that ensures all countries' security concerns are addressed cooperatively. This would reduce nuclear risks and foster regional stability.

5) Reconciliation among the Nations and Peoples of the Countries of Past Conflicts

East Asia has a history of conflicts, including Japanese colonialism, Pacific war, the Korean War and Vietnamese War, leaving deep scars and unresolved grievances. While there have been efforts at diplomatic reconciliation, enduring historical animosities still affect international relations. Promoting understanding and empathy through cultural exchanges and dialogue among people specially youth can help heal historical wounds. It is also important to recognize internationally norms for reconciliation through official apologies for truth and justice, reparations, memorialization, prevention and non-recurrence.

We urge political, social and religious leaders to work together to promote reconciliation based on truth and justice in the region by addressing the root causes of conflict, reducing military tensions, and fostering mutual understanding. Implementing these measures would contribute to a more stable and harmonious region, benefiting not only the countries directly involved but also the broader international community.

We commit ourselves to the following tasks for our joint actions

- 1) Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (PWNW)
- 2) Pope's special message for the multiple 80th anniversaries in 2025
- 3) World Youth Day (WYD) Seoul 2027
- 4) Youth Leadership for Peace
- 5) International 10 Days of Prayer and Action for Peace without Nuclear Weapons

1) Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (PWNW)

We respectfully invite other bishops concerned about peace without nuclear weapons in other countries to consider joining the Partnership for a World Without Nuclear Weapons (PWNW) launched on 9 August 2023.

2) Pope's special message for the multiple 80th anniversaries in 2025

We respectfully request that His Holiness Pope Francis address the growing nuclear threat to peace in his message for the World Day of Peace on 1 January 2025, the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. We urge him in his message to consider the abolition and prohibition of all nuclear weapons by 2045, the 100th anniversary of the United Nations.

3) 2027 World Youth Day (WYD) in Seoul, Korea

We respectfully invite all leaders and members of Catholic peace and youth organisations to work together to prepare for World Youth Day 2027 in Seoul, to make it a global momentum to revive and launch a youth-led and youth-oriented global campaign for peace without nuclear weapons.

4) Youth Leadership for Peace

We respectfully invite the leaders and members of the Catholic Church in South Korea, Japan, the USA and other countries to work together to promote youth leadership for peace in their professional, social and political lives, in line with Catholic social teachings such as *Laudato Si* (2015), *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) and the Pope's messages for World Day of Peace (1 January) and World Youth Day (WYD).

5) International 10 Days of Prayer and Action for Peace without Nuclear Weapons: from August 6 to 15

We respectfully propose that the 10 days of prayer and action from August 6-15 be observed internationally, especially in Japan, Korea and the USA, to commemorate all the victims of the Pacific wars and colonial rule, as well as the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to renew our commitment to peace without nuclear weapons. The 10 days of prayer will culminate in the Assumption of Mary, Queen of Peace (15 August).

We invite all Catholics, especially bishops of the PWNW, members of Pax Christi and Pax Romana, to pray the prayer for world peace and the prayer for the intercession of Mary, Queen of Peace, adopted in Nagasaki on August 9, 2023, in their own languages on the 6th, 9th and 15th of each month from January 2025 and for ten days every year from August 6-15.

To ensure our commitment to the above challenges and tasks, we respectfully invite members of the Church, lay, religious or clergy, to join the Catholic Peace Forum, which is an open platform for action for peace and non-violence in the spirit of synodality, in partnership with people of all faiths and civil society, in the hope of building a just and sustainable peace in Asia and beyond.

We commit ourselves to continue organising a series of Catholic Peace Forums to promote peace and non-violence, especially in and beyond 2025, the Jubilee year, as well as the multiple 80th anniversaries of the end of the Pacific War, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the liberation of Korea and the founding of the UN.

Nagasaki, August 10, 2024

Co-organizers and Bishop Participants

- Archbishop Peter Michiaki Nakamura of Nagasaki Archdiocese, Japan
- Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Mitsuaki Takami of Nagasaki Archdiocese, Japan
- Archbishop John C. Wester of Santa Fe Archdiocese, USA
- Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Seattle Archdiocese, USA
- Archbishop Emeritus Antonio Ledesma, SJ, Co-president of Pax Christi Pilipinas
- Bishop Alexis Mitsuru Shirahama of Hiroshima diocese, Japan
- Bishop John Stowe, Kentucky Diocese, Bishop-President, Pax Christi USA (PCUSA)
- Bishop Emeritus Marc Stenger, Co-President, Pax Christi International (PCI)
- Bishop Emeritus Peter Kang, Jeju Diocese, Co-president of Pax Christi Korea (PCK)

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- Pax Christi USA (PCUSA)
- Pax Christi Pilipinas
- Pax Romane International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) International
- Pax Romana IMCS Asia-Pacific
- International Youth Training Center (IYTC) – Laudato Si Center (Chiangmai, Thailand)