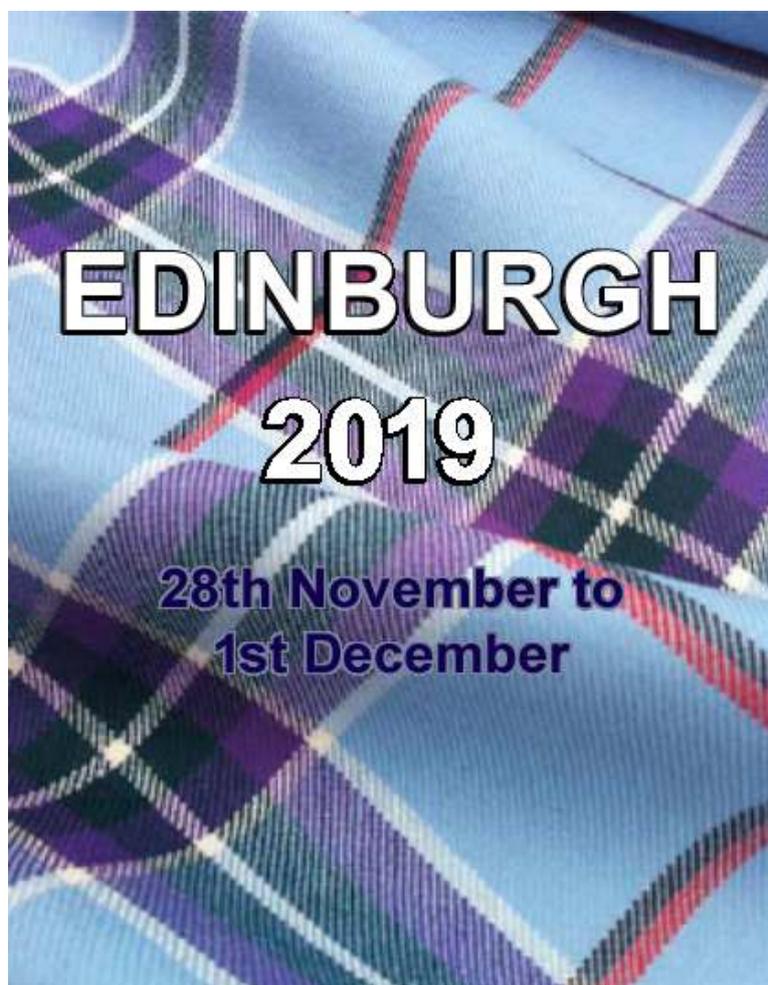


# 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns



## Conference Report

conscience  
TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR





**conscience**  
TAXES FOR PEACE NOT WAR

**JOIN US AT THE  
15TH INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE ON PEACE TAX  
CAMPAIGN IN EDINBURGH**



**28 NOVEMBER - 1 DECEMBER 2019  
QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, 7 VICTORIA  
TERRACE, EDINBURGH EH1 2JL**

**RSVP NOW AT  
[events@conscienceonline.org.uk](mailto:events@conscienceonline.org.uk)**

The tartan background on the front cover is the official 'Peace Tartan' which is why we adopted it into the conference theme.

# CONTENTS

- 4 Introduction
- 7 The Programme
- 8 The Delegates

## **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November**

- 11 Opening speeches - Robin Brookes, Brian Larkin
- 13 'Departments for Peace' Inaugural Talk by Vijay Metha

## **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

- 20 'Paying for Peace - Peace Philanthropy through History' Talk by Peter van den Dungen
- 27 Country reports: Germany, USA, Russia, Canada, UK, Belgium, Spain
- 35 Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) UN representative report
- 39 'Campaigns/Activism for Peace - what is my role?' Workshop led by Vijay Metha

## **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November**

- 41 CPTI General Assembly
- 42 Draft minutes of the General Assembly
- 44 Plenary sessions - free discussion of three key questions
- 46 Report on churches action in Germany
- 46 Derek Brett speaking: "Conscientious Objection across the world and the World Council of Churches"

## **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December**

- 49 Group visit to Faslane nuclear submarine base and the Faslane Peace Camp
- 50 Displays at the conference

## **51 Summary of accounts for the conference**

### **Appendices**

- 51 List of CPTI Members
  - 52 2017-18 CPTI accounts
  - 53 2018-19 CPTI accounts
  - 54 2020-21 CPTI budget
- Submissions to the UN (pages not numbered):
- CPTI Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Norway - October 2018
  - CPTI UPR Costa Rica - October 2018
  - CGNK-CPTI Joint Oral statement, UPR Eritrea - July 2019
  - CGNK-CPTI Joint Oral statement, UPR Lesotho - July 2019
  - CGNK-CPTI Joint Oral statement, Item 3 Mercenaries - September 2019
  - CPTI Oral Statement UPR Norway - September 2019
  - CGNK-CPTI Joint Oral statement, UPR USA - October 2019
  - CPTI Oral Statement UPR Gambia - March 2020

## INTRODUCTION

Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War chose to locate the 15th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns in Edinburgh. Hosted by the Edinburgh Conscience Group, it took place from November 28th to December 1st 2019 at the Quaker Meeting House on Victoria Terrace. This was the first time the international community of war tax resistance and peace tax campaigns had held a full international conference since the one in Bogota in 2013.

Anne McCullagh d'Lyske, our highly active member of the managing committee and founder of the Edinburgh Conscience Group found us an ideal spot at the Quaker Meeting House, not far from the castle and the main rail station. Anne managed all the site matters, catering and found interesting speakers for our event. She writes:



*“As a recently established group we were keen, both locally and throughout Scotland, to raise awareness of Conscience’s goals and ambitions for the world.*

*The preparations for the Conference took the better part of a year and involved many generous and helpful local contributors and volunteers. We are very grateful for their kind and unstinting efforts which went a long way towards making the Conference such a resounding success.*

*We wanted to give our delegates a true taste of Scottish hospitality from the start so obviously a local piper had to pipe the assembly in to the opening ceremony.”*

Thank you Anne for all your good energy, enthusiasm and hard work.

The theme we chose was ‘Paying for Peace Not Paying for War’ so very appropriately, on the Friday morning, peace historian Peter van den Dungen gave us a history of peace philanthropy. A report on his excellent talk is later in this report. You can also access a video of his talk and most of the rest of the conference on Conscience’s Facebook page: [https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page_internal)

We were honoured to have Vijay Metha to open our conference with his inaugural speech: ‘Departments for Peace and Peace Centres’. Later in the conference he led a workshop: ‘Campaigns/Activism for Peace - what is my role?’. These are also reported more fully in these pages and videos can be located on Conscience’s Facebook page.

Our prime purpose was to reinvigorate the international movement and rekindle the links between national organisations and individuals. We have had two interim, short conferences since Bogota in London at the Highbury Centre. These served to keep the lines open and Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) functioning but nothing more glamorous. Many ideas came out of these conferences but nothing much resulted.

There is potential for more work to carry out at the UN but also CPTI has a clear networking role. I stress networking - it has never been an umbrella organisation, indeed, it is the child of the international conferences, not the leader. However, maintaining a communication lifeline is very much needed to keep mutual support going between all the organisations and the lone individuals around the world.

We received reports from each of the attending organisations but also for the first time, video reports from Conscience Canada and a peace campaigner from Russia.

It was not all seriousness and work, on the Friday evening Anne and her helpers put on a ceilidh in a nearby church hall with food and dancing.

On the Saturday morning CPTI held its General Assembly and afterwards we discussed how to keep our campaigns going, including CPTI and future plans at the UN. Our current representative in Geneva, Christophe Barbey gave us a thorough picture of his work at the UN and outlined the possibilities for future work.

In the afternoon Derek Brett, who for many years represented us at the UN as 'our man in Geneva' gave a talk on conscientious objection around the world. This was followed by a showing of the film 'War School' with the option of discussing the churches action in Germany instead. These are both reported later.

Anne led us in our closing event - 'an Advent Vigil outside the Faslane Naval Base' where Trident is berthed, which reminded us all of the reality of the evil of the arms race and exactly what we are up against.

*"£244 billion and counting is being squandered on that soon to be internationally illegal Golden Calf of national hubris lying in the Clyde, and as the law presently stands - as regards taxpayers in the UK - we are all helpless to resist paying for it. Our poor suffering world both here and abroad simply cannot afford such a criminal waste of resources.*

*I hope the Edinburgh 2019 International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns helped to further our knowledge and understanding of the present iniquitous situation in the world today as regards this exorbitant and immoral spending on the weapons of war and mass destruction. I hope also that it gave us further tools and encouragement to keep up our good fight - in working towards our ultimate goal of achieving the right to fiscal Conscientious Objection for all mankind.*

*Edinburgh Conscience Group was happy and proud to invite Conscience and Peace Tax International to our conference - and hopefully soon to be independent - capital city."*

Website resources can be found here:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page_internal)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank:

Our staff at Conscience - Karen Robinson, Jonathan Maunders and Fay Salichou - for their hard work in preparing for the conference and making it such a resounding success.

The Executive Committee of Conscience: Taxes for Peace not War for their foresight and encouragement, particularly to Anne McCulloch d'Lyske for her inspired preparations for the conference and masterminding the search for venues in the most picturesque part of Edinburgh, Monica Frisch for her sound and generous financial management and to Robin Brookes for his unceasing efforts in promoting the conference worldwide and for putting together this splendid, very comprehensive report.



Brian Rutherford and Eva Gallova - Anne's ever willing and stalwart local supporters.

Robert Wylie, for his continuous encouragement, friendship and generosity.

Sonia Kerr for making her delightful curry for the ceilidh.

Charlie Hanks for his fabulous artisan sourdough bread.

Lisa Houston of Granton Hub for the two huge tureens of soup that filled us throughout the conference.

Andrew Macintyre, who at very short notice, piped us so beautifully into our opening ceremony.

Ceilidh Caleerie for their joyous playing and magnificent contribution to giving our foreign delegates such a great Scottish night out!

Brian Larkin of the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre for his continuous support and encouragement and the amazing display of Conscientious Objector archive materials.

Vijay and Shakti Mehta for their generous appearance and wise words.

Peter Van Dungen for his attendance and most thoughtful contribution.

Kate Ive for kindly showing us the maquette of her proposed anti war sculpture for Princes St Gardens.

The Quaker Meeting House and St Columba's under the Castle managements for their warm welcomes to our delegates.

Faslane Naval Base and police support who welcomed our 'First Sunday of Advent Ecumenical Humanist protest event' outside the base. One day, like the trumpets at Jericho, our ever growing and ever demanding voices for peace will surely bring those dreadful fences down and send those nuclear submarines packing!

Finally - to Wilhelmine Hoogendoorn and the dogged, heroic Faslane Peace Camp resident protestors who gave us all such a warm and generous welcome on a freezing, raw December day. Bless them for their extraordinary courage and conviction.

# PROGRAMME

## “Paying for Peace not Paying for War”

### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November

- 16.00 We arrive and register
- 18.00 Supper
- 18.30 Welcome, housekeeping
- 18.45 Welcoming speech by Brian Larkin, co-ordinator of the Peace and Justice Centre in Edinburgh
- 19.30 Vijay Metha speaking on the subject: How not to go to War - Creating Ministries / Departments for Peace around the World.
- 21.00 Depart Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House

### Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November

- 09.30 Peter Van den Dungen – Paying for Peace - peace philanthropy through history
- 10.30 Coffee
- 11.00 Country reports: UK, Germany, USA, Switzerland, Finland?
- 12.30 UN work report by Christophe Barbey
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 Workshop: Vijay Metha: Campaigns / Activism for Peace - What is my role?
- 15.15 Tea
- 16.45 Notices
- 17.00 Depart Edinburgh QMH
- 19.00 Supper at St Columba's Hall. Ceilidh and time to relax.
- 22.00 Depart St Columba's Hall

### Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November

- 09.00 Conscience and Peace Tax International General Assembly
- 11.00 Coffee
- 11.30 Plenary session:
  1. Keeping our campaigns together in the face of Brexit, plastic pollution and Extinction Rebellion taking the media limelight
  2. Prospects at the UN - forming a plan to promote Conscientious Objection to Military Taxes (COMT)
  3. CPTI - keeping the organisation and consequently our work at the UN going
- 13.30 Lunch
- 14.30 Derek Brett to speak - Conscientious Objection across the world and the World Council of Churches
- 15.30 Showing the film “War School” and discussion OR Churches action in Germany discussion
- 17.00 Tea
- 17.30 Closing remarks
- 18.00 Depart Edinburgh QMH
- Free discussion and meals out

### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December

- 09.00 Visit to the Trident submarine base at Faslane to bring solidarity to the peace camp there.
- 9.30 Coach departs for Faslane
- 14.00 Coach back to Edinburgh..

## REGISTERED DELEGATES

Name		Country	Organisation
Steve	Ballard	United Kingdom	Conscience
		<p>Steve Ballard was brought up in a pacifist farming community and has always understood that abusing labourers, livestock or land prejudices the ability of earth's integrated ecosystem to sustain the evolution of intelligent species on earth until the unpreventable disintegration of earth's solar system. He learned later that Immanuel Kant used the same understanding to demonstrate the self-destructive folly of war. Having studied chemical engineering, control engineering and systems engineering at university, and organisational change and project management since, Steve now devotes what time and energy he can afford to championing the pacifist philosophy first elaborated by Kant.</p>	
Robin	Brookes	United Kingdom	Conscience
		<p>I have been a member of Conscience since the early 1980's and a war tax resister since 2003. I was a member of the Peace Tax Seven, seeking a judicial review of UK tax laws. I am a member of Conscience's Executive Committee and a director of the holding company. I am also the treasurer for CPTI.</p>	
Monica	Frisch	United Kingdom	Conscience
		<p>I have been involved with Conscience for many years, serving on the Executive Committee and currently as one of the Directors and Treasurer. I have attended several of the International Conferences and am helping organise the 15th one to be held in Edinburgh.</p>	
Anne	McCullagh-DLyske	United Kingdom	Conscience
		<p>I'm a War Tax Resister and CO. I don't pay for war now. I won't ever pay for war in the future. So sue me! Blessings to all!</p>	
Vijay	Mehta	United Kingdom	Uniting for Peace
		<p>Vijay Mehta is an author and peace activist. He is Chair of Uniting for Peace and founding Trustee of Fortune Forum Charity. His notable books include 'The Economics of Killing' (Pluto Press, 2012) and 'Peace Beyond Borders' (New Internationalist, 2016). His current book is 'How Not To Go To War' (New Internationalist, 2019)</p>	
Shakti	Mehta	United Kingdom	Uniting for Peace
		<p>Shanti Mehta is a member of Uniting for Peace and wife of Vijay Mehta, Chair of Uniting for Peace.</p>	
Ahmed	Shahidov	Azerbaijan	Institute for Democracy and Human Rights
		<p>Director of the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights</p>	
Karen	Robinson	United Kingdom	Conscience
		<p>Hello. I am the Campaign Worker for Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War. I joined the staff team earlier this year and work three days a week in the London office. I have a blog called 'Fund War No More': <a href="http://blog.conscienceonline.org.uk">blog.conscienceonline.org.uk</a> Looking forward to meeting you and learning from you.</p>	

Peter	van den Dungen	United Kingdom	International Network of Museums for Peace (INMP);
		<p>Lecturer (&amp; then visiting lecturer) in peace studies, University of Bradford, 1976-2015. Founder &amp; general coordinator, International Network of Museums for Peace, 1992-2017. Trustee of The Peace Museum, Bradford.</p> <p>Chair, Bertha von Suttner Peace Institute, The Hague. I am passionate about peace education, peace museums, peace history, culture of peace and nonviolence, disarmament and have authored many publications in these areas.</p>	
Fay	Salichou	United Kingdom	Conscience
		Fundraising and Membership Officer at Conscience	
Jonathan	Mauders	United Kingdom	Conscience
		Office Co-ordinator at Conscience	
Symon	Hill	United Kingdom	Peace Pledge Union
		I am one of three staff (all part-time) at the Peace Pledge Union, a UK-based pacifist campaigning network. The PPU is a British section of War Resisters' International. I live in Oxford in southern England.	
Wilhelmena	Hoogendoorn	United Kingdom	Faslane Peace Camp
		I am a protester from Faslane Peace Camp, at the site of the Trident nuclear deterrent. I've been at the camp for two years. I am 56 and from The Netherlands.	
Jan	Birk	Germany	Netzwerk Friedensteuer
		Active in the Peace Movement since 1983, founding member of CPTI in 1994, member of the board since 2017. Head of Netzwerk Friedenssteuer, the German COMT organization Agricultural engineer, working for the protection of the environment. Father of five, active in the civil society for the labour union and a lot of other issues	
Dietmar	Czerny	Germany	Netzwerk Friedensteuer
		I was born 1967 in Munich. Work as electric engineer. Part of the CPTI board since 2010 in Sandjeford, currently chair.	
Hannelore	Morgenstern	Germany	Netzwerk Friedensteuer
		70 years, Germany Vice-chair of Netzwerk Friedenssteuer and till 2010 of CPTI. Retired (without tax refusing to the defence budget) for 5 years; previously I worked in youth work and then in "church service in the working world" (Mission in the Economies).	
Erica	Leigh	USA	National War Tax Resistance Co-ordinating Council
		I'm the sponsored representative of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC) in the United States. Also involved in anti-racist and migrant rights organizing.	

Christophe	Barbey	Switzerland	CPTI
		Peace activator and smile cultivator. I am CPTI representative at the United Nations in Geneva. I do research and advocacy for long term peace infrastructures, with specializations in peace and constitutions, peace as a human right, new forms of democracy, etc. I do not handover the part of my taxes going to the Swiss military budget. I symbolically let them peacefully take it at the counter, though specifying it is laundering blood money.	
Derek	Brett	Switzerland	International Fellowship of Reconciliation
		Derek Brett represented CPTI at the UN in Geneva from 2002 until 2011. In 2012, he became main representative of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation but continued the lobbying on conscientious objection to military service he had been doing with CPTI. Since 2017 he has been a member of CPTI's Board.	
John	Raven	United Kingdom	Conscience in Scotland



## OPENING SPEECHES

### **Robin Brookes - Committee member on Conscience Executive Committee and Treasurer of Conscience and Peace Tax International**

Welcome, on behalf of Conscience - Taxes for Peace Not War, to the 15th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns. It has been many years since the last conference in Bogota although Conscience and Peace Tax International organised two mini conferences in London since then.

Our association internationally is tenuous although in each of our countries we remain concerned about our taxes being used to deliberately kill people around the world. These military actions are not even in self-defence, they are for political reasons and Britain and the US are the major culprits. Our countries' military adventurism has caused chaos, destruction and death and made the world an increasingly volatile place.

We believe our human rights are being violated by being made to pay for war, just as much as if we were conscripted to fight. We don't want to pay for the military but we don't just want to be released from involvement in these conflicts. We want to influence governments and the way they deal with conflict. We want our taxes used to develop better tools for dealing with conflict, to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Conscientious objectors have been at the forefront of the peace movement for centuries but particularly since the First World War when so many defied conscription. They were instrumental in Britain in forming the Peace Pledge Union which has developed peace education and war resistance ever since.

So it is important that we conscientious objectors continue to meet every two years to develop solidarity and to discuss ways forward. It is also important that we maintain our special consultative status at the UN.

We have an exciting programme ahead of us this weekend, with a number of prominent speakers and some interesting discussions to be had. We start with two this evening:



### **Brian Larkin of the Peace and Justice Centre, Edinburgh.**

Brian began by saying it is an honour for Scottish peace campaigns to welcome us to Scotland. War tax resistance and peace tax is vital and he quoted Dwight Eisenhower: *“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”*

*This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children . . . This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron."*

He said he had friends in the US who are war tax resisters and he kept his income below taxable level to avoid paying for war. He first came to Scotland 40 years ago and on his return to the US he refused to register for military service.

Brian pointed to the pop-up banners around the room, depicting stories of conscientious objectors to WW1 in Scotland. These were made as part of a 'Legacies of Resistance to WW1' project at the Peace and Justice Centre.

Their latest project is the 'Opposing War Memorial' commemorating Conscientious Objectors (CO's). There is a profusion of war memorials around Edinburgh - 37 altogether. There are 8 in Princes Street Gardens. The Peace Centre held vigils to celebrate International Conscientious Objectors day. 80,000 people marched to oppose the First World War. Brian highlighted the thousands of CO's who died during that war. The Peace Centre think there is a need for an 'Opposing War Memorial' in Edinburgh and petitioned City of Edinburgh Council to erect such a monument. It was overwhelmingly welcomed and later welcomed by the Scottish Government. The Peace Centre started a competition to design the memorial to be erected in Princes Street Gardens. They wanted it to also include CO's today and those who resist war.



Kate Ive won the competition with her design for a bronze Handkerchief Tree and Brian introduced her to speak about her design. Kate showed slides and told us a story which inspired her creation. A CO meeting in 1916 which was being harangued by protesters who threatened to break in every time the audience cheered a speaker. So the chair asked the audience not to

cheer but to flutter handkerchiefs to show appreciation. Handkerchiefs were also significant in other ways. She then discovered Handkerchief Trees which are recognised widely as peace tree. There are three in Edinburgh so it seemed appropriate to build one out of bronze and set it in front of a low stone wall/seat which harks back to the stone quarry in Scotland where CO's were sent on hard labour.

## DEPARTMENTS FOR PEACE AND PEACE CENTRES Why Every Country Should Have Them

**Vijay Mehta - author and peace campaigner.**

### Introduction

Hello and good evening. Good to see you all. It is an honour to be at Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War Conference who are tirelessly campaigning for the legal right of those with a conscientious objection to war to have the entire military part of their taxes spent on peace building. Thanks to Anne McCullagh-D'lyske and the team of Conscience for giving me an opportunity to speak today to discuss my latest book '*How Not To Go To War*'. It is good to be here again as I was here last year speaking on 'UN: Peacemaker or Toothless Tiger?' at an event organised by Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre and University of Edinburgh.



It is good to be in Scotland where I must commend at least one party SNP's policy which remains opposed to the maintenance and replacement of Trident which should be applauded.

Dear Friends, UN Charter Goals of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and the goals of Conscience: Taxes for Peace not War and the message of my book '*How Not To Go To War*' are not much different as all of us are advocating for building a sustainable, peaceful world.

While we meet for this lecture, lots of changes are taking place in the world. Everywhere from Hong Kong to the Beirut, from Quito to Santiago, from Barcelona to London and Paris, frustration and violence is spreading throughout the world. Experts have spotted a pattern: these mass demonstrations are against elites in countries where democracy is a source of disappointment, corruption is seen as brazen and a tiny elite political class lives lavishly while the younger generation struggle to get by. Some of these protests have been successful in toppling governments and some are struggling to change policies of the governments.

UK is engulfed with the Brexit crisis and the US President, Donald Trump is flouting most of the international treaties like the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) treaty and agreements like the Paris Climate Change Accord. The world seems spinning out of control. West-Russia relations deteriorating with NATO threatening extension to Georgia and Ukraine. The Israel-Gaza border crisis festers with many protestors killed, and no just solution for Palestinians in prospect. US sanction on Iran and trade war with China and Turkey further destabilises the already volatile region.

Major power rivalries and proxy wars in the Middle East prevent the vitally needed peace in Syria, Yemen and Iraq undermining the UN System.

## **Understanding the Military Mindset**

Please allow me to ask a relevant question. Is peace possible? Can it pay and how do we build it into the fabric of daily life? Is war inevitable, necessary or beneficial, as we are often led to believe, with humanity doomed to ever increasing military spending or is it a charade to support the war economies. Years and even decades of perpetual war in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Libya have pushed militaristic spending to its highest ever level - \$1.8 trillion for 2018 (SIPRI). US has spent \$6 trillion since 2003 with a result that its economy crashed and the banks had to be bailed out to the tune of \$16 trillion, directly affecting the poorest of the society.

Global impact of violence in 2018 was \$14.76 trillion, a direct result of it is the 75 million refugees forced to flee from conflict and persecution. By contrast, the UN budget for peacekeeping operations was only \$6.2 billion for 2018, less than the yearly budget of Tokyo fire station, or what US citizens spend on plants and flowers in a year. Dear friends, no society on earth can afford to waste trillions of dollars every year.

In my book, *How Not To Go To War*, I have explained the psychological underpinnings of enforced culture of fear and militarism which is responsible why do taxpayers consent to pay billions, if not trillions of dollars to support military structures when their country faces no realistic threat of invasion and has not been attacked for centuries?

Real security doesn't come from belligerent posturing or reckless military interventions in Middle East spreading conflicts rather than settling them. Real security comes from working for peace and justice, cooperation and diplomacy and addressing the root causes we all face like terrorism and insecurity, widening gap between the "haves" and "have nots" and climate change crisis. The systematic destruction of arms control and treaties and disregard for international law by some world leaders have led to a new nuclear arms race and concern for national and global security. US decision to abdicate the INF Treaty and Paris Climate Accord are a great threat to the security of the planet and risks an ecological catastrophe.

Dear Friends, to understand the military mindset we need not go far. Even the Church of England has £10 million invested in global arms firms. In May 2019 Westminster Abbey (a church) hosted a bizarre and shameful thanksgiving celebration to mark the 50th anniversary of the UK's Trident nuclear submarine system, armed with the kind of weapons infamous for indiscriminately killing 100,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The event took place in the presence of government ministers and the royal family, showcasing how political, social and even religious elites combine to glorify the weapons of apocalypse.

We have learnt nothing from the death toll of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as US and Russia after abrogating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Treaty (INF) are developing the new usable nuclear capable weapons, a dangerous development which if used in a conventional conflict could trigger a third world war. The truth is that there is no way to win a nuclear war without eliminating civilisation.

With the rise of populists, far-right nationalist movements, and authoritarian leaders, the rules-based global order is being dismantled in front of our eyes, at the moment we need it most. The ultra-nationalists worship military along with racism, swaggering masculinity and dismissal of environment which is of great concern. The world faces complex overlapping crises in the form of poverty, inequality, climate change, forced migration, conflicts, terrorism and intolerance, dangers from new technology - cyber warfare, artificial intelligence and hypersonic missiles.

The military sucks the blood from the economy like some vast leech which leads US and other Western economies to crumble while it still continue to ask its government for more fighter planes they don't need. Devastating result of the large military spending is that over 820 million people are suffering from hunger and go to bed without any food.

Dear Friends, US military is the largest consumer of petroleum and its destructive impact on the environment is extensive and it is a bigger polluter of the environment than the 140 countries combined.

Why is the world spinning out of control? This is because the global economy is rigged in favour of rich countries at the expense of the poor countries, also because of our wrong spending priorities. People are brainwashed with deceptions and mistruths and are led to believe that we can't afford the National Health Service (NHS), education, public transport, renewable energy, doctors, teachers, nurses, fire fighters, social workers and police.

Things we can afford and the government draconian laws force us to support are unregulated banks, war in the Middle East, £93 billion corporate welfare for 2014, 2015, tax cuts for high earners, £42 billion for HS2 Railway, 11% pay-raise for MPs, £7 billion for Westminster Parliament refurbishment and, £205 billion for replacing the Trident Nuclear Submarine.

### **Departments for Peace - A Great Institutional Invention**

Dear friends, we need to change this culture of militarism, populism and extremism or we will face the scenario of what John F Kennedy said in his speech to the UN in 1961., 'Mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind.' This dire situation demands strong collective action, with new institutions to strengthen the international rule-based order, as you never change things by doing the same things again and again. People are taking to the streets and demanding new institutions to harness change. To change something, build a new model that makes the old model obsolete. My new book, *How Not To Go To War* has a way out. It examines how governments can bring these new institutions about.

It is a shameful fact that although almost every country has a Ministry / Department of War / Defence, very few have a Ministry / Department for Peace. There is an urgent need for ground-breaking institutions like Departments for Peace which will create the infrastructure for peace at governmental level. These departments will promote a culture of non-violence both at home and abroad, by seeking common ground through dialogue, diplomacy, negotiations and alternatives to war. Departments for Peace will institutionalise peace in

the same way that war has been institutionalised by Departments for Defence.

Departments for Peace will promote a foreign policy of live and let live principle. It will not apply threats, sanctions and bombings and instead it will have less confrontational approach to Russia, China, Iran and North Korea.

Departments for Peace all over the world will work for the promotion of culture of peace and eventual abolition of war. A Minister for Peace will be a voice at the Cabinet table to speak up for non-violent conflict resolution and alternative to war. It will advise on policies which can be developed to reduce the potential of conflict. It will provide and coordinate government resources to foster understanding in Britain and the world of how war can be avoided and peace achieved.

It will work to undo the systems that result in violence including the arms trade, racism, environmental destruction and shift the focus from war making to a culture of peace advancing practical techniques to avoid outbreaks of violence before they arise. Peace departments will also support and promote research into the causes and impacts of conflicts, monitoring potential areas of conflict and implement policies for conflict resolution. It will produce materials to be used by parliamentarians and public debates promoting negotiations and alternatives to conflicts.

Ministries and infrastructures for Peace will include local peace committees, peace councils, peace institutes, early warning systems, truth and reconciliation commissions, education and training programmes for peace building, schools and universities implementing peace education. So really, thinking about the comprehensive architecture from local communities to state, provincial, national, regional and global levels doing peace work and advocacy with projects, programmes and actual institutions and architecture like Departments for Peace and Peace Centres are needed to implement peace.

### **Successful Examples of Departments for Peace - Costa Rica and Ethiopia**

Among the countries that have already established a Department for Peace, Costa Rica and Ethiopia are shining examples of shifting the focus away from war-making. In 1948 Costa Rica abolished its military, allowing it to spend more on health, education and international peace. That is one of the main reasons Costa Rica, a Central American country of 5 million people, tops the Happy Planet Index, which measures personal well-being.

In contrast most of the countries with huge military budgets and possessing nuclear weapons have a level of peace which remains far below the global average. According to the Global Peace Index 2018, the ranking of UK is 45, France 60, China 110, USA 128, Russia 154.

In 2018, Ethiopia established a Ministry for Peace and in a ground-breaking move, its Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, brokered a peaceful resolution to a 20-year-old border conflict with Eritrea which had claimed more than 100,000 lives. Relations between the

two countries have improved, with flights and communications resuming, separated families reunited and embassies reopened. It is a great news that the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed for his services to peace.

### **UN Resolution supports building Ministries 'Departments for Peace**

United Nations General Assembly draft resolution (REV. 4126/10I supports building Ministries / Departments of Peace within governments to strengthen the Culture of Peace. The UN resolution cites all documents on the written on Culture of Peace since 1945. These include Charter of the UN, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), UN Year, Decade and Programme for Culture of Peace and Nonviolence, constitution of UNESCO and global partnership for prevention of Armed Conflict. All of them point out the need of a Ministry / Department of Peace. So this idea is reinforced by United Nations as well and works for building a peaceful world.

### **Peace Centres - New Concept of Peace Building for Individuals. Civil Society and NGOs**

One of the roles of Departments for Peace will be to open Peace Centres in major cities and towns to act as training, community and educational hubs for peace builders and community leaders, hosting inter-faith dialogue, multi-cultural activities and seminars on environmental sustainability, reducing knife crime, violence, shootings and murder. These centres will be the engines for cultural transformation. They will also address divisions in society by promoting a culture of peace in which conflicts can be resolved in a non-confrontational way.

Peace Centres will help create a vibrant local community, training in a non-violent way of life, through methods of reconciliation and conflict resolution, which will help in revitalising the society. It will seek to reconcile differences by community relations programmes, de-radicalisation efforts, prison visits, public diplomacy and outreach. By opening peace/social centres or franchises in each city, town and village, the peace movements can contain violence and foster a culture of non-violence. The Peace Centres will work towards violence prevention, at home and abroad. It will work with local community for reducing gang violence, drug and alcoholism abuse and meaningfully reduce aimless military pursuits and bloated defence spending.

At the global level, Peace Centres will give environmentally sustainable peace- building support and humanitarian aid resources - food, healthcare, education and more - to assist countries ending conflict.

To avoid future wars such as Afghanistan, Iran, Yemen and Libya and also to train present and future leaders and activists for peace building, we need infrastructures for peace like we have hospitals, ministries for health and education, universities, training nurses, doctors, pharmacists, health clinics, centre for disease control and research - when you look at the architectures that fund them or academics or psychologists that train fire fighters, a whole architecture is needed for fighting fires in the cities and communities when it comes to fire response. We also need to build institutional architecture to address violence, knife crime and conflicts effectively at every level within our communities, our

countries and globally. That will help our ability to transform and counter violence, military and war options to provide alternatives.

### **Making Peace a Profitable Industry**

To start a peace industrial revolution, and dedicate ourselves for creating infrastructures for peace which will work for the benefit of humanity. Against the huge military spending peace can be feasible at a fraction of the cost of military interventions.

It is in the interest of big businesses Fortune 500 companies who operate around the globe to operate in peaceful atmosphere for their business to flourish. These big and small businesses will be too willing to give funding to entrepreneurs for prevention of conflict and establishing urgently needed institutions that can build culture of peace.

### **Culture of Peace is Universal**

The culture of peace is universal. It is shared by people and nations worldwide. A peaceful society is one that acts responsibly for the needs of the entire planet and the beings that inhabit it, a society that is just and sustainable and not characterised by sudden outbreaks of violence and war.

Wars and militarism make us less safe rather than protect us, that they kill, injure and traumatize adults, children and infants, severely damage the natural environment, erode civil liberties, and drain our economies, siphoning resources from life-affirming activities. We should engage in and support nonviolent efforts to end all war and preparations for war and to create a sustainable and just peace.

It is analogous to the Confucian concept of "Ren," altruistic virtue encompassing kindness, compassion, and goodness promoting the welfare of others. The first duty of government is to safeguard the lives of its citizens, but this mantra was long ago hijacked by arms dealers and warmongers. It is incumbent for all the countries of the world to take peace as seriously as they take war, and build permanent institutions to this end for the transformation of the society.

### **Way Forward**

So let's work together to fight the challenges we face as a human race. Let us combine our resources and work for a better future for all living creatures on this unique planet earth, because I strongly believe that when we work together, we can achieve extraordinary things. Together we can overcome the threats that affect us as a global community and together we can create a better future for ourselves and our children through forging dialogue, diplomacy, cooperation, collective resolve, innovative partnerships in pursuit of sustainable peace, justice and human dignity.

Most of the people have never killed anyone. 102 countries have abolished death penalty. 22 countries including Costa Rica, Iceland, Haiti, Liechtenstein, The Marshall Islands and many more have no armies. 47 countries in our planet have relatively peaceful societies including European Union, Batek of Malaysia, Hadza of Tanzania, Martu of Australia, Lepchas of Himalayas and numerous others. No one has attacked those countries, so in

reality non-killing cultures and building a peaceful society is a work in progress. So we can build foundations of peace by adopting non-violence as a mode of action.

## **Conclusion**

When you look through the burning glass of media you mainly see, catastrophes, wars, lies, hypocrisy and destruction. Warmongering dominates the headlines and peace seems to be fading and suppressed by authoritarian leaders. What we all know is a narrow view of the whole picture.

Men, women and children in their billions have suffered the atrocities of war, poverty, human induced environmental disaster with the persistence of ongoing conflicts in various parts of the world. So, how do we save succeeding generations from scourge of war and militarism. The way out is to build Culture of Peace at individual, national and global level by the establishment of Departments / Ministries for Peace and Peace Centres Worldwide.

Dear Friends, global civil society must continue to play a critical role particularly governments and it's leaders who often make decisions based on self interest of the economic and political elites as is evident from the recent US congress decision to allocate half of its budget 2020 / 2021 an amount equal to over \$5700 billion to the military and the rest for healthcare, jobs, infrastructure etc.

As peace activists, our job is to help set up political agenda, provide support to policy makers and mobilise resources around issues. Radical social change doesn't just happen. Change happens when people take action together in non-violent ways that are effective and strategic to build foundations for peace. My message of hope is to empower people to build those foundations and networks of peace by establishing Departments for Peace and Peace Centres in all countries of the world for real and positive change.

Dear friends, the peace movement can and must establish a strong institutional base (Departments for Peace) from which to grow. We need a peace industrial complex (that profits from preventing conflict) sustained by the same combination of public and private enterprises that keeps the military industrial complex going, generation after generation. War has been institutionalised, yet all these weapons have not made the world less violent. Only by institutionalising peace at many levels of society can the peace movement become coherent and powerful enough to face down the many commercial and official networks that have a vested interest in armed violence.

With peace baked into our institutional framework, in the same way that warfare is already budgeted for.

I'm encouraged by the comparative research of scholars in a book, 'Why Civil Resistance Works' which provides evidence that non-violent campaigns are twice as likely to succeed against principally violent ones. Indian independence movement and the Civil Rights movement in the past are examples of successful non-violent struggles. Movements like Black Lives Matter, Me Too, recent Extinction Rebellion protests in London and Hong Kong are recent examples that the civil society of today have what it takes to change the world as

the world is ready to be moved.

As always, cynics continue to deride the attempts of us peace activists to make a just, equitable, sustainable and peaceful society, as naive efforts which will accomplish nothing, or make matters worse. I think their dismissive attitude is just an excuse to do nothing, take no action and keep business as usual.

Our hope is in the inventiveness and flexibility of future human beings who will harness the power of technology for finding and using cheaper and sustainable sources of energy. By using our critical thinking and creativity, and willingness to work together to solve future challenges and forge a common sustainable future for all, sharing the finite resources of our planet equitably and sustainably in a peaceful and compassionate way.

Dear friends, in conclusion let me say that dreams never get fulfilled, commitments do. It is protest and activism which brings change and always have. The publication of my book, *How Not To Go to War*, and establishing Departments for Peace and Peace Centres worldwide, are steps in the right direction, which will permeate non-violence and a culture of peace. This will ultimately put an end to a culture of militarism, violence and war. This is an aspiration for which I am willing to devote the rest of my life.

Thank you for listening.

## PAYING FOR PEACE

### Peace Philanthropy Through History

Talk by Peter van den Dungen, Chair of the Bertha von Suttner Peace Institute



#### Peace Philanthropy - Then and Now

Although the world-wide struggle for peace is not yet won, many of today's peace-makers are unaware of the efforts key philanthropists have made since the beginning of the industrial revolution. The extracts below are from Peter van den Dungen's presentation at the recent International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns in Edinburgh, which he authored for the International Network of Museums for Peace.

**Andrew Carnegie (1835 - 1919)** believed that the rich were merely trustees of their wealth and should distribute it for the betterment of humanity. By the time of his death, he had given away \$350 million.

Passionate about education, he financed the

building of nearly 3,000 public libraries. He founded museums, and other educational and scientific institutions. Carnegie also made many donations to black institutions in the US. He was a friend of Booker T. Washington, a former slave who became a leading African-American educator.

Carnegie was born in Dunfermline near Edinburgh, Scotland. Because of poverty, his parents emigrated to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1848). In the early 1860s he founded his first companies. Eventually, he owned the largest iron & steel works in the US. In 1901 he sold his steel empire for \$400 million, making him the richest man in the world. In today's dollars, he would have been comfortably ahead of Bill Gates or Warren Buffett.

A strong opponent of war, Carnegie used a large part of his fortune for efforts promoting its speedy abolition. Between 1903 and 1914 he endowed four trusts or foundations, all in the cause of international peace, and financed the building of three imposing "temples of peace".

Carnegie's firm belief that arbitration and international law would do away with war was given practical expression in his funding of the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Pan-American Union Building in Washington, D.C., and the Central American Court of Justice in Managua, Nicaragua.

Today, the Peace Palace in Cartago, Costa Rica is home to the International Court of Justice of the UN. The Pan-American Union Building houses the Organisation of American States, the first of the world's regional organisations.

In 1910 he created the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, endowing it with \$ 10 million, the equivalent of \$ 3.5 billion today. Through his Hero Fund, he hoped to replace the blood-stained heroes of the battlefield with the civilian heroes who saved lives rather than taking them.

**Albert K. Smiley (1828 - 1912)** was an American hotel proprietor who organised and hosted at his resort hotel at Lake Mohonk (New York State) influential annual conferences. At first, they concerned the situation of native Americans (from 1883), and also of black Americans (from 1890). The success of these meetings encouraged him to apply the conference idea also to the question of the abolition of war.

The first annual Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration was held in 1895. Later conferences would be attended by up to 300 prominent educators, lawyers, peace activists, religious leaders, statesmen, and also admirals and generals. At the last one (1916), former US President W.H. Taft introduced a scheme for an international organisation for the prevention of war.

The conferences had a far-reaching effect on the American peace movement. Andrew Carnegie and Edwin Ginn were regular participants. Smiley helped draft a proposal that eventually led to the creation of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (1910).

**Alfred Nobel (1833 - 1896)** was fascinated by explosives and patented epoch-making and very profitable inventions such as the Nobel Igniter and dynamite. They revolutionised mining, tunnel blasting, road building, and warfare. He built some 90 factories in 20 countries on all continents for the industrial exploitation of his inventions.

In his will (1895), Nobel left his enormous fortune for the creation of five annual prizes, first awarded in 1901. Today, each prize comes with a cheque for \$ 1.1 million. The award for "champions of peace" is largely due to his long friendship with the Austrian baroness

Bertha von Suttner, who wrote the bestselling novel *Lay Down Your Arms! (Die Waffen nieder!)*, 1889). She convinced him to support the peace movement.

In 1905, Von Suttner became the first woman to receive the peace prize. She was a prominent lobbyist at the Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907. In 2013, during the celebrations for the centenary of the Peace Palace in The Hague, she became the first woman to have her sculpture displayed in it.

### **Priscilla Peckover (1833 - 1931)**

From 1879, Priscilla Peckover successfully educated and mobilised women in the Women's Local Peace Association movement for the abolition of war. The Association had members in 30 countries. She founded a quarterly journal, *Peace and Goodwill* (1882), that she wrote, published and financed for the next fifty years, until her death at age 97.

She gave generously to the Peace Society which was the leading peace organisation in Britain before World War I. A linguist and committed internationalist, she also financed pacifists and peace groups in continental Europe. Her writings and example encouraged women everywhere to speak out in public against war and the danger and waste of military expenditure.

Peckover grew up in a wealthy English private banking family of Quakers - Christian pacifists who emerged in the 1650s. Ever since, Quakers have been important advocates and funders of peace, especially in the English-speaking world.

### **Jan Bloch (1836 - 1902)**

Born in Russian Poland, Jan Bloch (Jean de Bloch) constructed railways and amassed a fortune in the enterprising climate of the 1860s and 1870s. A keen student of military affairs, he published an astonishing and prophetic 6-volume work entitled *The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations* (1898). It argued that a war between the European powers would cause devastation on a scale unlike any war of the past and thus had to be avoided at all costs.

Bloch influenced Tsar Nicholas II's call for a peace conference to halt the arms race, which resulted in the First Hague Peace Conference (1899). Bloch was called its "spiritual father". In order to instruct and warn a large public, he created and financed the International Museum of War and Peace in Lucerne, Switzerland, the first museum of its kind.

### **Edwin Ginn (1838 - 1914)**

Edwin Ginn was passionate about world peace, and created and endowed the World Peace Foundation (1910). It funded publications and conferences promoting arbitration, disarmament and peace. He also funded public lectures, notably Bertha von Suttner's triumphant 6-month tour of the US (1912). He strongly believed that these activities helped to change public opinion. This was highly necessary: Ginn calculated that the sum spent annually throughout the world to advance peace was barely one-thousandth of that spent for military purposes.

Ginn was an innovative and successful textbook publisher and salesman in Boston. Ginn & Company was bought by the Xerox Corporation in 1968.

He left one third of his estate to the World Peace Foundation. On its 101st anniversary (2012), it became part of Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Ginn sometimes collaborated with Andrew Carnegie in their pursuit of world peace.

### **Johan G.D. Wateler (1858 - 1927)**

Johan G.D. Wateler was director of the Oranje-Nassau Hypotheekbank in The Hague. He stipulated in his will, drawn up in 1916 during World War I, that his considerable fortune should go to the Dutch state for the awarding of an annual prize for “private persons or institutions ... who have notably furthered the cause of peace by word or deed”. The Government rejected the legacy and entrusted its administration to the Carnegie Foundation which owns and manages the Peace Palace (where the award ceremony takes place).

The Wateler Peace Prize was first awarded in 1931 to Sir Eric Drummond, Secretary General of the League of Nations (precursor of the UN). The prize is the second oldest continuous award of its kind, after the Nobel Peace Prize.

From 2004, the award was renamed Carnegie Wateler Peace Prize and given every second year. In 2012 the prize went to War Child, an organisation supporting children and young people affected by war.

### **Henry Ford (1863 - 1947)**

Founder of the Ford Motor Company based near Detroit, Michigan (1903), Henry Ford pioneered assembly line mass production. When his one millionth car rolled off the line (December 1915), Ford was on his way to Europe on his famous Peace Ship. This was a spectacular effort to stop World War.

When US President Woodrow Wilson proved unable to involve his country in an effort at mediation to halt the war, Ford supported Rosika Schwimmer’s proposal for a Neutral Conference for Continuous Mediation. He chartered a Danish steamship, Oscar II, which on 4th December 1915 left New York for Scandinavia.

### **John D. Rockefeller Jr. (1874 - 1960)**

In 1946, John D. Rockefeller Jr. made possible the construction of the UN headquarters in New York City by buying land in Manhattan at a personal cost of \$ 8.5 million and donating it to the UN.

He was the only son of the founder of Standard Oil Company. Extending the philanthropy of his father, he gave away about \$ 537 million. In 1927 he had donated \$ 2 million for a library for the League of Nations in Geneva (now European Office of the UN).

In 2012, in celebration of the 85th anniversary of his donation, a new reading room was inaugurated at the UN in Geneva: the “John D. Rockefeller Jr. League of Nations and United Nations Archives Reading Room”. At the same time, an exhibition showed the vital role of philanthropy in the growth of international cooperation after the devastation of World War I.

### **Cyrus Eaton (1883 - 1979)**

Cyrus Eaton was a Canadian-born American industrialist and banker whose career was inspired by his meetings with John D. Rockefeller Sr. Later, during the Cold War, Eaton devoted much time and money to promoting better relations between the capitalist and communist worlds.

Eaton was impressed by the Russell-Einstein manifesto on the dangers of nuclear weapons (1955). Two years later he hosted the first meeting of leading intellectuals and scientists from East and West to discuss the issue. They met as private individuals, not

representatives of their governments. This was the start of the influential Pugwash Conferences on Science & World Affairs, named after his remote boyhood home in Nova Scotia, Canada. In 1995, on the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Pugwash movement shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Joseph Rotblat, its leading organiser.

### **Nobuo Nakano (1910 - 2010)**

War is detrimental to health, and medical doctors have often been in the forefront of the peace movement. Also Dr. Nobuo Nakano, a Japanese ophthalmologist (eye specialist) who experienced the inhumanity of war during his military service in Burma during World War II.

From 1981, he became very active in the citizens' peace movement in Kyoto which organised annual exhibitions on war for the promotion of peace. At the same time, Ritsumeikan University in Kyoto proposed the creation of a museum to promote peace and democracy.

With the help of Nakano's gift of \$ 5 million, the Kyoto Museum for World Peace was opened in 1992. It is the first and so far only peace museum in the world established within a university. The museum is one of the largest and best peace museums in Japan, and also the first to honestly display the country's war-time past. In 1998 and 2008, the museum hosted the conferences of the International Network of Museums for Peace.

**Young Seek Choue (1921 - 2012)** was the founder of Kyung Hee University in Seoul, South Korea. Its Graduate Institute of Peace Studies was the first such institute in Asia (1984).

In 1981, Choue successfully petitioned the General Assembly of the United Nations for the establishment of an annual UN International Day of Peace, and also for the designation of 1986 as the UN International Year of Peace.

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the UN, Choue initiated and financed a World Encyclopedia of Peace (1986), the first of its kind. He also commissioned a UN Peace Park and Global NGO complex on the campus of his university.

### **Joan Kroc (1928 - 2003)**

Following the death (1984) of her husband Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald's, Joan Kroc gave away a large part of her fortune, estimated at several billion dollars. Anti-war efforts and peace education projects greatly benefitted from her generosity.

In 1986 she donated \$ 12 million to the University of Notre Dame (Indiana) for the creation of an Institute for International Peace Studies. Reluctantly, she allowed it to carry her name. In 2001, she gave more than \$ 25 million for the founding of a School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego (California). In her will, she left an additional \$ 50 million to each university for their peace studies programmes.

A strong opponent of the US war against Iraq, Kroc donated \$ 200 million to National Public Radio for its unbiased coverage. She left \$ 1.8 billion to the Salvation Army for the establishment of youth centres around the US.

### **Cora Weiss (1934)**

Cora Weiss has devoted her life to the movements for human rights, women's rights, and peace. She was a national leader of Women Strike for Peace, which helped to bring about the end of nuclear testing in the atmosphere. In 1969, she led in organising the largest protest against the war in Vietnam. As a Trustee of Hampshire College (Massachusetts), she supported the student campaign to divest stocks in companies doing business in apartheid South Africa. This developed into a national campaign.

Weiss is President of the Hague Appeal for Peace which brought 10,000 people to The Hague in 1999 to celebrate the centenary of the First Hague Peace Conference.

In 2000, Weiss participated in the drafting of what became UN Security Council Resolution 1325, on Women, Peace and Security. It demands full participation of women in peace negotiations. A "doer" since college days, she has also been a donor for many years, running a small family foundation which supports peace and justice organisations.

### **Ted Turner (1938)**

Turner is an American media tycoon, founder of Cable News Network (CNN, 1980), which revolutionised news media. He is also one of the largest private landowners in the US.

In 1998 Ted Turner pledged to donate \$ 1 billion to the United Nations and created the UN Foundation to administer the gift. This amounted then to one third of his wealth. The UN Foundation is the largest source of private funding to the UN. It is intended to encourage other donors to support the world organisation. The gift is used to attract additional funds for UN causes through public-private partnerships. For every dollar the foundation spends, it brings in an additional \$ 1.25 from partners (individuals, charities, corporations, governments).

The funds are used to address the world's most pressing problems. They include children's health and climate change. The UN Foundation also promotes a stronger relationship between the US and the UN.

### **Akio Komatsu (1944)**

Akio Komatsu is a Japanese industrialist who founded Komatsu Electric Industry in 1973. In 1994 he established the Human, Nature & Science Institute Foundation and began his philanthropic activities.

Realising his country's post-World War II responsibilities, Komatsu has been active in "grassroots" diplomacy. He has visited many places of remembrance in the world (including war & peace museums), expressing sorrow, offering flowers, and making donations. His unique humanitarianism is meant to pave the road to world peace from the Japanese archipelago and the Korean Peninsula where the presence of three nuclear powers (China, Russia, US) is significant.

Komatsu has sponsored many international seminars on peace, health, and the environment. In his efforts promote a "culture of harmony", he has published *The Analects of Confucius*, and *The Chinese Classic Quotations* in several languages. He is also one of the main promoters of Bertha von Suttner in Japan.

### **Mo Ibrahim (1946)**

Alfred Nobel's peace prize has inspired the creation of hundreds of other awards for peace-making (and related activities). None is more generous than the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. The prize consists of a payment of \$ 5 million (in ten annual instalments), followed by an annual payment of \$ 200,000 for life.

Initiated in 2007, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation awards African leaders who have governed well, have raised living standards in their country, and have left office voluntarily. These exacting criteria have so far resulted in only three prizes. In 2012, the foundation awarded Desmond Tutu a \$ 1 million prize for his "lifelong commitment to speaking truth to power".

Ibrahim is a Sudanese-born mobile communications entrepreneur and billionaire who built one of the first mobile-phone networks in Africa (thereby contributing to the development of civil society). His foundation also produces an annual Index of African Governance, ranking the continent's 53 governments.

### **Richard Branson (1950)**

Richard Branson is one of Britain's best known and unconventional entrepreneurs who is also an adventurer. The founder and chairman of Virgin Group has pledged \$ 3 billion to combat global warming.

In the 1990s, with rock musician Peter Gabriel, Branson discussed with Nelson Mandela the formation of an independent group of leaders whose combined influence and expertise would support peaceful conflict resolution and human rights. Mandela launched The Elders in 2007, with funding from Branson and Pam & Pierre Omidyar (founders of eBay).

In 1995, to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, he donated a sculpture by Josefina de Vasconcellos to Coventry Cathedral. It represents the reunion of those divided by war. With his help, identical sculptures have been placed in Belfast, Berlin and Hiroshima, on behalf of the people of Coventry. Branson is a leader of the Global Zero movement for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

### **Bill (1955) & Melinda Gates (1964)**

In 2000, Bill Gates, cofounder of Microsoft Corporation, was widely regarded as the world's wealthiest individual. He indicated his intention to give away most of his fortune and some years later became a fulltime philanthropist - like Andrew Carnegie a century earlier.

In 2012, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (originally established in 1994) had an endowment of \$ 36 billion, and employed more than 1,000 staff. The foundation's main focus is on global health, education, and ending poverty. It has made major contributions to the eradication of polio, and the struggle against AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. Its annual budget for health (\$ 800 million) almost equals that of the UN's World Health Organisation (WHO).

Deeply affected by a visit to Tanzania in 1993, Bill and Melinda Gates sponsor many programmes in Africa, including family planning, and developing new crops and farming methods - both crucial for overcoming hunger.

## COUNTRY REPORTS

### GERMANY - JAN BIRK from Netwerk Friedensteuer



**Central demand:** Our nonprofit organization pleads for the Civil Tax Law/ Zivilsteuergesetz (**ZStG**): So that tax payers opt in their tax return for the use of their taxes exclusively for civilian or for all (civilian and military) purposes. Thus people determine about the flow of tax money before Parliament sets the budget. This month we have expanded the argument to the environmental damage caused by the German Bundeswehr (Army) and defense industry in Germany. The leaflet was sent to networked organizations. Since March 2019 **Jan Birk is chairman** of our association (succeeding Wolfgang Steuer).

**Lobbying in the Churches:** We continue our work in various Protestant Regional Churches [dioceses] and received a rejection or no negotiation of our concerns. During the Kirchentag (Lay movement assembly) we ran a booth again in 2019 in Dortmund and received a grant from the Ev. Regional Church in Baden.

Prior to the EKD synod (top organ of the Protestant Church in Germany) we contacted individual synods and gave them the request to the ZStG – failure (Nov.)

**Political lobbying:** Best success: The left-wing party-Die LINKE- took over our ZStG first in their election program and later in the party program. But that does not mean that all party members know about it and support our cause. – Conclusion: Political lobbying needs the contact with local parties and local people. We are too few and perhaps too “shy” to be successful.

#### **Individual activities:**

One lady does not file a tax return and returns every letter to the tax office with the remark "Acceptance refused". During the year her account will be seized and the amount due will be debited with fees for reminder and seizure.

In February 2019, the negotiation of a lawsuit by a woman of Pax Christi took place before the Nuremberg Finance Court - with numerous spectators. Her claim was denied.

**Group action 2018:** We encouraged all concerned persons to notify the tax office with a letter and symbolic quarterly deposit: *We transfer 4,30 € to the tax office with the urgent request to work for freedom of conscience in the tax payment.* We sent the texts to Global Campaign on Military Spending to make this paradoxical action part of the 2018 campaign.

- Campaign Citizens Alliance 2017 (biggest action ever): Out of 630 contacted party candidates from the CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP, the Greens and the Left, 75 have responded. Out of 180 citizen groups 20 were ready for a (small) cooperation. But because of the lack of staff has not made contact with the party candidates on the spot. The huge effort was not successful.
- The networking work has very much declined because the main actor has died.
- In some places in the country public work of our friends took place on ZStG.
- May 2017 till July 2019 we sold 18.000 stamps (2019 the price rose again – new stamps). These stamps are bone-fide postage stamps with Netwerk Friedensteuer's logo on them.

- The Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Baden was the first regional church to draw up a book on *Civil Security Policy - Rethinking Security*. A scenario outlines the medium-term exit from military peacekeeping till 2040. More on this later in the report
- The Federal Finance Court has denied **attac's** charitable status, because the association would be too politically active in many fields. All association now fear for their charitable status.
- Action weeks for a ban on nuclear weapons in the air base Büchel, where the nuclear warheads of the United States store - not confirmed - with camps, day events, intrusion on the runway etc. Peace tax people have been involved in this for years. Since 2018 there is also a day of christians with special preachers (about 500/750 peoples).

## USA - ERICA LEIGH from National War Tax Resisters Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC)



A new Coordinator joined the organisation in May 2018 - Lincoln Rice has been learning the ropes from Ruth Benn who continues her involvement with NWTRCC, writing a monthly blog among other activities.

Throughout 2018 NWTRCC printed their newsletter on yellow paper. This commemorated the persecution of Americans who refused to buy war bonds. Vigilantes painted vehicles, homes, businesses, and the bodies of "bond slackers" yellow to coerce them into buying war bonds.

NWTRCC launched a new website for their "Divest from War, Invest in People" campaign in February. (Visit [www.wartaxdivestment.org](http://www.wartaxdivestment.org)). The site focuses on war tax resistance as divesting from state violence, fossil fuels and military prisons.

Many other smaller actions can be read in their Annual Report at: <https://www.nwtrcc.org/PDFs/AnnualReport2018.pdf>

Various tax day protest actions happened around the US including penny polls, talks and demonstrations. Some of these can be read about here: <https://nwtrcc.org/tax-day-2019/> NWTRCC held a conference in November 2019 making the link between climate change and militarism. Their report on that can be read here: <https://nwtrcc.org/2019/11/14/war-tax-resistance-and-the-environment-nwtrcc-conference-report/>

A new law enables the IRS (US Inland Revenue Service; equivalent of HM Revenue and Customs) to inform the State Department of tax debts in excess of \$52,000. The State Department then sends a letter to the debtor to say their passport will not be renewed.

There have been a reduced number of demands for withheld taxes due to reduced funding for the IRS - Erica has not been asked to pay up in 10 years.

There has been some interest from people wanting to resist taxes because of Trump but this is a difficult fit with COMT and does not seem to have gone anywhere. NWTRCC tried to show them that resisting taxes for war is a good idea anytime.

The number of COMT organisations around the country has reduced but there are still many CO's in the US.

Erica has written about the conference in her blog:

<https://nwtrcc.org/2020/03/12/report-on-the-international-conference-for-war-tax-resistance-and-peace-tax-campaigns-november-28-december-1-2019-in-edinburgh-scotland/>

## **RUSSIA - ALEXANDR SUSLIN - Non Violence Russia**

Alexandr was not able to attend the conference so he sent us a video report. His video can be seen on Conscience's Facebook page:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page_internal)

Alexandr Suslin introduced himself as editor of a Russian e-magazine 'Nonviolence Russia' - URL: <https://nonviolence.ru>. Alexandr's website is well worth a visit - lovely pictures.



He began by describing the peace tax situation in Russia - "*sorry but it won't be encouraging*". There is compulsory military service in Russia but there has been a civil service alternative since 2004 which lasts for 21 months - 1½ times longer than military service. The final decision on whether someone is a genuine CO is decided by the military but on appeal, courts usually find in favour of the CO. This sounds reasonable but of 250,000 called up to do military service each year, 800 choose civil service - less than 1%. Unfortunately, after they have performed their civil service, CO's don't keep in contact. There is no community apart from a few CO's who live 100's of miles apart. These few keep in contact via Alexandr and his website.

He explained that the violence in Russian society is not limited to militarism. Police, secret service, bailiffs also employ violence. It is important to seek a peaceful alternative to all these forms. There is a lack of peace education programmes and an absence of financing for such.

Wondering what to do, Alexandr and his associates decided to send letters to government officials and politicians. By the way, £60b was spent on the military in 2019 - £420 per person. They hoped officials would make a positive decision to create a peace tax fund but this was met with stonewalling: "*Thank you for your active citizenship we will take it into account whenever possible*" CO's in Russia consider this a cynical response and even criminal. They are considering taking it to court but they don't even have a right to go to court and are likely to face prosecution for disobedience.

So there are a few like minded people who are doing what they can in a culture of militarism and propaganda. There is a lack of a free press, fear, corruption. This is exacerbated by an Army initiative to train 15,000 children a month in military discipline and tactics - to be little soldiers. A familiar story in most of our countries.

## CANADA - DOUG HEWITT- WHITE, Chair of Conscience Canada



Doug was not able to attend the conference so he sent us a video report. His video can be seen on Conscience's Facebook page:

[https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/taxesforpeacenotwar/videos/?ref=page_internal)

Doug introduced himself as the chair of Conscience Canada. Formed 1983 there are about 1000 members spread all across Canada. The organisation is getting smaller, growing older and tech challenged. They need to attract younger people so are trying to refocus around a couple of ideas - divestment from Israeli support and the Canadian military machine. They also draw attention to the link between climate change and the military machine. They are trying to get a discussion going with young people and making the links between Conscience Canada and the military industrial complex.

They have set up peace tax trust fund into which 156 depositors divert their military taxes. Should a department of peace be created, the money from the peace account can be returned to depositors for them to pay into the dept. of peace. They are trying to get more people to use their Peace Tax Return which identifies how much of their tax goes to the military. Canadians have no ability to withhold taxes since they are taken at source so they are left, only, with making declaration.

They seek legislation to create the legal right to divert war taxes to a peace tax fund. The latest was in 2013 - a Private Members Bill was put before parliament. No government has ever been in favour such a bill and nor has any political party got wholly behind it. Each time they find a sympathetic MP to present their bill. They are determined to keep presenting the bill. They have a new parliament and three Green Party members. Elizabeth May will introduce their bill again to the new parliament. She will have to work hard to gain support for the bill.

They are also looking at challenging for their rights in the courts. In the 1980's Conscience Canada supported a peace tax case. The government side argued that there is no connection between someone having to pay taxes and how the government uses those taxes. At the end of the process the Appeal Court refused to accept their case (echoes of the PT7 search for a judicial review). There is a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Guaranteed Freedom of Conscience. This right has never been tested in the courts (snap! - PT7). Other concerns are also interested in challenging the Canadian Charter - the right to die, animal vivisection, anti abortionists. These are strange allies but it might be the right way forward to work together on this.

Conscience Canada need more involvement of younger people who see the necessity of reducing the military. Meanwhile they continue to struggle with the small number of activists in their organisation.

## UK - JONATHAN MAUNDERS & KAREN ROBINSON from Conscience Taxes for Peace not War: a report on activities in 2018-19



Jonathan, Karen and Fay

Although there were staff changes, Conscience nevertheless had a productive and busy year. In addition to coping with staffing matters, it was decided to search for a new, more central office. The move to Wenlock Studios took place in January 2019, Jonathan Maunders, our new office coordinator having just started working with us. He was joined by

Fay Salichou, who had successfully applied for the Fundraising and Membership role, in late April and by Karen Robinson as Campaign Worker in mid-May 2019.

We did not attempt to introduce another bill in 2018, having done so in 2016 when it got a first reading but ran out of parliamentary time. Instead we focussed on activities which would raise awareness of the need for a bill to allow those with a conscientious objection to war to have the military part of their taxes spent on peace-building initiatives. These include publicising how our taxes fund war and preparations for war, highlighting alternative approaches to conflict and considering what is needed to make it possible for a bill to be passed. In addition our activities continue to contribute to developing a culture of peace, which would make legislation more likely to be achievable.

### **The Minister for Peace and Disarmament: An Assessment**

In 2017 it was agreed that it would be useful to consider the possibilities for a Minister for Peace / Ministry for Peace, following the Labour Party's announcement to appoint a Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament and funds to work on this were raised through crowdfunding in summer 2017. Dr Tim Street was commissioned in March 2018 to research and write a report for us. This was launched in Parliament in July 2018 and did much to raise awareness of the issues. More about that can be seen on Conscience's website here:

<https://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/our-previous-work/minister-for-peace-and-disarmament/>

The report provided a useful focus for a number of public meetings as well as discussions with politicians and decision-makers. There were opportunities to promote and discuss the report at the Conscience AGM on 8th September, at a fringe meeting at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool in late September, at a public meeting in Glasgow to coincide with the Scottish National Party's conference and in Leeds in December.

We invited Labour's Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament - Fabian Hamilton - to a question and answer session, which was very well attended and resulted in an interesting discussion with the audience of mainly Conscience supporters.

### **Local Groups development**

Following discussions at EC meetings and a suggestion from the Peace Tax Seven, we applied to them for a grant to employ a Local Groups Development Officer, who would, among other things, help get Conscience members together in their local areas. These local groups could then promote Conscience and undertake activities in their own areas.

Sweta Choudhury started work in April 2018 with a target of establishing ten local groups around the country. While she made contact with some local Conscience members she felt it was necessary to attract new members and so switched to organising public meetings and increasing Conscience's visibility through participation in demonstrations and a presence at party conferences.

We do now have the nucleus of a group in Edinburgh, where Anne McCullagh-D'Lyske is energetically raising awareness of Conscience at local meetings and through street stalls. As a result of her enthusiasm, it has been agreed that Conscience will host the 15th International War Tax Resistance Conference in Edinburgh at the end of November 2019.

### **Other activities**

As well as the meetings around the report on a minister for peace and disarmament already mentioned, in April 2018 there was a public meeting at Friends House, London: Aid not arms with Aisha Dodwell from Global Justice Now and Ann Feltham from Campaign against Arms Trade.

We continued to be involved with the First World War Peace Forum and to participate in activities around Conscientious Objectors Day and Remembrance Day.

We also took part in two trade union and three party conferences and had a presence at some peace demonstrations, giving out Conscience's printed material including leaflets, membership forms, affiliation forms, MPD reports, newsletters, etc.

In addition, David Milner followed up on work around the administration and definition of Overseas Development Aid. Shaughan made contact with Michael Mears, the author/performer of 'This Evil Thing', a play about World War One conscientious objectors, and did a video interview. Sweta developed contacts with a variety of MPs and prominent people and other peace organisations.

Conscience continues to promote its views through a variety of channels, including its newsletter to members, bulletins by email, Facebook and other social media.

This year we joined a worldwide campaign to count the money spent on nuclear weapons. We set up outside the Ministry of Defence to count £5.2 billion in £500,000 notes - it took two people 3 hours to count the money. There were some passers by showing interest but we mainly generated interest via live streaming by video and promotion on our social media.

Next year we are planning a series of meetings: 'Voices of Conscientious Objection' across the UK with an educational focus. We have received funding from Funding for Social Change Ltd to enable us to do this work.

### **BELGIUM - JAN HELLEBAUT - VRAK**

Jan was not able to attend the conference so he sent us this report.

Thank you for the invitation to the Conference. Unfortunately, there is so little activity on the Peace Tax Campaign in Flanders that I very recently decided to stop my activities for it. The next months I will archive the materials of VRAK (Aktie Vredesbelasting, the Campaign in Flanders). Besides Ria Verjauw and I, nobody was active for VRAK anymore the last years.

Together with other peace organisations in Belgium we tried to stop the purchase of 34 new warplanes with our Tax money, but alas, in vain.

The decision to stop my activities within the framework of VRAK still feels strange after a strong commitment of 23 years for the movement. At the other hand it feels also as the right decision. I attended several International Conferences where I met most of you. I'm gratefully carrying these contacts, the heart-warming international contacts and team spirit with me. I'm thankful for these. I'll continue my peace work, although it will be in a somehow different way.

I want to keep in contact with you and will follow the developments what Peace Tax and War Tax Resistance concern in the different country's. I also would like to receive the report of the 15th International Conference. Please keep my email address on the lists. I hope to see or hear you again. I wish you all the best in your personal life's, with your Peace work and CPTI. Cordially, Jan Hellebaut

## **SPAIN - JUAN CARLOS - Movimiento de Objeción de Conciencia**

MOC were unable to send a representative to the conference but sent us a report so we include it here.

### **Tax Resistance in the Autonomous Community of Basque Country campaign report.**

In the Bilbao anti-militarist group, KEM-MOC Bilbao, we have been boosting the Tax Resistance (TR or OF from the Spanish acronym) campaign within a local level for more than 30 years, in coordination with the campaign being performed across the entire Spanish state.

Our group has been working in the TR campaign with certain degree of apathy for many years, mainly due to the small impact the economic disobedience practice was reaching in our environment, as compared to other campaigns we are and have been developing, such as the refusal to military service campaign, the weapon industry and its exports from our country denunciation, the fight against bank entities which fund such weapon industry or the fight against military installations (military headquarters, shooting and training fields, etc).

Some years ago we analysed the possible causes of the small success of our campaign, identifying two of them: The technical difficulties inherent in doing the income tax statement for most of the population (even more if we want to include TR) and the fear to the consequences of economic disobedience for the people doing it.

After this analysis and intending to add more people to our campaign, we set up an office, firstly only in the Biscay province, in which volunteers with professional experience in income tax statement preparation could do it for those people willing to refuse the military expenses with their taxes. Our goal was to avoid people not practicing TR because of a lack of knowledge.

This office worked in a similar way to the ones implemented by the Regional Treasury (the regional organism responsible for tax collection in Biscay) and the banks which freely offer this service to their clients. People willing to do TR would ask for an appointment in the office (opening on Fridays afternoon and Saturdays morning) via phone call during the two months of the official Income Tax collection campaign. People were then required to bring the necessary paperwork to the appointment and were able to have their income tax statement done in half an hour.

The implementation of this office was supported by a communication campaign including talks by relevant people, interviews in local media, street actions, informative tables, and diffusion through the web, email, and social media.

After the success achieved during the first year in which 130 TRs were performed in the office, we decided to increase the campaign and, by developing a platform with other social collectives in our environment, we opened offices in the neighbour provinces of Araba and Gipuzkoa. The results were very positive, considerably increasing the number of TRs in those territories, achieving 220 in the entire Basque Country.

The Biscay office, which is the one currently doing more resistances, counts with a coordinated team of 6 volunteers doing the income tax statements during the two months of the campaign to every person with an appointment.

The TR platform is currently made up of 15 social organizations with different scopes of activity: anti-militarist groups, Non-Governmental Organizations for Development Aid, organizations working with refugees and migrant people, collectives working on alternative and solidarity economy, a union, an ecologist group or a collective working on the support of people in social exclusion.

In addition to the implementation of the office to help people fill their incoming tax statements, we believe that another factor that has helped other groups to join the TR campaign is the possibility to fund their projects with the objected money.

Besides the personalized attention in our offices, in the Biscay case, and with the objective of allowing the people who do TR every year to learn to fill the income tax statement by themselves, half-day workshops (either morning or afternoon) have been implemented by the Basque Country TR platform in which 15-20 people can receive training. These workshops aim to bring the possibility to objectors to be autonomous and allow the TR platform to focus on increasing the campaign and attend people willing to do TR for the first time.

A third factor which might have helped the TR campaign to grow in the Basque Country during the last years is the small number of cases in which the regional tax agencies detect this practice (even though every TR brings a letter informing the administration about the disobedience action) and that when this happens, no punishments nor fines are applied (they limit themselves to seize the objected money). On the contrary, in the rest of the Spanish State, where most of the TRs are spotted and is not unusual that when this happens, fines are imposed.



*TR learning collective workshops*

## SWITZERLAND - Christophe Barbey



Switzerland still has a draft for military service and though the alternative service is well in place, it is presently contested by the military apparatus. A popular referendum is expected on the topic later this year or early next one.

Presently, there is no tax resistance movement in the country and though I was willing to become a first resistant, I did not earn enough in 2018 to pay federal tax.

## Conscience and Peace Tax International WORK AT THE UN 2017 to 2019 - Christophe Barbey, our representative in Geneva

The work at the United Nations is awareness raising and advocacy. It is slow work, but change could also come fast: rapid shifts of opinions do sometimes happen.

By addressing submission to countries through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of their human rights record, every four years at the Human Rights Council (HRC), progressively more people, countries and governments are made aware of the need for much more money for peace, that peace budgets and therefore peace funds are needed, funds in which tax payer can pay their due for peace instead of paying for war and war means.

As the presence of the topic increases, sooner or later and hopefully soon, a country will pick up the idea and move ahead with an effective project of a peace tax fund. Help from within these countries will always be welcome.

In the period under review, we addressed written demands for the creation of peace funds for tax payers to Colombia, Costa Rica, Eritrea, Lesotho, Norway, Switzerland and the USA. Oral Statements to the Human Rights Council, upholding the project were also sometimes made to these countries.

Considering our means in funds and time, the objective is to make at least three of these demands yearly (one at every UPR session) and to make three oral statements yearly to the Human Rights Council (similarly one at every HRC session).

We also made two interventions on conscientious objection to military service, one of them addressing objection to military taxation, the other recalling the right to conscientious objection of professional soldiers, but also of servants of private military and security companies. In June 2019, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights issued of *very important report on conscientious objection to military service*. This report is a full review of all international law issued so far regarding conscientious objection to military service, thus finally giving full and universal recognition to conscientious objection. Further, the report presents in large details all the conditions needed for appropriate access to the conscientious objectors' status and presents the conditions under which an alternative

service must be performed to be fair and legal. We now have a solid official international document to advocate for conscientious objection worldwide. During the preparation of this report, we submitted our second report concerning conscientious objection in Switzerland.

We also raised awareness and specifically in Colombia and Lesotho, on the need for better peace policies : to uphold the right to peace for all in all situations, to increase the presence of peace and non-violence in education, to peacefully prevent conflicts and violence and if need be to mitigate conflicts at all levels using peaceful means.

We presented our quadrennial report to the United Nations in May 2018 and though we received a question from China on our relations with “Chinese dependent territories”, the report was approved.

The work ahead will be to continue discussing alternatives to military budgets and to find a country or more ready to set up a peace tax fund.

The main countries we want to do UPR's for in the near future are in July 2020, Nepal; in October 2020, Singapore, Belgium and Denmark; in March 2021, Ireland and may be Hungary and in June 2021, Iceland and Haiti.

The work at the UN is very pleasant and to our humble opinion valuable slowly but surely progressing in the right direction. Greater results will come as more of it is being made. We warmly thank CPTI for the possibility of doing it.

For contact: Christophe Barbey, [cb@apred.ch](mailto:cb@apred.ch)

\* Christophe's submissions to the UN are appended to the end of the conference report. The Quadrennial Report from CPTI to the UN follows.

## UNITED NATIONS QUADRENNIAL REPORT 2015-2018

### 1. Field 1 – A short introduction to your organization

**Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) was established at the 1994 International Conference of War Tax Resisters and Peace Tax Campaigns as an international NGO, initially registered in Belgium, since 2014 based in the United Kingdom. It obtained Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in 1999. For its core funding, it relies on its national member organizations. It has no permanent paid staff.**

### 2. Field 2 - The aims and purposes of your organization;

**Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) was founded in order to act as a link between the national movements which seek to obtain recognition of the right of conscientious objection to paying taxes for armaments, war preparation and war including all expenditure on armaments and to facilitate their access to international organizations.**

**It accordingly also supports all other forms of conscientious objection to military service, military doctrines and war.**

**Our organization upholds all efforts made for the prevention of war and violence and supports the establishment of peace funds. It supports the creation of peace ministries.**

**The organization supports a peace oriented economy, thus one being sustainable, people friendly and fulfilling human rights.**

3. Field 3 - Any changes that had a significant impact on the work of your organization;

**There have been no significant changes**

4. Field 4 – The contribution of your organization to the work of the United Nations;

**The work for conscientious objection to military budgets and for conscientious objection to military service links peace, human rights and development, thus supporting all three pillars of the work of the United Nations.**

**Through advocacy, because the reallocation of funds for peace by peaceful means prevents war and violence and through the reallocation of manpower and economic resources to peaceful ends, Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI), sometimes in collaboration with other ECOSOC NGOs - mainly the Center for Global Nonkilling and the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR), serves the United Nations purposes, the human community at large and all persons concerned by the prevention of war, by military budgets or military service or all persons and institutions supporting the end of the scourge of war and the establishment of a universal, lasting and comprehensive peace.**

5. Field 5 – The participation of your organization in meetings of the United Nations;

**Since 2015, in collaboration with the Center for Global Nonkilling, Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) physically attended all sessions of the Human Rights Council and all sessions of the working group of the Universal Periodic review.**

**Single or joint submissions were made for the Universal Periodic Reviews of the following Countries: Colombia, Costa Rica, Eritrea, Norway and Switzerland. Oral statements were regularly delivered on general issues, on Conscientious Objection and as related to the above mentioned UPR's.**

**We regularly participated, at the Human Rights Council at all sessions concerned with the Declaration on the Right to Peace (A/RES/71/189).**

**As conscientious objectors are most often young persons, our organization has been concerned and supportive of the process started with Security Council's resolution 2250 on youth and peace.**

6. Field 6 – Cooperation of your organization with United Nations bodies; **Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) jointly reported in 2017 on the situation of Conscientious objection in Switzerland for the quadrennial report on Conscientious Objection of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/35/4).**

**Our organization jointly reported in 2018 on the conditions of access to alternative service to military service in Switzerland for the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights pursuant to Resolution 36/18 of the Human Rights Council.**

**Our organization collaborated with IFOR to regularly follow and sometimes intervene for the work of the Human Rights Committee.**

7. Field 7 – Initiatives taken by your organization in support of the Sustainable Development Goals

**Through all of its work, Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) supports the establishment of comprehensive public peace policies, such as the promotion of peace through constitutions and human rights; peaceful settlement of disputes locally as it is provided for internationally and the prevention of violence, thus largely supporting and favoring the implementation of goal 16.**

**Our organization also works for goal 4.7, namely for education for peace and non-violence. Only partly related to any specific SDG's, upholding sustainable finance and assuring sufficient funds for peace initiatives is part of our work.**

8. Field 8 – Any additional, relevant **information you want to** share with the Committee

**Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) wishes to thank the United Nations, the ECOSOC Council and the NGO Committee, as well as all affiliated bodies and all Member States, as well as the UN staff for their work and for championing the cause of a healthy, sustainable, diverse, peaceful and happy humanity.**

**Thank you.**



# CAMPAIGNS/ACTIVISM FOR PEACE

## What is My Role

### A Workshop with Vijay Metha

Hello and welcome to the peace activism workshop. In this workshop, I will be asking some questions to test your knowledge of peace, provide a roadmap for peace which can also be served as a model everywhere - role of activism can play in peace building and violence prevention. Youth-led movements today are on the forefront influencing policies in areas of peace, abolition of war, climate change, violence reduction and much more.

Vijay then set us a 'Knowledge of Peace' quiz to warm us up before continuing with his introduction:

#### Solutions and Actions for Peace Building

- Join a peace group in your area which works for replacing war by cultivating Culture of Peace. Like, Uniting for Peace, Conscience: Taxes for Peace Not War etc.
- Invite a peace speaker to your event, workplace or community
- Write a blog about promoting peace
- Write articles for newsletters / newspapers and post it on social media.
- Study non-violence, conflict management, conflict resolution and peace studies
- Get in touch with your MP (Member of Parliament), Congressman or Legislator and ask what steps they are taking for reducing militarism and war, mitigating climate change and bringing harmony in a divided society.
- Put forward questions for MPs to ask the Parliament.
- Campaign for opening Department for Peace which can work for building peace, education and capacity building to solve aggression and wars between countries.
- Work in the community for opening peace centres for reduction of knife crimes, shootings, violence and help communities to overcome their differences and tensions.
- Make a personal commitment to non-violence and attend non-violence and conflict resolution training
- Read books about peace
- Create art, music and painting in the theme of peace
- Spread kindness, fairness, compassion, justice, equality, freedom etc. values which underpin a good society.
- Join a group for cultivating inner peace having calmness within oneself.
- Then expand outward for harmony among people. From outer peace at its largest level, peace is to live without violent conflict or war opening the doors for world peace.

#### Social Media Activism

One of the most important development in the last decade is how you can raise the profile of your campaign and activism by mobilising social media especially Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube.

One of the most important thing I'd like to emphasise is the importance of hashtag, in order to assure your posts to go viral. One of the examples is Sealegacy who are doing admirable work by cleaning the oceans and their hashtag is #TurningTheTide. Another one is Extinction Rebellion

which has a hashtag of #WhereIsYourPlan which has attracted millions of people, they are doing wonderful work on climate change mitigation and environmental protection.

## **Peaceful Schools**

Peace is needed now more than ever in schools, by pupils and teachers alike. We need to introduce peace education in primary, secondary and special schools with practical methods to improve pupil and teacher wellbeing, combat bullying and promote peace both inside and outside the school gates.

Adopt a simple 4 step system for promoting positive peace in individuals, relationships, the school community and the world. That will involve holistic approach to reduce stress, promote positive mental health, solve conflict, nurture potential of each individual and encourage children to develop peacemaking skills and values. By doing so, children and staff can transform their school environment for the better.

Schools can enable students to go out into the community as peace workers and peace ambassadors, an example of which is student activism for climate change challenging the society to make laws for a better environment. Another example is the Quaker Peace Education Programme in school project for 'Fly Kites Not Drones'

## **Conclusion**

There are 1.8 billion youth in the world who need empowerment to actively involve in organisations, civic initiatives and activities in peace building, social justice, addressing and overcoming violent extremism and hate in communities. Movements like Black Lives Matter, Me Too, Extinction Rebellions and others have what it takes to change the world as the world is ready to be moved.

We have got great examples of past and present leaders, M. K. Gandhi (non-violence and Indian Independence Movement), Martin Luther King (Civil Rights Movement), Nelson Mandela (African National Congress Movement) and now Malala Yousafzai (Pakistani Activist for Female Education), Greta Thunberg (Swedish Teen Climate Activist) who have shown the world that young people have a powerful voice and overpowering will to change the future of the world.

A question and answer session followed his introduction.

# CONSCIENCE AND PEACE TAX INTERNATIONAL (CPTI) GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA)



The GA was opened by its chair, Dietmar Czerny with Jan Birk, Board Secretary and Robin Brookes, Company Secretary and Treasurer by his side. CPTI has been in a holding pattern for the last four years, up until this conference. The work still clearly needs to be done, but we have noted that thriving conscientious objection to military taxes (COMT) organisations around the world have been dropping by the wayside. There are still Conscientious Objectors, however, and the work still needs to be done at the UN to bring our case to their attention. We need to revive the membership of CPTI and keep our consultative status with the UN alive. The minutes of this meeting follow the board's report.

## Annual Report of CPTI Board 2017 - 2019

Since 2017 the Board of CPTI - Chair Dietmar Czerny (Germany), Treasurer Robin Brookes (Britain), Secretary Jan Birk (Germany) and Board Member Milena Romero (Colombia) have been trying to stabilise the work of CPTI.

A second working meeting with about 11 participants took place in London in June of 2017, Friedrich Heilmann retired and Jan Birk and Derek Brett became new members. Jan to help with the organisational things and Derek to support the UN things together with Christophe.

The Board meets regularly on Skype.

In 2017 we promised that if we do not succeed sufficiently well in getting new active members for the board, CPTI will probably have to be dissolved.

By rotation only part of the Board will need to be elected – the company Memorandum and Articles of Association make it clear that one or two people must retire from office at each General Assembly and new director(s) elected in their place. Dietmar Czerny is not standing again in lack of support and to care for his health and business.

So far the Board consists of only five people, but there could be more. Candidates will be very, very welcome. Cathy Deppe (USA) has indicated that she is interested in working on the Board. No further actions has been done until now.

At the time of writing, CPTI has fourteen members from Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the UK, Colombia, Norway, Switzerland, the USA.

Christophe Barbey submitted several reports to the UN Human Rights Commission on a voluntary basis. For other reports he was paid in order to enable him to work out high-quality reports about the situation in other countries and the Quadrennial report which was published in July 2019 successfully at the NGO Branch of the UN.

Milena Romero tried to install an example for a new homepage with a Colombian programmer and Andro Gage offered to help with it, too. The next step has to be financed with further donations.

The balance in CPTI's bank account is: £2,221 - see the accounts appended.

As all NGOs CPTI stands and falls with the engagement of its members and sympathisers. We need more of these - but how are we going to find them?



## Draft minutes – November 30<sup>th</sup> 2019

Location: The Quaker Meeting House, Edinburgh, UK

Present (members: X):

Christophe Barbey	X	Dietmar Czerny (Chair)	X	Hannelore Morgenstern Netzwerk Friedenssteuer (NWFS)	X
Jan Birk (Board)	X	Steve Ballard		Karen Robinson	
Derek Brett (Board)	X			Jonathan Maunders	
Robin Brookes (Board)	X			Anne McCullagh-D'Lyske	X
Monica Frisch Conscience	X			Fay Salichou	

list of members see attachment 4

	<b>Agenda item (bold type), minutes (regular type)</b>	<b>who</b>	<b>when</b>
9.	<p><b>Welcome by the chair – 10:30 Edinburgh time</b></p> <p>Dietmar Czerny opens the General Assembly at 11:30 o'clock local time. Greetings to conference participants. He presents the members of the Board.</p>		
.	<p><b>Quorum affirmation</b></p> <p>A quorum is one third of the total membership at the time in person or by proxy whichever is higher. (AoA 14, 2b)</p> <p>Currently CPTI has 15 members, of whom 8 are present. The conference has a quorum.</p>		
.	<p><b>Designation of chairman and keeper of the minutes</b></p> <p>Chairman of the present conference: Dietmar Czerny – all agree</p> <p>Keeper of the minutes: Jan Birk – all agree</p>		

	<p>Dietmar proposes the agenda - all agree (bold type of each topic)</p>		
·	<p><b>Review and approval of the last GA minutes of June 26<sup>th</sup> 2017</b> agreed</p>		
·	<p><b>Report of the Board 2017 to 2019</b> given by Dietmar Czerny agreed See <u>attachment 1</u> Dietmar stresses on the importance of the work on the homepage. Steve: We're not offering anything to the young who don't see the link between their engagement against war and taxpaying. So are there other organizations to approach the young? <u>to be continued</u> NWTRCC discussed membership but has not come to a conclusion. Dietmar asks for other applications for membership, there are none.</p>	<p>the board  NWTRCC</p>	
·	<p><b>Financial report 2017 / 2018 / 2019</b> The balance is not to be made, but there is more money than calculated. Netzwerk Friedenssteuer is keeping CPTI afloat, Monica apologizes for Conscience not having paid in 2019 which is to be done in December. Though not demanded legally, <b>Derek will examine the accounts.</b> <u>agreed</u> The question of regular contributions of all member organisations is raised. The financial report is agreed subject to examination with 1 abstinence. (Subsequently the error has been found and the books now balanced. The corrected accounts are attached).</p>		
·	<p><b>Budget 2020</b> See attachment 2 € 1.000 went from NWFS to Conscience for the International Conference, not to CPTI. No charitable status to CPTI nor to Conscience. All the figures are rather vague. The budget is approved.</p>		

	<p><b>Election of new CPTI-board:</b></p> <p><i>At each subsequent general meeting one-third of the Directors or, if their number is not three or a multiple of three, the number nearest to one third must retire from office.</i></p> <p>(AoA 29)</p> <p>The current members of the board are Dietmar Czerny, Milena Romero, Robin Brookes, Jan Birk and Derek Brett. Dietmar Czerny is retiring. Robin steps down and is unanimously re-elected.</p> <p>Anne McCullough-D'Lyske has been put forward. For formal reasons the decision has to be endorsed at the next GA by the members for Anne to continue in the following two years. (Meanwhile the Directors have made Anne a director as allowed in the Memorandum of Association)</p>		
	<p><b>Next Conference</b></p> <p>Propositions: North America, Switzerland, Germany,</p> <p>Monica: GB can host the next GA, but not the International Conference (IC).</p> <p>Derek would welcome the IC in Geneva, but there are only Derek and Christophe for the moment. They have to investigate further, it is not an offer yet.</p> <p>Jan offers support for an IC in Switzerland, but points out that Netzwerk Friedenssteuer is too small to host and organize an IC.</p> <p>We will all check in our individual Countries. Africa and Russia are to be considered later.</p> <p>Dietmar asks Erica for a contact to NWTRCC. She will see to that.</p>		

Appendix 1 –CPTI Accounts 2017-2019

Appendix 2 – CPTI Budget 2019

Appendix 3 – CPTI members as on November 30th 2019

## Plenary Session

The GA was followed by a plenary session - a free discussion on the future of CPTI. We addressed three questions:

- How do we keep our campaigns together in the face of Brexit, plastic pollution and Extinction Rebellion taking the media limelight?
- What are our prospects at the UN - forming a plan to promote COMT?
- How do we keep CPTI going as an organisation and consequently our work at the UN going?

**Monica Frisch** opened the session with a resume of the role of COMT in the peace movement. Our organisations concentrate on the right of the taxpayer to not pay for military preparations. Other peace organisations have their own specialisations. CND concentrates on unilateral nuclear disarmament, CAAT focusses on the arms trade. Their work is important and we support their position but we cannot use our scarce resources to support them, we must keep our focus on COMT. While being aware of the other peace campaigns, we can be supportive in spirit and work with them where our interests meet.

National COMT organisations have flourished in the past but some have failed. It is a struggle and we need to encourage more members, particularly among the younger generations.

**Jan:** General problem young people don't think about taxes because they do not directly pay income tax. When they are older and pay taxes they have other problems to deal with so do not get involved with the campaign. Peace campaigners find they have to be involved with several different campaigns. If we want others to share our concerns we should seek them in the peace movement.

**Dietmar:** Younger people are not thinking about the taxes they pay for war. So he has a question: Why are the younger delegates here involved with COMT?

**Fay:** I think such organisations need to exist. People need to have the right to choose if their money goes to violence or not.

**Jonathan:** It is unlikely that young people would come directly to our campaign it is more likely they will come via other peace organisations like Stop the War

**Symon:** I don't regard myself as young, I am 42, but perhaps other members of the conference see me as young. Some say they don't pay tax but they mean income tax without realising we all pay tax via VAT and other tax streams. They still see it that the government pays for war without seeing the direct connection with themselves. So we really need to emphasise that fact - we all pay taxes for war.

**Erica:** I am also in the position of being considered young although I am 35. Of the war tax resisters under 40 all of us came as individuals, starting from an opposition to war and over time realising that paying taxes is part of that. Ideas take time to geminate. I took 7 years from when I first came to the peace movement to becoming involved with peace tax. At their last conference, NWTRCC focused on militarism's direct impact on the environment and the waste of resources which might be better used to address climate change.

**Steve:** Conscience is a natural thing which all sentient beings have. Other creatures in world don't pay taxes but they share our space. Their needs are disregarded but they are telling us through our children that unless you recognise that their needs are the same as ours you are not only going to destroy yourselves but you will destroy us as well. Children know this but what COMT organisations have to tell them is not going to be remotely attractive.

**John:** I am a policy researcher and I have colleagues who are clinical psychologists and educational psychologists who are horrified about what is going on in education and mental health. They can see what is going wrong but they say it is more than their job is worth to do anything about it. So there are institutional frameworks where people are aware of what is happening but the personal consequences of challenging this are so enormous that they don't act. We should set up ways to support them financially or protect their jobs so they are not inhibited.

# GERMAN CHURCHES PEACE PROPOSAL

Report by Hannelore Morgenstern from Netzwerk Friedensteuer



The starting point for the process "Becoming a just peace Church" was a resolution which was put to the synod of the Protestant Church in Baden in 2011 by Christians in one of the church districts. They called for a reorientation of protestant peace ethics in accordance with the core biblical messages of the Christian faith.

The Protestant Church in Baden subsequently wrote a position paper which was sent to the 25 church districts for discussion. There was a process of intensive discussion, at the end of which the Synod resolved that it wanted "to become a just peace church".

A working group was set up and presented a book publicly in April 2018. : "Rethinking Security - from military to civil security towards 2040: a scenario". In 2019/2020 this Church wants to bring the scenario into the discussion nationwide and start a campaign together with other organizations for a different security policy. The scenario method develops 3 phases of thought: a) continue as before, b) the worst case and c) the positive phase of thinking with numerous ideas on different aspects, incl. the approaches that already exist today. The scenario-book in its abridged version was translated (English, French) and can be downloaded here:

[https://www.ekiba.de/html/content/just\\_peace\\_church.html](https://www.ekiba.de/html/content/just_peace_church.html)

Hannelore Morgenstern gave a very interesting Powerpoint presentation outlining the proposal from this working group. This very much fits in with the theme of the conference and conscientious objectors aims and wishes.

Later she led a discussion group on the church's proposition as an alternative to the film showing 'War School'. The film is now available to watch for free on YouTube here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b15Zc71KV\\_g&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b15Zc71KV_g&feature=youtu.be)

## CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION ACROSS THE WORLD



**A talk by Derek Brett**

Derek was CPTI's representative at the UN and is currently with International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR).

"Yes, from 2002 to 2011 I represented CPTI at the UN in Geneva, but in 2012 the International Fellowship of Reconciliation needed a new main representative, and I persuaded them to appoint me. I didn't cut my links with CPTI, but one can only use the pass of one organisation at a time, so I was no longer able formally to speak on behalf of CPTI at the UN. With me I took the project for which I had been funded in a succession of grants from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, making submissions to UN bodies on the situation

of military recruitment and conscientious objection in different countries.

It is important to remember that the UN is an organisation of States. Once I was representing CPTI, I quickly realised that pushing to them cold the right of tax objection was a non-starter. Instead, one had to build on the growing acceptance of the right of conscientious objection to obligatory military service, and subsequently argue that tax refusal was a logical extension of that right.

In order to emphasise continuity, for a year or two after I moved I did the submissions jointly in the name of the two organisations, but once Christoph was ready himself to do CPTI submissions it was best that we did not overlap.

Let me say that I detest labelling. I have an issue I work on, and will continue to do so in the name of any organisation that wishes, CPTI, IFOR, or EBCO (the European Bureau for Conscientious Objection). I also work closely with War Resisters' International and the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva, although I have never claimed to represent them.

So, why did I move to IFOR? It is much bigger (branches in 40+ countries), and older, than CPTI, and can boast three Nobel Peace Prize laureates. It had also historically been a major supporter of conscientious objectors, but seemed to have lost that mission, perhaps because the biggest branches were in countries which had now abolished or suspended conscription. Not only would I gain "weight" at the UN, but I might also reinvogorate the issue within IFOR.

Between us, we have made great progress in moving forward international human rights law as regards conscientious objectors to military service. Another time, I might talk at length on this.

But in the introduction this evening, the World Council of Churches was specifically mentioned.

IFOR grew from a meeting of European protestant churchmen in Constanz, on the German/Swiss border in late July 1914, who were desperately trying to avert the looming war. (Sadly, it broke out while they were still in session, and they had to disband and rush home before all borders were closed.) Initially it thus had religious roots – it is now open to all faiths and beliefs – and therefore was able to obtain observer status at the World Council of Churches. We now rent an office at a preferential rate at the Ecumenical Centre, the Geneva home of the WCC.

Crucially this enabled us to play a small part in the evolution of the WCC's position on conscientious objection to military service. IFOR, before me, had contributed to the WCC's Decade for Peace and Non-Violence, which ended in a conference in Kingston, Jamaica which adopted a vigorous declaration on the right of conscientious objection to military service.

But their report had to be taken to the WCC's quadrennial General Assembly, which was to be held in Busan, South Korea in 2013.,

This was both a challenge and an opportunity. At the time, South Korea did not recognise conscientious objection to military service. As a result, it was responsible for over 90% of the world total of imprisonments of conscientious objectors, over 500 each year. (Yes, of course the situation in the North was worse. Nobody there bothered to declare as a conscientious objector, possibly from lack of information, but also because anyone who

refused military service was shot).

IFOR as an observer was able to send me, where I joined up with a coalition of “historic peace churches” and others to lobby on this issue.

The Council adopted a “Statement on the Way of Just Peace”, which included “Reiterate its previous policy (..) and reaffirm its support for the human right of conscientious objection to military service for religious, moral, or ethical reasons, as churches have an obligation to support those who are in prison because they object to military service.”

But in the statement on “peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula”, conscientious objection to military service was pointedly omitted. However a “minute of dissent “that the statement does not include a concern of special relevance to the Korean peninsula, namely the plight of conscientious objectors to military service” was adopted. Signatories were obviously the “historic peace churches” and individuals from other churches, but also the entire Protestant Church in Germany.

Just words? But last year, in response to a Constitutional Court verdict, South Korea released almost all imprisoned objectors, and a draft alternative service law is now under consideration.

One step at a time... Tax comes next!

---

World Council of Churches statements about conscientious objection

### **1. 2013 Busan: Statement on the Politicization of Religion and Rights of Religious Minorities**

References on page 2 (conscientious objection), page 6 (freedom of conscience) – but too unspecific for our cause. Older statements were more specific:

A commitment was made at the World Ecumenical Assembly in Seoul to support the right to refuse military service and military tax whenever possible and necessary (3/1990). The WCC central committee encourages churches to consider taxpayers' money for military expenses or war, and alternatives to military service (Geneva 9/2009).

### **2. Freedom of Religion: Documents of the CCIA 22 September 2016**

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has been deeply engaged in espousing and defending freedom of religion and belief since the end of World War II. In part to celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (WCC-CCIA) has compiled a nearly comprehensive anthology of documents pertaining to religious freedom. The 550-page collection includes statements, letters, reports and background studies that specifically address such issues as religious conflict and intolerance, violations of freedom of religious expression, country-by-country statements, blasphemy laws and treatment of religious minorities, anti-Semitism, conscientious objection, religious pluralism and the coexistence of religions....

Download : [WCC-CCIA\\_FreedomOfReligion\\_1991-2016.pdf](#)

## SHARING HOPES AND FEARS OUTSIDE HM NAVAL BASE CLYDE

On the Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December, a group of delegates from the 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns went to HM Naval Base Clyde, the home of the UK's Trident nuclear weapons.

We were people from five countries calling for the right to re-direct the part of our taxes currently allocated to the military, to peaceful purposes.

The UK currently spends £5.2 billion (i.e. £5,200,000,000) a year on its nuclear weapons programme. We went to the base to protest at the horror of nuclear weapons and this terrible waste of taxpayers' money.



We shared peace poems, personal reflections / stories, our fear of war and our hopes for peace. We stood in silence outside the nuclear weapons submarine base.



Later we visited Faslane Peace Camp to express support for their witness and nonviolent protest against nuclear weapons since 1982.

This was the last day of our moving and determined 15<sup>th</sup> International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns, held in Edinburgh. The conference was hosted by Conscience: Taxes For Peace Not War.

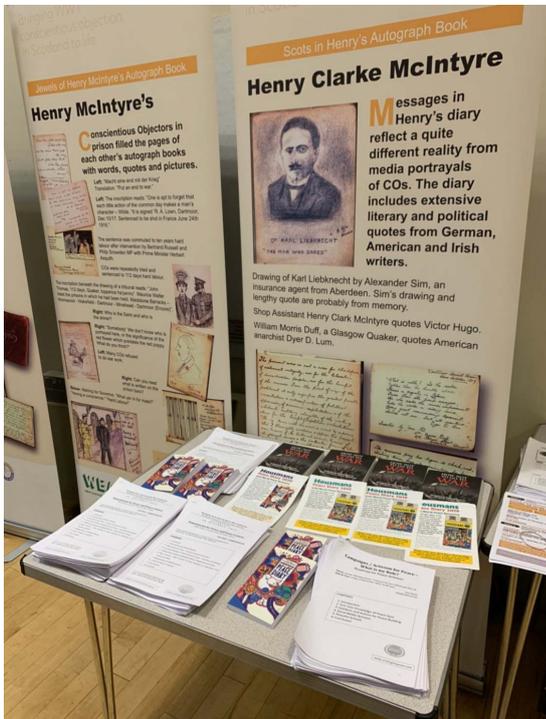
Karen Robinson has written

about the event in her blog:

<http://conscienceonline.org.uk/blog/2019/12/27/part-of-me-still-frightened-and-frozen-inside-after-standing-outside-faslane-nuclear-weapons-base/>

# DISPLAYS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns

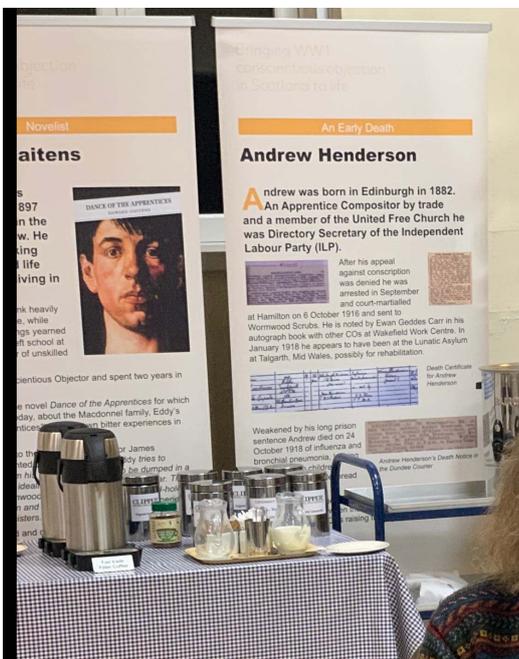
During the Conference participants had the chance to look at a series of panels about Scottish conscientious objectors. These had been produced by a WEA project “Legacies of Resistance” which looked at conscientious objectors during the first world war in three Scottish cities: Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Each panel had been researched and described the life and experiences of a Scottish conscientious objector with documentary evidence and photos from the period.



In addition, Karen from the Conscience office had borrowed some display material about conscientious objection from the Peace Pledge Union. She also put up information about the ‘Count the Nuclear Weapons Money’ action that had taken place in London at the end of October, to coincide with the international ‘Count the Nuclear Weapons Money’ action which took place in New York throughout UN Disarmament Week.

Participants had been encouraged to bring along examples of leaflets and other campaigning resources produced by their campaigns and these were available for people to look at. It included archive material about Conscience’s own activities and about previous International Conferences.

We were privileged not only to hear Kate Ive talk about her winning design for the Edinburgh Opposing War Memorial, but to have her model of the design for us to study and admire.



A video tour of the displays can be seen on our website

# 15<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ACCOUNTS

## SUMMARY ACCOUNTS

Item	Income	Expenditure
<b>INCOME</b>		
Registration fees from participants	£994.86	
Donation from Netzwerk Friedenssteuer	£870.34	
Ceilidh	£60.00	
Donations	£478.00	
	<b>£2,403.20</b>	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Edinburgh Quaker Meeting		£2,287.50
Speakers' expenses		£250.00
Conscience staff travel & accommodation		£959.59
Incidentals		£213.47
Ceilidh		£560.65
Faslane trip		£475.00
		<b>£4,746.21</b>
Shortfall		-£2,343.01

Conscience: Taxes for Peace not War have underwritten the Conference so the shortfall will be met from their reserves.

## LIST OF CPTI MEMBERS

As of 25th March 2015:

\* Thelma Azolukwan  
Christophe Barbey  
Robin Brookes  
Dietmar Czerny  
Monica Frisch  
\* Friedrich Heilman  
Hannelore Morgenstern  
\* Viviana Rodriguez Tapas  
Emilia Rojo  
Milena Romero Sanabria

Three of these have resigned or have become estranged from the organisation. The next CPTI board meeting on 15th January 2020, declared them no longer members. They are marked with an asterisk. Two more members have been added:

Anne McCullogh d'Lyske  
Jan Birk

## CPTI ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2017/18

These are unexamined accounts

All amounts in GBP

Opening balance - 1st June 2017	4746.75
---------------------------------	---------

### INCOME

Donations from individuals and organisations	281.65
International conference fees	97.70
Bank interest	2.75
	<u>5128.85</u>

### OUTGOING

Officer's expenses	1782.30
Representative payments	874.85
Conference facilities hire	169.00
Administrative/Accountancy fees	13.00
Bank charges	25.00
Other - mistaken withdrawals	33.96
	<u>2898.11</u>

Transfers between accounts

Balance at 31st May 2018	<u>2230.74</u>
--------------------------	----------------

### DEBTORS

None

### DEBTORS

Highbury Centre	169.00
-----------------	--------

### BALANCES at 31 May 2018

Money held in Triodos Bank account	2211.02
Money held in PayPal account	22.72
	<u>2233.74</u>
Error	3.00

# CPTI ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2018/19

These are unexamined accounts

All amounts in GBP

Opening balances - 1st June 2018	
Triodos account	2211.02
Paypal account	<u>22.72</u>
	<u>2233.74</u>

## INCOME

Donations from individuals and organisations	284.53
Paypal Giving donations from Ebay sales	2.21
International conference fees	0.00
Bank interest	<u>6.85</u>
	<u>293.59</u>

## OUTGOING

Officer's expenses	184.47
Representative payments	0.00
Conference facilities hire	0.00
Administrative/Accountancy fees	0.00
Bank charges	0.00
Other	<u>121.33</u>
	<u>305.80</u>

Profit/Deficit	-12.21
----------------	--------

Balance at 31st May 2019	<u>2221.53</u>
--------------------------	----------------

## DEBTORS

None

## DEBTORS

Highbury Centre	169.00
-----------------	--------

## BALANCES at 31 May 2019

Money held in Triodos Bank account	2194.07
Money held in PayPal account	<u>27.47</u>
	<u>2221.54</u>

Error	-0.01
-------	-------





#### FOUNDER

**Glenn D. Paige** (1928–2017)

#### HONORARY SPONSORS

**Máiread Maguire** (N. Ireland)  
Nobel Peace Laureate (1976)

**Óscar Arias** (Costa Rica)  
Nobel Peace Laureate (1987)

**J. E. Aristizábal "Juanes"** (Colombia)  
Grammy-winning singer and activist

**Federico Mayor Zaragoza** (Spain)  
Former Director-General, UNESCO

**Neelakanta Radhakrishnan** (India)  
Founder, Council of Gandhian Studies

**Bernard Lafayette, Jr.** (USA)  
Activist leader, Civil Rights Movement

**Ilya Prigogine**, in memoriam (Russia)  
Nobel Chemistry Laureate (1977)

**Robert Muller**, in memoriam  
(Belgium)  
Co-Founder, UN University for Peace

#### GOVERNING COUNCIL

**Anoop Swarup** (India)  
**Chaiwat Satha-Anand** (Thailand)

**Glenda H. Paige** (Hawaii)  
**Bill (Balwant) Bhaneja** (Canada)

**Ha'aheo Guanson** (Hawaii)  
**Jose V. Abueva** (Philippines)  
**Christina Kemmer** (Hawaii)  
**Maorong Jiang** (China/USA)

#### DIRECTOR

**Joám Evans Pim** (Galiza, Spain)

#### UN REPRESENTATIVES

**Christophe Barbey** (Geneva)  
+41 79 524 35 74 / cb@apred.ch  
**Winnie Wang** (New York)

#### CONTACTS

[www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)  
[info@nonkilling.org](mailto:info@nonkilling.org)  
3653 Tantalus Drive  
Honolulu, Hawai'i  
96822-5033 United States

Human Rights Council

Item 6.

Universal Periodic Review of  
Eritrea

Geneva, 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2019

Dear Human Beings,  
Mister President,  
Excellency's,  
Dear delegation of Eritrea,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear webcasters  
Good afternoon,

The Rule of law is the solid ground upon which a government can freely, safely and efficiently serve the public good. The Universal Periodic Review is fully part of the Rule of Law. The commitments taken herein are official State commitments and need to be fulfilled in good faith.

We congratulate the Authorities of Eritrea for accepting all the recommendations made regarding Freedom of Religion. We sometimes heard Eritrea use in this room the wording "double standards". We do hope that these new commitments regarding freedom of religion are made in good faith. There is a lot of work to be done, people and religious leaders to be freed, health care centres to be reopened. Such change in respect for religious diversity would meet one of the benchmarks suggested by the Special Rapporteur *of Human Rights in Eritrea*.

Serving in the Public or Military service is a great and very honourable task. However, if not of voluntary nature, whatever its nature, the service must be of limited duration to avoid befalling under the prohibition of slavery. We do encourage the Government of Eritrea to swiftly review its position regarding the National and Military services and to report on these changes.

Finally, the rule of law is made of principles, sometimes unwritten but always brought to practice by institutions elected by, designed by and accountable to the people. The progress of democracy is needed worldwide and Eritrea is as responsible as any other State to see this happen.

Thank you for your sound and effective efforts.  
Thank you Mister President.

## Universal Periodical Review

*Third Cycle*

### Lesotho



### Rights to Life and Peace Related Human Rights Issues

18<sup>th</sup> of July 2019

*“From the politics of taking life to the politics of affirming it”*  
*“From the politics of paying for war to the politics of offering peace”*

Center for Global Nonkilling | Conscience and Peace tax International  
Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch  
Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

*We understand the right to life as being the full enjoyment of Life,  
as being the right not to be killed,  
but also as being everyone's responsibility not to kill or let others die.*

*We understand the right to peace as being the full enjoyment of Peace,  
as being the right to be free from violence and want  
but also as everyone's responsibility to assure peace to each and all.*

## Introduction

### Submitting organisations

The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) has a unique mission that is both inspirational for individuals and transformative for societies: *“To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world by means open to infinite human creativity in reverence for life”*. It was founded in 2008, among others by Glenn Paige (1929-2017), political science Professor and author of the book “Nonkilling Political Science”, widely translated<sup>1</sup>. CGNK is a worldwide congregation of individuals, scholars and groups working at creating societies that do not kill. CGNK has ECOSOC consultative status since 2014.

The purpose of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) is to forward and sustain an economic transformation from an economy of war to an economy of peace, of universal well-being. Until then, it claims that people have a conscience based right to pay their tax money into peace funds instead of into military budgets and it acts to obtain full recognition of the right to conscientious objection to paying for armaments, war preparation and war conduct. CPTI was founded in 1994 and has ECOSOC special consultative status since 1999.

### Human rights

All human rights are universal, of equal importance, indivisible, interlinked and mutually reinforcing. They arise out of our fundamental human nature and are expressed by our feelings and values. They grow and remain through knowledge, practice and kindness. They are needed to build lasting and prosperous, thriving and humane societies enabling each and every one to lead a fulfilling life. Human rights are universal values, human and legal values.

They are supported and implemented by universal and fundamental methods such as education, the culture of peace, prevention and precaution, peaceful settlements of disputes and if need be non-violence. These methods are fully needed for the full respect, the common enjoyment and the achievement of all human rights.

Center for Global Nonkilling | Conscience and Peace tax International  
Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch  
*Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)*

## **The right to life**

Compared to other human rights, the right to life has four specific features:

- a. If dignity can be said to be the paramount human right, present when each and all human rights are fulfilled, so is the right to life present within all other human rights. However, the right to life precedes all other human rights: if life is taken all human rights are cancelled<sup>2</sup>. Conversely, joyfully living and granting life, thus giving solid ground to life and to the right to life, to the equality and quality of life, is the base needed for the peaceful progress, the proactive fulfillment and the completion of all human rights.
- b. There are no possible limitations or restrictions to the right to life: one is either alive or not. Issues pertaining to the beginning and to the end of life such as reproductive rights, abortion, suicides and euthanasia as well as prenatal and genetic engineering should thus be dealt with in a preventive, human and humane sustainable manner, for each and all, in full dignity.
- c. There is only one way to guarantee the respect of, to protect the right to life: full and effective prevention. Once a life is lost, compensation may be due, but there are no possible reparations for that lost life.
- d. Henceforth, the right to life is also the absolute *duty not to kill*. As such, the right to life is a fully reciprocal right, granted to all and in need of being granted by all to all, individually as collectively.

The Center for Global Nonkilling, whatsoever, recognises no *right* to kill and encourages all persons and institutions to do likewise.

Though not rights, three powers to kill have sometimes been legally granted (or remain), always under very strict circumstances. We do not approve or condone to these existing powers. They should be made into what they often already are: unwanted remnants of the past. These powers are:

- 1) The use of legitimate self-defence, by a proportionate reaction linked to a direct, serious and imminent threat as legally required. The circumstances where self-defence may be needed are always a failure of prevention: failure that should be thoroughly analysed to extract lessons learned and design more accurate policies. If these circumstances nevertheless occur, using nonviolent means, reaction should never result in killing or maiming. Thereafter and whatever the result of legitimate defence, an independent judicial control over it is part of the rule of law. Similarly, because it highly impacts on the rights to life, personal integrity and security, any *use of force* by officials or any one shall be avoided, or highly limited. We recall that States have a duty of exemplarity regarding fundamental values and respect of human rights. Outmost attention is therefore to be given to prevent situations which may result in loss or losses of lives or in any type of maiming. Failures of prevention shall be thoroughly monitored to extract lessons learned and instigate changes in policies. Methods used when the use of force is nevertheless needed should be inspired by non-violent techniques as used by civil society: force is not violence as long as it causes no harm. Again, any official use of force should be monitored by a totally independent mechanism. We encourage the creation of police complain courts, having

investigative and decisional powers, yet being totally separated and independent from police and prosecutors.

2) Death penalty, if ever permissible, is however a major and definitive breach of the right to life and of numerous other human rights, including of other persons. It is also considered as being an inhumane, cruel and degrading treatment<sup>3</sup>. It is the worst example of respect for the right to life a State and a nation can give. Preventive effects being undemonstrated, it is unworthy and lacks the necessary dignity, the moral standards and exemplarity required of any authoritative power. Death penalty is not compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as these grant universal development: to “leave no one behind” is development and rehabilitation for all. The SDG’s, unanimously adopted, require “significant reduction of violence and related killings (SDG 16.1)”: it includes State killings.

3) Powers of war, as conceded by humanitarian law as an exception to the right to life, permit under certain circumstances only, the taking of the life of soldiers. Seeing peace and respect of life prevail – always – and nullifying this exception is one of the objectives of the Center for Global Nonkilling and shall be a purpose for humanity, for the sake of life as for the sake of peace.

### **The right to peace**

Peace originates in our human nature, is supported by human feelings and continues through intelligence and practices, supported by non-violent institutions.

No life would be possible without a sufficient attainment of peace, and dignity can only be fully achieved when peace and human rights prevail. Peace is a right but it is also a method, a universal method needed for the completion of all human rights.

Peace is fully present (if not worded) in article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it states that “*Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized*”. It is only through a peaceful order that such an endeavour can be accomplished: all rights set forth in the Universal Declaration being fully realized.

The links between *human rights and peace* are progressively being developed<sup>4</sup>. It is with great respect that we salute the fact that Lesotho has supported the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Peace in 2016<sup>5</sup>. It is time to implement it<sup>6</sup>.

Henceforth, peace and peaceful methods provide means to prevent and solve conflicts without aggravating them (including between competing human rights) and as may be to the advantage of all concerned, in a constructive or reconstructive way. Conflicts solved peacefully make it easier to alleviate feelings with respect, to draw lessons learned from difficult situations and to design policies for future prevention, overcoming, for thriving and well-being.

### **Other related human rights**

All human rights are needed to fulfil a safe and happy life.

However, some of them may be of more direct importance either for the full realisation of the rights to life and to peace, or to avoid their breach.

The *right to participation*, including of women, youth and disabled persons is highly important as it creates societies where responsibilities are shared, for the progress of all towards the well-being of all. The more people participate in the decision making process, the more people will respect the consequences of their decisions and the easier it will be to achieve SDG 16: safe and inclusive societies.

The right to *accurate standards of living*, including the rights to food, water and sanitation, clothing and housing, to work and social security deserve full attention, in all circumstances.

The *right to health* is an essential right for the fulfilment of the right to life and of the subsequent right to longevity. It is needed as well to achieve societies in which *human rights are all equally shared*. The *human right to a healthy natural environment*, thus sustaining humanity and life on Earth, deserves accurate protection and full attention as well.

The *right to happiness* and to fulfilment, in reverence for life, should always be mentioned:

*“Happy people breed a happy world”*

## **Universal Periodic Review of Lesotho**

As an introduction, we note with regret that Lesotho has not made any recommendation to other countries in the third cycle of the UPR<sup>7</sup>.

**I. We strongly encourage Lesotho to participate and engage in the UPR process of other countries.**

### **The right to life in the national and international human rights constitutions**

*We here look at some aspects of life and the right to life. In an overall approach of life and its quality, various other aspects of life and living such as reproductive rights, abortion, birth registration, child and maternal mortality, longevity and assisted suicide should be considered for a comprehensive analysis. However, these will need to be considered, presented and analyzed otherwise.*

The following international legal obligations – the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of *genocide*, the covenant on *civil and political rights* and its optional protocol on the *abolition of the death penalty*, and the convention on *enforced disappearances* – are, within the human rights constitution, the ones mostly concerned with the right to life. They are the minimum international standards needed for any country to show full legal respect for life and for the right to life. National constitutions shall similarly reflect this human and legal stand in favor of life.

Center for Global Nonkilling | Conscience and Peace tax International  
Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch  
Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

Beyond legal aspects, it is consciously evident that it is the bounty of life, the ethics, the knowledge and the human best practices, strong heart feelings and our well understood instincts and our good will: it is what we offer to each other and to humanity for life, to be living well with accurate living means and it is what our institutions promote and exemplify to pursue progress in dignity and to achieve a sustainable civilization on Earth, so forth it is our personal and collective feelings, intelligence and commitments that give a future, a meaning and a worth to the lives we lead and live, leaving no one behind, for ourselves as for future generations.

### **Prohibition of the death penalty**

To respect life is to value all lives, without distinction or discrimination.

The act of killing is the same, be it official or a crime. States have the duty to stand as examples of respect for life and for the right to life. We recall that the right to life granted to all is also the responsibility vested in all to refuse to kill. Accepting that one could be killed or to kill one is accepting the act of killing. As such, regardless of who is killed, how many are killed or why, there is a killing.

*Death penalty* is still present in the Constitution of Lesotho.

Worse, the constitution largely permits the taking of life in cases of arrest, escape, riot, insurrection, mutiny and to prevent the commitment of criminal offences (article 4)<sup>8</sup>. The use of force, preferably of nonkilling, non-maiming and non-violent force, is to be avoided or highly limited in all circumstances. Instead of being permitted and an exception to the right life, in all occurring cases, use of force should be restricted and be subject to a strict and totally independent control.

The constitution of Lesotho is too wide, sending a wrong message about the imperative protection of life and of the right to life, by all.

**II. We urge the People and the Authorities of Lesotho to change the constitution and to enhance life and its full value therein.**

Lesotho has not executed any convict since 1995. It can thus almost be considered as an abolitionist country in practice. Yet, Amnesty International reports two persons on death row<sup>9</sup>.

We recall that States have a duty of exemplarity regarding fundamental values and respect of human rights, specifically here the right to life and the duty not to kill.

**III. We urge the People and the Authorities of Lesotho to change the law, to abolish the death penalty and to commute all remaining death sentences.**

**IV. Thereafter, we recommend the swift ratification of protocol II of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.**

### **Prevention of homicides**

Tough slowly declining, with a homicide rate of 29.7 killings for a 100,000 inhabitants, much higher than world rate (6.1/100,000) or the African rate (13/100,000) Lesotho clearly has work to do to promote life and respect for life and to attain SDG 16.1<sup>10</sup>. We note with regret that target 16.1 of the SDG's is not mentioned in Lesotho's Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2019, though the VNR includes goal 16<sup>11</sup>. As said, showing the authoritative example of respect for life and for the right to life by abolishing the death penalty would be an essential preventive and constructive step. As proposed by the World Health Organization, adopting prevention plans to reduce violence and killings is of the essence<sup>12</sup>.

**V. We urgently recommend the adoption of homicide prevention programs.**

### **Prevention of suicides**

Suicides are clearly a problem, and rising in Lesotho<sup>13</sup>.

Available figures largely differ but with a mentioned rate of 28.9/100,000 inhabitants<sup>14</sup>, Lesotho would be the second country in the world, the first in Africa with the highest suicide rate.

Respect for life, the life of others as ours, is a primal value in education, social networks, in law and institutions. Suicide prevention programs, in general and for populations at risk, are fully part of the State duty to protect life and to enhance the fulfillment of the right to life. Hotlines are an example among many of such programs.

No suicide prevention program is mentioned in the WHO "preventing suicides: a global imperative" study (2014)<sup>15</sup> and suicide prevention is totally absent from the National Health Policy Strategy Plan 2017-2022<sup>16</sup>. Suicides come under SDG 3.4.2, but could also be measured under 16.1 (reducing violence and related deaths); nothing is mentioned in VNR 2019.

If disaggregated, data shows a higher proportion of female suicides.

**VI. We strongly call on the Government of Lesotho and to all concerned countries to recommend the urgent adoption of a suicide prevention plan.**

### **Prevention of traffic injuries**

Traffic casualties are high as well, 28.9/100,000<sup>17</sup> (World 18.2/100,000, Africa 26.6/100,000<sup>18</sup>).

**VII. We recommend doing more for traffic casualties' prevention.**

Lesotho clearly needs to stand out for a greater respect of life on three of the major causes of deaths caused by injuries and violence<sup>19</sup>.

### **The right to peace, the international and national peace constitutions**

Life and peace are deeply intertwined. Respecting life diminishes the risks of violent conflicts and of conflicts becoming violent. Peace enables well-being and therefore a meaningful life.

To attain and sustain peace, there is a need to adopt and implement comprehensive public peace policies, both at the national and international levels.

### **The international peace constitution**

Regarding peace and disarmament, Lesotho fares well: most disarmament treaties are ratified and it accepts reciprocal automatic jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

**VIII. We still recommend the ratification of the following peace and disarmament treaties and conventions:**

**The optional protocol n° 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.**

**The three Hague conventions on the protection of cultural property.**

**The Enmod convention on the prohibition of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques.**

**The amended protocol II of the Convention of conventional weapons.**

**Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.**

### **The national peace constitution**

Peace is not mentioned (except for the right of peaceful assembly), in the Constitution of Lesotho.

As gender and environmental issues, peace is a cross-cutting matter that should be set as a goal for the State, to see Justice and Peace prevail in all State and State overviewed activities.

**IX. Therefore, we recommend to the people and the authorities of Lesotho the opening of a participative process to enshrine a living peace in the National Constitution.**

We congratulate Lesotho for supporting the adoption, by the United Nations General Assembly, of the resolution on the right to peace<sup>20</sup>.

The implementation of the right supposes making peace a human right in the Constitution of Lesotho, with individuals and social groups as rights holders and the State as a duty bearer.

**X. We recommend the adoption, at constitutional level, of the human right to peace.**

To implement the right to peace, the SDG Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2019 of Lesotho is an excellent report documenting many aspects of peace and of SDG 16. It expresses, at least at the policy level, the intended progresses towards peace and peaceful societies Lesotho intends to implement<sup>21</sup>.

We would like to mention and add that comprehensive peace policies and the right to peace shall include, as provided for by SDG 4.7, education to peace and non-violence, as part of the curricula, at all levels, which sadly is not mentioned in the VNR.

**XI. We strongly recommend to the authorities of Lesotho and to all educational staff the integration of peace and peaceful relations, of non-violent conflict prevention and management, in the education curricula.**

Prevention of violence has partly been mentioned above regarding homicides. We mention it again as a peace building mechanism; moreover as data is missing in the World Health Organization's violence prevention reports<sup>22</sup>.

**XII. We recommend to the authorities of Lesotho the adoption of a general violence prevention plan and of specific prevention plans and laws for groups and situations at risks.**

We note with delight and congratulate the authorities of Lesotho for the creation and functioning of the “Directorate for Disputes Prevention and Resolution (DDPR)”<sup>23</sup>. We send our care and best wishes to them for their work and encourage them for promotion of peaceful settlements of disputes nationally (as it is provided for internationally).

To peacefully progress with the implementation of peace and the right to peace we would like this office to regularly report on the progress of peace.

**XIII. We recommend to Lesotho to be regularly reporting on the progress of peace and of SDG 16.**

Various Basotho and others have been researching and encouraging for the total demilitarization of Lesotho<sup>24</sup>. Such a process of achieving complete disarmament and of attaining non-militarisation – as many countries have already done<sup>25</sup> – would lower the potential for cultural and direct violence in the country, enhance respect for the right to life, give a strong signal for peace, bring peace policies to be less hindered by potential violence and destruction and thus make these peace policies more comprehensive.

And last not least, it would liberate funds for more pressing issues; hereafter reduction of poverty or more generally it will provide more funds for the progress of peace.

The Lesotho defense force is a small force, with very little strategic power in a nevertheless peaceful region and it has a rather poor human rights record. Its dismantling would need to be done very cautiously to assure a professional future to the members of the force and to properly collect and destroy (or reallocate) the existing weapons.

The process should be completed by a constitutional change forbidding the existence of an army and, to assure the adherence of the people of Lesotho to assure that the liberated funds will be allocated in a universal way to all the people of Lesotho.

Research has shown that the annual savings from dismantling the force, if distributed evenly among the adult population, as a basic income grant<sup>26</sup>, would increase average household income by around 20 per cent. This would represent a significant and continuous improvement in the

Center for Global Nonkilling | Conscience and Peace tax International  
Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch  
*Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)*

living standards of a country where almost 60 per cent of the population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.90 per day<sup>27</sup>.

**XIV. We recommend to the people and authorities of Lesotho the dismantling of the Lesotho defense force, inscribing the absence of an army in the constitution and reallocating the liberated funds to the people of Lesotho.**

In case an army is maintained, we want to make sure that even professional soldiers have a right to conscientious objection, as provided for by international law<sup>28</sup>.

**XV. We recommend the adoption and publication of a status for conscientious objectors.**

Peace is in dire need of being financed (nevertheless to peacefully address climate change issues), while paying for war preparation and war is, for the organizations supporting and the members of Conscience and Peace Tax International and others a consciousness issue.

To forward the financing of peace, people should be able to choose to retrieve the part of their taxes going to the military budget and to dedicate these funds for peace building issues.

**XVI. Therefore, we recommend the creation of a peace fund and of the option, for the tax payers, to pay the part of their taxes that would usually go to the military budget into the said peace fund.**

Participation in the decision making process shall be universal.

**XVII. We recommend to the parliament and to the people of Lesotho the extension of referendum and initiative rights to the approval of all laws and constitutional changes.**

**Welcoming the delegation of Lesotho to  
Geneva, the city of peace,  
we wish to you as to all the people of the country  
a constructive, successful, enhancing and fulfilling  
Universal Periodic Review.**

<sup>1</sup> <http://nonkilling.org/center/publications-media/books-translations>

<sup>2</sup> The Human Rights Committee, in its general comment 36 on the right to life describes it this way: “It is the supreme right from which no derogation is permitted (...). The right to life has profound importance both for individuals and for society as a whole. It is most precious for its own sake as a right that inheres in every human being, but it also constitutes a fundamental right whose effective protection is the prerequisite for the enjoyment of all other human rights (...)”.

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/1\\_Global/CCPR\\_C\\_GC\\_36\\_8785\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CCPR_C_GC_36_8785_E.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See i.e. the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council.

<sup>4</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council on mainstreaming human rights on the contribution of human rights to peacebuilding, but also resolutions 2250 on youth and peace of the Security Council, the common resolution of the General Assembly and the Security Council (2282) on Sustaining peace. Or the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 appeal by Switzerland and 70 States, <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-62152.html>. Or the Declaration on the Right to Peace A/RES/71/189.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<sup>6</sup> They are possibilities described here: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31)

We add peaceful settlement of disputes for internal disputes as for international ones.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.upr-info.org/database/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Lesotho\\_2011?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Lesotho_2011?lang=en)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ACT5098702019ENGLISH.PDF> page 39.

<http://www.afsam.org/?&Syf=22&Mkl=920059>

<sup>10</sup> Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

Unodc, *Global Study On Homicide 2019* <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet2.pdf> Booklet 2, p. 22

<sup>11</sup> [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho\\_VNR\\_Report\\_2019\\_Final.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho_VNR_Report_2019_Final.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <http://apps.who.int/violence-info>

<sup>13</sup> [https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/131056/9789241564878\\_eng.pdf](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/131056/9789241564878_eng.pdf) p.128

<sup>14</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_suicide\\_rate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_suicide_rate)

<https://www.nwlesotho.co.ls/report-lesotho-has-highest-suicide-rate-in-africa/>

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/evidence/atlas/profiles-2014/lso.pdf?ua=1](https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/atlas/profiles-2014/lso.pdf?ua=1)

[https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/131056/9789241564878\\_eng.pdf](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/131056/9789241564878_eng.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning\\_cycle\\_repository/lesotho/lesotho\\_revised\\_nhsp\\_2017-22\\_final\\_draft1.pdf](http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/lesotho/lesotho_revised_nhsp_2017-22_final_draft1.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2018/Table\\_A2\\_Road\\_Traffic\\_Deaths.pdf?ua=1](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2018/Table_A2_Road_Traffic_Deaths.pdf?ua=1)

<sup>18</sup> <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/277370/WHO-NMH-NVI-18.20-eng.pdf?ua=1>

<sup>19</sup> In decreasing order of importance worldwide (2012): traffic (24.4%), suicides (15.5%), falls (13.5%), interpersonal violence including armed conflict (12.1%), drowning (7.2%), etc. Source: WHO, from MDG's to SDG's, 2015, p. 174.

<sup>20</sup> <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

[https://undocs.org/en/A/71/PV.65 p. 26.](https://undocs.org/en/A/71/PV.65_p.26)

[http://www.demilitarisation.org/spip.php?rubrique16&debut\\_article\\_numerotes=0#pagination\\_article\\_numerotes](http://www.demilitarisation.org/spip.php?rubrique16&debut_article_numerotes=0#pagination_article_numerotes)

A bibliography on the right to peace is available on request.

<sup>21</sup> [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho\\_VNR\\_Report\\_2019\\_Final.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho_VNR_Report_2019_Final.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> <http://apps.who.int/violence-info/country/LS>

<sup>23</sup> [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho\\_VNR\\_Report\\_2019\\_Final.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23777Lesotho_VNR_Report_2019_Final.pdf) p. 85

<sup>24</sup> I.e. Letsie, T. 2018. *Demilitarising the mountain kingdom: an action research project in Lesotho*. PhD thesis in Peacebuilding, Durban University of Technology. Available at <http://hdl.handle.net/10321/3125>

Letsie, Tlohang & Harris, Geoff. (2019). The economics of peace and security journal: *Demilitarizing a small African country: Rationale, necessary conditions, and financing*.

<sup>25</sup> C. Barbey: « *Non militarization: countries without armies. Identification criteria and first findings*». APRED. Working papers series. Åland Islands Peace Institute. Octobre 2015, online version. March 2016, paper version.

<sup>26</sup> On the Universal Basic Income, see the report of the UN's special rapporteur on extreme poverty:

[http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/35/26](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/35/26)

<sup>27</sup> See above, footnote 24.

<sup>28</sup> [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/41/23](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/41/23)



## Universal Periodical Review

*Third Cycle*

### *United States of America*



## Rights to Life and Peace and Related Human Rights Issues

3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2019

*“From the politics of taking life to the politics of affirming it”  
“From the politics of paying for war to the politics of offering peace”*

Center for Global Nonkilling | Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | [cb@apred.ch](mailto:cb@apred.ch)

Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

## **Submitting organisations**

The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) has a unique mission that is both inspirational for individuals and transformative for societies: *“To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world by means open to infinite human creativity in reverence for life”*. It was founded in 2008, among others by Glenn Paige (1929-2017), political science Professor and author of the book “Nonkilling Political Science”, widely translated<sup>1</sup>. CGNK is a worldwide congregation of individuals, scholars and groups working at creating societies that do not kill. CGNK has ECOSOC consultative status since 2014.

The purpose of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) is to forward and sustain an economic transformation from an economy of war to an economy of peace, of universal well-being. Until then, it claims that people have a conscience based right to pay their tax money into peace funds instead of into military budgets and it acts to obtain full recognition of the right to conscientious objection to paying for armaments, war preparation and war conduct. CPTI was founded in 1994 and has ECOSOC special consultative status since 1999.

## **Introduction**

### **Human rights**

All human rights are universal, of equal importance, indivisible, interlinked and mutually reinforcing. They arise out of our fundamental human nature and are expressed by our feelings and values. They grow and remain through knowledge, practice and kindness. They are needed to build lasting and prosperous, thriving and humane societies, enabling each and every one to lead a fulfilling life. Human rights are universal values, human and legal values.

They are supported and implemented by universal and fundamental methods such as education and exemplarity, the culture of peace and non-violence, prevention and precaution and peaceful settlements of disputes. These methods are fully needed for the full respect, the common enjoyment and the achievement of all human rights.

### **The right to life**

Compared to other human rights, the right to life has four specific features:

a. If dignity can be said to be the paramount human right, present when each and all human rights are fulfilled, so is the right to life present within all other human rights. However, the right to life precedes all other human rights: if life is taken all human rights are cancelled<sup>2</sup>.

Conversely, living and joyfully living, thus granting life and giving a solid ground to the existence of life and to the right to life, to equality and quality of life is the base needed for the peaceful progress, the proactive fulfillment and the completion of all human rights.

b. There are no possible limitations or restrictions to the right to life: one is either alive or not. Issues pertaining to the beginning and the end of life such as reproductive rights, abortion,

suicides and euthanasia, as well as prenatal and genetic engineering should thus be dealt with in a preventive, human and humane sustainable manner, for each and all, in full dignity.

c. There is only one way to guarantee the respect of life, to protect and ensure the right to life: full and effective prevention. Once a life is lost, compensation may be due, but there are no possible reparations for that lost life.

d. Henceforth, the right to life is also the *absolute duty not to kill*. As such, the right to life is a fully reciprocal right, granted to all and in need of being granted by all to all, individually as collectively.

The Center for Global Nonkilling, whatsoever, recognises no *right* to kill and encourages all persons and institutions to do likewise.

Though not rights, three *powers* to kill have sometimes been legally granted and they are always granted under very strict circumstances. We do not approve or condone to these existing powers. They should be made into what they often already are: unwanted remnants of the past. These powers are:

1) The use of legitimate self-defence, by a proportionate reaction linked to a direct, serious and imminent threat, as legally required. The circumstances where self-defence may be needed are always a failure of prevention: failure that should be thoroughly analysed to extract lessons learned and design more accurate policies and best practices. If these circumstances nevertheless occur, by using nonviolent means the reactions should never result in killing or maiming. Thereafter, whatever the result of legitimate defence, an independent judicial control over it is part of the rule of law.

Similarly, because it highly impacts on the rights to life, on personal integrity and security, any *use of force* by officials and any one shall be avoided, or highly limited<sup>3</sup>. We insist on the fact that States have a duty of exemplarity regarding fundamental rights and values and regarding full respect and promotion of human rights. Outmost attention is therefore to be given to prevent situations which may result in loss or losses of lives or in any type of maiming. Failures of prevention shall be thoroughly monitored to extract lessons learned and instigate changes in policies. Methods used when the use of force is nevertheless needed should be inspired by non-violent techniques as used by civil society: force is not violence as long as it causes no harm. Again, any official use of force should be monitored by a totally independent mechanism. We encourage the creation of autonomous police complain courts, totally or sufficiently separated and independent from police and prosecutors, having full investigative and decisional powers.

2) Death penalty, if ever permissible, is however a major and definitive breach of the right to life and of numerous other human rights, including of other related persons. It is also considered as being an inhumane, cruel and degrading treatment<sup>4</sup>. It is the worst example of respect for the right to life a State and a nation can give. Preventive effects being undemonstrated, it is unworthy and it lacks the necessary dignity and legitimacy, the moral standards and exemplarity required of any authoritative power. Death penalty is not compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as they grant universal development in its main assertion to “leave no one behind”.

Such an affirmation unanimously adopted by all Members of the UN is grant a right to development and rehabilitation for all. The SDG's also require "significant reduction of violence and related killings (SDG 16.1)". This includes State killings.

3) Powers of war, as conceded by humanitarian law may be an exception to the right to life, as it permits, under certain circumstances and precautions only, the taking of the life of soldiers. This is morally unacceptable and profoundly backward. Seeing peace and respect of life prevail – always – and nullifying this exception to the right to life is one of the objectives of the Center for Global Nonkilling. It shall be a purpose for all humanity, for the sake of life in peace.

### **The right to peace**

Peace originates in our human nature, is supported by human feelings and knowledge, continues through prevention and practices and is supported by non-violent institutions.

No life would be possible without a sufficient attainment of peace and dignity can only be achieved when peace and human rights prevail. Peace is a right but it is also a universal method needed for the completion of all human rights.

Peace is fully present (if not worded) in article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it states: "*Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized*". It is only through a peaceful order that such an endeavour can be accomplished: all rights set forth in the Universal Declaration fully realized.

The links between *human rights and peace* are being developed<sup>5</sup>. It is with great respect that we regret the fact that the United States has not supported the Declaration on the Right to Peace<sup>6</sup>. It is nevertheless time to implement it<sup>7</sup>.

Peace and peaceful methods provide means to prevent and solve conflicts without aggravating them (including between competing human rights) and, as may be to the advantage of all concerned persons and parties in a constructive or reconstructive way. Conflicts solved peacefully alleviate feelings with respect; allow drawing lessons learned from difficult situations and favour the design of preventive policies for the future.

### **Other related human rights**

All human rights are needed to fulfil a safe and happy life.

However, some of them may be of more direct importance, either for the full realisation of the rights to life and to peace, or to avoid their breach.

The *right to participation*, including of women, youth, disabled and all vulnerable persons and social groups is highly important as it creates inclusive and humane societies, where responsibilities are shared for the progress of all and towards the well-being of all. The more people participate in the decision making process and the more people work by consensus, the more people will respect the consequences of their decisions and henceforth, the easier it will be to achieve SDG 16: safe and inclusive societies.

The right to *accurate standards of living*, including the rights to food, water and sanitation, clothing and housing, the rights to work and social security all deserve full attention, in all circumstances.

Center for Global Nonkilling | Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch

Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

The *right to health* is an essential right for the fulfilment of the right to life and of the subsequent right to longevity. It is needed as well to achieve societies in which *human rights are all equally shared*. The *human right to a sustainable natural environment*, thus sustaining humanity and life on Earth, deserves accurate protection and full attention as well.

The *right to happiness* and to fulfilment, in reverence for life, should always be mentioned:

*“Happy people breed a happy world”*

### **Universal Periodic Review of the United States of America**

All States have a full duty of exemplarity. Such a duty of being examples in the respect and promotion of human rights is vested in their commitment to life and to human rights, but it is also enshrined in the capacity of each and all, of all of us to give the best of ourselves.

The duty of exemplarity is expressed in international law, as it is needed to reach the legitimate and peaceful goals of the International Community.

We wish to the people and the authorities of the USA a happy, constructive and peaceful UPR.

### **The right to life in the national and international human rights constitutions**

The following international legal obligations – the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of *genocide*, the covenant on *civil and political rights* and its optional protocol on the *abolition of the death penalty*, and the convention on *enforced disappearances* – are, within the human rights constitution, the ones mostly concerned with the right to life. They are the minimum international standards needed for any country to show full legal respect for life and the right to life. National constitutions shall similarly reflect this human and legal stand in favor of life.

Beyond legal aspects, it is consciously evident that it is the bounty of life, the ethics, knowledge and the human best practices, our strong heart feelings and well understood instincts, our sound and profound understanding and good will, it is what we offer to each other and humanity for life, to living well with accurate living means, it is what our institutions promote and exemplify to pursue progress in dignity and achieve a sustainable civilization on Earth, it is our personal and collective feelings, intelligence and commitments that give a future, a meaning and a worth to the lives we live and lead, leaving no one behind, for ourselves as for future generations.

### **Prohibition of the death penalty**

To respect life is to value all lives, without exceptions, distinctions or discriminations.

The act of killing is the same, be it official or a crime. States have the duty to stand as examples of respect for life and the right to life. We recall that the right to life granted to all is also the responsibility vested in all to refuse to kill. Accepting that one could be killed and accepting to kill one is accepting the act of killing in itself. As such, regardless of who is killed by whom or of how many are killed or why, a killing is always an infringement on, a destruction of the right to life.

Center for Global Nonkilling | Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | cb@apred.ch

Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)

The United States as an influent member of the human community and as a permanent member of the Security Council has a clear duty to work towards the full preservation of life and the complete respect of the right to life.

**I. Dear United States of America, please abolish the death penalty.**

**II. Henceforth, we recommend, sooner than not, the ratification of the Second Protocol of the Covenant on civil and political rights aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.**

### **Illegality of enforced disappearances**

To be granted a life is also receiving a right to a presence, to a public presence before the law and to a private presence and acknowledgeable presence with and for one's kin.

As such enforced disappearances violate numerous human rights, be them in law or in *jus cogens*. There are 5 outstanding cases of enforced disappearances presently listed by the working group on enforced disappearances in the USA<sup>8</sup>.

But even if they were none, the convention has universal effects and contains provisions regarding cases beyond the national territory<sup>9</sup>.

**III. Henceforth, we hereby recommend to the United States of America to urgently ratify the Enforced Disappearances Convention.**

### **The right to life in practice**

#### **Prevention of homicides**

Despite the general impression given because of shocking events, the homicide rate is low in the United States at 5.3/100,000 inhabitants (2017) and below world rate (7.6/100,000). However, goal 16 applies and substantive reduction of killings is thereupon expected.

**IV. We expect the United States, as any other country to reach a nonkilling State.**

**V. Henceforth, we urgently call for the adoption of homicide prevention programs.**

## **The national and international peace constitution**

We recommend to the USA adoption of comprehensive peace policies for the fulfillment of SDG16, for the well-being and safety of its entire people and of the world, and for the progress of peace, non-violence and non-killing worldwide.

**VI. We recommend the ratification of the following peace and disarmament treaties and conventions:**

**Acceptance of the reciprocal automatic jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.**

**The optional protocols of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.**

**Two of the three Hague conventions on the protection of cultural property.**

**The Rome statute of the Criminal Court.**

**The mine and cluster munitions ban conventions.**

**The Arms Trade Treaty.**

**The treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.**

## **The national peace constitution**

Peace is barely mentioned in the Constitution of USA.

As gender and environmental issues, peace is a cross-cutting matter that should be set as a goal for the State, to see Justice and Peace prevail in all State and State overviewed activities.

**VII. Therefore, we recommend to the people and the authorities of the USA the opening of a participative process to enshrine a living peace in the National Constitution.**

We regret that the USA has not supported the adoption, by the United Nations General Assembly, of the resolution on the right to peace<sup>10</sup>.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the right to peace supposes making peace a human right in the Constitution of the USA, with individuals and social groups as rights holders and the State as duty bearer.

**VIII. We recommend the adoption, at constitutional level, of the human right to peace.**

To implement the right to peace and SDG 4 and 16, we mention that comprehensive peace policies and the right to peace shall include, as provided for by SDG 4.7, education to peace and non-violence, as part of the curricula, at all levels.

**IX. We strongly recommend to the authorities of the USA and to all educational staff the integration of peace and peaceful relations, of non-violent conflict prevention and management, in the education curricula.**

Prevention of violence has partly been mentioned above regarding homicides. We mention it again as a peace building mechanism.

**X. We recommend to the authorities of USA the adoption of a general violence prevention plan and of specific prevention plans and laws for groups and situations at risk.**

In case an army is maintained, we want to make sure that even professional soldiers have a right to conscientious objection, as provided for by international law<sup>11</sup>.

**XI. We recommend the adoption and publication of a status for conscientious objectors for professional soldiers, as for employees of private military and security companies.**

Peace is in dire need of being financed (nevertheless to peacefully address climate change issues), while paying for war preparation and war is, for the organizations supporting and the members of Conscience and Peace Tax International and others: a consciousness issue.

To forward the financing of peace, people should be able to choose to retrieve the part of their taxes going to the military budget and to dedicate these funds for peacebuilding by peaceful means only issues.

**XII. Therefore, we recommend the creation of a peace fund and of the option, for the tax payers, to pay the part of their taxes that would usually go to the military budget into the said peace fund.**

Participation in the decision making process shall be universal.

**XIII. We recommend to the Congress and to the people of the United States the extension of referendum and initiative rights to the national level for the approval of all laws and constitutional changes.**

**Welcoming the delegation of the United States to  
Geneva, the city of peace,  
we wish to you as to all the people of the country  
a constructive, successful, enhancing and fulfilling  
Universal Periodic Review.**

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://nonkilling.org/center/publications-media/books-translations>

<sup>2</sup> The Human Rights Committee, in its general comment 36 on the right to life describes it this way: “It is the supreme right from which no derogation is permitted (...). The right to life has profound importance both for individuals and for society as a whole. It is most precious for its own sake as a right that inheres in every human being, but it also constitutes a fundamental right whose effective protection is the prerequisite for the enjoyment of all other human rights (...)”.

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/1\\_Global/CCPR\\_C\\_GC\\_36\\_8785\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CCPR_C_GC_36_8785_E.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The constitution of the local State, the Canton of Geneva, states it clearly (§ 184.3.): “Conflictive situations are treated in priority so as to rule out or limit the use of force. Concerned persons have a duty to concur”. Unofficial translation from French.

<https://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20132788/index.html#a184>

<sup>4</sup> See i.e. the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council.

<sup>5</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council on mainstreaming human rights on the contribution of human rights to peacebuilding, but also resolutions 2250 on youth and peace of the Security Council, the common resolution of the General Assembly and the Security Council (2282) on Sustaining peace. Or the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 appeal by Switzerland and 70 States, <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-62152.html>. Or the Declaration on the Right to Peace A/RES/71/189.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<sup>7</sup> They are possibilities described here: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31)

We add peaceful settlement of disputes for internal disputes as for international ones.

<sup>8</sup> [https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/42/40](https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/42/40)

<sup>9</sup> A strong measure that will prevent the occurrence of enforced disappearances will be to include in law, in the criminal code or the criminal procedure code a disposition by which any person arrested has the right to make his arrest known to a person or an institution of his choice within 48 hours of his arrest. A public roster of arrested persons shall be available to persons making a legitimate demand and prolongation of the 48 hours delay may only be authorized, for investigative purposes, for a very short time and non-renewable period.

<sup>10</sup> <https://undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<https://undocs.org/en/A/71/PV.65> p. 26.

[http://www.demilitarisation.org/spip.php?rubrique16&debut\\_article\\_numerotes=0#pagination\\_article\\_numerotes](http://www.demilitarisation.org/spip.php?rubrique16&debut_article_numerotes=0#pagination_article_numerotes)

A bibliography on the right to peace is available on request.

<sup>11</sup> [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/41/23](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/41/23)



**FOUNDER**

**Glenn D. Paige** (1928–2017)

**HONORARY SPONSORS**

**Máiread Maguire** (N. Ireland)  
Nobel Peace Laureate (1976)

**Óscar Arias** (Costa Rica)  
Nobel Peace Laureate (1987)

**J. E. Aristizábal "Juanes"** (Colombia)  
Grammy-winning singer and activist

**Federico Mayor Zaragoza** (Spain)  
Former Director-General, UNESCO

**Neelakanta Radhakrishnan** (India)  
Founder, Council of Gandhian Studies

**Bernard Lafayette, Jr.** (USA)  
Activist leader, Civil Rights Movement

**Ilya Prigogine**, in memoriam (Russia)  
Nobel Chemistry Laureate (1977)

**Robert Muller**, in memoriam  
(Belgium)  
Co-Founder, UN University for Peace

**GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**Anoop Swarup** (India)  
**Chaiwat Satha-Anand** (Thailand)  
**Glenda H. Paige** (Hawaii)  
**Bill (Balwant) Bhaneja** (Canada)  
**Ha'aheo Guanson** (Hawaii)  
**Jose V. Abueva** (Philippines)  
**Christina Kemmer** (Hawaii)  
**Maorong Jiang** (China/USA)

**DIRECTOR**

**Joám Evans Pim** (Galiza, Spain)

**UN REPRESENTATIVES**

**Christophe Barbey** (Geneva)  
+41 79 524 35 74 / cb@apred.ch  
**Winnie Wang** (New York)

**CONTACTS**

[www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)  
[info@nonkilling.org](mailto:info@nonkilling.org)  
3653 Tantalus Drive  
Honolulu, Hawai'i  
96822–5033 United States

Human Rights Council  
Item 3. Interactive dialogue with the  
Working group on Mercenaries  
Geneva, 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2019

Right to conscientious objection of persons acting in  
private military and security companies

*Joint Statement Conscience and Peace tax International, Center for Global  
Nonkilling and International Fellowship of Reconciliation.*

Dear Human Beings,  
Mister Vice-President,  
Dear Members of the Working Group,  
Excellency's,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear webcasters,  
Good morning,

The Right to Conscientious objection, its international legal framework and the minimum criteria to obtain the status of conscientious objector have been magnificently presented by the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the previous session of our Council ([A/HRC/41/23](#)).

However, we care to attract the attention of the Human Rights Community, of the Council and of the Working Group on Mercenaries on the links between Freedom of Conscience, Mercenaries and Employees of private military and security companies, the later not being mentioned in the report.

Conscience is needed to enjoy and respect all human rights: it is needed to prevent, stop and repair human rights violations, always. In this sense, staff and employees of private military and security companies facing violations of human rights have a duty to object and if acting legitimately, they have a full right to object without incurring reprisals, prejudice or penalties.

We kindly ask to the Working Group on mercenaries, as well as to the open-ended working group elaborating a regulatory framework to take this in account in their future works and to fully recognize the right to conscientious objection of mercenaries and employees of private military and security companies.

Thank you for promoting the Universality of Conscientious Objection.

Mister Vice-President, thank you for your attention!

Thank you for your kind support at [www.nonkilling.org](http://www.nonkilling.org)



## Conscience and Peace Tax International

*For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war*

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

International non-profit organization

Company Number 8514742

Office address • c/o Conscience UK • Archway Resource Centre

[www.cpti.ws](http://www.cpti.ws)

1b Waterlow Road • London N19 5NJ • United Kingdom

e-✉: [cpti@cpti.ws](mailto:cpti@cpti.ws)

Triodos Bank: 20591144 • IBAN: GB11 RBOS 1600 3410 0008 56 • BIC: RBOSGB2LXXX

## Universal Periodical Review

*Third Cycle*

# COSTA RICA

## Right to Peace

## Setting up of a Peace Fund

4<sup>th</sup> of October 2018

*“The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded”*

*Ban Ki-moon*

Conscience and Peace Tax International | Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | [cb@apred.ch](mailto:cb@apred.ch)

## **Introduction**

The aim of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) is to allow people to pay their tax money into peace funds instead of into military budgets and to obtain full recognition of the right to conscientious objection to paying for armaments, war preparation and war conduct through taxes. CPTI was founded in 1994 and has ECOSOC special consultative status since 1999.

Our mission arises from the deep affront made to our consciences by the fact that people are obliged to participate in war as combatants, civilian victims and through taxation. We are moved by this common sense proposition: our taxes should be used to abolish war, not to promote or sustain it. The ethical principle of freedom of conscience, a moral imperative governing the behaviour of all individuals, is central to the objectives and the work of CPTI. We are deeply concerned by the fact that our taxes could be (or are) used to kill people, making us, if we do not contest it, accomplices to infringements on the rights to life, to peace and to freedom of conscience, on the duty vested in all to respect life, to enhance it, to see it blossom and last in peace.

The very idea of war, as it happens or as it is deemed possible by war preparations of all sorts inflicts a spirit of conflictuality, of violence and destruction over humanity and thus hinders the good nature of the human being, threatening dignity and the achievements of civilisation so far, while the solutions needed for peace to prevail and to overcome war do, in our humble opinion, fully exist.

From education to local peaceful settlement of disputes, passing through prevention and sustaining peace, there are many ways to improve and implement peace, to report on its progress and they are still largely unused. This submission focuses on only one: setting up a peace fund<sup>1</sup>.

## **The right to peace**

Dignity is present in all human rights, life precedes them all and peace is always interlinking them all, or needed to interlink them and to routinely fulfil them. Peace also interlinks or is needed to link the individual person with all social and political groups and institutions, and reciprocally to link institutions and all social groups among themselves as with individuals.

The links between *human rights and peace* are progressively being developed<sup>2</sup> and a Declaration on the human right to peace has been adopted by the UN's General assembly in 2016<sup>3</sup>.

Conscience and peace tax international attaches a special importance to the *human right to peace* as human rights can only progress and be coordinated, be reciprocally fulfilled in a peaceful environment<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, peace and peaceful methods provide important means, fundamental methods needed to solve conflicts (including between competing human rights) without aggravating them and, as may be, to the advantage of all persons concerned, in a constructive or reconstructive manner. Conflicts solved peacefully make it easier to alleviate feelings with respect, to draw

lessons learned from difficult situations and to design policies for future prevention and overcoming.

It is with great respect that we salute the support given by Costa Rica towards the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Peace and further works towards its implementation<sup>5</sup>.

### **The peace fund**

Paying for war and war preparation should never be mandatory. And money for peace is too often direly missing. Therefore CPTI advocates for the setting up of dedicated peace funds, which should never be used for any military activities and preferably be used for peacebuilding and prevention, rather than for reconstruction.

The system could be rather simple to implement, with a “tick box” on the taxation allowing for a certain amount of money to go to the peace fund. In countries where there is a military budget, the amount should be equivalent to the percentage of the military budget in the complete budget.

As a champion of peace (with our compliments) and though it has no army, Costa Rica would be in a very good position to set up such a system and demonstrate its feasibility.

Therefore and under the rights to peace, life and freedom of Conscience, we warmly recommend to State of Costa Rica, the setting up a special peace fund, within the tax system, to allow individuals and corporations to dedicate funds, a legitimate part of their taxation, directly and exclusively to the (uncompromised with any form of violence or force) promotion, enhancement, establishment and achievement of peace, locally as worldwide; achievement of peace as required by the preamble, the principles and the aims of the United Nations Charter.

*Welcoming the delegation of Costa Rica to Geneva,  
we wish to them and to all the people of the country  
a constructive, enhancing and fulfilling  
Universal Periodic Review.*

*May peace bring us happiness,  
Sustain our future,  
And give full dignity  
To our institutions and our civilization,  
To the people of the world and of  
Costa Rica.*

---

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat more comprehensive approach of peace implementation means, see the submission done by CGNK (Center for Global non-killing) for Costa Rica, at this same session 33<sup>rd</sup> session of the UPR.

<sup>2</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 34th session of the Human Rights Council on mainstreaming human rights on the contribution of human rights to peacebuilding, but also resolutions 2250 on youth and peace of the Security Council, the common resolution of the General Assembly and the Security Council (2282) on Sustaining peace. Or the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 appeal by Switzerland and 70 States, <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-62152.html>. Or the Declaration on the Right to Peace A/RES/71/189.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<sup>4</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 28: “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized”.

<sup>5</sup> They are possibilities described here: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31)

We add peaceful settlement of disputes for internal disputes as for international ones.



## Conscience and Peace Tax International

*For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war*

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

International non-profit organization

Company Number 8514742

Office address • c/o Conscience UK • Archway Resource Centre

[www.cpti.ws](http://www.cpti.ws)

1b Waterlow Road • London N19 5NJ • United Kingdom

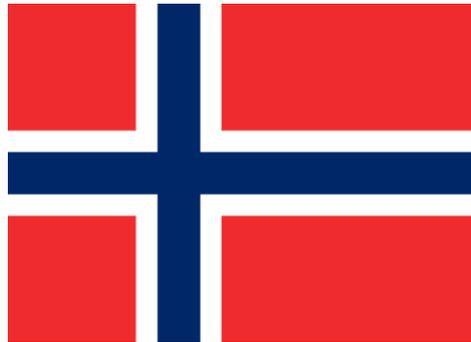
e-✉: [cpti@cpti.ws](mailto:cpti@cpti.ws)

Triodos Bank: 20591144 • IBAN: GB11 RBOS 1600 3410 0008 56 • BIC: RBOSGB2LXXX

## Universal Periodical Review

*Third Cycle*

# NORWAY



## Right to Peace

## Setting up of a Peace Fund

4<sup>th</sup> of October 2018

*“The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded”*

*Ban Ki-moon*

Conscience and Peace Tax International | Christophe Barbey | Main representative in Geneva  
C/° Center John Knox, 27, ch. des Crêts-de-Pregny, CH-1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland  
+41 79 524 35 74 | [cb@apred.ch](mailto:cb@apred.ch)

## **Introduction**

The aim of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) is to allow people to pay their tax money into peace funds instead of into military budgets and to obtain full recognition of the right to conscientious objection to paying for armaments, war preparation and war conduct through taxes. CPTI was founded in 1994 and has ECOSOC special consultative status since 1999.

Our mission arises from the deep affront made to our consciences by the fact that people are obliged to participate in war as combatants, civilian victims and through taxation. We are moved by this common sense proposition: our taxes should be used to abolish war, not to promote or sustain it. The ethical principle of freedom of conscience, a moral imperative governing the behaviour of all individuals, is central to the objectives and the work of CPTI. We are deeply concerned by the fact that our taxes could be or are used to kill people, making us, if we do not contest it, accomplices to infringements on the rights to life, to peace and to freedom of conscience, on the duty vested in all to respect life, to enhance it, to see it blossom and last in peace.

The very idea of war, as it happens or as it is deemed possible by war preparations of all sorts inflicts a spirit of conflictuality, of violence and destruction over humanity and thus hinders the good nature of the human being, threatening dignity and the achievements of civilisation so far, while the solutions needed for peace to prevail and to overcome war do, in our humble opinion, fully exist.

From education to local peaceful settlement of disputes, passing through prevention and sustaining peace, there are many ways to improve and implement peace, to report on its progress and they are still largely unused. This submission focuses on only one: setting up a peace fund<sup>1</sup>.

## **The right to peace**

Dignity is present in all human rights, life precedes them all and peace is always interlinking them all, or needed to interlink them and to routinely fulfil them. Peace also interlinks or is needed to link the individual person with all social and political groups and institutions, and reciprocally to link institutions and all social groups among themselves as with individuals.

Conscience and peace tax international also attaches a special importance to the *human right to peace* as human rights can only progress and be coordinated, be reciprocally fulfilled in a peaceful environment<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, peace and peaceful methods provide important means, fundamental methods needed to solve conflicts (including between competing human rights) without aggravating them and, as may be, to the advantage of all persons concerned, in a constructive or reconstructive manner. Conflicts solved peacefully make it easier to alleviate feelings with respect, to draw lessons learned from difficult situations and to design policies for future prevention and overcoming.

The links between *human rights and peace* are progressively being developed<sup>3</sup> and a Declaration on the human right to peace has been adopted by the UN's General assembly in 2016<sup>4</sup>.

We would've preferred it if Norway had voted in favour of it, but at least Norway was not opposed to it. Nevertheless the time for its implementation has now come<sup>5</sup>.

### **The peace fund**

Paying for war and war preparation should never be mandatory. And money for peace is too often direly missing. Therefore CPTI advocates for the setting up of dedicated peace funds, which should never be used for any military activities and preferably be used for peacebuilding and prevention, rather than for reconstruction.

The system could be rather simple to implement, with a “tick box” on the taxation form allowing for a certain amount of money to go to the peace fund. In countries where there is a military budget, the amount should be equivalent to the percentage of the military budget in the complete budget.

Therefore and under the rights to peace, life and freedom of Conscience, we warmly recommend to State of Norway, the setting up a special peace fund, within the tax system, to allow individuals and corporations to dedicate funds, a legitimate part of their taxation, directly and exclusively to the (uncompromised with any form of violence or force) promotion, enhancement, establishment and achievement of peace, locally as worldwide; achievement of peace as required by the preamble, the principles and the aims of the United Nations Charter.

*Welcoming the delegation of Norway to Geneva,  
we wish to them and to all the people of the country  
a constructive, enhancing and fulfilling  
Universal Periodic Review.*

*May peace bring us happiness,  
Sustain our future,  
And give full dignity  
To our institutions and our civilization,  
To the people of the world and of  
Norway.*

---

<sup>1</sup> For a somewhat more comprehensive approach of peace implementation means, see the submission done by CGNK (Center for Global non-killing) at this same session 33<sup>rd</sup> session of the UPR for Costa Rica.

---

<sup>2</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 28: “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized”.

<sup>3</sup> See 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the 34th session of the Human Rights Council on mainstreaming human rights on the contribution of human rights to peacebuilding, but also resolutions 2250 on youth and peace of the Security Council, the common resolution of the General Assembly and the Security Council (2282) on Sustaining peace. Or the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2016 appeal by Switzerland and 70 States, <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-62152.html>. Or the Declaration on the Right to Peace: <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

<sup>5</sup> They are possibilities described here: [http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage\\_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31](http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31)

We add peaceful settlement of disputes for internal disputes as for international ones.



## Conscience and Peace Tax International

*For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war*

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

International non-profit organization

Company Number 8514742

Office address • c/o Conscience UK • Wenlock Studios, Unit 8, First Floor • [www.cpti.ws](http://www.cpti.ws)

50 - 52 Wharf Road • London N1 7EU • United Kingdom • e-mail: [cpti@cpti.ws](mailto:cpti@cpti.ws)

Triodos Bank: 20591144 • IBAN: GB11 RBOS 1600 3410 0008 56 • BIC: RBOSGB2LXXX

Human Rights Council 43<sup>rd</sup>  
Item 6  
*Universal Periodic Review of Gambia*  
Geneva, 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2020

Madame President,  
Dear Human Beings,  
Excellency's,  
Dear delegation of The Gambia,  
Dear Webcasters,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Good morning, with wishes for health,

First, let us compliment the Authorities of Gambia for the abolition of the death penalty; for raising the Genocide question at the International Court of Justice and generally speaking for looking at a better future for all people.

The main concern of Conscience and Peace Tax international is to see peace progress at all levels of society. This shall be done by allocating more funds for the promotion of peace and by adopting comprehensive peace policies.

In the draft of the new constitution, we note with great pleasure a disposition promoting universal peaceful settlement of disputes (§ 169, 2, d). We encourage the government to establish proper means to grant access to peaceful settlements for all people, including once the work of the truth commission is completed.

The draft also contains at article 37, with due reservation, an outspoken “permit to kill”, inter alia in case of riot, escape or arrest. Use of force can only be legitimate if it is proportionate, or better non-violent and non-maiming.

A constitutional disposition should promote the right to life as a whole and as much as may be avoid proclaiming or citing an open list of exceptions to the protection of life.

We encourage the People and the authorities of The Gambia to change this disposition.

Nevertheless, we wish to the people and to the Authorities of The Gambia a successful UPR.

Thank you dear Friends for your participation in peace and life.

Thank you Madame President.



## Conscience and Peace Tax International

*For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war*

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

International non-profit organization

Company Number 8514742

Office address • c/o Conscience UK • Wenlock Studios, Unit 8, First Floor • [www.cpti.ws](http://www.cpti.ws)

50 - 52 Wharf Road • London N1 7EU • United Kingdom • e-mail: [cpti@cpti.ws](mailto:cpti@cpti.ws)

Triodos Bank: 20591144 • IBAN: GB11 RBOS 1600 3410 0008 56 • BIC: RBOSGB2LXXX

Human Rights Council. Item 6.  
Universal Periodic Review of  
Norway  
Geneva, 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2019

### *Joint Statement with the Center for Global Nonkilling*

Dear Human Beings,

Monsieur le Président,  
Dear Human Rights Council,  
Dear delegation of Norway,  
Excellency's,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Dear webcasters,  
Good afternoon,

Our Human Rights Council has numerous times highlighted the links between human rights and peace and as well, between climate change and human rights. These links – breaking silos – need to deepen, evermore.

Norway is certainly one of the nations championing peace. However, peace and conscientious objection are not mentioned in this UPR. Worse, the recommendation made by Haiti, largely speaking, on climate change, has been noted as, I quote: “Beyond the scope of the UPR” (140.96).

As long as humanity exists – and if we are cautious, our species could live for millions of years or more – we will need human rights and when human dignity stands, nothing is beyond human rights or out of the scope of the UPR.

As long as we pay for war, what we will mostly reap is war: we need to pay for peace, for peace only and we need to pay much more for peace. They are peace and peaceful climate change initiatives, all over the world, that need gentle guidance and funding.

Partly because of oil, Norway is one of the richest countries in the world. This gives to the People and the Government of Norway a special and extra responsibility. Henceforth, we reiterate our call to see Norway set up a special peace fund, to grant conscientious objection rights to those refusing to pay for the military budget and to allow them to pay their part of their taxes in this peace fund. We also call for a status for conscientious objection to military service for professionals, be them in the armed forces or in private military and security companies.

Active, dynamic and constructive participation of the People and of the Government of Norway in the major changes our humanity is now undergoing is now expected.

May we all do our best!  
Merci Monsieur le Président!