

11th January 2010

Addressing the real wounds of the human family: a call to action

*'They dress my people's wound without concern: "Peace! Peace!" they say,
but there is no peace. They should be ashamed of their abominable deeds. But not they!'*

(Jeremiah 6:14-15)

The first decade of the twenty-first century has seen increased global polarity. Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Israel-Palestine, Congo, are just some of those countries that continue to be torn apart by war and conflict, many in the name of the 'war on terror', others in the drive to secure access to and control of natural resources. As well as the obvious human costs, the opportunity costs of these wars are incalculable: lack of investment in social and development projects, the displacement of people, the destruction of essential infrastructure within countries, the fuelling of suspicion and hatred within and between communities. As with the people at the heart of Jeremiah's cry, millions today are offered a false and dangerous peace which not only ignores but often exacerbates the real suffering of the human family and the very planet.

For decades the discussion on peace and security has been dominated by proponents of the 'might is right' model, arguing that national self-interest and the protection and security of others is best achieved by military means. The time has come to turn away from this false and short-sighted model in favour of a model of sustainable human security that puts people – and especially the poor – at its centre. Such a model is consistent with the social teachings of many churches which seek to build global solidarity between peoples – solidarity that heals the wounds of war, the violation of rights, poverty and the destruction of the environment.

- We call upon churches, dioceses, congregations, parishes, groups, and all individuals of goodwill, to join our appeal to build security for the common good where the pursuit of love and justice set the political, economic and social agenda.

- We call on the Government, as it undertakes its Defence Review, to use this opportunity for a radical evaluation of security policies. It is not enough to tinker with budgets, to choose between 'boots or bombs'. Now is the time to redirect military spending, research and development into life-giving projects that address our real security needs today.
- We call on all political parties in the run-up to a General Election to reframe their approaches to defence and security in favour of security for the common good.

I wish to add my support to the Call to Action

Signature:

Role:

Please return to Pax Christi, Christian Peace Education Centre, St Joseph's, Watford Way,
London NW4 4TY

Or email your response to: 'securityforthecommongood@for.org.uk'.