

Rome Appeal for PEACE

- Rome Youth Declaration for Social Change
- Rome Commitment for Peace, Justice and Care for Creation

Rome, 19 September 2024

(Final version)



PAX Catholica Forum

Rome, Sept. 19 (Thur.) 2024

Rome Appeal for PEACE

*“I encourage you to continue to be **agents for social change**,
steadfast in your efforts
to help build a more inclusive, harmonious and sustainable world.”*

Rome, July 22 2022

Pope Francis Centennial Address to
IMCS Pax Romana founded in 1921.

September 19, 2024

We, the participants of the Empowerment Summit at the Pax Romana Centennial Center (PRCC) in La-Roche-sur-Foron, France on Sept, 12-15, 2024 and Pax Catholica Forum organized jointly by International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) Pax Romana and with International Catholic Movement of Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA) CMICA, Pax Christi International and Pax Christi Korea and International Youth Training Center (IYTC) - Laudato Si Center in Chiangmai, Thailand on September 19, 2024 under the theme “Youth for a Culture of Justice and Sustainable Peace and Nonviolence”

- 1) Deeply and painfully concerned about the ongoing and escalating military conflicts and threats in the world, particularly in Ukraine and Palestine (Gaza) and Sudan, which Pope Francis has described as a "piecemeal World War III",
- 2) Welcoming and reaffirming the Nagasaki Appeal for Peace without Nuclear Weapons, the outcome document of the Catholic Peace Forum held in Nagasaki on August 10, 2024, on the 79th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in which Pax Romana IMCS participated as a co-organizer,
- 3) Inspired and encouraged by the teachings and messages of Pope Francis for peace, justice and care for creation, such as the Papal Encyclicals Laudato Si - Care for Our Common Home (2015) and Fratelli Tutti - Human Fraternity and Social Friendship (2020), messages for the World Day of Peace (January 1) since 2014, .
- 4) Inspired by the message of Pope Francis to the members of Pax Romana IMCS and ICMICA on the occasion of their centenary on October 22, 2022, encouraging us to be

"agents of social change to create a more inclusive, harmonious and sustainable world",

- 5) Inspired by the tireless efforts and leadership of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to prevent and resolve armed conflicts, including through nuclear disarmament, through multilateral diplomacy and dialogue,
- 6) Inspired by the appeal of the Pax Christi International Catholic Nonviolence Initiative and the hope of the PCI Catholic Institute for Nonviolence, to be inaugurated in Rome on September 29, 2024, to deepen Catholic understanding of and commitment to the practice of Gospel nonviolence,
- 7) Encouraged by the theme "From Clicks to Progress: Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development" of the International Youth Day on August 12, 2024
- 8) Looking forward to the positive outcome of the United Nations Summit on the Future (SOTF) to be held in New York on September 22-23, 2024, with the aim of promoting peace and human security
- 9) Looking forward to the fruitful outcome of the Second Plenary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Lay Apostolate and the Youth Movement, to be held in Rome, October 2-27, 2024
- 10) Welcoming the United Nations International Day of Peace on September 21, 2024, under the theme: Cultivating a Culture of Peace, marking the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace by the United Nations General Assembly in 1999,
- 11) Welcoming the proclamation by Pope Francis of the Jubilee Year 2025 and the 50th anniversary of World Youth Day, especially the Jubilee of Youth from July 30 to August 3, 2025,
- 12) Welcoming the hosting of the 18th World Youth Day (WYD) in 2027 in Seoul, South Korea,
- 13) Expressing our solidarity with the civil society actors and people who have participated in the preparation and especially the Action Day for the UN Summit of the Future on September 20-21, 2024,

*We declare the **Rome Appeal for Peace** as a reflection of our shared values and a pledge to work tirelessly for the realization of a world where peace and justice are not just ideals, but lived realities.*

Rome Youth Declaration for Social Change

Preamble

We, Catholic youth and university students from different nations, united by our faith and commitment to the teachings of Christ, come together to work for a world rooted in peace and justice.

Inspired by the principles of the Gospel and the teachings of Pope Francis, we recognise that true peace cannot exist without justice, and that justice is only complete when it is based on love, equality and respect for every human being. We also believe that peace is not merely the absence of war, but the presence of harmony, understanding, and respect within and among all people. We reject all forms of violence and conflict and pledge to resolve differences through acceptance, dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual understanding.

This statement is our call to action, inviting all people of good will to join us in building a future where peace and justice flourish for all, as we prepare for the World Youth Day (WYD) in Seoul, Korea in 2027.

Commitments

Article 1: Commitment to Peace

Article 2: Justice as the Foundation of Peace

Article 3: Solidarity with the Poor and Oppressed

Article 5: Education for Justice and Peace

Article 6: Advocacy and Action

Article 7: Prayer and Spiritual Renewal

Commitments

Article 1: Commitment to Peace

We commit ourselves to the pursuit of peace in our personal lives, in our communities, and in the world. We believe that peace is not merely the absence of war, but the presence of harmony, understanding, and respect within and among all people. We reject all forms of violence and conflict and pledge to resolve differences through acceptance, dialogue, reconciliation, and mutual understanding.

Article 2: Justice as the foundation of peace

We affirm that justice is the foundation of true and lasting peace. Justice requires the recognition of the inherent dignity of every person, the protection of human rights, and the promotion of the common good. We call upon all peoples and nations to enact and uphold laws that ensure fairness, equality and access to opportunities for all, especially the marginalized and vulnerable.

Article 3: Solidarity with the poor and oppressed

Following the example of Christ, we stand in solidarity with the poor, the oppressed and all those who suffer injustice, in the spirit of the preferential option for the poor. We recognize that the structures of sin such as poverty, discrimination and exploitation are obstacles to peace. We commit ourselves to work for a world where the needs of the most vulnerable are prioritized

and where all have the opportunity to live a life of dignity and fulfillment.

Article 4: Care for Creation

We recognize that care for our common home is inextricably linked to justice and peace. Environmental degradation and climate change disproportionately affect the poor and future generations. We commit ourselves to be stewards of creation, to advocate for policies that protect the earth, our common home, and to promote ecologically sustainable practices in our communities.

Article 5: Education for Justice and Peace

We recognize the power of education to promote a culture of peace, nonviolence, and justice. We call upon educational institutions to integrate the principles of social justice, human rights, integrity of creation, and peacemaking into their curricula. We commit ourselves to educate ourselves and others about the importance of justice, peace and care for creation and to apply these principles in our daily lives.

Article 6: Advocacy and Action

We commit ourselves to be active agents of transformative change in our societies, locally, nationally, and internationally. We will advocate for policies and practices that promote justice, peace and solidarity, and engage in actions that contribute to the well-being of all people and creation. We will use our voices to speak out against injustice and our hands to build a world where peace and justice are realities for all.

Article 7: Prayer and Spiritual Renewal

We recognize the importance of prayer and spiritual renewal in sustaining our efforts for peace and justice. We commit ourselves to deepen our relationship with God through prayer, the sacraments and reflection, trusting that God's grace will guide us in our work. We call on all Catholic youth and students to join us in praying for peace, justice and the care of creation, and for the courage and wisdom to live these values in our lives.

Actions

As Catholic youth and university students, we declare our actions to implement the Rome Youth Declaration for Social Change for the next 3 years (2025-2027). We believe that through faith, solidarity and action we can transform our world into a place where every person is treated with dignity and respect, where justice is served and where peace prevails. We invite all people of good will to join us in this noble endeavor, confident that with God's help we can build a better future for all.

- 1) We commit to promote a sustainable culture of just peace through active nonviolence leading to conflict resolution, transformation and prevention.
- 2) We commit to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), towards the third SDG Summit in 2027,

3) We commit to implement the outcomes of the UN Summit on the Future (SOTF) - Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations - to be held in New York on September 22-23, 2024, to promote youth leadership and global citizenship for a more just, peaceful and sustainable future.

4) We commit to proactively engage with the UN and other international organizations, such as the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, regional sustainable development forums and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in New York, the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP-UNFCCC), and peace conferences, to advocate for peace, justice and the care of creation in collaboration with other like-minded Catholic, ecumenical, interfaith and civil society organizations.

5) We commit ourselves to build a synodal church in accordance with the outcome of the Synod on Synodality (2021-2024), beginning in 2025.

6) We commit ourselves to study and implement Catholic social teaching and practice throughout the year, such as the *Evangelii Gaudium* - The Joy of the Gospel (2013), *Laudato Si* - Praise the Lord (2015), *Christus Vivit* - Christ is Alive (2019) and *Fratelli Tutti* - All Brothers/Sisters (2020).

7) We commit to study and implement the Pope's message for the World Day of Peace (January 1) each year.

8) We commit to participate in the *Laudato Si* Week and Day (April 24) and the Season of Creation (September 1- October 4) each year.

9) We commit to participate in the Catholic Nonviolence Days of Action (September 21- October 2) each year.

10) We commit ourselves to carry out the Pax Jubilee Campaign for Peace, Justice and Care for Creation for 3 years from 2025 to 2027 in preparation for the World Youth Day (WYD) in Rome in 2025 and in Seoul in 2027 as well as the World Assembly of Pax Romana IMCS in 2027.

Finally, recognizing the great potential of synodality as a framework for fostering unity and shared responsibility within the Church, we affirm that the active involvement of young people is essential for the future growth and vitality. As a student movement, we are dedicated to implementing the above commitments and actions in the spirit of synodality and Catholic Social Teaching as “protagonist of revolution of love and service (*Christus Vivit*, 174)” at all levels, from the grassroots, the national and international levels.

Rome, September 19, 2024