

The Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions

International Workshop and General Assembly 2026

"Nuclear disarmament and pathways towards an unarmed and disarming peace"

Friday 18th September – Monday 21st September 2026, Glasgow

FINAL DECLARATION

**Security is founded not on the threat of destruction,
but on justice, human dignity and the common good**

As delegates of the European Justice and Peace Commissions, we gathered in Glasgow, Scotland, from 18th-21st September to learn, reflect, and act on the pressing need to advance nuclear disarmament. We meet at a time of heightened global tension wherein many nuclear-armed states are actively engaged in, or have recently engaged in, direct military conflict against both nuclear and non-nuclear nations. Inspired by the words of Pope Leo XIV in his first [World Day of Peace Message](#), encouraging us to work towards an "unarmed and disarming peace", our gathering placed a profound urgency on moving beyond abstract discussions to ask the critical question: how do we practically achieve disarmament?

Since the 1960s, Scotland has been the host nation for the United Kingdom's nuclear-armed submarines at HMNB Clyde (Faslane) on the River Clyde. Consequently, since the 1980s, both Justice & Peace Scotland and the Bishops' Conference of Scotland as well as a broader peace movement across the country have continuously advocated for authentic peace and security, rejecting the false security founded on the wielding of power and the threat of 'mutually assured destruction' (MAD). During our time in Glasgow, we met with members of this long-established Scottish peace movement. We learned about their unwavering commitment to advancing disarmament through dialogue and diplomacy, highlighting the catastrophic human and environmental impacts of nuclear detonation, advocating for a just transition for defence workers, and educating society for peace, nonviolence and on how to reframe the state-centred concept of security.

To ground our intellectual and theological reflections in the real-world context, we visited Faslane to participate in a vigil of Christian witness for disarmament and peace. Standing before the gates behind which these weapons of mass destruction are housed, we prayed, listened to Scripture, and reflected on the fundamental truth that authentic security cannot be built upon an addiction to arms and increased nuclear spending but must be rooted in human dignity, respect for neighbour, and the promotion of the common good.

Catholic Social Teaching has for decades been resolute regarding the Church's position on nuclear weapons. From [Pacem in Terris](#) (1963), which declares that "nuclear weapons must be banned" (112), to [Magnifica Humanitas](#) (2026), the Church has consistently challenged the contemporary political rhetoric that dominates international defence policies. *Magnifica Humanitas* specifically identifies the "widespread yet erroneous belief that nuclear deterrence is an indispensable prerequisite for security" (194). Thus, as Christians committed to making the moral frameworks of Catholic Social Teaching a reality, we acknowledge that nuclear weapons can never be considered "just weapons," and their production, possession, use, as well as the threat of their use, remains morally wrong.

However, a truly prophetic voice must also be relational and realistic. We do not preach from an ivory tower, detached from the genuine fears and security threats that populations face as war dominates European and international affairs. The situation created by the Russian aggression on Ukraine serves as a stark reminder of the complexities surrounding nuclear deterrence and state vulnerability, prompting difficult questions about security and defence. We recognise that the geopolitical realities of our respective nations vary immensely; from the historical and present threats in Central and Eastern Europe to the perspectives of neutral countries.

Despite these differences, we share a unified commitment: we must not become accustomed to the existence of nuclear weapons, nor accept the prevailing narrative that to ensure peace, we must be prepared for war. We categorically reject this and instead uphold the words of Pope Paul VI that if you want peace, you must work for justice, and take up the call of our current Holy Father to work for an unarmed and disarming peace. Authentic security is not found in armed insecurity, but in human security: investing in people, democratic institutions, and social justice. Furthermore, our moral evaluation must expand to recognise that the threat of mass destruction is evolving. We must urgently address the integration of Artificial Intelligence into nuclear command systems, echoing the [Rome Declaration](#) of the Global Nobel Laureates Assembly on AI and Nuclear War, as well as rapid scientific developments that elevate the risk of biological weapons.

To achieve our common goal of overcoming nuclear deterrence and building an authentic peace based on justice, we commit to, and call for, the following concrete actions:

- **Strengthen disarmament frameworks:** We urge political leaders to strengthen international law and multilateralism and to uphold existing disarmament commitments. This requires unwavering support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the development of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). We call upon European nations to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and urge states currently committed to nuclear deterrence to engage with its processes, including by attending meetings as observers.
- **Hold governments and industry accountable:** Justice and Peace Commissions must continuously engage with and hold elected officials accountable, challenging governments that increase defence spending at the expense of social and economic justice. We must also contest the economic interests embedded within the nuclear weapons and wider arms industries and advocate for just transitions for affected workers.
- **Mobilise civil society for multilateral nuclear disarmament:** We encourage Christians and all people of goodwill to take up the cause of nonviolence and nuclear disarmament through peaceful action. This may include: prayer, reflection, advocacy, and public witness, for example at sites where nuclear weapons are hosted.
- **Invest in Peace Education:** We must prioritise Peace Education and Global Citizenship Education to change mentalities across Europe and globally, challenging the normalisation of nuclear weapons and reframing “security” away from militarisation and towards human security - namely the safeguarding and flourishing of people, democracy, communities and resources. We acknowledge that to achieve this we must also

challenge misinformation both in politics and the media as well as within our own churches.

- **Foster dialogue and credible alternatives:** We commit to creating and sustaining spaces for dialogue within the Church and civil society; we must ensure that genuine fears and security concerns are heard while developing and advocating for credible alternatives to nuclear deterrence.

We leave Glasgow reaffirmed in our conviction that multilateral nuclear disarmament is both a moral imperative and a practical political challenge. We commit ourselves to being a prophetic and persistent voice for an authentic and just peace in which security is founded not on the threat of destruction, but on justice, human dignity and the common good.

Adopted by the General Assembly of
Justice & Peace Europe in Glasgow,
on the International Day of Peace,
21 September 2026