

Pax Christi International Fourth Asia-Pacific Continental Consultation Conference Statement

Forty (40) delegates from seventeen (17) countries gathered for the Fourth Pax Christi Asia-Pacific Continental Consultation in Pattaya, Thailand, 24 – 28 September 2006. The participants consisted of representatives of Pax Christi International's Asia Pacific member organizations, resource persons, observers, former and current members of the executive committee and the international secretariat.

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, Thailand (CCJPT) co-hosted the Consultation.

Our reflections, analysis, and learning were based on the themes, "Reconciliation, Inter-Faith Cooperation and Conflict Transformation in Asia-Pacific". The inter-faith resource persons called our attention to the dangerous implications of the "imperial project" of the war on terror. They reminded us of the need to expose the "US Empire" that exploits the fear, prejudices and stereotypes about Muslims, and urged us to work to help Christians shed these unjust perceptions. In conclusion, they challenged us that in order to work towards real peace we need to learn to accept and live with the pains of the past through Forgiveness and to live with the uncertainties of the future with the Promise.

Attention was also focused on the need to look at the global and local dimensions of conflict transformation.

An interactive session helped the participants look closely into the constitutive elements of Truth, Justice, Mercy and Peace needed for reconciliation and which are essential to break the vicious cycle of violence.

Regional and thematic workshops helped us crystallize and prioritise four areas of concern for peace in the Asia Pacific region.

The first area of concern is "The prevalence of mindsets/attitudes of dominance and intolerance that breed discrimination, violence, and fear". Therefore, we are called to promote education for a culture of peace and reconciliation as well as promote interfaith/intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

The second area is the “Militarization of politics, political systems, and governance; the collapse of the rule of law and democracy; the erosion of non-violent values and human rights’ norms.” Therefore, we are called for the democratisation of governance systems, the empowerment of civil society and the reform in the security sector.

The third area is the “Imposition of Empire for global military, cultural and economic dominance and its implications for Asia-Pacific”. Therefore, we are called to conscientise people on the Impact of Empire (global military, cultural & economic dominance) and the resistance to it, which envisions a world where war is not used as a means for resolving conflict.

A plea for support and solidarity by the Japanese delegation to Protect and Keep Article 9 of their Peace Constitution was adopted as a special concern.

The consultation ended with the participant resolving to set up the necessary programs of action and support structure to sustain Pax Christi’s commitment to the four concerns.

Pattaya, Thailand
28 September 2006

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