



CHURCH OF NORWAY

Council on Ecumenical and International Relations

Peace, Justice and Human Dignity in Troubled Times

Human rights and international law are now at stake. The wars in Sudan, Ukraine and Palestine are examples of how the rules of war are undermined and human dignity is despised. Geopolitical tensions, weakened democracy, and the rise of authoritarian regimes, give cause for deep concern. New weapon technology and increased risk of the use of nuclear weapons, also present new humanitarian, ethical and legal challenges.

This is something we, as church and society, must respond to. International law represents standards that express Christian values. Jesus' words about peace, love of our neighbor and love of our enemies, are central to Christian ethics and remain a radical commitment today. The churches' work for peace opposes injustice and the abuse of power. We insist on reconciliation, justice and hope, even when it is costly.

When we emphasize love and reconciliation, we cannot remain indifferent to violations of international law and climate destruction. Nor do we ever accept weapons that can destroy all life. If we as a church are to be true to our calling, we must place human dignity and creation above national and economic interests.

A rule-based world order contributes to predictability and justice and helps prevent that it is the law of the strongest that prevails. As the UN now marks its 80th anniversary, we emphasize the need for a strong UN and binding multilateral cooperation.

Together, as church and society, we must:

- Defend international law: Continue to be a clear voice for cooperation, dialogue and a rule-based world order. Without common rules, the law of the strongest prevails.
- Protect life and human dignity: Norway must join the UN nuclear weapons ban and take a lead in developing conventions that ensure that human decision-makers are held accountable for any use of military power.
- Be courageous and truthful: Be self-critical and confront double standards. We must clearly distance ourselves from hostile rhetoric, abuse of religion and lack of respect for international agreements.
- Maintain the hope for peace: Continue to pray and work for reconciliation and justice. Peace is possible!

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