

***Just Policing and Unarmed Interventions:
Towards Broader Church Engagement in R2P (Responsibility to Protect)?***

Panel, Church and Peace Conference, Baarlo, NL, 24 May 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to join a conference of people who work faithfully for peace. Thank you for your contributions to the *Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV)*, your reminders to the Busan Assembly that “discipleship in love” is the basis of peace, and your anticipated commitments to the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace.

It is a privilege within the wide World Council of Churches (WCC) to call attention to the role of the peace churches in the ecumenical movement. Your churches are leaven in the ecumenical ‘loaf’, helping a much larger body rise to challenges which followers of Jesus cannot escape. Joining the WCC secretariat halfway through the DOV, I saw churches seeking and pursuing peace in new ways. It was evident that your calling, your example, your challenges added much to the DOV and in some cases influenced what other churches did.

The subject for this panel may also be like leaven. I would like to offer the following aspects for consideration and discussion.

I. SOME JUST POLICING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The positive link between just policing and human security. The slow but steady emergence of the concept of human security is a mark of our era. It is a concept friendly to just policing. Human security has an inherent universality. It sets a broad societal baseline for expectation and purpose; one that entails as much equality, well-being and safety as possible for as many people as possible. It is, therefore, good news to the vulnerable and marginalized. Advances in human security require reforms in other, less inclusive fields of security -- national, corporate and private security.¹

Just policing, as currently envisioned, is highly compatible with the concept of human security. The concept of shared human security may also help to bring just policing into the international agenda. Examples of successful just policing might well be taken as indicators of progress on human security.²

The limits of a police force stop at a jurisdictional border – municipal, provincial, national. The limits of a just policing “team” could be the same, in some cases, but must also take up the challenge of working beyond international borders in foreign contexts.

Issues to address in just policing ‘sans frontiers’: How well could just policing be internationalized? Successful conventional policing requires solid community relations and active engagement around societal norms and values by the local citizens and their locally hired policewomen and men. What are the international equivalents of these requirements? If good conventional policing requires a basic consensus around social and cultural standards and be-

1 For Christians, the term security is problematic. It smacks of privilege, self-centeredness and fear. As Lisa Schirch told the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Jamaica, security is not a word one finds in the Bible. In a secular era, the term may signify something idolatrous—particularly when it is used among privileged nations and social classes to shape popular opinion, government actions and relations with foreigners. The term becomes more constructive when paired with adjectives like “cooperative”, “collective” and “shared”. In that vein, seeing security in terms of *humanity* -- as human security -- adds a built-in corrective, particularly on questions of peace.

2 In common usage the term “policing” connotes the enforcement of law and order, apprehension of criminals, provision of personal safety, protection of citizens and communities, and harassment of individuals or social groups. Just policing connotes a higher-quality rule of law, citizens and communities invested in the everyday challenges of building peace, shared security, personal safety and increased scope for the realization of the common good.

haviours, what are the trans-national parallels in the case of effective just policing? If today's policing depends in part on a shared vision of the common good and of domestic security, what are the multi-cultural, multi-religious and trans-national equivalents? It would seem that these are problematic prerequisites for international just policing.

The world is globalizing: Is such a world more, or less, amenable to a universalist initiative like just policing? Yes, one might say, technology is transcending barriers to enable far-flung connections. Many more people are linked-up in more fields than ever before. International business and commerce are enjoying unprecedented possibilities. Global problems should compel greater cooperation in various fields, most notably climate change. But endeavours that require a significant trade-off between independence and the common good are proving difficult. It is relatively straight-forward to globalize the behaviour of the many to produce a commercial benefit for the few. It is proving relatively difficult for decisions of a few key national leaders to be globalized into common international action for the common good.³

Tobias Winright and others promote 'community policing' as a foundation for just policing. There are many helpful dimensions in that model. However, for our purpose here, consider how foreigners would fit in a community policing model? At a basic level, how well would Russian, or Indian, or American 'just police' do in your community? We should note that they would not be there in good times, when everything was fine. They would be there when your community or nation was on the brink of serious trouble or already divided and in conflict. How would foreign police do? Can the concept of 'community policing' be applied to foreigners? How well does just policing 'travel'?

The potential synergy between just policing and international law is of fundamental importance. A key goal of just policing is the enforcement of international law, especially in responding to, mitigating, avoiding or resolving armed conflict. Thankfully, the body of international human rights and humanitarian law has grown historically in the last century.⁴

Where national legislation incorporates international laws, treaties and guidelines related to human security, where nations are implementing such 'trans-national' legislation, where judicial independence is guaranteed, there are good prospects to enforce international law and develop it further. These are essentially pre-conditions for successful just policing.

A list of grave threats to public peace and social order today would include endemic violations of human rights, blatant aggression, mass violence, trans-national organized crime, and non-judicial killings carried out by projecting lethal force across domestic and international borders. In country after country, there are also widening disparities in income and wealth plus other manifestations of injustice and exploitation. Police may have a role to play in each example. Against which of these threats would just policing have a role to play? Against which ones could just policing be effective or ineffective?

³ It can be argued that globalization is both exacerbating and narrowing cultural, ethnic and religious differences. What about historic rivalries and grievances involving ethnic groups, nations and regions? It is one thing for billions of people to depend on smart phones or for a billion people to open a Facebook page (examples of the aggregated, commercial behaviours which define globalization). It is quite another domain to develop and deploy a just policing team including foreigners, or to operate non-violently and effectively in a context of injustice, aggression, violence and human rights abuses. Examining the prospects for trans-national just policing raise many more issues than are normally addressed in discussions of globalization.

⁴ The Geneva Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and a succession of related treaties, protocols and codes of conduct are a great common achievement of the last century. International law, fortified by the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, has even begun to qualify the right of state sovereignty and to establish rough standards of accountability for national leaders. Two heads of state have now been brought to account before the ICC. (A third is in the process of escaping prosecution.) One of the functions of just policing – if it were well-established and universally recognized – could be to serve, in effect, as an independent agency supporting the ICC.

II. JUST POLICING ON THE ECUMENICAL HORIZON

Broad and patient ecumenical engagement will be needed to explore the potential for just policing and to understand possible church roles. In the weeks after September 11, 2001, the agency where I worked took part in joint deliberations with nine other church humanitarian agencies in the US on how to respond to the imminent US invasion of Afghanistan. As our position developed, it became clear that we did not have a basis for a broad common position. Five church bodies wanted to see the 9-11 attacks prosecuted as international crimes. There was robust debate in good faith, but in the end some of the largest players withdrew. The US Catholic Bishops Conference, for example, decided that the invasion was a just war so the Catholic agency withdrew. Episcopalians came to a similar decision. A united Christian voice was raised, but it was not broad enough to influence the nationalistic and violent US response, which many churches supported. Mennonites, Quakers, Presbyterians and Lutherans took a stand that seemed a credible Christian response at the time and looks even better today after the 14 years of military reprisals and armed violence that followed. We noted “the call of Jesus to love enemies and live as peacemakers”, the need to pray for and reach out to people affected on all sides of the conflict, that the US government should address the root causes that give rise to violent extremism, that a heinous crime of this scale required detective work, police work and judicial prosecution, and that governments should “use the existing mechanisms of the UN Security Council and world court system to deal with the crisis.”

We were calling for what amounts to an ad-hoc experiment in just policing using the existing instruments of the international community.⁵ The challenges are considerable. Such crises are driven by many factors. But there is reason to believe that just policing could help provide alternatives for conflict transformation.

Just policing has the potential to help reduce differences between churches on questions of peace. It does so in two ways. First, it takes a middle path between the traditions of just war and non-violence, drawing strength from each but also challenging each. As Gerald Schlabach points out, “for the just war theory to stand any chance of fulfilling its advocates’ best intentions, it must retrace its steps and attend far more closely to the ways in which war is not like policing at all” (Just Policing: Not War, 2007). War, for example, is not subject to the rule of law in the manner that policing can be. Yet war is often described in terms of policing. The Korean War was even called a police action. Such obfuscation is inadmissible in peace building.

Just policing also challenges non-violence. It requires a distinction between policing and preserving law and order on the one hand and soldiering and war-fighting on the other hand. While everyday actions of just policing are non-violent, as are the steps envisaged in a just-policing response to an emergency, there is a contingency for limited use of force. Jim Wallis, Schlabach and others suggest that some kind of armed teamwork may be required to capture and hold people who are armed and bent on violence. The Ecumenical Call to Just Peace points to this eventuality with a reference to the development of an ethic of a lawful use of force under a rigorous and conditional application of the just war criteria.

The second way in which just policing may help bridge church differences over peace is in its emphasis on prevention, the next topic here.

⁵ We knew a judicial response was an untried solution but we were convinced that, despite its unconventionality, it was far more proportionate and discriminating than the alternatives including especially the prospect of the most powerful nation in the world invading one of the weakest nations as part of a war against a word, “terror”. Imagine how a well-developed capacity for just policing could have changed the options after 9-11: patient, respectful multilateral work by police and a judiciary (with protection of unarmed or armed multinational peacekeepers, if necessary); international Christian and multi-religious support for just policing and for confidence-building measures; and the avoidance of military invasions.

III. The “Responsibility to Prevent” and ecumenical examples of preventive peace-building

There are a host of preventive measures which merit a place in church engagement for peace. There are other preventive activities, like just policing, which merit church support and cooperation but are generally beyond the capacity of churches to implement.

Preventive measures are covered generally in Glen Stassen's ten practices of just peace-making. These ten ways to prevent war and armed conflict include non-violent direct action, cooperative conflict resolution, advancing democracy and human rights, and strengthening the United Nations, other international institutions and international norms related to peace with justice.

Not only do these preventive measures bridge church differences over peace but, when combined with the ecumenical record of opposing the use of armed force, they raise questions about how much of a gap there is to bridge. If we take the current peace-related activities led by the WCC, for example, and go back over Stassen's list, we find: non-violent direct action (Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel/EAPPI), cooperative conflict resolution (Nigeria, Sudan, Syria, Korea), advancing democracy and human rights (work related to the Human Rights Council), and strengthening the United Nations, other international institutions and international norms (gender-based violence via Commission on the Status of Women; issues pursued with indigenous peoples and at their UN forum; solid contributions to the Arms Trade Treaty and step toward reducing nuclear threats). Some of these preventive activities might be classified as “unarmed interventions”. Some of them deal directly with arms in order to limit the instruments of mass violence, but all of these initiatives are in accordance with the long-standing ecumenical commitment to live without resort to arms.

If we look to the fuller vision of Just Peace – in its economic and ecological dimensions as well as its political and social dimensions – we could add other areas of prevention such as the churches’ responses to climate change.

Impulses from Busan and in current work demonstrate a wide spectrum of prevention in ecumenical engagement for peace. If the message of the 1st WCC assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 was “We intend to **stay together**”, the Message of the 10th Assembly in 2013 was “We intend to **move together**.” May these words be made flesh in the forthcoming Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. The General Secretary exhorted the Busan Assembly:

“We are not here to discuss *if* we can make a difference together as a fellowship of churches. We are **here to discern how and with whom we can offer our contributions**. ...to call one another to visible unity...witness and service to the world and to advance towards that unity in order that the world may believe.”

In the Peace plenary in Busan, the host region signalled a deep yearning for change, for us to prevent, react and rebuild:

“Peace, from a faith perspective, means “Exodus journey” to Korean people. If we are to arrive at peace we need to make three related Exodus journeys.

The first is an **Exodus into new peace** here in divided Korea.... The 1953 Armistice did not end the Korean war. We are the pivot for the Obama administration to contain China, we are caught up in a new Cold War....

Second is an **Exodus into new light**. This is an Exodus from the blinding flash of nuclear bombs and deadly glow of nuclear reactors to a world free of nuclear weapons and power plants. Northeast Asia has become the “global ground zero” of nuclear dangers....

Third is an **Exodus to a new earth**, an Exodus from the industrial age to an ecological age.”

In the Statement on the Way of Just Peace, there was an affirmation of the *Ecumenical Call to Just Peace* and its multi-sectorial approach:

- For just peace in the community – *so that all may live free from fear*
- For just peace with the earth – *so that life is sustained*
- For just peace in the marketplace – *so that all may live with dignity*
- For just peace among the nations – *so that human lives are protected*

In a variety of statements, Ecumenical Conversations, workshops and exhibits, 'just-peace' characteristics emerge for the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace:

- Work in the four sectors of just peace – social, ecological, economic, political.
- Put prevention first and last.
- Work strategically to transform the “pyramid of violence” (see below) into a pyramid of peace.
- Engage in a multi-sectorial way – build peace within and across the four sectors.
- Pursue peace in a collective mode – the pursuit of peace is a joint endeavour; it seeks strength through unity in order to build peace.
- The task is on-going – peace-building is not a crisis response; it is a permanent responsibility.
- Embark on a journey – to build peace is to explore and persevere; a journey requires a certain outlook, endurance and expectation.

Consider these endeavours from a different angle, as a metaphor for the preventive value of a **just peace**: (see diagram 1 in the annex)

- *A just peace is to war and armed conflict as good health is to sickness and disease.*
- *Is this a useful metaphor? If so, what is the comparative size of the two circles?*

Prevention is empowered through faith-based life and work which endeavors to live out the Gospel. Included could be steps to promote just policing which exercise our faith and reflect our capacities.⁶

The Pyramid of Violence methodology came into the DOV through WCC collaboration with the World Health Organization. The pyramid (see diagram 2 in the annex) is a tool to help identify and connect violence to its roots. At the peak are things society does not accept, but most of the pyramid consists of things which a substantial segment of society typically does accept or allow. Mapping the building blocks of such a pyramid generates insights into ways in which all of us are indirectly involved in violence and how violence can be prevented.

The Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which began at the IEPC, is preventive in terms of purpose and method:

- Purpose – To save lives, protect communities where people are at risk from unregulated transfers of arms
- Method – To mobilize churches inter-regionally in order to press governments to include specific global standards needed for a new preventive treaty.

⁶ Prevention holds the most promise for the greatest range of church ministries that may contribute to peace.

For example:

- Focused, crisis-oriented interventions including civilian protection – to curb overt forms of violence and threats
- Broad advocacy for a just peace – to influence policies, norms, treaties and laws that protect peace and save lives
- Vocations and lifestyles guided by just peace – to shape the social, economic and environmental dimensions of peace.

The treaty will have to be useful in a situation like South Sudan. A Sudanese MP and leading churchwoman we met immediately identified cases where such a treaty would have to make a difference. Joy Kwaje: “The fighters of this ethnic group were just demobilized. Now they have brand new guns. Where does one get new guns for 6,000 young men?” The same question is valid in many countries, including DR Congo.⁷

The WCC-led campaign of member churches and related ministries worked for a strong, effective and human-centered ATT by exerting influence on the treaty’s criteria for authorizing arms transfers:

1. International **human rights** law and **international humanitarian law** as criteria for arms transfers (“shall not authorize and arms transfer if there is serious risk of substantial violations” of these criteria) – *included*.
2. **Small Arms and Light Weapons, ammunition**, components and parts included in the scope of the treaty – *SALW included in scope; ammunition is included in implementation*.
3. No transfer of arms if substantial risk to impair **sustainable development** – *in preamble*.
4. No transfer of arms if substantial risk it will perpetuate a pattern of **gender-based violence** – *in treaty criteria*.
5. **Victims assistance** should be addressed by states – *not in the treaty*.

Prevention is concrete by nature: In the case of the ATT, 60 churches, related networks and specialized ministries in 30 countries took part in specific actions.⁸

In terms of the pyramid of violence, enforcement of a new norm at the base reduces the flow of arms and the means of armed conflict, saving lives and protecting communities.

What is more, the ecumenical ATT work is part of a trend in prevention. There is an emerging **legal basis for preventive measures** based on International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law:

- Basis for ban on landmines, cluster munitions, chemical weapons, biological weapons
- Laser weapons – pre-emptive ban
- Emergence of “Humanitarian Disarmament”
- ATT includes humanitarian controls of arms sales and other transfers.
- What is next? Nuclear weapons – the worst WMD and the only one not banned? Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems – movement afoot for a pre-emptive ban?
- *Are these new bans important issues for preventive action by churches? Why, or why not?*

⁷ Irene Tchangou is a gynecologist in Bukavu, DRC. She points to the preventive value of an ATT. In 2011 her hospital treated 2,591 victims of sexual violence:

- 1,177 people were cases of gender-based violence as a weapon of war.
- Armed groups in eastern DRC committed 70% of the attacks.
- GBV increases mortality, diseases, family breakdowns and social collapse – the same effects as military weapons.
- More than half were multiple rapes.
- Three-quarters of the survivors needed psychological care, psycho-social and legal services.

⁸ Countries included Australia, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria, DR Congo, Uganda, Germany, Norway, Sweden, India, and South Korea. Together they did global outreach for a global treaty:

- Coordinated national and international advocacy, in “stereo”
- Policy, strategy and coordination led by WCC: Contacts with government officials at national level; then, international lobbying at the UN linked to those national actions; regional unity versus big power demands: African church outreach to US embassies
- Cooperation with Catholic, Evangelical counterparts
- Participation in civil society campaign, with the benefit of NGO expertise.

These advances are slowly transforming certain of the roots of armed violence illustrated through the pyramid (see diagram).⁹

IV. “R2P2”

In conclusion, here is a **proposal and a challenge for the ecumenical family** concerning church advocacy for peace. The proposal is for churches to engage primarily in the Responsibility to Prevent, to do so with other actors in civil society and to build constructive-and-critical relationships with governments. In the ecumenical family, our approach to “R2P” can actually be “R2P2” (or R2P-squared). Why? Because we have two complementary approaches to the same concern.

Peace churches approach peace work out of a core commitment to non-violence. Let’s call that “non-violent R2P”. Other interested churches tend to approach peace work through an inter-disciplinary framework. This reflects various commitments across the spectrum of peace, justice, eco-justice and Just Peace. Let’s call this “holistic R2P”. Thus, churches are blessed with two schools of prevention—non-violent and holistic—R2P times two, or “R2P2”.

Note, as mentioned above, that both groups of churches join in non-violent actions and unarmed interventions to build peace. The two schools are not new, yet they have more in common than ever before, don’t they?

A challenge comes at this point. The main body of the WCC has moved steadily closer to the peace church position. This applies to WCC governing bodies and the statements they approve, some church leadership circles, and some networks in the WCC constituency. Whether the rank-and-file in those member churches has moved in the same direction is not clear. It deserves more research.

However, engagement of peace churches with the majority of churches does not appear to include broad participation in ecumenical peace-building ministries that involve the majority. If that is a fair assessment, it raises questions. Where are the peace churches when it comes to peace-building with the majority? Present for ecumenical debates related to non-violence and pacifism, definitely. But when those debates taper off and it is time for advocacy work to go forward, it seems that representatives of peace churches mostly move on to the next issue in the debate. It seems they are more active on new issues than on implementation of existing decisions.

⁹ There are broader applications of this approach. For example the Ecumenical Call to Just Peace identified two global challenges which require prevention or pose the risk of unprecedented human costs:

*We are witnesses to prodigious increases in the **human capacity to destroy life and its foundations**. The scale of the threat, the collective human responsibility behind it, and the need for a concerted global response are without precedent.*

Two threats of this magnitude—nuclear holocaust and climate change—could destroy much life and all prospects for Just Peace. Both are violent misuses of the energy inherent in Creation. One catastrophe stems from the **proliferation of weapons**, especially weapons of mass destruction; the other threat may be understood as the **proliferation of lifestyles** of mass extinction.

What is the unprecedented factor in these threats? Why the urgency? The characteristics of these two uniquely global threats to justice and peace include:

- Increases in the human capacity to destroy all life
- Moving away from, not towards, a just peace
- ECJP says one of the root causes of climate change is "lifestyles of mass extinction"; this is the antithesis of "economies of life"
- Nuclear catastrophe is linked to the development of weapons of mass destruction, weapons whose effects cannot be limited in space and time
- In both cases, there is **scope and necessity for preventive and remedial action that is majority-led.**

At a certain level, the main body has certainly moved in the peace church direction over the years. Praise God for that. Have the peace churches moved in the direction of the main body in terms of complementary or cooperative actions around major concrete common goals? Name your own choice of a major common concrete goal. Add complementary or cooperative action. Make it part of an ecumenical program. Help bring that collective lobby for peace, involving both peace churches and other churches, into the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. That would be R2P2. That would be churches united for peace and active together.

The Busan Assembly challenged churches to exercise their collective relevance: “The huge potential of ecumenical work is the combination of being relevant in the local church, in the national arena and in the international agenda and relations at the same time”. Hopefully some of the examples in this talk may help to show how such potential can be realized.

Human notions of peace tempt us to debate whose peace claims are the greatest. Some of us spend more time arguing for our own view of peace than building it with people of other views. Separate endeavours magnify limitations in skills and resources. In the search for peace beyond borders – where the WCC is well-placed to convene and to lead – there are ample opportunities for churches of different persuasions to build peace together, to intervene where lives are endangered, to restore where human dignity is denied, to protect where the sanctity of life is at risk, to engage both sides where borders divide and to serve as agents of much-needed change.

May God guide us all in the pursuit of peace and in the discipleship of love.

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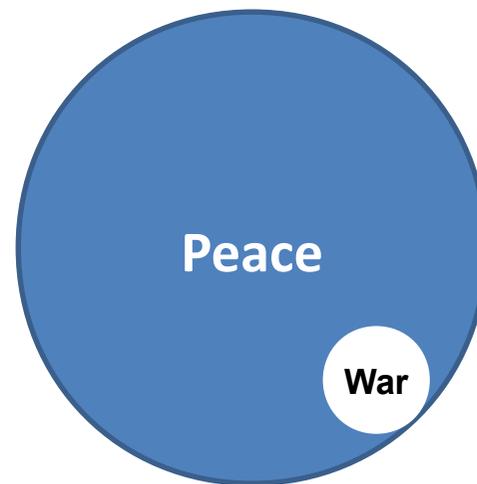
Annex:

Diagram 1: A Just Peace metaphor?

Diagram 2: Pyramid of Violence

Pilgrimage > Applying a Just Peace framework

- Multi-sectorial – Peace is built within and across the four sectors
- Collective – The pursuit of peace is a collective endeavour
- On-going – Peace-building is not a crisis response; it is a permanent responsibility
- Journey – To build peace is to embark on a journey, to explore and persevere



- A Just Peace metaphor?
Just peace is to war and armed conflict as good health (public and personal) is to sickness and disease.

Q: Is this a useful metaphor? If so, what is the comparative size of the two circles?

Pilgrimage > 'Pyramid of Violence'

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Q: How deep within the pyramid can churches exercise the responsibility to prevent?

