Youth Forum in New Zealand

In early December 2018, New Zealand will convene a high-level conference for Pacific Islands on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) in Auckland, New Zealand. Each state has been invited to send two representatives to the conference.

In parallel to the high-level conference, a youth forum will be held from December 5 to December 7. The intended participants will be both Pacific and Non-Pacific Youth. An emphasis has been placed on ensuring the diversity of the participants, especially from the US and European states. Mr. Christian N. Ciobanu of PEAC Institute has been designated as one of the chairs of this youth forum.

**Agenda**

In preparation for the Youth Forum, PEAC Institute and its partners are organizing a series of online discussions for the youth participants in order to prepare them for the Youth Forum.

Upon arriving to New Zealand, we will also conduct an orientation session. Finally, we will organize a photographic public event in order to raise attention about the significance of the conference.

During the Youth Forum, the following activities will take place:

Wednesday 5 December

0900 - Welcome and logistics: co-chairs

0910 - Roundtable introductions

0920 - Welcome and opening statement, Hon Phil Goff, Mayor of Auckland (previously NZ’s MFA/MDAC/MOT etc)

1000 - Background to the Conference; NZG position, Ambassador Dell Higgie

1030 - Background to the TPNW (Austria, Brazil, South Africa)

1130 - Beatrice Fihn - ICAN, Nobel Peace Prize winner

1200 - Lunch break

1300 - Legal issues and complexities of the TPNW, Assoc Prof Treasa Dunworth

1400 - Discussion and exploration of key issues among youth attendees

1530– Address by Vanuatu’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Ralph Regenvanu, on “A Nuclear Weapon-Free Pacific: The Treaty of Rarotonga”

1700– Address from Ireland’s Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Tánaiste Simon Coveney TD on “The NPT and its bearing on the TPNW”

1830 - Reception & Cultural Event hosted by NZG

Thursday 6 December

1100 - Qs and As with Dr Zia Mian

1230 - **Keynote address and lunch - Beatrice Fihn of ICAN[[1]](#footnote-1)**

Friday 7 December

0900 - Panel conveying national perspectives on nuclear disarmament and the TPNW:  Austria, Brazil, South Africa, and Ireland

1100 - Discussion of Auckland Declaration (from Pacific Conference)

**1230 - Lunch and Keynote address by New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and MFA/MDAC, Rt Hon Winston Peters**

1600 - Report-back from Conference

In addition, there will be significant interactions between the youth and leaders from the Pacific Islands in which the youth will urge them to support the TPNW.

**Selection of the Participants**

To ensure that there will be diverse and well-qualified participants, PEAC Institute and its partners is aiming to bring 20 youth to the conference. We are developing a selection process for the participants. The criteria will focus on their background in international relations.

PEAC Institute has already been in touch with young student leaders and faculty from NYU, Columbia University, Yale University, Northeastern University, Wesley College, and the University of Pennsylvania. Additionally, PEAC Institute is also advertising the project to Japanese young activists, such as students from Nagasaki University.

New Zealand will also invite its diplomats and members of its civil society to the Youth Forum.

Additionally, PEAC Institute and its partners will also select European students, who have an interest in nuclear disarmament and experience in activism and international relations.

**Accommodations**

PEAC Institute will contact the University of Auckland to request the University to provide dormitories to the international participants.

**Information about PEAC Institute**

PEAC Institute is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) public charity incorporated in New Jersey. Our founding partner, president and CEO Rebecca Irby created the name PEAC based on four pillars. Education, art, and communication are the broad avenues that lead to peace. Through transformative educational projects, we strive to reach the most marginalized youth and use art and communication activities to help them explore and express themselves.

We see PEAC as a growing collaborative network, much like any living system, where elements continuously fall into place through connection and shared resources. We aim to create an alternative web of experiential learning that spreads across national borders, touching people across cultures and generations, to enable diverse avenues of access to and engagement with issues concerning all of humanity. So far this has taken the form of facilitated educational workshops given in various relevant locations across the world, and we are in the process of establishing more permanent campuses to host our education seminars, based on the success of our premier Peace Culture Village.

Peace Culture Village (PCV) is a PEAC campus and nonprofit organization in Hiroshima Prefecture. A Japanese nonprofit, international community, organic farm, and experiential peace training camp, PCV hosts PEAC programs where underserved youth from around the world can experience a peace culture lifestyle, reflect on what peace means to them, and learn skills they can bring back to their communities.

In April 2018, PEAC Institute participated at the 2018 NPT PrepCom in Geneva, Switzerland, where 14 students met with diplomats and prepared a presentation in order to convince states to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). PEAC Institute also organized a successful side event on the nexus between the Article VI of the NPT and the TPNW. Our panelists were prominent female experts from Austria, New Zealand, PAX, and the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies.

**Partners**

PEAC Institute’s institutional partners are the YMCA, Rotary, University of the Middle East Project, Helping Hands, and Big Brothers, Big Sisters. PEAC Institute is also a partner organization of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Due to the importance of the Youth Forum, PEAC Institute, a partner of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons is collaborating closely with its civil society partners, including PAX and ICAN. We are also forming partnerships with prominent youth activists in New Zealand.

**Composition of the Team**

In addition to our partners, we have assembled a dynamic team. The members of the team include: Ms. Rebecca Irby, President of PEAC Institute; Ms. Selma van Oostwaard, the Programme Officer Humanitarian Disarmament at PAX; Ms. Anda Serban; Coordinator of ICAN Romania; Ms. Brooke Takala, Co-coordinator of Elimoñdik, a Marshall Islands NGO; and Mr. Christian N. Ciobanu, UN Representative of PEAC Institute.

1. The bold events will be shared between the participants of the High-Level Conference and the youth participants [↑](#footnote-ref-1)