

# Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

## Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours

### International Day Against Nuclear Tests



The history of nuclear testing is one of suffering, with the victims of more than 2,000 nuclear tests often from the most vulnerable communities around the world.

*António Guterres, U.N. Secretary-General*

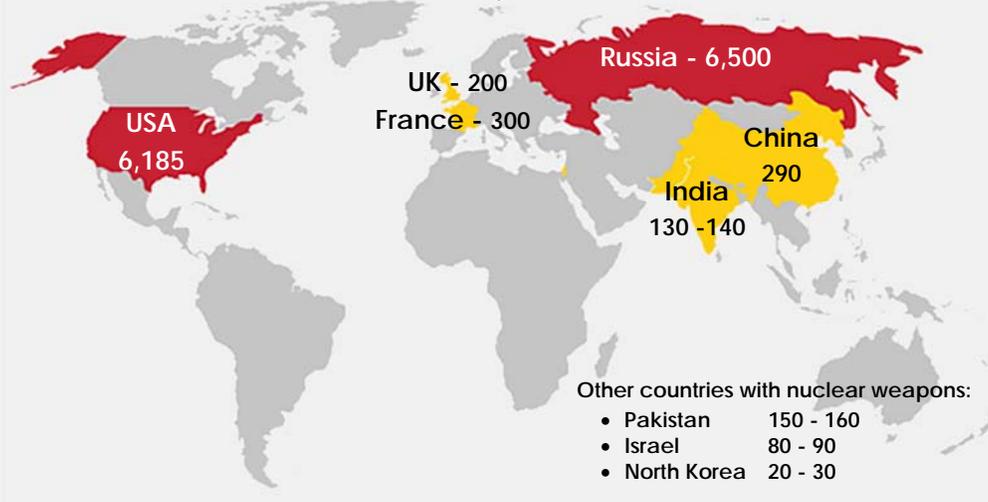
Since nuclear weapons testing began in July 1945, nearly 2,000 have taken place. In the early days of nuclear testing little consideration was given to its devastating effects on human life, let alone the dangers of nuclear fallout from atmospheric tests. Hindsight and history have shown us the terrifying and tragic effects of nuclear weapons testing in light of the far more powerful and destructive nuclear weapons that exist today.

Currently, nine countries together possess approximately 14,000 nuclear weapons. Most are many times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. A single nuclear warhead, if detonated on a large city, could kill millions of people, with the effects persisting for decades. (Source: UN)

The International Day Against Nuclear Tests is observed annually on August 29 to enhance public awareness and education about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. It also promotes the need for a nuclear weapon-free world. As Sisters of Bon Secours we are committed to ending violence in all its forms. This month we advocate for an end to nuclear tests, with the hope that ultimately nuclear disarmament becomes a global reality.

### World Nuclear Weapons Stockpile - Approximately 13,965 weapons

Source: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons



August, 2019  
Vol. 4, Number 12



August  
JPIC Days of Remembrance

August 6 and 9  
Anniversary of the Bombings of  
Hiroshima & Nagasaki

August 9  
International Day of World's  
Indigenous Peoples

August 19  
World Humanitarian Day

August 23  
International Day for  
Remembrance of the  
Slave Trade & Its Abolition

August 29  
International Day  
Against Nuclear Tests



*Sisters of Bon Secours... Women of healing... defending and caring for all creation (Mission Focus)*

## Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons



On July 7, 2017, an overwhelming majority of the world's nations voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – a landmark international agreement that outlaws the ultimate weapons of mass destruction and establishes a pathway to their elimination. Currently the Treaty has 70 signatories and 23 out of the 50 ratifications needed for it to enter into force.

France, the United Kingdom and the United States were not among the 135 nations that participated in the negotiation of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. They have said that they intend never to join the treaty. They voted against the UN General Assembly resolution in 2016 that established the mandate for nations to negotiate the treaty.

Ireland, Peru and the Democratic Republic of Congo signed the UN Treaty on 20 September 2017 and were among the co-sponsors of the UN General Assembly resolution in 2016 that established the mandate for nations to negotiate the treaty.

Source: International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

**'We believe that there is no 'just war'. We propose that the Catholic Church consider shifting to a Just Peace approach based on Gospel nonviolence.**

**A Just Peace approach offers a vision and an ethic to build peace as well as to prevent, defuse, and to heal the damage of violent conflict.'**

*An Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence, Just Peace Conference, The Vatican, 2016 – The Congregation of Bon Secours supported this conference.*

### Reflection & Sharing

Since the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, the Church has advocated the "just war theory." With the development of modern weaponry and the failure of warfare, as well as the rediscovery of the nonviolence of Jesus, what do you think of the statement: "We believe that there is no 'just war'?"

*If the Church let go of the just war theory, what would that mean for the Church and the world?*

*What would it mean to place all our security in God and to apply the methodology of Gospel nonviolence to global situations of international conflict?*

*What do you think of the proposal of the conference, that the church "develop and consider shifting to a Just Peace approach based on Gospel nonviolence," with "a vision and an ethic to build peace as well as to prevent, defuse, and to heal the damage of violent conflict"?*

### Principles of the Just War Theory

- Damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;
- All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
- There must be serious prospects of success;
- Use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated.

## A Survivor's Story

Shizuko Nagae

August 9<sup>th</sup> was one of those hot summer days. An air raid warning was called off, and I was fixing a lunch of food eaten as a substitute for rice because there was a shortage of rice during the war.



Then at two minutes past eleven, suddenly there was a large sound. Kaboom! Before I knew it, my house in Imahakata-machi, 2.9 km from the epicenter of the blast, was covered with mud as thick as 30 cm. The window panes, paper screens, lattice doors and clay walls had all disintegrated into pieces. I had no idea what had happened. The air outside was filled with orange-colored smoke, and I couldn't even see the houses across the street. Some people cried, "The bomb was dropped on my house!"

The green of the mountain that surrounded the city was gone. They were brown mountains now. After a while, I saw astounding scenery on the brown mountainside. There was a long black line moving slowly downwards. It looked like a march of ants. They were burned, wounded people who tried to escape from the fires near the epicenter coming over the mountain. They were almost naked. Their hair stuck together with blood, like horns. Many people might have died on their way.

The lot next to my house was an evacuation place. As there was a well in my backyard, people who were severely burned or wounded came one after another for water. I took care of countless people by washing their wounds. I don't know what happened to them afterwards. All of the dead bodies were cremated from morning to night every day. Because of their stench, I totally lost my appetite. People talked about the dead bodies as if they were an everyday sight, saying, "There are lots today," or, "There aren't so many today." Everybody became numb to what was happening. What is human dignity? Should human beings be treated like that? I wonder.

Source: CBC News, Japan

## Nuclear Disaster and Homelessness

Any nuclear disaster, intentional or not, will create homelessness, which is already a global shame and affront to God. Homelessness has never appeared in any United Nations' document in its almost 75 years of history. It is the hope of **UNANIMA International** that the UN adopts a definition of homelessness that includes adequate housing with support. In the long term, the objective is to include homelessness in the new UN Agenda, expected to be agreed to by 2028. Watch for updates in future JPIC Newsletters and be courageous enough to engage people who are homeless in our conversation: "Don't talk about us without us"!



*UNANIMA International is a non-governmental organization (NGO) advocating on behalf of women and children, immigrants and refugees, and the environment at the United Nations. In solidarity, we work for systemic change to achieve a more just world. The Sisters of Bon Secours are members of UNANIMA.*

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