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Joint written statement submitted by the International Alliance of Women (IAW), Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches (CCIA/WCC), non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI), Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers), Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, Interfaith International, Pax Romana (International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs and International Movement of Catholic Students), Temple of Understanding (TOU), Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Women’s World Summit Foundation (WWSF), World Organization Against Torture, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status, Institute for Planetary Synthesis (IPS), International Peace Bureau, International Society for Human Rights (ISHR), UNESCO Centre Basque Country (UNESCO Etxea) and 3HO Foundation, non-governmental organizations on the Roster**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[31 May 2007]

* Re-issued for technical reasons

* * This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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“Global Campaign for a Declaration on the Human Right to Peace”¹

The *Spanish Society for the Advancement of International Human Rights Law* (SSIHRL)² and *UNESCO Etxea* (*UNESCO Centre of the Basque Country*), with the support of the Basque Government, organised a first seminar of experts on the human right to peace for the first time in Gernika (Basque Country) at the end of November 2005. On 1 December 2005 the experts adopted their Final Agreement identifying core content which should constitute the human right to peace in the views of the Spanish civil society. In addition, the experts decided that "a committee of independent experts should elaborate a draft universal declaration of the human right to peace which should include a procedural mechanism to monitor its implementation"³.

In accordance with the proposals formulated in the Final Agreement at Gernika, the SSIHRL, with the support of the Catalonian Agency for Cooperation to Development, during 2006, held six additional seminars of experts in six Spanish Autonomous Communities⁴, with the aim of promoting the 2005 Gernika Agreement among Spanish civil society, discussing the normative content of this fundamental right on the basis of research papers previously delivered by distinguished specialists in the field, and gathering new input to expand the minimum content identified in the Gernika Final Agreement.

As the culmination of this preparatory work the SSIHRL convened in the city of Luarca (Asturias), on 29-30 October 2006, a committee of experts to draft a universal declaration on the human right to peace on the basis of the conclusions obtained in the previous regional expert seminars. On 30 October 2006 the drafting process was completed and the "Luarca Declaration on the Human Right to Peace" was made public. This Declaration was subsequently endorsed (November - December 2006) by the organisations and experts which had taken part in the extensive regional preparatory seminars, so that the text finally approved in Luarca represents the opinions of a wide scope of the Spanish civil society, as well as its aspirations laying the foundations of a new society based on the universal value of peace.

The Luarca Declaration was officially introduced in an oral statement to the plenary of the fourth session of the Human Rights Council, held in Geneva on 15 March 2007. Furthermore, the SSIHRL and UNESCO Etxea submitted a written statement to announce on the adoption of the Luarca Declaration. This statement is before the Human Rights Council as an official document of its fourth session in 2007 (A/HRC/4/NGO/85, 8 March 2007).

On 15-16 March 2007 two additional parallel meetings were organized at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Firstly, the SSIHL and the International Society of Human Rights (Frankfurt) called for an open *Information Meeting on the Luarca Declaration*, with was attended by States delegates as well as representatives of International Organisations and non-governmental organisations. Secondly, the SSIHRL organized a *technical meeting*

¹ Harmony International also shares the views expressed in this statement.

² Society constituted in Asturias in 2004, bringing together about 80 Spanish IHRL specialists with the aim of promoting the values of IHRL and furthering its development.

³ *Cfr.* "Acuerdo final del Seminario sobre el derecho humano a la paz", *Tiempo de paz*, n° 80, Spring 2006, p. 109, paragraph II.1

⁴ The regional seminars took place in Oviedo (27-28 July 2006), Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (17-18 August 2006), Bilbao (15-16 September 2006), Madrid (21-22 September 2006), Barcelona (28-29 September 2006) and Seville (13-14 October 2006)

with NGO and human rights experts attending the Human Rights Council. The main purpose of these meetings was to agree on a common strategy for a world-wide campaign through expert consultations with the international civil society, aiming at discussing the draft of a civil society universal declaration on the human right to peace.

We are currently engaged in a two-year world campaign for the codification and progressive development of the human right to peace in the framework of the United Nations. Regional expert seminars have already been held in Bogota (Colombia) and Addis Abbeba (Ethiopia) in March 2007. Caracas (Venezuela) and Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in April 2007. Morelia (Mexico), Sta. Fé (United States), and Bogota (Colombia) in May 2007. Expert seminars will be organised in Washington D.C. (United States), Nairobi (Kenya) and Dakar (Senegal) in June 2007. Expert seminars will be organised in both Latin American and African countries further in the second half of 2007. In 2008 the world campaign will be focused in Asia and Europe. The purpose of all these expert seminars is to discuss and take into account the input of different cultures in relation to the human right to peace, focusing on the mutual relationship between international peace and security, development and human rights.

Once completed the world-wide campaign of consultations with international civil society, the SSIHRL will call in February 2009 for a World NGO Conference to be held in Geneva, to discuss and adopt a draft universal declaration on the human right to peace which should accurately reflect the aspirations of the international civil society as a whole. This draft will be subsequently submitted to the UN competent human rights bodies to urge them to start the process of official codification and progressive development of the human right to peace within the framework of the United Nations.

The SSIHRL, -with the support of the Catalonian Agency for Cooperation to Development and the signatories Organisations- undertakes to monitor the process of codification within the framework of the United Nations. This would be a parallel initiative of the "Alliance of Civilisations" endorsed by the former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, the process will certainly be long and costly.

We are confident that a large number of national and international non-governmental organisations, interested in achieving the universal proclamation of the human right to peace, will associate themselves with this initiative. We also hope that States will be sensitive to the widespread and increasing demand of civil society for the recognition of the human right to peace and will, in turn, join this initiative for official codification.

At the end of this process, it will be up to the States to decide the final fate of the civil society proposal for a draft declaration which began with the Luarca Declaration of 30 October 2006. We foresee that the United Nations will finally adopt a normative text on the *human right to peace* in the form of a Declaration, which further will develop mechanisms for its implementation. Once the process of codification is completed, the Declaration, subsequently, should be adopted and proclaimed by the UN General Assembly as a resolution.

Later on, we shall turn our efforts to achieve the codification of a third International Covenant on Human Rights enshrining the "solidarity rights", among them the right to

peace, the right to development, the right to a healthy environment, the right to humanitarian assistance and the right to the common heritage of mankind. This new Covenant will formulate more specific legal obligations for the States Parties.

Proposals of this kind are urgently needed as a positive reaction to the serious crises in international relations which we have witnessed since the fateful 11 September 2001. The citizens of the world should not remain silent before the proliferation of wars of aggression unilaterally promoted by the superpowers, which have violated the collective security system established in the Charter of the United Nations. Nor can we accept the barbarity of massive infringements of international humanitarian law or widespread violations of international human rights law. Similarly, we are also unable to remain indifferent to the trivialisation or de-location of torture, as well as the abduction of persons and the suspension sine die of their procedural and legal guarantees.

It is reasonable for the States to defend themselves against international terrorism within the strict respect of the rule of law and universally accepted human rights. However, this phenomenon can not be only fought exclusively only with arms, since it is the expression of something much more profound and turbulent in society: the desperation of the poor, three billion human beings demanding a chance in a globalized world. In neo-liberal economies and international finance markets, the main beneficiaries continue to be multinational companies at the expense of the half the world population.

The solidarity of the developed countries within the framework of international cooperation is also a moral and legal requirement⁵ to eliminate extreme poverty, hunger and disease. Thus, we conclude with the former Secretary-General that human rights, development and international peace and security are interrelated and interdependent and that the fostering of one promotes the enhancement of the others⁶.

We therefore urge Member States to meet the Millennium Goals for Development (MDGs) and to reduce the prevailing gap between developed and developing countries. In this process, it is incumbent to seek the support of women's groups who have been training to contribute to peaceful resolution of conflicts at the family, community and national levels⁷. Only then we will be building the path to reach a lasting and universal peace.

⁵ International cooperation for development and the implementation of human rights is an obligation imposed on all the States under Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter of the United Nations and must be based on the principles laid down in the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 1986.

⁶ "In a larger freedom", Report of the Secretary-General to the Summit of Head of States held in New York in September 2005, paragraph 17. These purposes were subsequently endorsed by the World Summit's Outcome Document, adopted on 16 September 2005.

⁷ S/RES/1325