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***Laudato Si – a “compendium of global solidarity”***

In his statement dated 18 June 2015, Bishop Dr Stephan Ackermann appreciated the new encyclical ‘Laudato Si’ as being “more than an urgent plea for development justice, more than a climate encyclical”, and called it a “compendium for social solidarity”.

It could serve as an orientation for the adoption of a new agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and open up perspectives for a global implementation, Bishop Ackermann said. Referring to the dignity of each human being, Pope Francis bases his expositions on a human rights perspective. He also considers decent work to be a necessary investment in the preservation of peaceful and intergenerationally equitable societies. He opposes the ideology of economic growth and replaces it by a new definition of progress which he describes as an economic and technological development bringing about a better world and improving the quality of life for all. He gives alternative lifestyles and a moderate and responsible consumption a special emphasis, Bishop Ackermann continued.

This encyclical promotes “a spirituality of global solidarity” and thus in many passages is an example of the possible contribution of religions to a sustainable development worldwide which is a much discussed topic in German development policy. The ecumenical pilgrimage for climate justice prior to the climate conference in Paris wants to join in the alarm calling for an urgently required comprehensive change.

***JP at the International Labour Conference in Geneva***

The 104<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Conference took place from 1 to 13 June 2015. On 2 June 2015, Kolping international/Justitia et Pax together with the International Catholic Centre of Geneva (CCIG), the World Movement of Christian Workers (WBCA), the International Co-ordination of Young Christian Workers (CIJOC) and Caritas internationalis organized the workshop ‘From informal to formal Economy: Ensuring more just and decent conditions of work’ in view of the planned ‘Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation’. The event took place at the World Council of Churches, outside the ILO, and was attended by approx. 35 representatives of human rights and development organisations from Geneva. The particular focus was on migrant workers, women and young people and on how an ILO recommendation can improve their situation. At the invitation of JP, Mrs Prossy Nambatya, the colleague from the Ugandan Justice and Peace Commission and coordinator of the Joint Action Committee for Decent Work in Uganda (JACODEWU) as well as Mrs Suman More, representing the trade union of wastepickers KKP from Pune, India, took part in the joint activities.

Poverty can only be overcome if people through their daily work will earn enough money for a decent life, explained Dr Hagemann in her speech to the plenary with reference to the sustainability agenda of the United Nations.

***Spring meeting: Blasphemy and Criminal Law, R2P***

In its spring meeting, the Commission concentrated on the responsibility to protect of the international community and discussed the draft of a declaration submitted by Prof Stobbe from the working group “Just Peace”.

As regards blasphemy and criminal law from an international perspective, Prof Bielefeldt argued that the public discussion about religions should less focus on criminal law. There was a general consensus that Article 166 on the “defamation of religious denominations...” is not a real blasphemy law. It is only a shortened description as it does not penalize blasphemous statements



*Workshop Women and Social Security: Ms Suman More, Harshad Barde, Poonsap Tulaphan, WIEGO*



*Plenary: Rodrigo Whitelaw, UNIAPAC, Prossy Nambatya, JACO DeWU, Marilea Damasio, MMTc, Hagemann, Gloria Morena Fontes, ILO, from left to right.*

but rather aims at securing the public peace by forbidding defamations of the substance of religious convictions, Mrs. Jestaedt from the Catholic Liaison Office in Berlin explained. However, international debates on questionable blasphemy laws relating to religious denominations as for example in Pakistan often refer to the German law, Mr Bielefeldt replied. A clarification of the content and function of article 166 or a *clear differentiation from blasphemy laws* in the inner-church as well as the political and public debate was unanimously deemed necessary. The State and society have the task to create and to preserve an atmosphere where people can confess their faith freely and practise it unhindered together with others.

### ***Declaration on the International Responsibility to Protect***

Following a detailed discussion within the Commission, the governing board on 7 June has published a declaration on the International Responsibility to Protect. The declaration emphasizes the ethical importance of the principle of the international responsibility to protect and at the same time draws attention to a number of important desiderata. The declaration strongly stresses the need to further develop the UN system whose potential seems far from being fully exhausted. With this statement the Commission takes a clear stand against the disenchantment with the UN to be observed in many places.

### ***German-Colombian Workshop***

A German-Colombian workshop on the experiences of Germany in dealing with a past burdened by violence was held in Berlin from 7 to 12 June 2015. The workshop was realized on the initiative of the Colombian Bishops' Conference which in 2013 had asked the Secretariat of the German Bishops' Conference to organize such a workshop in order to support the Colombian partners in their preparation for the forthcoming reconciliation process in Colombia. Against the backdrop of 50 years of civil war that has left deep scars also on the Church, the participants visited different relevant sites in Berlin exemplifying the German experiences. During the workshop, specific options and fields of actions were identified and discussed. In this context, the President of the Colombian Bishops' Conference, Archbishop Castro finally drew attention to the particular role of the Church in the conflict.

### ***Round Table Spac Memorial / Albania***

On 23 May 2015, JP Albania, the Maximilian Kolbe Foundation and Renovabis realized a public Round Table in Tirana on the future use of the former Communist labour camp Spac as a memorial. This Round Table did clearly heighten the political attention to the politics of remembrance.

### ***Peace Ethics Training - AGEH***

Together with AGEH, the peace ethics training "Church and Conflict. Part of the problem or part of the solution?" was organized again for experts on development cooperation and of the Civil Peace Service (CPS) on 16 and 17 March 2015. In future this training will be an integral part of the coaching of all CPS experts. In addition to an introduction into the fundamentals of the Church's teaching on peace, the training will include issues such as the interrelation of church systems as well as biographical approaches and obstacles.

### ***Expert talks on Decent Work with members of the European Parliament and COMECE***

An international group of Catholic-inspired organisations on 17 March 2015 arranged a discussion on "Decent Work – The path to dignity for all – Creating decent jobs for poverty eradication through post 2015 Agenda" together with COMECE and two members of the European Parliament. The representative of the COMECE, Vice-President Bishop Ambrosio, and the Nuncio to the EU, Msgr. Alain Lebeaupin, as well as approx. 70 persons took part in the two-hour event. Video records of the event are available for online viewing at JP website:

[http://www.justitia-et-pax.de/jp/aktuelles/20150512\\_dokumentation\\_decent\\_work.php](http://www.justitia-et-pax.de/jp/aktuelles/20150512_dokumentation_decent_work.php)

Podium from left to right:  
Norbert Klein, EZA Bishop  
Gianni Ambrosio, (COM-  
ECE), Patricia Toia (MEP),  
Davor Ivo Stier (MEP),  
Stephen Pursey (ILO),  
Hildegard Hagemann (JP)



### **Workshop on Food Sovereignty**

On the initiative of the working group 'orientation to the poor' experts met for a workshop on "food sovereignty in the context of the SDG Agenda" at the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut in Essen on 8 July 2015. The workshop provided an opportunity to relate the current international political processes with the central topics of the working group 'orientation to the poor': The dialogue on agrarian issues relating the SDG Agenda shall be continued in order to emphasize the significance of both, the right to food as well as the right to decent work. The intention of the workshop was to sharpen concepts and to identify the importance of food sovereignty in the SDG Agenda as basis for the further development of the dialogue on agrarian issues of the German Commission for Justice and Peace.

### **New study "Who cares about care"**

The new study of the Group of Experts on "World Economy and Social Ethics" entitled "Wen kümmert die Sorgearbeit – Gerechte Arbeitsplätze in Privathaushalten" (Who cares about care – Fair jobs in private households) was presented to the public during an expert meeting and a press conference on 2 July 2015. Prof Emunds from the Oswald von Nell Breuning Institute talked about the JP Commission's commitment to domestic workers and the socio-ethical aspects of this topic. The German Catholic Women's Association was also involved in the realization of the workshop. The participants in the workshop considered the study to be an important contribution to the implementation of the ILO Convention C189 on decent work for domestic workers and appreciated the workshop as a platform for networking and visualizing the manifold activities of church institutions to improve the situation of domestic workers, especially of migrant workers. It has been suggested to critically accompany the forthcoming report of the Federal Government on the implementation of the Convention with petitions to the Federal Ministry of Labour.

### **GKKE – Coherence Report on Food Standards**

On 11 June 2015, the 'Coherence' expert group has published its new coherence report entitled 'Plädoyer für gerechte und nachhaltige globale Lebensmittelstandards' (plea for fair and sustainable global food standards). The study provides a detailed overview of the relevance of the different standards and current developments. The report was presented to an interested public during a Thursday discussion. An expert meeting on this topic with representatives from politics, agriculture and food industry will be held on 21 September.

### **GKKE on the Military Equipment Export Report 2014 of the Federal Government**

On 24 June 2015 the Federal Government has presented its Military Equipment Export Report 2014; it was the second time that it was already published in June. In its statement GKKE welcomes the decrease of single export licences for military equipment (3.97 billion Euro compared to 5.85 billion Euro in 2013) but criticises that the share of exports to countries which are not members of the NATO or equivalent countries of about 60 percent was still too high just as in the previous year. Another point of criticism is that the value of licences for the export of war weapons doubled to 1.48 billion Euros and that a major part of the supplies was to Third Countries. Nearly one third of all exports were delivered to countries of the Near and Middle East and of Northern Africa. GKKE demands a considerably more consequent implementation of the Federal Government's political principles saying that licences for exports to third countries, particularly to crisis and conflict regions, shall be issued only in justified individual cases.

### **Forum for Dialogue on Arms Export in the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy**

Federal Minister Gabriel took up the GKKE suggestion to organize a forum for dialogue on arms exports and invited representatives of business enterprises and trade unions as well as of the GKKE expert group "arms exports" to a meeting at the Federal Ministry on 21 July 2015. The agenda included principles governing exports of small arms and on-site-inspections. The



*Anna Echterhoff in conversation with Davor Ivo Stier*



*Michael Windfuhr, H. Hagemann, Johannes Wallacher (from left to right)*



*Stephan Becker-Sonnenschein, Die Lebensmittelwirtschaft e.V., Berlin Harald Ebner MP, Jacqueline Boysen (Moderation), Ulrich Hoffmann UN Forum on Sustainability Standards, Geneva and Rupert Ebner, Slow Food Germany*

(Catholic) GKKE President Prelate Jüsten considered this forum to be an opportunity to exchange arguments brought forward by the arms industry, trade unions, science, civil society and last but not least the Churches with political representatives and expressed the hope that this overall picture will contribute to draw the necessary conclusions.

### *JP Europe – statement on the reception of refugees in all EU member states*

In a declaration published in Prague on 15 June 2015, the executive committee of the Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions described the EU Agenda on Migration adopted on 13 May 2015 as a first step into the right direction. The declaration welcomed the extension of actions to save lives in the Mediterranean as well as the measures taken against traffickers. However, any form of military intervention should be covered by a clear mandate of the UN and the lives of innocent people should not be exposed to risk. The EU should open up new ways for a legal migration and mobility.

The proposal concerning the distribution of 60,000 refugees among all EU member states and an appropriate sustainable distribution key is welcomed as a signal to replace the insufficient Dublin II system. Justitia et Pax Europe called upon all states, especially the more hesitant member states, to give up their reservations and to show more hospitality to strangers.

### *Cultural traditions and human rights, Conference and EDP in Lusaka*

Cultural traditions can facilitate or obstruct the implementation of human rights as was emphasized by the participants in an international conference of the German Commission for Justice and Peace and the Jesuit Center for Theological Reflection JCTR which was held in Lusaka (Zambia) from 25 to 27 June 2015. Among the participants were the Vice-President of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar SECAM, Archbishop Gabriel Anokye (Ghana), the Archbishop of Johannesburg Buti Tlhagale (South Africa), Auxiliary Bishop Dr Stefan Zekorn from Münster, the German Ambassador Bernd Finke as well as senior representatives of the United Nations and of the African system of human rights protection. In his résumé Heiner Bielefeldt underlined that “without the support of the living environment which is determined by cultural traditions, human rights cannot develop lastingly”. However, cultural practices which conflict with human dignity or the free development of a person must be denounced as incompatible with human rights.

In a preceding Exposure Programme, some of the participants experienced in rural and urban areas of Zambia how traditional practices obstruct or facilitate the implementation of human rights.



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