



Conscience and Peace Tax International

For the right to pay taxes for peace, not for war

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN

International non-profit organization

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COSTA RICA



Right to Peace

Setting up of a Peace fund

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“The world is over-armed and peace is underfunded”

Ban Ki-moon

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Introduction

The aim of Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) is to allow people to pay their tax money into peace funds instead of into military budgets and to obtain full recognition of the right to conscientious objection to paying for armaments, war preparation and war conduct through taxes. CPTI was founded in 1994 and has ECOSOC special consultative status since 1999.

Our mission arises from the deep affront made to our consciences by the fact that people are obliged to participate in war as combatants, civilian victims and through taxation. We are moved by this common sense proposition: our taxes should be used to abolish war, not to promote or sustain it. The ethical principle of freedom of conscience, a moral imperative governing the behaviour of all individuals, is central to the objectives and the work of CPTI. We are deeply concerned by the fact that our taxes could be (or are) used to kill people, making us, if we do not contest it, accomplices to infringements on the rights to life, to peace and to freedom of conscience, on the duty vested in all to respect life, to enhance it, to see it blossom and last in peace.

The very idea of war, as it happens or as it is deemed possible by war preparations of all sorts inflicts a spirit of conflictuality, of violence and destruction over humanity and thus hinders the good nature of the human being, threatening dignity and the achievements of civilisation so far, while the solutions needed for peace to prevail and to overcome war do, in our humble opinion, fully exist.

From education to local peaceful settlement of disputes, passing through prevention and sustaining peace, there are many ways to improve and implement peace, to report on its progress and they are still largely unused. This submission focuses on only one: setting up a peace fund¹.

The right to peace

Dignity is present in all human rights, life precedes them all and peace is always interlinking them all, or needed to interlink them and to routinely fulfil them. Peace also interlinks or is needed to link the individual person with all social and political groups and institutions, and reciprocally to link institutions and all social groups among themselves as with individuals.

The links between *human rights and peace* are progressively being developed² and a Declaration on the human right to peace has been adopted by the UN's General assembly in 2016³.

Conscience and peace tax international attaches a special importance to the *human right to peace* as human rights can only progress and be coordinated, be reciprocally fulfilled in a peaceful environment⁴.

Furthermore, peace and peaceful methods provide important means, fundamental methods needed to solve conflicts (including between competing human rights) without aggravating them and, as may be, to the advantage of all persons concerned, in a constructive or reconstructive manner. Conflicts solved peacefully make it easier to alleviate feelings with respect, to draw lessons learned from difficult situations and to design policies for future prevention and overcoming.

It is with great respect that we salute the support given by Costa Rica towards the adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Peace and further works towards its implementation⁵.

The peace fund

Paying for war and war preparation should never be mandatory. And money for peace is too often direly missing. Therefore CPTI advocates for the setting up dedicated peace funds, which should never be used for any military activities and preferably be used for peacebuilding and prevention, rather than for reconstruction.

The system could be rather simple to implement with a “tick box” on the taxation allowing for a certain amount of money to the peace fund. In countries where there is a military budget, the amount should be equivalent to the percentage of the military budget in the complete budget.

As a champion of peace (with our compliments) and though it has no army, Costa Rica would be in a very good position to set up such a system and demonstrate its feasibility.

Therefore and under the rights to peace, life and freedom of Conscience, we warmly recommend to State of Costa Rica, the setting up a special peace fund, within the tax system, to allow individuals and corporations to dedicate funds, a legitimate part of their taxation, directly and exclusively to the (uncompromised with any form of violence or force) promotion, enhancement, establishment and achievement of peace, locally as worldwide; achievement of peace as required by the preamble, the principles and the aims of the United Nations Charter.

*Welcoming the delegation of Costa Rica to Geneva,
we wish to them and to all the people of the country
a constructive, enhancing and fulfilling
Universal Periodic Review.*

*May peace bring us happiness,
Sustain our future,
And give full dignity
To our institutions and our civilization,
To the people of the world and of
Costa Rica.*

¹ For a somewhat more comprehensive approach of peace implementation means, see the submission done by CGNK (Center for Global non-killing), for Costa Rica, at this same session 33rd session of the UPR.

² See 3rd meeting of the 34th session of the Human Rights Council on mainstreaming human rights on the contribution of human rights to peacebuilding, but also resolutions 2250 on youth and peace of the Security Council, the common resolution of the General Assembly and the Security Council (2282) on Sustaining peace. Or the 13th of June 2016 appeal by Switzerland and 70 States, <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-62152.html>. Or the Declaration on the Right to Peace A/RES/71/189.

³ <http://www.undocs.org/A/RES/71/189>

⁴ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 28: “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized”.

⁵ They are possibilities described here: http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/39/31

We add peaceful settlement of disputes for internal disputes as for international ones.