News




Nuclear war protesters demonstrate outside the White House in Washington Aug. 9. (CNS/Tyler Orsburn)



by Joshua J. McElwee

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The international Catholic peace organization Pax Christi has called on U.S. and North Korean leaders to tone down their rhetoric, saying the recent bout of nuclear brinksmanship "should be relegated to the dustbin of history."

In an August 14 statement, Pax Christi International asked leaders in both countries "to cease the inflammatory rhetoric and threatening actions of last week that have raised tensions and strained relationships in the region, increasing the possibility of a cataclysmic confrontation."

"Both nations have undertaken aggressive actions recently which have destabilized an already precarious situation, moving the region-and the world-closer to war," states the organization, which is an international Catholic coalition based in Brussels that maintains separate national groups in many countries.

Referencing the recent anniversaries of the Aug. 6 and 9, 1945 U.S. nuclear bombings of Japan at the end of World War II, the statement continues: "In the wake of the commemoration of the devastation suffered by Hiroshima and Nagasaki 72 years ago last week, we are especially appalled that these two leaders can so blithely and irresponsibly threaten the use of nuclear weapons."

"We strongly urge the United States and other nuclear powers to honor their disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and plead with North Korea to recommit to the treaty," Pax Christi states. "This dispute between the United States and North Korea is further evidence of how the very existence of nuclear weapons greatly increases our collective insecurity."

The statement concludes: "It is time now to resume direct negotiations if possible in the context of the Six Party Talks toward finally signing a peace agreement to end the war on the Korean peninsula and the suffering and isolation of the North Korean people; freezing North Korea's missile and nuclear tests; ending provocative joint U.S.-Japanese-South Korean military exercises; and achieving mutual nuclear disarmament as part of a global drive to abolish nuclear weapons."

[Joshua J. McElwee is *NCR* Vatican correspondent. His email address is jmcelwee@ncronline.org. Follow him on Twitter: @joshjmac.]

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