

TANGAZA COLLEGE
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH:
A SURVEY ON DISARMAMENT AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS
(From “*Pacem in Terris*” to “*Centesimus Annus*”)

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the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed.....*Xaviero P*.....

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This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To all who gave me life; my parents, my family members and all those who introduced me into Christian faith. In a special way, to those who are subjected to iniquities and those who work very hard to bring about justice and peace in this world.

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Thanks to the Creator who has guided me and given me the courage since my first day in Tangaza College up to now. Many thanks to all those who helped me day after day to accomplish this work. In a special way, I thank Fr. Maurice Kigame Lugutu, my moderator, who supported me from the start of the project to its accomplishment.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UN	United Nations
US	United States
AU	African Union
EU	European Union
NPT	Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty
RPF	Rwandese Patriotic Front

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

By its very nature, the church is missionary. The church continues the mission or the work of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, according to the plan of God. Jesus sent his disciples into the world to continue his own saving mission. The church has indeed an apostolic mission of proclaiming and witnessing to the Kingdom of God as Jesus did. The church carries out this mission in different places and different situations of this world. This is why in her mission the church is always looking for a language adapted to different cultures and situations of people. How can the church preach the same Gospel to rich and poor people, educated and illiterate persons, sick and healthy people, oppressed people and their oppressors? How can the church accomplish effectively her mission in this changing world?

It is indeed the mission of the church to bring the Good News of Salvation to all people all over the world. The Church's message must reach out to transform all aspects of human existence in this world. Thus, when the church is speaking up for social issues is not meddling in affairs, which it should not be dealing with. When the church is speaking up for the human dignity, human rights, peace, unity, human work, etc, it is always fulfilling her mission. Even though the ultimate end of the Church's mission is the eternal life, this mission has to do with temporal life as its way to eternal life. Consequently, the church should not remain

silent on social issues, which are affecting the daily life of the people of God throughout the world. The church's mission is not limited to the spiritual dimension of life; it should reach and transform the whole human being, made of both spirit and matter. The Gospel itself on which the church's mission is based is about God becoming man to embrace all human realities. Created in God's image, the human being is called to reflect that image in his/her daily life. In fact, the church has been given the mission of safeguarding the transcendence of the human person. Being rooted in the very mystery of creation, the church's mission is a divine mission in its very nature.

However, even though the church should be involved in different social issues due to her mission, it should always transcend every political or economic system because of the nature of her mission. Thus, to be involved in social issues is one thing and how the church should be involved is another one. Indeed, the church leaders have been intervening in different social issues from the early church. However, the official Catholic Social Teaching" dates from the Pope Leo XIII's encyclical letter "Rerum Novarum", issued in 1891. From Pope Leo XIII to the current Pope, Benedict XVI, the Catholic Social Teaching has developed very much.

Today's world peace situation will be at the heart of this study. Peace is indeed among the very sensitive social issues of our modern world where the presence of different types of weapons remains the main source of violence, wars and different armed conflicts. The attacks of terrorists and the risk of nuclear war are increasing day after day. The proliferation of illicit small arms, light weapons and nuclear weapons has become a big threat to peace in this 21st century.

Peace is indeed an intrinsic desire of each human person. What can be done to build a peaceful world where terrorism, war and other kinds of violence have no place? How can the development of science and technology be at the service of the well being of human persons? In her mission to preach the Gospel of Peace (Eph 2: 14), the church has denounced the use of violence and the use of all types of weapons. Pope John XXIII's encyclical letter "Pacem in Terris" is the first official church's document on the issues of peace, nuclear armament and disarmament.

Peace remains our big challenge in this world where deterrence has been adopted by different nations as the effective means to protect their peace. Even though Disarmament has been adopted by the international community as a solution to the problem of insecurity around the world, especially after the World War II, the results are still very small. On the issue of mass destruction weapons, many nations still believe that they are necessary for their security. This essay will focus on war, disarmament and the issue of nuclear weapons in today's world.

1. The problem

Nobody wishes to stay where there is no peace. Peace is without doubt an intrinsic desire of each human person. Before sending his disciples out, Jesus gave them his peace, so that they may effectively carry out his mission. It is the same peace Jesus gave to his apostles during his apparition after the resurrection from the dead. Indeed, there are two different dimensions of peace: interior peace that comes from God and exterior peace. The two dimensions of peace are of course inseparable; otherwise it is not fully peace.

Different people and countries have been and are still experiencing the situations of conflicts and insecurity. These situations of insecurity and violence have led people to create the protective measures. The first war weapon has been made certainly in the name of protection from aggression. However, by nature, every war weapon has a destructive force in itself. Today's situation of proliferation of small, major and mass destruction weapons creates an environment of fear throughout the world. Through her different interventions on the armament issues and war, the church has many times spoken out against the use of violence, war and nuclear proliferation and called for disarmament and the ban of nuclear weapons. This essay will cover war, disarmament and the issue of nuclear weapons, looking specifically at the negative consequences of war, nuclear weapons and at disarmament as the effective way to peace in this modern world. The research will be focused on Catholic Social Teaching, in particular way from the encyclical letter "Pacem in Terris" to "Centesimus Annus".

2. Church's commitment to peace and her contribution.

Through the Holy Spirit, the church carries out her mission to preach the Gospel of peace. The results of the mission of the church should be then the fruit of the Holy Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22). Even though peace should be a result of the church's mission of evangelization in general, the church is committed in a special way to promoting and witnessing to true peace based on justice, which comes from the risen Lord. The church has the duty to

proclaim the word of peace throughout the world especially in the troubled places. Peace is one of the fundamental desires of human person which has always been violated either by individuals, groups of people or by nations.

From the beginning up to now, the church intervenes in different situations of wars and armed conflicts by giving her message of peace. The main theme in the encyclical letter “Pacem in Terris” is “*arms race and disarmament*”. Almost all the recent encyclicals and church documents on social issues have talked about the problems of nuclear weapons, wars, disarmament and peace in general. Indeed, all the church members are called to be peacemakers; to witness to Christ who is peace par excellence (Is 9:6). The church has the mission to be the voice of the voiceless in all those troubled parts of the planet and thus to build the world in which justice will flourish and peace abound (Ps 72:7).

3. The aim of the study

The aim of this study is the following:

- To point out the Catholic Social Teaching on the issues of violence, war, nuclear weapons and disarmament in today’s world,
- To establish the causes of lack of peace in present time,
- To show the consequences of war and mass destruction weapons in this modern world,
- To underline the necessity of disarmament,
- To point out the church’s commitment to peace as her main mission,

- To suggest some recommendations for more effectiveness of the Catholic Social Teaching on issues of war, armed conflicts, disarmament and nuclear weapons.

4. Scope of study.

This research will mainly be done on Catholic Social Teaching by focusing specifically on the issues of war, disarmament and nuclear weapons, some concrete examples of wars and today's sensitive problem of mass destruction weapons.

5. Methodology.

The method used in this work is a critical analysis of some documents of the Catholic Social Teaching on the issues of war, disarmament and nuclear weapons. The research was also carried out on current issues of Iraq's war and the recent Rwandan armed conflict.

Chapter I: WAR, ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS.

Introduction.

Violence is certainly part of human nature. From generation to generation, the human race has experienced and used violence. War, ethnic clashes and different armed conflicts are among the violent actions of human being. The causes and effects of violence and war on human being are many. Today's world is still experiencing the chaos of war. The first chapter of this essay will cover Church's position on war, war and its causes, and today's world peace situation.

1.1. Church's traditional position on war.

War is not a new phenomenon in human history. Throughout history, different tribes, societies and kingdoms around the world have gone to war against their neighbors. In her mission to seek and pursue peace throughout the world, the church did not remain silent on such situations of violence and war. As Jesus her founder, the church's message is against the use of violence and war. However, every generation has known the existence of war. Indeed, through different experiences, human beings are never satisfied of what he/she has and of course that he/she is. Disorder, greed, and selfishness exist in the hearts of human beings and in the structures of our world. From different examples, the desire of power is the first source of conflicts, war and its consequences. And sin makes it

difficult for all the members of different nations to work together for the common good.¹ Each human person is indeed striving for happiness in this earthly life.

By the Church's traditional position on war, many people immediately understand the church's traditional theory known as "Just war." The just war theory dates from early church with Saint Augustine: "The historical origins of the just war tradition go back to Augustine, with subsequent development by Thomas Aquinas, sixteenth-century Spanish scholastics, and Francisco Suarez (d.1617). The just war tradition attempts to justify war as a last resort in certain circumstances but to limit war in its inception and its execution."² How can the church, an institution intrinsically committed to peace justify the use of violence? The justification of war by the church was something unthinkable in the early church. The first Christians have been strongly considering any war activity as incompatible with the Gospel of Christ and thus, any temptation to justify war was rejected. In fact, Jesus has always shown the nonviolence attitudes in his earthly life and towards his persecutor. For instance, Jesus was against the use of violence in his betrayal and arrest (Jn 18: 10-11).

However, there are certain circumstances, which later on have obliged the early Christians to take the new position on war. Ans Van der Bent writes:

The just war theory became part of Christianity 1500 years ago as a consequence of the Constantinian settlement of the roles of church and state and to some extent remains, in the more structured and institutional Christian communities

¹ Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis*, (Georgetown University Press: Washington, D.C., 2002), 28.

² *Ibid.*, 159.

like the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and Reformed churches, the predominant approach to questions of war and peace.³

During the first two centuries many Christians were killed because of their faith and the survivors were obliged to change religion. Those who refused to change religion were obliged to hide themselves. During that period of persecution, it was almost impossible for Christians to defend their lives and Christian faith without sometimes using violence.

However, the most important event which led the church to a take position justifying an eventual participation in war is the establishment of Christianity as the state religion by the Emperor Constantine: “The conversion of Constantine and his establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire led to a reversal of the church’s position on war.”⁴ According to just war theory, there are some required conditions for a war to be considered as just. Those conditions are legitimate authority, just cause, last resort, declaration of war, reasonable hope of success, proportionality and right intention.⁵ Therefore, a war to be considered as just, it should be declared by a legitimate authority or the sovereign power of the state, it should have a just cause. For instance, all acts of aggression are unjust and they give a just cause to self-defense. It should also be the last resort after other means have failed to have a reasonable chance of success. Finally, those who go to war should have the right intention and thus, the just war should be waged for the cause of justice and not for the reasons of self-interest.

³ Ans van der Bent, *Commitment to God’s World: A Concise Critical survey of Ecumenical Social Thought*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1995, p. 117.

⁴ Patrick T., Russell B., *Facing Ethical issues: Dimensions of Character, choices & Community*, (New York: Paulist Press, 2002), 91.

⁵ Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis*, (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 159.

The modern doctrine of just war theory is dependent upon the traditional one with of course some few developments due to the new realities of this modern world. The modern doctrine on war can be dated from Pope John XXIII's encyclical letter, "Pacem in Terris", issued in 1963. The crime of aggression remains the measure of justification of just war.

1.2. The proliferation of weapons as the cause of violence and insecurity.

Those who have not yet seen a weapon or stayed in troubled places have at least watched television read newspapers or listened to the news on the radio to realize how violence has become almost inevitable in this world. The extraordinary development of science and technology is surely one of the characteristics of our modern world. The armaments industry is one of the areas, which has realized incredible achievements.

From the Second World War, humanity possesses weapons, which can destroy the whole world. With today's deterrence policy nobody knows how many weapons that our world possesses. The budget spent in armament by different developed countries can eradicate poverty in many poor countries of this world. In his message for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, 2006, Pope Benedict XVI stated that: "Investments are still made in the production of arms and research aimed at developing new ones."⁶ A big number of illicit small arms and light weapons are in the hands of civilian people and are being used to kill innocent

⁶ Benedict XVI, *World Day of Peace*, 2006.

people in different parts of the planet. The highly sophisticated weapons are being used in the conflicts in Iraq, Israel and Lebanon, Afghanistan, etc.

The armament phenomenon is as old as humanity. From generation to generation, different types of weapons have been used in wars and other types of violence. The armament technology has developed very much. Weapon developments of the 4000 B.C.-1450 A.D. period were in the beginning like those of primitives. Typical weapons of the Ancient Egyptian, Assyrian, Greek, Macedonian, and Roman civilizations included the spear, javelin, sword, sling, bow-and-arrow, and battle-axe, with helmets and shields for protection. The pike (a long wooden shaft with a pointed iron head) was used in Greece about the time of the Persian Wars (roughly 500 B.C.); the typical soldier, in fact, was the hoplite or armored pikeman, with archers, slingers, and javelin men serving as auxiliaries. Armaments had especially developed since the Middle Ages. From approximately 4400 B.C. up to the middle of the fifteenth century A.D. many more complex war weapons have been made.⁷

The last century was characterized by tremendous strides in scientific and technological advancements in armament; the concrete examples are the first and second world wars in which the arms of mass destruction were used for the first time. The use of atomic bombs in two Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had as results the mass destruction of those two cities and great loss of human lives. However, this horrible event of the Second World War did not change the mind of the Western developed countries in their deterrence policy. The proliferation of small, major and mass destruction weapons remains the biggest

⁷ Allen, Hart, Miller, Ogburn, Nimkoff, *Technology and Social Change*, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), 356.

threat to peace in our modern world. The illicit small arms and light weapons are being used in different wars and armed conflicts to kill innocent people. Indeed, it is very easy to get illicit small arms and light weapons especially in the troubled parts of the world, such as Iraq, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Somalia, Sudan, etc. The easy availability of small weapons assists drug trafficking, terrorism, organized crimes, and robbery. Portable, cheap, and readily procured, small arms are supremely destructive.⁸

Some leaders who have adopted the deterrence policy to ensure peace for their people justify the proliferation of weapons in our modern world. On the issue of deterrence, Pope John XXIII, stated:

The production of arms is alleged justified on the grounds that in present-day conditions peace cannot be preserved without an equal balance of armaments. And so, if one country increases its armaments, others feel the need to do the same; and if one country is equipped with nuclear weapons, other countries must produce their own, equally destructive.⁹

The United States has the biggest number and most powerful weapons in the world. However, it could not prevent the attacks of September 11, 2001. Therefore, one can say that to possess the big stocks of armaments does not ensure peace at all. Indeed, the production and the sale of weapons by developed countries can never help in bringing about peace in this world. In his message to the U.N. General Assembly, 1982, Pope John Paul II said:

The production and sale of conventional weapons throughout the world is a truly alarming and evidently growing phenomenon. Moreover the traffic in these weapons seems to be developing at an increasing rate and seems to be directed most of all toward developing countries.¹⁰

The armaments industry has become the most profitable business in our world today. Worst still, a big amount of money from the budgets of poor countries is

⁸ http://www.researchmatters.harvard.edu/story.php?article_id=163

⁹ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No.110.

¹⁰ John Paul II, *Message to the U.N. general Assembly*, 1982, No.9.

spent on buying weapons that have been used in civil wars and other acts of violence, resulting in the killings of many innocent people.

1.3. The situation of peace in today's world.

Peace is first of all a free gift of God to mankind and is one of the attributes of God. In his message for the World Day of Peace in 2004, Pope John Paul II stated: “ We Christians see the commitment to educate ourselves and others to peace as something at the very heart of our religion. For Christians, in fact, to proclaim peace is to announce Christ who is ‘our peace’ (Eph 2:14); it is to announce his Gospel, which is a ‘Gospel of peace’ (Eph 6:15); it is to call all people to the beatitude of being ‘peacemakers’ (Mt 5:9).”¹¹Peace is an intrinsic desire of each human person. However, peace is not always a reality enjoyed by all people.

This world has been and is still experiencing the chaos of injustices, conflicts and war, results of evil which humanity has brought on the earth. Different people according to their situations define peace differently. Ans Van der Bent writes:

A situation that qualifies as peace according to international law may be at the same time a situation of the most sinister oppression. If peace is understood only as the absence of war it may be synonymous with a state of deepest misery or total wrong. Peace conditioned by nuclear deterrence is threatened peace and does not deserve the name.¹²

In many parts of the world life has become so violent and full of hatred and wars, that there is no longer hope of the future.

¹¹ John Paul II, *Message for the World Day of Peace, 2004, No.3.*

¹² Ans van der Bent, *Commitment to God's World: A Concise Critical survey of Ecumenical Social Thought*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1995, p.108.

Today's world has been affected by fatalism, fear, and despair because of terrorism and the eventual nuclear war. On the issue of mass destruction arms, the tendency is to feel that nothing can be done about it. The issue of security in many countries is becoming a means of muzzling and blinding people. The issue of terrorism is increasing fear and mistrust resulting in greater insecurity in such a way that there are no longer relations of trust between peoples and nations. Our world is one in which armed conflicts especially internal conflicts are prevalent. The folly of nuclear armament has increased the risk of nuclear war and consumes resources vitally needed to overcome the problems of hunger and poverty in many poor countries. The acts of terrorism, wars and armed conflicts are prevalent in many parts of our world.

Peace is threatened by the intolerable injustice of hunger, starvation and poverty, while the gap between rich and poor nations is increasing the readiness of the rich countries for sharing their wealth is diminishing. In his message to the U.N. General Assembly, 1982, Pope John Paul II stated:

The great disparity between the rich and the poor living together on this one planet is no longer supportable in a world of rapid universal communications without giving birth to a justified resentment that can turn to violence.¹³

Many people are dying of hunger in different poor countries. Others are losing their lives in the armed conflicts in Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Palestine Afghanistan, etc. Indeed, we are far from peace if our nations do not stop their rhythm in armament of both conventional and nuclear weapons. In his encyclical letter, *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII says:

People live in constant fear lest the storm that every moment threatens should break upon them with dreadful violence. And with good reason, for the arms of war are ready at hand.¹⁴

¹³ John Paul II, *Message to The U.N. General Assembly*, 1982.

The world peace will remain a dream as long as the war against terrorism started by the powerful Western nations continues to show little results. In fact, Osama Bin Laden is still hiding and Al Qaeda is increasing its force in different countries, waiting for an occasion to destroy. Indeed, destroying the terrorists cannot eliminate terrorism. On the contrary, any step in the direction of destruction only helps to create more terrorists. And more terrorists only result in more waves of violence. Thus, there is no wisdom in initiating a continuous theme of destruction in the name of protection.¹⁵ Today's world peace is under the threat of nuclear war and the whole universe is confronted with weapons whose capacity of destruction can lead to the extinction of life.

There are tensions between powerful countries known as "nuclear weapons states" and some emerging countries like Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, North and South Korea, etc, which want to acquire nuclear armament. On the folly of mass destruction weapons, Brill Earl H. writes:

International conflict is the most dramatic and frightening threat to the future of mankind. The existence of intercontinental ballistic missiles equipped with multiple nuclear warheads poses an almost incomprehensible danger of mass destruction and death.¹⁶

Armament industry in many countries represents a big source of their income. This is the reason why the reduction of weapons in this world has become a pure speculation. In today's world, it is possible for any nation, no matter how small, to develop an atomic bomb. Even nameless terrorist groups throughout the world may be able to manufacture such weapons and use them.¹⁷

¹⁴ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No.111.

¹⁵ <http://www.defenceindia.com/24-jun-2k2/reasearch.html>

¹⁶ Brill Earl H., *The Christian Moral Vision*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), 205.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 208.

Peace is indeed more than absence of violence, war, armed conflicts and other kinds of violence. “The Hebrew *Shalom* designates not only the absence of conflict but righteousness, wholeness, justice, liberation, salvation. In sum, it denotes things as they should be and shall be in the divine purpose for humanity. This *Shalom*, fulfilled in the work of Jesus Christ, is what the apostles called good news. ‘Peace on Earth’ was promised by the angels in Luke 2:14. The promise of Jesus was that the inauguration of God’s rule is at hand. The seventh beatitude calls peacemakers God’s children. According to Ephesians 2:14, Christ is ‘Our peace’, because by reconciling Jew and Gentile he has created ‘one new humanity.’”¹⁸ Peace is a state of satisfaction of being faithful to the commitments made in life. However, our own force is not enough to remain faithful to our commitments. Since the beginning of Israel history, peace is first and foremost a gift from God:

All notions of peace must be understood in light of Israel’s relation to God. Peace is always seen as a gift from God and as fruit of God’s saving activity...The well-being and freedom from fear which result from God’s love are viewed primarily as they pertain to the community and its unity and harmony.¹⁹

This general image of world peace situation does not mean that peace is completely absent in today’s world. There are many people and countries in this world that are enjoying peace. The promotion of peace should be a goal and duty of all men and women of good will. The commitment to peace should be a continuous struggle of each person. Christian people in particular, as the followers of Christ, “King of peace”, should play their role in building a peaceful world as Christ did.

¹⁸ Ibid., 108.

¹⁹ The U.S. Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and our Response*, 1983, No.32.

1.4. Church's teaching on war.

Different people have been hostile to one another from the beginning of human history. The hostility between two people or two nations ends up sometimes in violence or in armed conflicts. Many people have lost their lives and many things have been destroyed in different wars and armed conflicts all over the world. In their latter, the *Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops taught:

Violence and war are very much present in the history of the people of God, particularly from the Exodus period to the monarchy. God is often seen as the one who leads the Hebrews in battle, protects them from their enemies, makes them victorious over other armies. The warrior God was highly significant during long period of Israel's understanding of its faith.²⁰

Even though the desire of power and violence are parts of human nature that sometimes lead to wars and armed conflicts, there is no justification of war in the Bible. As long as Christianity is a religion of Christ, it can never preach the use of violence, no matter how violent is the Roman Pontiff or any given Bishop. The crusades reported in the church's history could never define Christianity. The church is holy, but the members of the church are still sinful human persons. Indeed, Christianity is not a religion of violence, but of peace. The earthly life of Jesus was characterized by the attitudes of nonviolence. Instead of using violence, Jesus preached the love of our enemies. Therefore, it would be a pure contradiction to see the church of Christ preaching violence instead of peace. The U.S. bishops put it this way:

There is no notion of a warrior God who will lead the people in an historical victory over its enemies in the New Testament. The only war spoken of is found in apocalyptic images of the final moments, especially as they are depicted in the Book

²⁰ Ibid., No. 31.

of Revelation. Here war stands as image of the eschatological struggle between God and Satan.²¹

In the contemporary world, one can say that peace is still far from people. Indeed, in different parts of this world, children, old people and many vulnerable men and women are suffering from famine, diseases and wars. In the last several years ethnic conflicts and civil wars have become ever more widespread, bloody and destructive. Not only are the responses of national governments hypocritical, belated and ineffective and the interventions of the United Nations impotent, but also the statements of ecumenical organizations and churches are ignored or misinterpreted. Merely speaking about the need to build bridges of reconciliation and to overcome breakdowns in communication contributes little to the reduction of violence. The service of peace whether in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Rwanda, Azerbaijan and Armenia or anywhere else involves more than unanimously condemning the appalling carnage.²² The fact that violence, wars and whatever leads to such realities have existed from the beginning of human history and still exist shows that even though violence does not define human being, it is part of the human nature.

In her duty to seek and pursue peace throughout the world, the church has played a big role to bring about peace in different places of the world through dialogue between the belligerents and other peaceful means. The church is still preaching the Gospel of peace in the troubled parts of this world. Without peace there is no hope for a total development of human being and the development of the

²¹ Ibid., No. 40.

²² Ans van der Bent, *Commitment to God's World: A Concise Critical survey of Ecumenical Social Thought*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1995, p.119.

world in general. Through his word and deeds, Jesus has never called for violence and he was a non-violent man. Hollenbach David writes:

There can be no doubt that the New Testament proclaim a message of peace and calls those who would be Jesus' disciples to a nonviolent way of living. This proclamation and call are evident in Jesus' teachings on love of neighbor and love of enemy.²³

Despite of the church theory of just war, violence is in itself evil. The pacifist movement condemns all war, even when it is used as self-defense because it is not allowed morally to use an evil means for a good end. Therefore, for pacifists, war can never be justified because all violence is evil itself.

Conclusion.

By nature, war and violence are evil and thus, they can never be justified by Christian morality. Indeed, wars, armed conflicts and all other kinds of violence in this world are the consequences of sinful actions of men and women of all generations. The proliferation of weapons, both conventional and mass destruction weapons remains the biggest threat to peace in this modern world. The consequences of wars and armed conflicts are various: killings, refugees, destruction of infrastructures, poverty, widows, diseases, traumatism, hatred, etc. In short, violence is a reality in our world today. But, violence is evil in itself, and evil should always be avoided. The use of violence in the name of self-defense, just war or the morality of lesser evil can never change evil into good.

²³ Hollenbach David, *Justice, Peace, an Human Rights: American Catholic Social Ethics in a Pluralistic World*, (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 130.

Chapter II. DISARMAMENT AND CHURCH'S CONTRIBUTION

Introduction.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons, illicit small arms and light weapons is without doubt a serious threat to peace in today's world. The fast development of armaments technology after the Second World War has led this world into different wars, armed conflicts and the risk of nuclear war. The current proliferation of all types of weapons is certainly one of the main causes of terrorism, killings, wars and political instability in different parts of the planet. The deterrence policy makes the problem worse or simply is the reason why the number of weapons is increasing day after day. With the issue of deterrence and the proliferation of weapons, there is no other effective means to bring about peace in this world apart from disarmament.

2.1. An over-armed world.

The easy availability of illicit small arms and light weapons is considered the main cause of the proliferation of weapons and of course the increase of violence. However, apart from the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, different countries are currently able to obtain major sophisticated weapons and nuclear weapons. Many weapons from western countries are being sold in different developing countries, where rebel groups and militias use them to destabilize their countries.

When you look at the type of armament being used in Iraq either by the coalition forces or Islamic groups, recently in Lebanon by Israel and Lebanon Islamic group, etc, it is not difficult to have an idea of how powerful are the modern weapons. Western countries and some other emerging countries in Asia and Latin America are spending a big amount of money on armament technology to produce more powerful and sophisticated weapons. In fact, one can say that our modern world is in infinite competition of armament. Since 1945, the human race has the capacity to destroy the planet and that capacity has increased tremendously. Currently, different nations, independent armed groups and terrorist groups have the weapons with the capacity to exterminate life on this planet in a small time.

The large number of countries acquiring nuclear weapons is never a good sign for the world peace. Indeed, in today's world an accidental nuclear war can happen between any given countries such as was about to happen in 1999 and 2002 between India and Pakistan. There are many countries already having or still in process of obtaining nuclear weapons such as U.S., Russia, United Kingdom, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan, North and South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Japan, Syria, Iran, South Africa, Nigeria, etc. In fact, the nature of nuclear weapons does not make neighboring countries feel comfortable when one country possess them. In their letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response*, the U.S. bishops stated:

We live today, therefore, in the midst of a cosmic drama; we possess a power which should never be used, but which might be used if we do not reverse our direction. We live with nuclear weapons knowing we cannot afford to make one serious mistake. This fact dramatizes the precariousness of our position, politically, morally, and spiritually.²⁴

²⁴ US Bishops, "*The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response*", 1983, No. 124.

Indeed, in current situation of terrorism and nuclear armament, it is so difficult to build a world where nations trust each other and where people have hope in the future. And nobody knows where this phenomenon of nuclear proliferation and suspicion among countries will lead us. Paul Tillich stated: “The increasing and apparently unlimited power of the means of self-destruction in human hands puts us before the question of the ultimate meaning of this development.”²⁵ In brief, nuclear weapons are simply the instruments of evil. Only one nuclear explosion would kill millions of people and thus, create an international disaster.

Today’s world peace is somehow in hands of those who have more sophisticated and mass destruction weapons. However, with the current problem of terrorism, it is very hard to control and protect peace. The September 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington has shown that to have a big number and more powerful weapons does never ensure peace. On the issue of deterrence and nuclear weapons, the catechism of the Catholic Church states that:

The accumulation of arms strikes many as a paradoxically suitable way of deterring potential adversaries from war. They see it as the most effective means of ensuring peace among nations. This method of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The arms race does not ensure peace. Far from eliminating the causes of war, it risks aggravating them.²⁶

We are no longer living in a world where the so-called five “major weapons states”, United States, Russia, Britain, France and China, have the last word to the world peace. In the current situation, the number of countries obtaining nuclear weapons either publicly or secretly is increasing day after day. And the control of this type of weapons is becoming difficult. The nuclear technology has developed tremendously in such a way that the current nuclear weapon is more powerful than the atomic bomb used in

²⁵ Paul Tillich, *Theology of Peace*, (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1990), 158.

²⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 2315.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War. However, it becomes quite irrational when in spite of providing the means for the well being of human race, the development of science and technology puts people in the greatest danger ever experienced by humankind. In his message to the U.N. General Assembly, Pope John Paul II stated: “ Research and technology must always be at the service of man. In our day, the use and misuse of science and technology for other purposes is a too well known fact.”²⁷

People are living in a great fear because of the large number of weapons scattered everywhere in this world. In fact, many countries have adopted deterrence policy as an effective means to ensure peace for their citizens.

2. 2. Disarmament as an effective means to peace.

After the Second World War, in which the atomic bombs were used for the first time, the whole world had unanimously condemned the use of mass destruction weapons. Many countries have adopted disarmament not only of nuclear weapons, but also of conventional weapons as an effective means to bring about peace in this world. By definition, disarmament can mean the reduction or elimination by a nation of its weapons systems. The concept of disarmament is an ideal based on the view that weapons cause wars, and that the elimination of weapons will in itself remove the main causes of armed conflicts. Many people also believe that by disarming, individual nations will no longer perceive arms as necessary for their security. Therefore, the act of disarmament is seen as creating a new situation in which the potential for international conflict is eliminated.²⁸

²⁷ John Paul II, “*Message to the U.N. General Assembly*”, 1982, No.10.

²⁸ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/disarmament>

However, since the adoption of disarmament up to now, the results from this good initiative are almost non-existent. To bear fruits, disarmament should be a project of all nations and all men and women of good will. Indeed, different international organizations were founded to promote peace. The United Nations for instance, is dedicated to promote peace throughout the world especially in the troubled regions of this world. All churches have also the duty to seek and pursue peace through their words and deeds. The proliferation of weapons remains the main cause of violence and wars in today's world. Therefore, by eliminating weapons in our world, we can have hope that peace will one day become a reality. In fact, the elimination of illicit small arms and light weapons can be a promising start for a peaceful world.

It is more than necessary in today's world to reduce and eliminate all means of violence, especially the weapons of different types. This is the time for all people and nations to realize that to possess many weapons does not mean having peace, no matter how powerful they are. The fact of having many weapons stimulates other people and nations to have the same, or even more powerful weapons. From the September 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, the issue of terrorism has developed fear and suspicions among nations. Disarmament is indeed necessary if we really want to build a peaceful world. With other international organizations and people of good will, the church speaks often up for disarmament to ensure peace for our world. In Bent's book it is stated that:

No other issue has been discussed more widely and intensively in the ecumenical movement from its very beginning and in the World Council of Churches since 1948 than peace and disarmament.²⁹

The Catholic Church and other churches have produced many documents on disarmament. In their messages on peace, church leaders invite all nations and armed groups for disarmament, especially at this time when the world is facing a very big problem of nuclear proliferation. Unfortunately, in today's world situation, the reality is that instead of disarming, different countries have chosen deterrence as an effective way to ensure peace. In his encyclical letter, *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII stated:

All must realize that there is no hope of putting an end to the building up of armaments, nor of reducing the present stocks, nor, still less, of abolishing them altogether, unless the process is complete and thorough and unless it proceeds from inner conviction: unless, that is, everyone sincerely cooperates to banish the fear and anxious expectation of war with which men are oppressed.³⁰

Indeed, from different experiences, no peace comes from violence, no matter how reasonable is the cause of violence. However, as long as human beings remain what they are, violence is inevitable. The promotion of peace is then a long process, which needs the complete change of human heart. Peace remains a big challenge of our today's world where many people want to become famous through the force of weapons. In his book, Bent writes:

Peace will not be easily or quickly attained. We live in a world in which from generation to generation ignorance of God and rebellion against him have resulted in greed and an insatiable lust for power. War and its evils are the consequences. Basically the problem is a spiritual one, and economic and political measures alone will not solve it. Men's hearts must be changed.³¹

After all, it is the same human person who makes and uses weapons who should stop and avoid the use of violence. Being the most effective means to ensure peace in

²⁹ Ans van der Bent, *Commitment to God's World: A Concise Critical survey of Ecumenical Social Thought*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1995, p.107.

³⁰ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963

³¹ Ans van der Bent, *Commitment to God's World: A Concise Critical survey of Ecumenical Social Thought*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 1995, p.111.

current situation, disarmament policy must be on the agenda of each country. Our world will overcome the situation of wars and conflicts by not feeding this situation with more weapons but by reducing and eliminating all types of weapons scattered around the world.

2.3. International community's policy on disarmament.

Peace is a fundamental desire for the entire human race. This is why nobody wishes to live in the conflict situations or simply where there is no peace. The promotion of peace is a duty of each human person and each country, no matter how peaceful they are. In the traditional wisdom of Rwandan people, they say that: "When your neighbor's house is attacked, prepare yourself for tomorrow". Peace is indeed a common desire and the lack of it by one person or nation affects the neighborhood. This is why different national, regional and international organizations were created in order to promote peace around the world.

We are living in a world where discriminations, divisions, violence, wars, armed conflicts and terrorism have taken strong roots. Peace is not possible without cooperation: "Global security will be guaranteed through global cooperation within the framework of an authentically multilateral system. However, in order to be effective, multilateralism requires the responsible, honest and coherent cooperation of all the members of the community of nations."³²

Since its creation after the Second World War, the United Nations speaks out against the use of violence, war and nuclear weapons and it calls

³² <http://ternews2.com/nuclear.html>

for disarmament and the ban on nuclear weapons. Despite of this good initiative, the proliferation of small, major and nuclear weapons remains the most pressing problem of today's world. With today's issue of terrorism and mass destruction weapons, one would say that peace has never been more at stake than today. In their document, *Gaudium et Spes*, the Bishops of Vatican II taught:

As long as the danger of war remains and there is no competent and sufficiently powerful authority at the international level, governments cannot be denied the right to legitimate defense once every means of peaceful settlement has been exhausted.³³

More needs to be done on the international level. Peace remains one of the fundamental needs, which people from different parts of the planet are still thirsting for. Indeed, there is no peace where people live under fear and where the trade of arms has become a normal business. On arms trade, the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace has stated: "Arms can never in any way be treated like other goods or exchanged on the world or international market. There is, in actual fact, a close and in dissociable relationship between arms and violence."³⁴ Peace is a fundamental need without which there is no integral development of human being and thus, economical development of nations. Terrorism, wars, proliferation of both conventional and nuclear weapons are still the big enemy of peace in our world. Such as war in Iraq, Afghanistan, war between Israel and Lebanon, Israel and Palestine, Sudan, Somalia, etc. The international organizations like the United Nations (U.N.), the European Union (E.U.) and the African Union (A.U.) are intervening in different regions in war by sending peacekeepers and

³³ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, No. 79.

³⁴ Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, "*The International Arms Trade*", 1996, No.12.

calling the belligerent for disarmament and for a ceasefire, but there is still a long way to go.

It is the time for all nations to work together for peace by stopping their deterrence policy and by disarming. On the current issue of deterrence, Boyle and Grisez write:

The norm which forbids intending to kill the innocent forbids the deterrent. To maintain the deterrent pending mutual disarmament, or even as a spur to mutual disarmament, is to maintain the murderous intent, which the deterrent involves. That murderous intention is not eliminated or overcome by anyone's disapproval of the deterrent.³⁵

The international community should always update its disarmament strategies so that the dream of harmony and peace on earth may become a reality. It is the time for the international organizations to use their moral authority on nations so that disarmament may be a reality.³⁶ International organizations, governments and non-governmental actors alike have to work together to free this world of the threat of proliferation of small, major and nuclear weapons.

2.4. Biblical understanding of peace.

Peace is among the most used concepts in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Bible, peace is one of the attributes of God and is the gift of God to each human person. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace puts it this way: "Before being God's gift to man and a human project in

³⁵ Finnis, Boyle, and Grisez, *Nuclear deterrence, Morality and Realism*, (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1987), 327.

³⁶ Donal Dorr, *The Social Justice Agenda: Justice, Ecology, Power and the Church*, (New York: Orbis books, 1991), 21.

conformity with the divine plan, peace is in the first place a basic attribute of God: 'the Lord is peace' (Jdg 6:24).³⁷

Being the free gift of God to humanity, each person must protect peace and another person should deprive none of this gift of God. On the nature of peace, Pope Benedict XVI stated: "Peace appears as a heavenly gift and a divine grace, which demands at every level the exercise of the highest responsibility: that of conforming human history in truth, justice, freedom and love to the divine order."³⁸ There are indeed two dimensions of peace; interior and exterior peace and those two dimensions are inseparable. However, in today's world there is tendency to focus only on one dimension of peace (exterior peace), and we forget the reality of interior peace. The Bishops of Vatican II taught:

Peace is not merely the absence of war. Nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies. Nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called 'an enterprise of justice' (Is 32:7). Peace results from that harmony built into human society by its divine founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever-greater justice.³⁹

The church has been given the mission to be the instrument of peace. All Christians then are called to be the instruments of peace in this world by reflecting that peace first of all among themselves and thus, that peace will reach the whole world.

Biblical peace is not only God's gift to the world, but it is also the mission given to each person by God. Before sending his disciples, Jesus said to them: "whatever house you enter, first say, peace be to this house (Luke 10:5)." But, how can the followers of Christ, bring about peace in this changing world? From its beginning, the church has been faithful to her mission of preaching the

³⁷ Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004, No. 488.

³⁸ Benedict XVI, "Message for the celebration of World Day of Peace", 2006.

³⁹ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, No. 78.

Gospel of peace. However, peace remains the biggest challenge of today's world. In his book, Buhlmann says:

It is no longer enough simply to communicate a cheerful, serene atmosphere by our presence, in an idyllic visit to a family. We must carry this peace into the hard, brutal structures of the world, and not merely passively, by refraining from disturbing peace, but actively, by establishing peace, by creating peace, not just as meteorologists forecast probable developments, but actually by causing peace, making peace.⁴⁰

Even though the promotion of peace is a duty of each Christian, peace remains a free gift from God. In the Hebrew Bible, the term 'peace' is replaced by *Shalom*, which means the presence of positive elements such as right relationships, well being, security, and wholeness.⁴¹ The New Covenant fulfils the Old one; the promise of peace in the Old Testament finds its fulfillment in the very person of Jesus.⁴² In his promise of peace to his disciples, Jesus said to them: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (Jn14: 27)."

Indeed, the church has to be the voice of voiceless in the troubled places of this world, where people are crying for "Peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14). The term peace can mean different things to different people, as when somebody says that Islam or Judaism is a "religion of peace." In the Bible also, especially in the Old Testament, there are different understandings of peace: in the Book of Kings, the Solomon's empire is described as living in peace: "For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the Kings west of the Euphrates; and he had peace on all sides round

⁴⁰ Buhlmann W., *With Eyes to See: Church and World in the Third Millennium*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 114.

⁴¹ "Overcoming violence", World Council of Churches Statements and Actions, 1994-2000, p. 93.

⁴² Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004, No. 491.

about him.” (1Kings 4:24) Job also talks about peace, but on the other level of peace: “ Dominion and fear are with God; he makes peace in his high heaven.”(Job 25:2). In the first biblical passage, peace is connected with imperialistic power and in the second, peace is connected with God’s Kingdom. Peace in biblical idea of *shalom* does not mean simply the absence of violence but a state of well being and harmony among people and with the whole universe.

God invites us to be peacemakers, “ Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God.”(Mt5: 9) He calls us to build a world in which justice will flourish and peace abounds: “ In his days may righteousness flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!” (Ps 72:7). Jesus Himself knows that human beings, being what they are, are constantly ensnared in hostilities, strife, and war. Therefore, to live in peace and to work for peace we need God’s grace.⁴³ The prophets have considered Christ’s entry in human history as the Prince of Peace: “ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be called ‘Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Is 9:6).” Peace is a promise and a free gift of God to his people except when they refuse it. In Leviticus, God promises peace to his people Israel: “ And I will give peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will remove evil beasts from the land, and the sword shall not go through your land (Lev 26:6).” As the writer of 1 Peter states, from its very beginning the church has the duty to work for peace and to establish peace in the world, especially in those troubled places on the planet: “

⁴³ Buhlmann W., *With Eyes to See: Church and World in the Third Millennium*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), 114.

Let him turn away from evil and do right; let him seek peace and pursue it.” (First Peter 3:11)

Apart from being the attribute of God, peace is the gift of God to human beings and is the mission of each human person in this world. Indeed, peace is at the center of the Gospel and the entire Bible.

2.5. Church’s teaching on disarmament.

One can talk about peace without the church but the opposite is impossible. You cannot talk about the church without peace! In her very nature, the church is one body with different members. The head is Christ, “prince of peace” (Is 9: 6) and the members are the people who have freely chosen to follow Jesus Christ. The followers of Christ have been given by Christ Himself the mission to work for peace and to promote peace throughout the world. However, you cannot give what you do not have. Peace should first of all start in the church’s structures by promoting justice as the foundation of peace. As the Disciples of Christ, all Christians should reflect that peace Jesus gave to his disciples before sending them around the world to preach the Gospel of peace, the Good News of salvation.

Disarmament is believed to be the most effective means to bring about peace. Proliferation of arms, the increase of armed conflicts and terrorism present a very serious threat to peace in today’s world. The enormous increase in arms represents a grave threat to stability and peace. The message of the church on the issue of proliferation of weapons is very clear. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

The accumulation of arms strikes many as a paradoxically suitable way of deterring potential adversaries from war. They see it as the most effective means of ensuring peace among nations. This method of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The arms race does not ensure peace. Far from eliminating the causes of war, it risks aggravating them.⁴⁴

The Catholic Church considers disarmament as the most effective means to bring about peace in this modern world. The bishops of Vatican II have taught:

The problems of peace and disarmament have already been the subject of extensive, strenuous, and relentless examination. Together with international meetings dealing with these problems, such studies should be regarded as the first steps toward solving these serious questions. They should be promoted with even greater urgency in the hope that they will yield practical results in the future.⁴⁵

Even though each person and every nation has a right to self-defence by its nature, every weapon has a destructive power. Each armed conflict should be condemned because it has no respect for the dignity of others (and consequently of oneself). It excludes reasonable compromise, does not pursue the common good but the good of a group, and sets out to destroy whatever stands in its way.⁴⁶ Being what they are, weapons can never be taken as a means of peace.

From generation to generation different types of arms are being used in wars and armed conflicts. However, the results of any war or armed conflict are: destruction, killings, injuries, refugees, etc. In his encyclical letter, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope John Paul II stated:

The Church cannot accept violence, especially the force of arms -which is uncontrollable once it is let loose -and indiscriminate death as the path to liberation, because she knows that violence always provokes violence and irresistibly engenders new forms of oppression and enslavement which are often harder to bear than those from which they claimed to bring freedom.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 2315.

⁴⁵ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, No. 82.

⁴⁶ John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 1991, No. 14.

⁴⁷ Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975, No. 37.

One of the mechanisms to ensure peace in our modern world is probably the nuclear disarmament.

In the current situation, the world is under the threat of nuclear war and terrorism. Many countries have now nuclear technology with the possibility to make nuclear weapons. The issue of the new nuclear countries is developing hatred between them and the former nuclear countries. The recent example is the test of nuclear weapons by North Korea, on October 9, 2006. The church continues unceasingly to call for nuclear disarmament and of course for disarmament in general. However, to have good dreams is one thing and the realization of these dreams is another thing. The Catholic Church will always collaborate with other churches, people of good will, nations and international community to promote peace throughout the world.

Conclusion.

In her mission to “seek peace and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:11), the Church encourages all countries to disarm because without disarmament peace will remain a dream in this world where humanity faces a crucial challenge of terrorism, proliferation of all types of weapons, wars and armed conflicts. Today’s nuclear armament and the use of ever newer and more sophisticated weapons will never end if each person, all churches, nations, regional and international organizations do not work together for disarmament.

Chapter III. NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND IRAQI WAR.

Introduction.

Nuclear weapons remain the most dangerous threat to peace in this new century. The conflict between the superpowers countries having nuclear armament and the new countries trying to acquire nuclear weapons is increasing the risk of nuclear war. The invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces is certainly one of the signs of suspicion among nations having nuclear weapons and the risk of nuclear war. Indeed, the nuclear weapons are the most powerful and the most dangerous weapons ever invented by human beings. The attack of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War where the atomic bomb killed millions of innocent people while several other millions of people were maimed for generations to come might serve as an example.

3.1. What is a nuclear weapon?

A nuclear weapon is generally “ a weapon of mass destruction whose explosive power derives from a nuclear reaction.”⁴⁸ A nuclear weapon is a weapon, which represent a very serious danger not only to humankind but also to the whole universe because of its capacity of destruction. According to David Barash: “ The first nuclear weapons were based on fission. Most nuclear weapons today,

⁴⁸ <http://www.google.co.ke/search?hl>

however, are fusion, or thermonuclear, devices. They derive much of their energy from the squeezing together of very small atoms, notably deuterium and tritium, two isotopes of hydrogen."⁴⁹

Since 1945, the technology of nuclear weapons has tremendously developed in such a way that nuclear weapons remain the most sophisticated and powerful force ever invented by humankind. However, even if the current technology of nuclear armament reflects an extraordinary genius of human beings, it represents also the power of evil.

In their letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response*, the U.S. bishops say:

The whole world must summon the moral courage and technical means to say 'no' to nuclear conflict; 'no' to weapons of mass destruction; 'no' to an arms race which robs the poor and the vulnerable; and 'no' to the moral danger of a nuclear age which places before humankind indefensible choices of constant terror or surrender.⁵⁰

To say "no" can be fruitless if it is not accompanied by a concrete act. This is why since the nuclear holocaust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 the church calls for nuclear disarmament. Nuclear weapons must be banned and a general agreement must be reached on a fitting disarmament program, with an effective system of mutual control.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Barash, David P., *Introduction to Peace studies*, (Wadsworth: California, 1991), 106.

⁵⁰ U.S. Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response*, 1983, No. 333.

⁵¹ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No. 112.

3.2. Iraqi war, its causes and church's position.

One of the big-armed conflicts of the 21st century will probably be the invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces. The Iraqi war or the invasion of Iraq, baptized "Operation Iraqi Freedom" by the United States administration began on March 20, 2003. Much has been said in international media about the causes and consequences of this invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces led by the United States and United Kingdom.

There are two strong opposite positions on Iraq's war. On one hand there is people who justify this invasion and to another hand there is people who strongly condemn this invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces led by U.S. The reasons given by the U.S. administration to attack Iraq are the alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction by Iraq, alleged collaboration between Iraq and Al Qaeda and thus, with the international terrorism in general, Iraqi repression and brutalization of its civilian population, Iraq's hostility toward the United States and Iraq's violation of cease fire agreement with Kuwait. However, the United States official reason was that Iraq was in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441 regarding weapons of mass destruction and had to be disarmed by force. In spite of these reasons, many people still believe that the invasion of Iraq is a violation of international law, breaking the U.N. charter especially because three countries out of five members of U.N. Security Council were against the reasons given by the United States and the United Kingdom before the invasion.

Indeed, France, Russia and China had decided to use their Security Council veto power against any resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq.⁵²

The Iraqi war began on March 20, 2003, without any agreement among the U.N. Security Council members. The invasion of Iraq was decided by the Bush administration in collaboration with the United Kingdom. Italy, Poland, Australia, Denmark, Romania, South Korea and other countries joined the United States and the United Kingdom by either giving troops or the logistics. All these countries, which invaded Iraq, formed what is called "coalition forces". The Iraq's capital, *Baghdad*, fell on April 9, 2003, and the coalition forces captured the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on December 13, 2003. The consequences of the Iraqi war both on Iraqi people and the entire world are many.

Many Iraqi civilian people, especially women, children and old people lost their lives and many infrastructures were completely destroyed. Extravagant sums of money, which could have helped in reducing poverty in the world, have been spent and are still being spent on that war because the conflict is not really finished. In fact, a big number of coalition forces are still in Iraq to stabilize the country and to support the new government to strengthen itself. Indeed, the reality is that many people are still dying day after day in Iraq because of the hostility between different Islamic armed groups and the coalition forces. More is still to be done in Iraq because even if the main war was declared finished by the coalition forces, there is ongoing resistance by religious and political divisions between the majority Shiite population and the formerly ruling Sunni. These Islamic armed groups complicated the establishment of a new civilian government of Iraq

⁵² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq

and are still a big problem to peace in that part of the planet. On the international level, the invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces has increased the risk of terrorist attacks and the hostility between Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries. Today's situation shows that there is a real inability of the coalition forces to restore safety in Iraq and ensure basic human needs. According to statistics, eight-four percent of the deaths were reported to be caused by the actions of coalition forces and 95% of those deaths were due to air strikes and artillery.

In spite of the reasons advanced by the U.S. administration that Iraq illegally possessed weapons of mass destruction in violation of U.N. Security Council resolution 1441 and had to be disarmed by force, the report of the U.S. inspectors has shown later on that Saddam Hussein did not possess stockpiles of illicit weapons at the time of the U.S. invasion in March 20, 2003, and had not begun any program to produce them.⁵³

The church has strongly condemned the invasion of Iraq by coalition forces led by U.S. Before the beginning of the invasion, Pope John Paul II sent his personal representative, Cardinal Pio Laghi, a friend of the Bush family, to remonstrate with the U.S. President. Pio Laghi said that such a war would be illegal and unjust. The message was clear: "God is not on your side if you invade Iraq." After the beginning of the invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces, Pope John Paul II declared on the Italian religious television channel: "Violence and arms can never resolve the problems of man."⁵⁴ In an interview with Zenit on May 2, 2003, the Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger restated the position of John Paul II on the Iraq's war and on the question of the possibility of a just war in today's world: "There were not

⁵³ [http://www.factbites.com/topics/2003 invasion of Iraq](http://www.factbites.com/topics/2003%20invasion%20of%20Iraq)

⁵⁴ <http://www.cjd.org/paper/jp2war.html>

sufficient reasons to unleash a war against Iraq. To say nothing of the fact that, given the new weapons that make possible destructions that go beyond the combatant groups, today we should be asking ourselves if it is still licit to admit the very existence of a 'just war.'"⁵⁵ Through the experience of this invasion of Iraq by the coalition forces each person can realize the danger nuclear weapons or simply the fear of them can cause to the whole world. Indeed, nuclear weapons are the instruments of evil. In Christian morality, evil should always be avoided.

3.3. Church's position on nuclear weapons.

By its nature, the church is against the use of violence. The church condemns weapons and calls for disarmament. After the Second World War in which the atomic bomb was used for the first time, the church has strongly condemned the use of mass destruction weapons.

The experience of the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the Second World War is enough to understand why nuclear weapons are called "the instruments of evil." On mass destruction weapons, the bishops of Vatican II taught: "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation."⁵⁶ The terrible danger created by the proliferation of nuclear weapons is currently a reality to everybody. However, in today's situation there is no hope of the reduction or elimination of nuclear weapons. Currently, there is a large number of countries making and testing their

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, No. 80.

nuclear weapons. On the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Allen and his collaborators have written: "One of the facts about accelerating military destructiveness is that nuclear weapons are becoming more and more accessible to more and more nations. The process of their manufacture is being simplified. Scientific knowledge about them is being disseminated throughout the world."⁵⁷

The commitment to peace is of the utmost urgency because the world is confronted with weapons whose capacity of destruction can lead to the extinction of life. Indeed, with today's situation of nuclear armament, it is not too exaggerated to say that this world lives under the threat of nuclear war. The attitude of Christians towards weapons of mass destruction should be determined by their faith. In fact, it is a question of affirming or denying the gospel itself, because by supporting the present irrational arms race the world continues to compromise with evil that leads to death. Nuclear armament increases not only the risk of nuclear war, but also consumes resources vitally needed for overcoming the problems of hunger and poverty in many parts of this world. Illicit small arms and light weapons are scattered in hands of both civilian people and different armed groups around the world. The Pontifical council for Justice and Peace has stated that:

Appropriate measures are needed to control the production, sale, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons, armaments that facilitate many outbreaks of violence to occur. The sale and trafficking of such weapons constitute a serious threat to peace: these arms kill and are used for the most part in internal and regional conflicts; their ready availability increases both the risk of new conflicts and the intensity of those already underway.⁵⁸

The armament industry is indeed developing very quickly in both developed and some developing countries.

⁵⁷ Allen, Hart, Miller, Ogburn, Nimkoff, *Technology and Social Change*, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), 239.

⁵⁸ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the church*, Paulines, 2004, No. 511.

The Church condemns the proliferation of nuclear weapons and calls for nuclear disarmament. In his message on Nuclear Disarmament to the General Assembly of the U.N., Pope John Paul II stated:

If there is one area where a multilateral agreement is necessary, it is in regard to this type of weapon which is unworthy of humanity.... the renunciation of chemical weapons, as well as bacteriological weapons, and of all weapons of mass destruction, is above all a moral question.⁵⁹

It is indeed the church's duty to work and promote peace throughout the world. By seeking and pursuing peace, the church continues the salvific mission of Jesus Christ in this world.

3. 4. The situation of nuclear weapons in today's world.

The first nuclear weapons can officially be dated from the Second World War when the United States used the atomic bomb against Japan in the cities of Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945). Certainly, the construction of those bombs had started before 1945. The United States is then known as the first nuclear weapon country in the history. After the Second World War, many declarations have been made and many treaties have been signed for the ban on nuclear weapons.

In spite of the strong condemnations of nuclear weapons, which came from around the world, after the atomic bomb's attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear technology has never stopped. On the contrary, from 1945 up to now, nuclear technology has tremendously developed. The Soviet Union was the second country after the United States to acquire nuclear weapons. The United

⁵⁹ John Paul II, *Message to the U.N. General Assembly*, 1988, No. 4c

Kingdom and France followed the Soviet Union in obtaining nuclear weapons. By 1964 there were five nuclear powers all over the world after China had acquired nuclear weapons. This increase in number of the countries possessing nuclear weapons has also developed an environment of fear throughout the world. The treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons was signed in 1968 by the United States, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union among the nuclear weapons states. France and China signed this treaty in 1992. However, even though they signed the treaty, the technology to build nuclear weapons did not stop in those five countries known as “nuclear weapons states”. This would explain why many other countries had secretly engaged in the process of obtaining nuclear weapons. This is why, apart from the “nuclear weapons states”, we currently have also the countries known as ‘illegal nuclear weapons states.’

In today’s world, one cannot be blamed for saying that this world is in nuclear armament competition. Every day we hear the new countries that have built and tested nuclear weapons. In this situation, the declarations and treaties on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons lose their sense. Indeed, this nuclear proliferation will one day end up in nuclear war. Nuclear weapons had never solved problems; on the contrary, nuclear weapons create fear among nations and the fear leads sometimes to violence and death. In his encyclical letter, *Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII stated: “in an age such as ours, which prides itself on its atomic energy, it is contrary to reason to hold that war is now a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated.”⁶⁰ Nuclear deterrence and thus, nuclear proliferation is the most serious problem of our world today.

⁶⁰ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No. 127.

The scientific knowledge on nuclear weapons is no longer the privilege of few countries. Now many countries are able to obtain nuclear weapons. In fact, some countries are still considering the treaty on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons as unjust because of the fact that only few countries (five “nuclear weapons states”) are allowed to possess nuclear weapons. The results of these complaints are very visible in today’s world where different countries are making nuclear weapons secretly. The recent concrete example is the nuclear conflicts between India and Pakistan in 1998 and 2002, and the recent test of nuclear weapons by North Korea.. Even though the cold war is supposedly over, in current situation, nuclear weapons can still destroy the world.

The countries having nuclear weapons are now seven. All these seven countries have tested their nuclear weapons. Five of them are considered to be ‘*nuclear weapons states*’, status conferred by the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. Those nuclear weapons states are: The United States of America, Russia, The United Kingdom, France, and China. Since the NPT, two non-signatory states of the NPT have conducted nuclear tests: India and Pakistan. There are also two suspected nuclear states: Israel and North Korea. In fact, North Korea had finally recognized to have nuclear weapons and have tested them on October 9, 2006. There are two states suspected of having clandestine nuclear programs, Iran and Saudi Arabia. Four states are known to have possessed nuclear weapons in the past: South Africa and former Soviet-bloc countries (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine). There are also the states formerly possessing nuclear programs: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Libya, Poland, Romania, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and Yugoslavia. Finally there are some

countries considered as nuclear-capable states: Canada, Germany, Japan, Italy, Lithuania and Netherlands.⁶¹

If it is not stopped, the current speed in nuclear armament will probably lead this world to nuclear war. More needs to be done for nuclear disarmament. It is the time for the international community to move from theories to concrete actions in their search of peace.

Conclusion.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a real problem in today's world. Different signs are showing that nuclear war is not impossible in the current situation. However, since the Second World War, nuclear weapons are considered to be the instruments of pure evil, which have to be condemned and eliminated from this world. In her social teaching, the church calls all nations having the mass destruction weapons for disarmament. Indeed, in current situation of nuclear armament, all nations have to work together for nuclear disarmament to ensure a lasting peace for our planet.

⁶¹ [http://en. Wikipedia. Org/ wiki /list of countries with nuclear weapons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_with_nuclear_weapons)

Chapter IV. EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND GENERAL CONCLUSION.

Introduction.

Peace is an intrinsic desire of each person, nation and the whole world. Whoever lacks peace, either interior or exterior, will never feel fine and he/she will struggle for it. The justification given to different civil wars and armed conflicts around the world is either the protection of peace or the liberation of people from slavery to freedom and peace. The last chapter of this essay will focus a bit on Rwandan armed conflict, and it will make some recommendations to the Church and the international community. The recommendations shall focus on disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular.

4.1. Rwandan armed conflict and 1994 Genocide

One of the tragedies of the 20th century is probably the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. What really happened in Rwanda and what are the causes of this gravest and greatest of the crimes against humanity? First of all, Rwanda is a small country of only 26,000 square kilometres. It is known as “ the country of a thousand hills” because of its relief. There is only one language in Rwanda “*Kinyarwanda*”, spoken by all the three ethnic groups (*Hutu, Tutsi and Twa*).

Before the arrival of the colonialists (up to 1900), the three ethnic groups lived together under the leadership of the same King. There were no clashes based on ethnicity recorded during this period. The power was in the hands of a monarch with a *Batutsi* King. Through the social situation, a *Muhutu* (a rich one) could become a member of the *Batutsi* group.⁶² Therefore, the ethnic belonging was often connected to the economic situation of people. However, when colonialists arrived in Rwanda, they saw differences between the ethnic groups by saying that the *Batutsi* group has a Hamitic origin and *Bahutu* group, Bantu origin. They introduced also a system of ethnic identity for each person. This differentiation which made one ethnic group (*Tutsi*) superior to others ended in the first ethnic clash in 1959: "The 1959 social revolution was an instance of the *Bahutu* turning against the *Batutsi*. This was the first ethnic clash in the history of the nation. Then began the successive *Bahutu* regimes that ruled until 1994."⁶³ The consequences of this ethnic clash have been the death of many *Tutsis* killed by *Hutus* and the flight of many others into the neighbouring Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania and Zaire. These exiles have planned later on to attack their country of origin. Gerard Prunier writes: "As time went on the exile's position became more and more detached from Rwandese reality. In December 1963, feeling this progressive loss of control over their situation, they launched a desperate operation from Burundi and invaded Bugesera."⁶⁴ During this attack from Burundi, many *Tutsis* in the country were once again killed and others exiled. Between October 1972 and February 1973 operations were organized especially in the schools, the universities, civil service and private

⁶² WCC, *For a New Africa, With Hope and dignity*, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2004, p. 51.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁶⁴ Gerard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis (1959-1994): History of a Genocide*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995), 56.

businesses to make sure that the ethnic quota policy was respected.⁶⁵ This time also some *Tutsis* were killed and others exiled into the neighboring countries.

This ethnic exclusion, hatred and killings lead to 1990 attack of R.P.F. (Rwandese Patriotic Front) comprised mainly of the Tutsi exiles in the neighboring Uganda, and to 1994 Genocide. The 1994 Genocide in Rwanda is one of the great crimes of the 20th century and the third genocide in human history. Many people lost their lives and others became displaced in their own country during the civil war in which it is said that RPF was helped by Ugandan army on one hand, and the Rwandan armed forces by French troops, on another hand. The two sides were strongly armed; this was the reason why the war took a bit long to end. Political assassinations and ethnic massacres is one of the characteristics of this armed conflict. However, in 1993 there was a strong hope that the negotiations between the Rwandan government and RPF mediated by the international community in Arusha (Tanzania) would bring about peace in the country. Indeed, the government of Rwanda, the RPF and the opposition parties in the country signed a peace accords in Arusha, which consisted in providing a model for transition to democracy.

However, as the time went by, the two parts changed their minds about the peace agreement. It is in this environment of misunderstanding that the plane of the president of Rwanda was shut down in Kigali on April 7, 1994 in the evening. The mass killings of *Tutsis*, which will be called later on, the “Rwandan Genocide” by the United Nations, started the same evening. More than one million people were killed in the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda. The aim of the Rwandan

⁶⁵ Ibid., 60.

government, who encouraged and supervised the killings, was to eliminate all Tutsis from the country. And as the Killings intensified, the international community especially the U.N. troops deserted Rwanda, leaving the country on fire. On July 4, 1994, the R.P.F soldiers took the capital Kigali. The Kigali conquest was considered the official end of the civil war and especially of genocide. Two weeks later, on July 19, R.P.F announced the formation of the new government comprising mainly of the R.P.F leaders and some names previously selected for the transition government according to Arusha peace agreement. After the R.P.F military victory, the members of the Rwandan armed forces and many civilian people fled to neighboring countries, especially in Congo and Tanzania.

Where was the church during the civil war and the 1994 Genocide? In Rwanda, the Catholic Church missions started in 1900, and many people became Catholics. In its very nature, the church has a mission to be the voice of the voiceless, and to promote peace and justice. Since their arrival in Rwanda, the missionaries mostly White Fathers, had been an active partner with Germany and then Belgium who colonized the country. A large number of Rwandan populations became Christian; the highest percentage was Catholic. Quantity and quality do not always go together; this can be applied to the evangelization of Rwanda. On the growth of Christianity on the African continent, one theologian writes:

The church has grown very much in terms of numbers of members, sponsored schools, clinics and dispensaries. In terms of the physical out-reach, the church has grown tremendously. But as far as theological growth is concerned, it appears that the church has not yet grown significantly.⁶⁶

Indeed, in Rwanda as in many African countries, Christianity was accepted as a cult and thus, it was not able to affect any substantial change in social life. Even though

⁶⁶ Mugambi, J.N.K., *The Biblical Basis for Evangelisation*, (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3.

the church leaders were not systematically involved in the killings or in the planning of the genocide, the church leaders remained silent the time they were supposed to condemn ethnic hatred and to denounce the killings of innocent people. The influential church leaders were aware of the preparation of the genocide by the government but they did not react. Some of the church leaders are even known to have cooperated with and facilitated the work of the killers. In general, the church in Rwanda did not play her role as it was supposed to, due to the nature of her mission. The church should denounce and condemn injustice, discrimination and the use of violence.

4.2. Post-war and disarmament.

After the RPF military victory and the formation of the new government, the country was obliged to start afresh, because everything had collapsed during the civil war and the 1994 Genocide. The people who remained in the country were scattered in different displaced camps and the former refugees came back home after many years in exile. The weapons and landmines were hidden everywhere in the country. It was a pure disorder throughout the country.

Despite this difficult situation, things went quickly well. Gerard Prunier writes: "Soon after the creation of the new government some foreign countries started to reopen their embassies. By early August, Germany, Belgium and the United States had all reopened theirs."⁶⁷ To deal with different problems caused by the civil war and the 1994 Genocide, the new government had to work hard even

⁶⁷ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis (1959-1994): History of a genocide*, (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995), 336.

if it was not easy at all. Immediately after the genocide, the new government started a program of sensitisation so that people who were scattered in the displaced camps throughout the country could return to their places. In its efforts to build a new country in which each person will feel at home, the new government established in 1999 the “*Commission of Unity and Reconciliation*”. This commission had a mission to organise the national summits in which Rwandan citizens from all sectors of life in the country and the Diaspora might meet together to discuss on the national unity and reconciliation, by pointing out the causes of divisions and making recommendations to the government for implementation. On the juridical level, the government recently began setting up local courts or traditional courts known as “Gacaca court” to deal with the lower-level cases of genocide. With these local courts, people hope that the truth on what happened during 1994 genocide will be known and thus, help many in a true reconciliation.

Disarmament is another big issue the new government was supposed to deal with. After the civil war and the 1994 Genocide, different types of weapons were scattered throughout the country, either hidden by the former Rwanda armed forces and the militias or still in the hands of civilian people. The issue of disarmament remains very sensitive not only in Rwanda, but also in the entire great lake regions where different armed groups and militias are still operating. The problem becomes very complex in the case of Rwanda. Indeed, after the R.P.F military victory in 1994, the former Rwandan armed forces and Interahamwe (*Hutu* militia) accused to be the perpetrators of 1994 Genocide fled in Congo where they are still hiding with their arms preparing to invade Rwanda. However, the Rwandan government is engaged on illicit small arms and light weapons control issues by

becoming an active participant in Eastern African regional efforts through the Nairobi Declaration on small arms. Very recently, 6000 weapons were destroyed by the Rwandan government as part of its commitment to control small arms through the Nairobi Declaration.⁶⁸

The traffic and the proliferation of small arms has become a big threat to peace in the great lake regions. Different armed groups and militias are operating in eastern Congo from where they come to destabilise the neighbouring Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. Civil war is not yet over in Burundi, despite the different peace agreements signed between the Burundian government and the rebel groups. The Democratic Republic of Congo is not yet stable because of the rebel groups from the neighbouring countries operating in the eastern part of the country, and different Congolese armed groups opposed to their government. Indeed, there is no doubt if different types of weapons, especially small weapons had not been sold to the Rwandan government during the period leading to the 1994 genocide, a calamity of the magnitude of the genocide (in 100 days only) would not have taken place.⁶⁹ Even though the Rwandan government has started the disarmament process, the problem of security in the great lake regions remains very complex. Much need to be done to bring about peace in all the countries of the great lakes region. Disarmament and other strategies have to be developed to prevent the tragedies such as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and the massacres of civilian people in Republic Democratic of Congo, Uganda and Burundi.

⁶⁸ Alusala Nelson, "*Disarmament and Reconciliation, Rwanda's Concerns*", Occasional Paper 108, June 2005.

⁶⁹ Alusala N., "*The arming of Rwanda and the genocide*," African security Review 13(2), 2004.

4.3. Recommendations to the Church

There is no doubt, the local churches and the universal church have played and are still playing a big role in the promotion of peace and reconciliation in the troubled parts of the planet. However, justice, peace and reconciliation remain the very sensitive areas in which more need to be done. In the current world peace situation, the church should raise her voice as far as the issue of disarmament and nuclear weapons are concerned. Indeed, today's world faces the big problems of terrorism, war and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

It is a metaphysical principle that “you cannot give what you do not have”. The church should heal itself first before launching out its message of peace and reconciliation if it has to be a credible message. The Church has to become a family of true reconciliation. As “the salt” and “the light” of the world, the church ought to stand up, to light up this planet in matters of disarmament for a lasting peace. The church should be instrumental in pinning down states in terms of budgetary allocations so that the huge sums of money may go to the improvement of the social welfare instead of buying arms. In his message for the World Day of Peace, the Pope Benedict XVI stated: “ How can there ever be a future of peace when investments are still made in the production of arms and in research aimed at developing new ones?”⁷⁰ Conflicts arise because in many developing countries power has become the only source of wealth. The church ought to lead people in realizing the value of hard work. Proper work ethic will enhance and promote food security, standard of living and above all minimize the social tensions,

⁷⁰ Benedict XVI, “*Message for the World Day of Peace*”, 2006, No. 14.

discriminations, exclusions, etc, hence, armed conflicts and the proliferation of weapons.

The local churches should be the real peacemakers especially in the troubled places of this world by not being involved in the ethnic and regional divisions, source of many armed conflicts, civil wars and ethnic clashes. In the current situation of nuclear proliferation, the church has to raise her voice to condemn those instruments of evil and invite all nations for disarmament. It is the mission of the church and all Christians to proclaim that nuclear weapons and peace cannot co-exist in this world. Indeed, nuclear weapons and all types of weapons are incompatible with peace.

In this modern world, the church should develop the new strategies in its mission of evangelisation to condemn and to call for the elimination of all instrument of violence in this world. The church seeks peace based on justice. Therefore, the church should give itself a clear witness to these values through its own institutions and procedures. Donal Door writes:

Since the church is committed to promoting and witnessing to true peace based on justice, it must ensure that its own institutions provide just and effective ways of resolving disputes and of responding to complaints.⁷¹

The church has to use its moral authority to seek and pursue peace by speaking out against the politicians who use violence and war to reach their goals. The church ought to continue denouncing the folly of the nuclear armament race, which increases the risk of nuclear war and consumes resources needed to overcome the problems of hunger, malnutrition, and diseases.

⁷¹ Donal Dorr, *The Social Justice Agenda: Justice, Ecology, Power and the Church*, (New York: Mary Knoll, 1991), 91.

Disarmament of both conventional and nuclear weapons should be the church's main message in today's world peace situation. Indeed, peace will never become a reality on the planet if nations and independent groups around the world continue to make and sell both conventional and nuclear weapons. All church leaders should have the courage to denounce injustices, corruption and discriminations, which are the source of armed conflicts and violence. The Church leaders should dissociate with the opportunist political leaders, especially in those countries where the church is being accused of taking part in politics.

4.4. Recommendations to the nations and international community

It is one thing to encourage disarmament, to denounce the use of violence and to condemn the proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, it is another thing to implement these good intentions. For the good dreams, especially on the international level, to become a reality the international community and all nations ought to work together for the same cause.

It is a pure hypocrisy when some countries sign a treaty on nuclear disarmament and non-nuclear proliferation and continue at the same time their nuclear research produces more powerful nuclear weapons. All nations should realize that the peace of this world is in their hands. All nations should work together to eliminate all means of violence and war. In the current situation, each country should realize that peace is possible only if all countries work together. There is no country in this world, which will bring about peace alone without collaboration with others. In his encyclical letter, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Pope John

Paul II stated: "Humanity today is in a new and more difficult phase of its genuine development. It needs a greater degree of international ordering."⁷²

The international community ought to control the production and the sale of all types of weapons throughout the world. The international community should find the effective solutions to the current problems of terrorism and the proliferation of mass destruction weapons. In his message for the World Day of Peace, Pope John Paul II stated:

Today international law is hard pressed to provide solutions to situations of conflicts arising from the changed landscape of the contemporary world. These situations of conflicts frequently involve agents which are not themselves states but rather entities derived from the collapse of states, or connected to independence movements, or linked to trained criminal organizations.⁷³

Peace is the main goal of different international organizations such as the United Nations, the African Union, and the European Union. However, the international community should play its role of being the neutral mediator in the current problems of armed conflicts, terrorism and nuclear proliferation. Indeed, violence does not generate peace. On the contrary, violence creates violence. On the war against terrorism, Pope John Paul II stated:

In the necessary fight against terrorism, international law is now called to develop legal instruments provided with effective means for the prevention monitoring and suppression of crime. In any event, democratic governments know well that the use of force against terrorists cannot justify a renunciation of the principles of the rule of law.⁷⁴

The international community should make more effort to implement good decisions and treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Each country should cooperate in the implementation of the international decisions on the promotion of peace and justice. Each country should

⁷² John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1988.

⁷³ John Paul II, "Message for the World Day of peace", 2004, No. 8.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 8.

establish good relationships with other countries. In his encyclical letter, "*Pacem in Terris*", Pope John XXIII stated:

It has also to be borne in mind that relations between states should be based on freedom, that is to say, that no country may unjustly oppress others or unduly meddle in their affairs. On the contrary, all should help to develop in others a sense of responsibility, a spirit of enterprise, and an earnest desire to be the first to promote their own advancement in every field.⁷⁵

All nations should stop their deterrence policies because there is no development without peace stability and security. Deterrence policy does not ensure peace; on the contrary, it increases the conflicts among the nations.

The international community should have clear laws, regulations and administrative procedures to exercise effective control over the possession of nuclear weapons. In the process of disarmament, all nations especially those who experienced civil wars and other kinds of armed conflicts should adopt laws and control mechanisms to govern civilian possession of arms. The international community in collaboration with all nations should establish the more effective strategies for disarmament. All nations should cooperate in implementation of the relevant decisions of the United Nations and other international organizations to address the problem of armament and the proliferation of conventional and mass destruction weapons.

⁷⁵ John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 1963, No. 120.

GENERAL CONCLUSION.

Peace is certainly one of the most sensitive social issues on which the Catholic Social Teaching has put a particular accent. The church has been given the mission to “seek peace and to pursue it”(1 Peter 3: 11). The church plays a big role in promoting peace in different troubled parts of this world. Like Jesus, the church denounces the use of violence, says no to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and condemns war by calling all nations for disarmament, unity, reconciliation and the communion in love of Christ.

The systematic teaching of the church on peace issues is dated from John XXIII’s encyclical letter, *Pacem in Terris*, issued in 1963. In his encyclical, John XXIII talks especially about the nuclear weapons as a big threat to peace in this modern world. The same encyclical considers disarmament as an effective means for promoting peace in today’s world. Indeed, the social teaching of the church deals with the social problems of the time. Edward P.De Berri and companions write:

The body of Catholic social teaching is by no means a fixed set of tightly developed doctrine. Rather, it is a collection of key themes, which has evolved in response to the challenges of the day. Rooted in biblical orientations and reflections on Christian tradition, the social teaching shows a lively evolution marked by shifts both in attitude and methodology.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ De Berri P. Edward & Hug E. James, *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret*, (New York: Orbis Books, 2003), 14.

With the problem of terrorism and the proliferation of mass destruction weapons, nobody knows when or what the end will be. Nuclear disarmament would enable many nations to cease being the nations ruled by fear of terrorism and nuclear war.

Peace will become a reality on this planet if all nations, churches and the international community work together to bring about peace. The international community has the duty to establish the mechanisms to promote peace and justice in all parts of the planet. Peace is not impossible. Peace is a dream, which can become a reality. In his message to the UN general Assembly, Pope John Paul II stated:

Peace is not a utopia, nor an inaccessible ideal, nor an unrealisable dream. War is not an inevitable calamity. Peace is possible. And because it is possible, peace is our duty: our grave duty, our supreme responsibility. Certainly, peace is difficult; certainly it demands much good will, wisdom, and tenacity. But man can and he must make the force of reason prevail over the reasons of force.⁷⁷

Disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular are the most effective means to bring about peace in this world. Indeed, "Christ is our peace" (Eph 2: 14). Therefore, to bring about peace in our world is to make Christ present in our midst.

⁷⁷ John Paul II, *Message to the U.N. General Assembly*, 1982, No. 13.

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