 **International Christian Peace Movement**

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**Statement of Pax Christi Australia re AUKUS Agreement**

Pax Christi Australia is a branch of the International Christian Peace Movement, Pax Christi International.

We wish to raise our objections in the strongest possible terms to the AUKUS agreement.

We do not believe that this initiative will do anything towards building peace in our region.

It is our belief that Peace involves much more than the absence of armed conflict. It involves building genuine understanding between peoples, sharing resources, support of weaker an poorer nations by the well-resourced, life enhancing development programmes resourced but not directed by giving nations.

This agreement will

* threaten rather than enhance Australian security by provoking China and souring our relationships with our neighbours as well as European Union countries. National security is best pursued by peace-enhancing methods such as negotiation, discussion and respectful dialogue.
* represents a massive deployment of white Anglo Saxon Power in our region. It will be seen as a threat not just by China but by Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and ultimately Japan and South Korea and precludes the possibility of building a non-aligned movement in the region. It could draw Australia into another US inspired war.
* will encourage an arms race in the region which will encourage other nations to follow.
* will lock Australia even more into the foreign ambitions of the United states and severely limit any freedom of action in foreign policy.
* The submarine project and the compensation to France represents a massive diversion of resources which could be employed in genuine peace building initiatives in the Asia Pacific particularly in disadvantaged nations such as Timor Leste, PNG and the Pacific.
* Australia has chosen to forgo a constructive and fraternal relationship with China by engaging with USA. It is both a failure of diplomacy and humanity. Little thought has been given to understanding and acknowledging China’s historical trauma and worldview. There seems to be little thought of the possibility of building bridges.
* The deployment of nuclear submarines will draw Australia into the nuclear fuel cycle and open the possibility of nuclear war. There will be pressure to restart uranium mining in Australia. It is difficult to see how it can accord with our obligations under nuclear proliferation treaties.

We call on faith communities and all peace loving people to call on the Australian government to repudiate this arrangement.

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