

**Declaration of the 2013 UK Pilgrimage
for Peace
and Economic Justice**

Iona to London, May 19 – July 20 2013



'Nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive power, in the unspeakable human suffering they cause, in the impossibility of controlling their effects in space and time, in the risks of escalation they create, and in the threat they pose to the environment, to future generations, and indeed to the survival of humanity.'

International Committee of the Red Cross, 2010

- ❖ **The 2013 Pilgrimage for Peace and Justice is a collective expression of the deep conviction held by many individuals and groups taking part that economic, environmental and human injustices are root causes of much of the violent conflict presently blighting and threatening the security of our world.**
- ❖ **We feel a shared sense of being called to journey from Iona, the birthplace of Christian mission in Scotland, via the Trident nuclear submarine base at Faslane, the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and a succession of English cathedral cities to the UK's seat of government in London to raise awareness of these issues.**
- ❖ **Our purpose in walking from Iona to London is also to affirm our faith in a profoundly different vision of the paths by which true peace, national and global security, and material well-being for everyone – not merely the privileged few – can be achieved.**
- ❖ **We regard as morally indefensible the UK Government's choice to commit countless billions of pounds to developing a new generation of Trident nuclear**

missiles, while at the same time pursuing a policy of economic austerity which is unfairly imposing the severest hardship and material privation upon many of our nation's most vulnerable individuals and communities.

- ❖ We believe that the latent hostility towards other nations implied by the UK's insistence on retaining nuclear weapons as a deterrent actively obstructs the spirit of international cooperation and goodwill urgently required to address genuine security issues facing the world in the 21st century.
- ❖ We consider the continuing possession of nuclear weapons to be a violation of the most sacred values and fundamental principles of civilized society, an unacceptable threat to current and future generations, as well as being illegal according to the spirit and letter of international law.
- ❖ We therefore call upon the UK Government to abandon with immediate effect its plans to renew and upgrade the Trident missile system, and instead to direct the vast amount of UK taxpayers' money set aside for the renewal of Trident towards strengthening our frontline health and education services, schools and welfare agencies.
- ❖ We also urge the UK Government to enter at the earliest opportunity into multilateral international negotiations to conclude a Nuclear Weapons Convention, with a view to securing the world-wide elimination of all nuclear weapons.
- ❖ It is our belief that by reversing the decision to renew Trident, and beginning the process of dismantling the UK's current stock of nuclear warheads, the UK Government would demonstrate convincingly to the rest of the world its capacity for true leadership on the world stage, as well as proclaiming the UK's genuine commitment to helping achieve a safer, more peaceful nuclear-free world for future generations.

