

## STATEMENT

### **For Justice, Peace, and the Dignity of Peoples**

#### Continental Network for Popular Education-JPIC. Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

In a time marked by wars, social crises, political tensions, and growing violence against our common home, we feel an ethical responsibility to raise our voices. As a Continental Network committed to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, we cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of peoples or to the multiple violations of human dignity occurring today in different regions of the world; and we reaffirm our commitment to peace, conscious participatory democracy, and the defense of life.

We observe with alarm, indignation, and deep concern the escalation of armed conflicts and geopolitical tensions that threaten world peace, as well as the use of force, sanctions, and external pressure as mechanisms for resolving disputes between States. Wars, various forms of violence, and humanitarian crises affect the lives of millions of people. As Pope Francis noted, we are living in a reality that often resembles a “world war in parts,” where the main victims are always civilian populations. In this scenario, realities that gravely harm humanity—such as poverty, hunger, injustice, inequalities, human rights violations, gender-based violence, discrimination, racism, and exploitation—are further exacerbated.

In our Latin American and Caribbean region, situations persist that threaten democratic coexistence and fundamental rights. Political tensions in various countries, the growing instances of forced migration and the displacement of individuals and families caused by violence, poverty, and political crises; electoral processes marred by mistrust or polarization; and reports of human rights violations, challenge us as societies committed to peace and democracy. We recognize that femicides have risen sharply in recent times, in addition to social media that perpetuate violence against women.

We reaffirm the fundamental principle of the sovereignty and self-determination of Peoples. Latin America and the Caribbean have a history marked by external interventions and unequal power relations. Therefore, we consider it essential to overcome all forms of interference—political, economic, or military—that limit or violate the capacity of our societies to freely determine their own destiny.

We express our concern regarding:

- the wars and military actions affecting civilian populations in Iran, Ukraine, Palestine, South Sudan, the Congo, Haiti... and in so many other places around the world...
- human rights violations and the criminalization of protest.
- external interference in the internal affairs of nations such as Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico, and Ecuador.
- the weakening of citizen participation and democratic institutions.
- social inequalities that deepen conflicts.
- the erosion of the social and community fabric.
- the use of all forms of violence, especially against women.

We are convinced that peace can only be built on the foundation of justice, respect for international law, and the full realization of human rights. The sovereignty of people implies that every society can make its own decisions without external impositions.

Amid the difficulties of our time, we reaffirm our hope forged from the resistance of women, men, young people, and children. We believe that people are capable of building paths of justice, reconciliation, and peace when they place human dignity, the common good, and care for our common home at the center.

We also make our own the recent call by Pope Leo XIV to halt the spiral of violence and seek solutions without weapons, always committing to dialogue, justice, respect, and fraternity among peoples.

For a peace that is unarmed and disarming, we who are part of the Continental Network join in the desire for a dignified life, justice, and unity among all peoples, beyond borders.

*March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026*