

# Taking Sides: "Do not be afraid" - Act for peace

This statement and call for people to "act for peace" is written by the Ecumenical Advocacy Committee on behalf of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA).

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance is compelled by the Gospel to call upon all churches, related organisations and people of faith to fulfil their role as peacemakers. In your home and workplace, your neighbourhood and country - act for peace.

The news of the day and escalating tension between the United States and Iraq provide a new sense of urgency. The powers of the world seem to have begun an unstoppable march to war - but we must resist, say 'no' and act now.

Can the people of the Christian churches hear God's call in the words, "Do not be afraid!"? This message is repeated many times throughout the Bible - perhaps because we need to be convinced. Today, we find ourselves in a world filled with fear. God's creation is shaken to its core by the destruction of the environment, the ravaging of life and livelihoods by HIV/AIDS, the injustice of economic systems that create and crush people living in poverty, and violence that brutalises individuals and makes unsafe our homes and streets, our communities and nations. We have taken up this task with a special focus on overcoming stigma and discrimination against people affected by HIV/AIDS, and to change the systems of global trade to insure that people and their human rights come before profits and power.

But the fear of war is very real. The special concern of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance for issues of peace and conflict resolution is even more necessary. And the commitment and action of participating churches and organisations can be decisive in building peace.

In your own context and your own ways, through your own networks and structures, work tirelessly and faithfully for peace. Accompany prayer with action for peace - in the churches and streets, and even more urgently in national capitals and among the powerful. Believe the Gospel's call. "Do not be afraid!" Act for peace.

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance is a broad ecumenical network for coordinated international advocacy on HIV/AIDS and global trade. The network reaches hundreds of millions of Christians

around the world (WACC is a member of EAA, to see the list of participants go to: [www.e-alliance.ch](http://www.e-alliance.ch)).

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