



# Basel Peace Office

*Advancing international peace and security through  
the abolition of nuclear weapons*

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## Basel Peace Office Presidents Report 2021

As in previous years, readers may kindly consult the extensive report of Alyn Ware, the Basel Peace Office (BPO) director, on the global activities over the past 12 months of our office and the represented organization. This would also include the activities of the BPO Deputy Director, Ms Marzhan Nurzhan.

Your president enjoyed selecting the entries and presiding over a large ZOOM Session with some 200 participants at the annual PACEY awards. These traditionally are held on the occasion of the Basel Peace Forum in January. For pandemic reasons the 2021 peace forum had to be held virtually to a large extent.

The PACEY Awards were founded in 2020 and are sponsored by the BPO, the Office of the Cantonal and Urban Development (at the Office of Presidential Affairs, Canton Basel Stadt), Youth Fusion and private persons. Two prizes of €5000 Euro each are awarded annually to exemplary youth projects or youth initiatives to advance peace, climate protection and disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament. One of the awards is for a European youth project and the other is for a youth project from outside of Europe, although both may have a global focus. The awards support projects which advance effective policy action to cut carbon emissions, enhance the transition to re-newable energies, address and resolve international conflicts, abolish nuclear weapons, reduce weapons budgets and investments, and/or support the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Priority is given to projects making the connections between peace, climate and nuclear disarmament issues, and their increasing relevance in times of the pandemic.

The 2 winners of this year's PACEY Youth awards are from *Platform for Peace and Humanity*, a Europe-wide youth platform based in Slovakia; and from *World's Youth for Climate Justice*, a global youth network with leadership from youth in the Pacific, in the Caribbean and in Europe.

Platform for Peace and Humanity submitted a proposal on *Youth Ambassadors to Advance the Right to Peace*, a project to strengthen this right under customary

international law. The project includes youth training, diplomatic advocacy including for a UN resolution, a mock court case and an effort to secure an International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion affirming this legal right.

The Worlds Youth for Climate Justice project focuses primarily on taking a case to the ICJ on the international obligations to protect current and future generations from climate change. They have already found a government to sponsor a UN resolution to take the case to the court.

It was remarkable to meet both organizations in November and learn, how far they were able already to move their projects. As a side note, it was impressive for me that all activists we met during this follow-up meeting were young women, an observation which apparently was also made at the recent Glasgow COP26 Meeting. Perhaps women turn out to be the more important movers for the future with more care for the earth, spend less in militarism and more in peace activities and encourage wider observation of human rights for all.

In this regard, when welcoming these youth delegations, I introduced my late friend Martin Vosselers emphasis on the need for an “earthcompatible” lifestyle.

At this stage I also want to have a short outlook on the near future, when our BPO board member Prof. Laurent Goetschel and his crew of “swisspeace”, which recently has moved from Bern to Basel, will finally establish here their definite quarters. As few still know, swisspeace will become one of the principal tenants – perhaps somewhat paradoxically – of the original barracks i.e. the Kaserne in Basel. In doing so, swiss-peace will not directly start making «Plows out of Swords”, but still this move to Kleinbasel undoubtedly will contribute to the status of Basel as a city of peace and seems enormously enriching.



Andreas Nidecker  
President BPO

*December 14, 2021*