



Pacific Conference of Churches

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MEDIA STATEMENT

Pacific Conference of Churches Condemns Militarised Escalation: Pacific Airspace Must Not Be a Staging Ground for War

Suva, Fiji – 23 June 2025

The Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), representing regional ecumenical churches and faith-based communities, expresses grave concern over the recent United States military strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities—launched in part from Pacific territory and airspace under *Operation Midnight Hammer*. These strikes included B-2 bombers, submarine-launched Tomahawks, and stealth operations that used Pacific routes as part of a “deception effort known only to an extremely small number of planners and key leaders.”

This act of geopolitical theatre—executed without consultation or regional consent—**violates the principles of transparency, sovereignty, and peace** to which the Pacific is committed. It reflects a growing pattern of external militarisation that **undermines the region’s foundational peace architecture**—especially the **Treaty of Rarotonga** and the collective vision for an **Ocean of Peace**.

“The Pacific cannot be a pawn in global warfare,” said Rev. James Bhagwan, General Secretary of PCC. “To use our skies and islands for secretive military strikes is a betrayal of the values enshrined in the Treaty of Rarotonga and a direct threat to our collective spiritual and ecological security.”

What This Means for the Treaty of Rarotonga and the Ocean of Peace Vision

The **Treaty of Rarotonga**, established in 1985, declared the South Pacific a **nuclear-weapon-free zone**, affirming the region’s moral and legal commitment to peace, disarmament, and non-alignment. The use of Pacific territory and airspace in a nuclear-adjacent operation—potentially involving weapons delivery systems and launched in deception—**calls the integrity of this treaty into question**. It risks turning Pacific states and territories into **involuntary accomplices in violations of international law and provocations of future war**.

These recent actions expose the fragility of the Ocean of Peace—a vision grounded in:

- **Do Kamo**, the Kanaky theological ethic of continuous transformation;
- **Right relationships** among peoples, lands, oceans, and the Divine;
- **Faith-rooted security** grounded in justice, not deterrence;
- And the **spiritual sovereignty** of Pacific peoples, especially those in colonised territories like Guam, Amerika Samoa, Hawai’I, West Papua, Kanaky and Ma’ohi Nui.

By militarising our region without consent, global powers fracture the sacred covenant of peace the Pacific has upheld through its ecumenical, Indigenous, and diplomatic witness. **We cannot speak of a “Blue Pacific Continent” if we remain targets, launchpads, or corridors for war.**

Key Concerns and Calls

1. Demilitarisation Now

- Cease all unauthorised military use of Pacific airspace and territory.
- Reaffirm and strengthen commitments to the Treaty of Rarotonga and the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone.

2. Regional Accountability

- Demand transparency from AUKUS and all foreign defence partners.
- Call for a regional inquiry into the use of Guam and Pacific skies in recent military actions.

3. Values-Based Pacific Foreign Policy

- Develop regional policy rooted in justice, Indigenous ethics, and faith-based diplomacy.
- Reject participation in any military alliance or action that contradicts the principles of peace and sovereignty.

Conclusion: Reclaiming the Ocean of Peace

The Ocean of Peace must be more than high-level rhetoric —it must be a **political commitment and spiritual mandate**. Through the lens of Do Kamo, Pacific churches proclaim peace not as passivity, but as **active, relational resistance to violence, domination, and secrecy**. We call upon Pacific leaders, development partners, and churches to stand firm:

“Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like a never-failing stream.” – Amos 5:24

The Pacific is not a deception corridor. It is not a testing ground. It is the sacred ocean of our ancestors and our future.



Rev. James Shri Bhagwan

General Secretary

18 June, 2025

Suva, Fiji