



Office of the President

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Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of New York
President

June 25, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20270

Mr. President:

We write to commend you for exercising leadership for peace in relationship to two issues of deep concern to the Catholic Church.

In Berlin, you recently reiterated a vision of a world without nuclear weapons, a vision that the Catholic Church has long supported. In 1963, Blessed Pope John XXIII called for a worldwide ban on nuclear weapons, and in 1983, our own Bishops' Conference issued a pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace*, in which we reiterated the nuclear disarmament goal. Today, we again pledge support of U.S. efforts to achieve mutual reductions in the stockpiles of nuclear weapons, to adopt the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation.

In a letter dated January 9, 2013, we asked you to exercise vigorous leadership for Israeli-Palestinian peace. We write today to commend you for traveling to the Holy Land in March, and for charging Secretary of State John Kerry with the urgent task of bringing the parties to the negotiating table. We are aware of his tireless efforts, affirm the vision of a two-state solution, and promise our support for this U.S. initiative for peace.

We know that many consider the conflict intractable, but we believe that peace is possible. We share the Easter prayer of Pope Francis: "Peace for the Middle East, and particularly between Israelis and Palestinians, who struggle to find the road of agreement, that they may willingly and courageously resume negotiations to end a conflict that has lasted all too long." We urge persistent U.S. leadership and promise our untiring support and encouragement.

Thank you for your leadership on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and on Israeli-Palestinian peace. We know both issues remain challenging, appreciate your leadership in tackling them, and offer our prayerful support.

Sincerely yours,

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Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York
President,
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates
Bishop of Des Moines
Chair,
Committee on International Justice and Peace