



# International Peace Bureau

*Disarmament for Development*

21 December 2025

## Appeal for a Christmastime Peace in Ukraine

As Christmas approaches, the war in Ukraine is still ongoing after nearly four years, with countless lives lost, cities destroyed and grave consequences for the environment. Despite ongoing diplomatic efforts to resolve the war, there are still no signs of a breakthrough. Recent calls for a Christmas ceasefire from Zelenskyy and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz represent a renewed opportunity for an important first step towards peace - a new Christmas Ceasefire. Similar proposals have been made in past years, including by Russia in 2023, without success. While distrust and disagreements have held back a ceasefire, we emphasise that a ceasefire can also serve as a starting point toward further progress on peace. It is in this context that we renew our appeal for peace during this year's Christmas period, calling for a ceasefire that reaffirms our shared humanity and places the protection of life above the logics of war.

History reminds us that even during the darkest moments of conflict, compassion and humanity can prevail. The Christmas Truce of 1914 remains a symbol of hope, when soldiers spontaneously put down their arms to gather across trenches during Christmas time. By seeing each other as people and not just enemies, this event disrupted the dehumanising cycle of war and demonstrated that reconciliation was possible. It challenged the belief that war is inevitable or that enemies inherently hate each other.

Today, after almost four years of war in Ukraine, this appeal carries renewed urgency. We call on the leaders of both parties to let the weapons fall silent and allow people on both sides a moment of peace. Ongoing diplomatic discussions, even if fragile, demonstrate that channels for negotiation exist. A Christmas ceasefire could help provide the conditions needed for trust to be built and for meaningful talks to take root.





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On this occasion, we also recognize and remember those conscientious objectors who refuse to kill and who are persecuted for their antiwar and pacifist beliefs. Conscientious objections must be protected, even and especially during wartime. We call on all governments to stop persecutions against objectors, release prisoners of conscience, and respect the human rights to peace and objection to military service. These individuals, many of whom base their refusal in religious values, deserve their full rights, including advocacy for objection. We stand with them.

**We call on the international community to strongly support and advocate for a Christmas ceasefire in Ukraine and for humanitarian pauses in conflicts around the world.**

This appeal should be understood in a broader sense. It is not only a call for a ceasefire in Ukraine, but part of a global appeal for pauses in all active conflict zones. While Christmas is not universally observed, the end of the year represents a shared moment across cultures and traditions. A time for reflection, accountability and renewal. This time of the year offers a meaningful opportunity to interrupt violence worldwide and to reaffirm the primacy of human life.

This call is also a reminder of the responsibility to work towards sustainable peace. Ceasefires are not an end in themselves, but they can create spaces for trust to emerge as an initial step towards re-imagining security structures worldwide. Our long-term vision is a peace and security order grounded in common security. One that is based on cooperation, dialogue and negotiation, and on the recognition that lasting peace requires addressing the legitimate security concerns of all states. While the path for such a transformation is long, even small steps taken now can help to make a future of peaceful coexistence possible.

Let this end of the year mark a moment of renewed responsibility, dialogue and commitment not only to ending the war in Ukraine, but also to advancing sustainable peace worldwide.

