First, thank you for inviting Pax Christi USA to be part of this important gathering, and a special thank you to the Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace for engaging us in this noble cause to preserve Article 9 and also to promote it as a gift to the world. At a time when violence is spiraling out of control in too many corners of the world, much of which is fueled by a US militarized foreign policy, Article 9—is a unique institutional model of political non-violence that is desperately, desperately needed.

I sometimes find it difficult to admit that I am from the U.S. I know that you in this gathering can distinguish U.S. citizens from the actions of the U.S. government, and I thank you for your warm welcome, yet I still feel shame in knowing what my country has done to unleash so much destructive power in the world. Next week I will stay on to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, in order to touch that wound—and on behalf of our Catholic peace movement, I renew our profound apology for the U.S. atomic bombings of your people. Your people are our people; and there are no words to fully capture our grief. We can only offer our unwavering commitment to join with you in our shared mission to end all war, to end all violence.

In the Christian tradition of communion, we use a chalice in which bread and wine are joined and transform into the body and blood of Christ for us. It speaks to something transcendent that happens when great suffering is met with great love. I imagine that all of us are in this room because, at some point, our hearts were broken with stories of suffering from violence or war. But this room, like a chalice, not only holds the tears, but also our great love and passion for peace. So I trust that something will happen in this mix, this gathering, that will transform into a greater force for peace. I feel humbled and honored to be with you.

My comments today will be in 3 parts: first, to talk about Pax Christi’s work on Article 9 through our collaboration with JCCJP; second, to outline a map of the broader U.S. peace movement; and third, to talk about the political context of the U.S.. Through this, I hope to name some areas of challenge as we go into strategizing action plans on how best to preserve Art. 9 and beyond.

1. Pax Christi USA – CCJP.

First, what is Pax Christi? Pax Christi is the global Catholic peace movement, founded 60 years ago as a gesture of reconciliation between French and German Catholics following WWII. There are Pax Christi national sections or affiliate groups in over 50 countries, including PCUSA and CCJP. PC has non-governmental status at the UN.
In the US, Pax Christi is a grassroots membership organization, with 400 local chapters, 600 religious congregational members, 130 individual Catholic bishops and over 20,000 individual members. Our mission is to promote nonviolence through prayer, study and action--beginning in our personal lives, and extending outward to promote nonviolence in societal structures. We are independent from the official Catholic church, which enables us to move quickly to respond to issues, and to do so with a prophetic voice.

A year and a half ago, CCJP asked to come and address the annual assembly of Pax Christi USA, and to engage our support for Article 9. That first delegation included Bishop Goro Matsuura, Deacon Nagasawa and Sr. Filo Hirota, and their presentation was compelling. They opened our eyes to the broader context of the U.S. military transformation of the Asia Pacific, and we were quickly convinced of the urgent need to become involved. A second delegation of Sr. Filo and Archbishop Takami of Nagasaki returned in March 07.

For both delegations, we organized a host of advocacy activities in Washington, D.C. including:
- meetings with Members of Congress
- speaking presentations to faith groups, peace groups, Japanese-American Catholics, and a major presentation at Georgetown University,
- we organized meetings with Catholic Church leadership, including our U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference, individuals bishops, and a Cardinal—in order to urge them to use their diplomatic channels to the U.S. Administration; and
- organized media interviews to generate news articles on Article 9.

We also promoted grassroots advocacy in which Pax Christi members from around the U.S. sent email messages to the Japanese prime minister’s website in support of Article 9, and sent copies to our Members in the U.S. Congress to alert them to this issue.

When Prime Minister Abe came to Washington last April, we collected about 100 letters in support of Article 9, primarily from women’s religious orders, and hand-delivered these to the Japanese Embassy on the day that the Prime Minister arrived. The night he had dinner with President Bush, we held a vigil outside the White House in protest.—and though small in numbers, we had a mix of nuns, peace activists, a Buddhist priest and kids in strollers—and made our presence known—with a banner: “Article 9 – gift to the world...keep it.”.

All these efforts are but a humble contribution. We know that it will be the Japanese people who will decide on Article 9, and that our job is to challenge the U.S. policies of militarism and its “war on terrorism” that is pressing the Japanese government to eliminate its most precious gift of Article 9. It’s a struggle on both sides of the world.
2. Broader Peace Movement in the U.S.

Our peace movement in the U.S. is composed of a wide network of organizations, doing a variety of activities. I will name some of the categories, and invite you to keep in mind those groups with whom you might have a relationship, perhaps as a counterpart, who could be brought into our struggle to preserve Article 9. I suggest this, in part, because it has been very difficult for us to find other groups in the U.S. working on Article 9, or even know about the broader context of the U.S. military transformation in the Asia-Pacific. For our peace movements, the challenge is that there are SO MANY aspects of the US “war on terrorism” that we are protesting, including: the war and occupation of Iraq, the use of torture, preventing a possible war on Iran, and on and on.

So getting back to the map...

A. First, there are the religious peace efforts, including:
   - the work of the National Council of Christian Churches—the mainline Protestant denominations, and the different denominational peace fellowships
   - the Evangelical Christian Churches, including organizations like Sojourners
   - Catholic groupings. In addition to Pax Christi, others include the Center of Concern, NETWORK, Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Maryknoll, Colombans, Jesuits and more.
   - Peace churches: the Quakers, Mennonites and Church of the Brethren
   - Jewish groups, including Tikkun and The Shalom Center
   - the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, which in Washington, D.C., holds Saturday silent vigils outside the Capitol
   - the Muslim Peace Fellowship
   - Fellowship of Reconciliation

   The religious peace groups: educate, advocate for peace with representatives in Congress, pray for peace, and organize public actions. Religious peace groups are almost always a major part of public actions and demonstrations.

B. Second there are the secular peace groups, well as large national “umbrella” organizations and coalitions with many local members:
   - Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
   - United for Peace and Justice, of which PCUSA is a member, which organizes major national demonstrations
   - Move-on.org, a virtual organization, using email and web technology to generate advocacy:
   - Code Pink, mostly women, who often disrupt Congressional hearings with dramatic visual effects.

C. Third, there are the peace movements representing particular constituencies, such as
   - 9-11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows
   - Torture Abolition Survivors’ Support Coalition (TASSC), Campaign to Close Guantanamo
   - Military Families Speak Out, Iraq Veterans Against the War

D. Fourth, organizations that do research and analysis for peace
E. Fifth, Lobby and Policy Advocacy Groups

F. Sixth, Alternative media, including radio and web news outlets.

G. Lastly, Political organizing and education in the electoral political arena – to change the balance of power in the US government

There are many more groups, but hopefully this gives a picture of the U.S. peace movement as a complex web of projects carrying out a multitude of activities every day, from Washington DC to the smallest towns. All of us vehemently oppose US national security policy and the so-called war on terror, and we are working in every way we can think of -- to change the US way of being in the world.

3. Political Context in the U.S.

The Bush Administration has used the excuse of a “war on terror” to pursue a national security strategy based on military dominance in service of economic prosperity, at any cost.

I will be quoting from a document of the Bush Administration, entitled “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America” from September 2002. In it, “national security” is defined as the need to protect “American interests” and defend “our way of life.” So what is this “way of life”? The document continues: “Free markets and free trade are key priorities to our national security strategy….We will seek to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets and free trade to every corner of the world.”

This free market underpinning of national security is mostly hidden in the political discourse. Instead, the Bush Administration repeatedly uses words like “threats” “attacks from terrorists,” “enemies” and “vulnerability” to promote a culture of fear to justify its “war on terror.”

Catholic theologian Rev. Bryan Massingale, however, captured it well in a paper comparing the American vision of security with a “faith based vision of security.” He concludes that the Bush Administration’s promotion of “freedom” really means “the freedom to buy and sell, the freedom to acquire and consume, the freedom (he says) to shop.”

A key point to remember about this stated goal of “economic prosperity” is that it is about prosperity for a few. Last year, 35.5 million Americans went hungry. Three million are homeless, 2 million are in prisons, and 47 million are without health care. There has been a scandalous robbing of the national budget diverted to a military build-up that is out of control.

In terms of military dominance to ensure economic prosperity (again for a few), what is distinctive in the Bush 2002 National Security strategy is the stance that the U.S. will act preemptively, unilaterally and with overwhelming power, to maintain U.S. interests. The
possible use of preemptive nuclear strikes was included in this. Another quote from the Bush document:

“Our forces will be strong enough to dissuade potential adversaries from pursuing a military build-up in hopes of surpassing, or equaling the power of the United States….Our best defense is a good offense...We cannot allow our enemies to strike first.”

As suggested earlier, this Administration has used September 11th, 2001 to promote a culture of fear among the American public to justify a host of domestic and foreign policies that are crushing people and violating international laws and norms.

As a result, Guantanamo, for example, is allowed to exist and torture is viewed as necessary. Racism and Xenophobia are rampant. Immigrant families are afraid to take their sick kids to hospitals. Walls are being erected at our southern border to keep Mexicans out, though they keep crossing—and dying in the desert...AND there is no recognition that U.S. economic policies of corporate-driven trade and globalization are impoverishing people in other countries and creating the immigrant flow. Parallel to “gated communities” where middle and upper middle class housing complexes are surrounded by walls with guards at the entrance, the U.S. has become a gated empire.

Also, under the lie of “national security,” the U.S. has ruthlessly pursued an illegal and immoral war and occupation of Iraq, a sin which has unleashed a spiral of violence and ripped apart the social fabric of an ancient nation. It has cost the lives of some 6-700,000 Iraqis, 3000+ U.S. service people; and left 4 million Iraqis internally displaced or living as refugees. The cost to date is about a ½ trillion dollars. All this in the name of “national security”—but which is really about controlling Iraqi oil!

We have presidential elections next year, and though we cannot imagine that the Republican party will win the presidency again, nothing is definite. Our peace movement tries to unmask the lies, but many Americans are victims of mass media propaganda, wooed to sleep in front of televisions, or into shopping malls to consume. The rhetoric of fear works, and so the presidential candidates keep talking about the U.S. needing to be militarily strong. And even if the Democrats get in, it will not necessarily mean a radical departure from our militarized foreign policy, nor the economic plundering of the world’s resources.

In September, the Iranian president came to the U.S. for meetings at the U.N.-- and nearly all the media coverage was about demonizing him, personalizing and painting him as an enemy, and thus by extension—demonizing the Iranian people. It’s a strategy used to justify going to war. And we know that will be catastrophic. Pax Christi joined with other religious leaders in a private meeting with President Ahmadinejad to create another space—one of dialogue and listening. This was the U.S. religious community’s humble effort to show there is another way to be in the world community. We were criticized by some, but our question in return—what is our choice?—to dialogue, or to bomb?

In conclusion, a hope for those of us gathered here as an inter-religious community is that we can help chart another path, a nonviolent path. The phrase that comes to mind
is “another world is possible;” and it goes further “another world is necessary, urgent” ...a world built on international cooperation, inclusive security, non-violence and peace. The theologian I referenced earlier, Rev. Massingale, offered an alternative, biblical vision of security, of “shalom.” While often translated as “peace,” it goes much deeper. He says that shalom “is a vision of social wholeness a state of well-being for all, where everyone has access to the goods of creation intended to meet the needs of all.”

That vision—is incompatible with military dominance. That vision is what true and lasting peace is about. That vision is enfleshed in Article 9 – and it IS what this world desperately, desperately needs.

There’s a phrase by deceased social scientist Margaret Mead which says “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.

I believe in that, as those of you who have been working so hard on Article 9 are making impact. Another image that fits comes from scientists working on “chaos theory.” They refer to the “butterfly effect,” in which the flap of a butterfly wing on one side of the globe—can accumulate enough momentum to change weather patterns on the other side of the globe. .

For us in Pax Christi USA, Article 9 was nowhere on our scope 2 years ago. All it took was a butterfly flap: an email from small group of people, the Japan Catholic Council for Justice and Peace—asking to come and talk to us. The face-to-face mattered; both our hearts and heads were touched. Let us keep sending those emails, flapping those butterfly wings, asking more groups to draw close and build this movement.

I bow before the beautiful and important work you all have been doing on Article 9, and its significance for global peace. We thank you for your tireless efforts. We join with you, humbly, and in profound gratitude