

Speech – Ignacio Packer
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Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day – Geneva – 6th March 2026

Excellencies, dear colleagues, dear friends,

It is an honour to join you today for this commemoration of Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day.

I would like first to express our deep gratitude to the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for bringing us together, and in particular Ambassador Doreen Debrun and her colleagues for their leadership. My gratitude to Augustine Sokimi, who is guiding us through this programme.

I am also honoured to stand alongside voices committed to justice and human dignity, including Jennifer Philpot Nissen, Selina Leem, John Taukave and Abacca Anjain-Maddison.

And we are all honoured by the national address of Her Excellency Dr. Hilda C. Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Above all, today we honour the people of the Marshall Islands. Thank you for your courage in sharing your story with the world.

The theme of today's commemoration "Añin Jitbon Mar: A Spiritual Calling from our Islands" is powerful. It reminds us that the legacy of nuclear testing is not only a matter of politics or history. It is a matter of human lives, families, communities, and generations who continue to live with the consequences of decisions taken far from their islands.

A spiritual calling invites us to pause and listen more deeply. It calls not only to our intellect, but to our conscience.

And today this call feels especially urgent. As we gather here in Geneva, a devastating war is unfolding in the Middle East. Families are losing loved ones, communities are displaced, and once again humanity is confronted with the tragic consequences of conflict.

Moments like these remind us how profoundly interdependent our world has become. The suffering of one region is never isolated from the moral responsibility of the rest of humanity.

They also remind us that peace is not only the responsibility of governments or international institutions. It is also the responsibility of each of us in the values we uphold, in the courage we show when confronting injustice, and in our willingness to listen to the stories of others.

The story of the Marshall Islands speaks powerfully to this responsibility.

Between 1946 and 1958, 67 nuclear weapons tests were conducted in the Marshall Islands, leaving deep and lasting consequences for the Marshallese people : affecting their health, environment, and fundamental human rights. But alongside suffering, there is also extraordinary resilience.

The voices of survivors remind us that history is not an abstract narrative. It is lived experience. It is memory carried in bodies, families, and communities. And when survivors speak, humanity is invited not only to remember but to learn.

For the Caux Initiatives of Change Foundation, it has been a privilege to accompany this journey in a modest way. We were honoured to partner in the organisation of the 2025 commemoration in Geneva, and we are grateful to contribute again to this year's remembrance.

Last summer, in Caux above Montreux, at the 240-room Belle Époque Caux Palace, which is celebrating 80 years of hosting trust-building retreats and gatherings, we hosted an exhibition of drawings by children from the Pacific

reflecting the legacy of the atomic trials.. More than 800 visitors came to see it. Many encountered the story of the Marshall Islands for the first time, and many left deeply moved. Art has the power to reach where political language sometimes cannot.

This is also why I want to connect today's commemoration to what we are building in 2026.

In 2026, we celebrate 80 years of Caux as a place dedicated to trust-building and reconciliation. And this year, our forums will continue to bring International Geneva and Caux into a shared journey of dialogue, courage, and responsibility.

In particular, the Caux Democracy Forum will open here at the Maison de la Paix on 22 June, before continuing in Caux. It will bring together public leaders, international organizations, civil society, and young leaders to explore how to revitalise democracy through hope, healing, and human security.

And in July, our Caux Inner Development Forum will explore what we might call the alchemy of forgiveness. In a world shaped by war, displacement, and intergenerational wounds, this is not a "soft" theme. It is a practical one. Without inner change, outer peace becomes fragile.

Caux is part of the International Geneva ecosystem, and we see our role as creating spaces where the hardest truths can be held with dignity, where empathy can rebuild trust, and where people can find the courage to act.

And this brings us back to today's theme: a spiritual calling.

A spiritual call asks us to listen with humility.

It asks us to recognise that justice is not only a legal question, but a moral one. And it reminds us that peace begins with the choices we make as individuals and as societies.

So today, on behalf of the Caux Foundation, I would simply like to say:

Thank you to the people of the Marshall Islands.

Thank you for your courage.

Thank you for your resilience.

And thank you for calling the world, spiritually and morally, to remember, to care, and to act.

May this remembrance, at a time when the nuclear threat is higher than it has been in decades, strengthen our commitment to truth, solidarity, and peace.

Thank you.