

# Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations Newsletter

*Bringing the United Nations to the Anglican Communion*



*Image courtesy of un.org*

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**Preparatory Workshop for Faith-Based Organizations  
Engaging in coordinated Gender Justice Advocacy**

The ACOUN was part of a planning team of multi-faith actors and UN partners--including ACT Alliance, Islamic Relief USA, Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, and UN Women—for a day-long preparatory workshop for faith-based organizations to explore the specific challenges and opportunities for faith based organizations to engage in gender justice advocacy in advance of the upcoming Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The CSW will review the Beijing Platform for Action, a foundational international document for gender equality and women’s rights, signed 25 years ago. The workshop focused on providing faith-inspired actors who are engaged in promoting gender equality with an interactive

space to consider how faith organizations can be included in the Beijing +25 review process and engage in the various thematic areas that it raises. Informed by presentations on the scriptural basis for a commitment to gender equality, participants discussed the need to view our holy texts through multiple lenses. Sessions focused on the topics of sexual and gender-based violence, poverty eradication and social services, and peaceful and inclusive societies. These conversations exemplified the need to break down silos between faith actors and to work in unison, acknowledging how the misinterpretation of religious texts can perpetuate violence. The event also focused on the upcoming 75th anniversary of the United Nations and the importance of faith-based organizations’ commitment to global dialogue and support for multilateralism in ensuring our perspectives and voices are heard at all levels of decision-making.

## ACOUN attends first-ever Global Refugee Forum

In December 2019, the ACOUN attended the first-ever Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. The Forum was a 3-day event that sought commitments and pledges from Member States and other stakeholders to achieve the goals established in the Global Compact on Refugees, which was agreed by UN Member States in 2018. Despite the significant number of pledges and commitments--nearly 800 by the end of the Forum--there was a lack of political will in pushing for even greater measures to protect the well-being of

refugees, particularly from wealthier countries. The Permanent Representative to the UN, Jack Palmer-White, represented the Anglican Communion, monitor the conversations, and highlight the work of provinces and other Anglican entities. At the time of the Forum, the ACOUN was able to submit pledges on behalf of The Anglican Church of Canada, The Anglican Archdeaconry of Cyprus, The Church of England, and the Refuge Egypt (the Anglican and Episcopal Diocese of Egypt). The Anglican Communion Office at the UN also co-sponsored a side event at the Forum along with our faith partners at Caritas Internationalis, ACT Alliance, Islamic Relief Worldwide and International Catholic Migration Commission. This event focused on the role faith-based organizations played in securing impactful pledges towards the Global Refugee Forum, and the ways in which their contributions could positively impact the lives of refugees and displaced peoples. The event served as a launching point for increased collaboration, advocacy and partnership looking ahead to the next Global Refugee Forum to be held in 2023. Please read our full-length report on our website (or click on the picture above).



## #CSocD58: Global Perspectives to Ending Homelessness

The 58th session of the Commission on Social Development was held from 10-19 February at the UN headquarters in New York, focusing on the theme: Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness. This was the first time the topic of homelessness has ever been debated at an official UN conference to the lament of many UN officials and civil society organizations. Advancing a holistic approach to housing and homelessness, many high-level panels focused on analyzing the root cause for this epidemic. The Commission highlighted that homelessness can take many forms and is far more pervasive than meets the eye. Whether homelessness is temporary, transitional, or rooted in structural violence, homelessness affects people from all backgrounds. Homeless has been recorded to be prevalent among youth, women, and indigenous people in recent years. Among the solutions discussed was the need for a globally accepted definition of homelessness. This would provide a shared understanding on which member states can build a coordinated effort to tackle the issue. Accurate data on the number of homeless people living in a country is also necessary for such efforts. Without this data, states will not be able to adequately track progress and stay accountable to international commitments. A full-length report from the ACOUN is forthcoming.

**If you wish to be more involved with the ACOUN please go to: [bit.ly/acoun](https://bit.ly/acoun)**