

Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations Newsletter

Bringing the United Nations to the Anglican Communion

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CSW64 Postponed due to COVID-19



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The 64th Session of the United Nations' Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW64) was scheduled to be held from the 9th to the 22nd of March at the UN's New York City Headquarters to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Due to the global outbreak of COVID-19, the event was postponed indefinitely, much to the ACOUN staff and our delegation's disappointment. Although the delegates were unable to physically participate in the CSW64, the ACOUN was able to attend a Holy Eucharist organized by the Episcopal Church in collaboration with the ACOUN. The UNCSW64 was reduced to a one-day procedural event on 9 March and strongly discouraged participation that required international travel. The outcome of the day-long event was a political declaration on the anniversary year of the Beijing Declaration. The postponement of the UNCSW was the first in a long string of conferences that have since been cancelled or postponed by the UN in 2020 due to COVID-19. Despite the postponement, gender justice remains a critical issue during the COVID-19 with the increase in domestic violence witnessed worldwide, and the UNCSW delegates continue to pursue gender justice and advocate in their own provinces.



Image: strib.com

World Health Organization (WHO) addresses faith leaders

Religious leaders and faith actors are trusted sources of information and guidance in our communities, providing pastoral and spiritual support, and making faith actors strategic partners for UN agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), which has been actively responding to the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe. Recognizing the unique position of faith leaders, the WHO released a [guide](#) with practical considerations and recommendations for faith leaders

and communities when considering restructuring religious practices in light of concerns and complications raised by COVID-19, both locally and globally. These guidelines discourage any non-essential physical gatherings, and conveys that any decision to convene a group must be based first on a sound risk assessment. Above all, the WHO seeks to support faith leaders in countering misinformation and rumors about the virus, which can cause damage and confusion, as well as the rise of xenophobia and discrimination resulting from rising fear and panic. Whether gathering together physically or not, churches remain strong through these difficult times, finding new ways to connect, support, and love one another. One of the ways the Anglican Communion is responding is through the Anglican Alliance, which has created a [resource hub](#) open to all to promote accurate information on the virus, as well as materials to help Churches respond the pandemic.

UN Secretary General and Archbishop of Canterbury call for a global ceasefire

In March, the United Nations' Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, held a press conference where he called for an immediate global ceasefire in order to focus our collective efforts in fighting our common enemy--the coronavirus pandemic. He wrote, "This is crucial to help create corridors for life-saving aid, open windows for diplomacy and bring hope to places among the most vulnerable to COVID-19." This decision was brought on in conjunction with a [UN report](#) which revealed that the socio-economic impact of the virus could reverse decades of progress in poverty, inequality, and human rights. More than 70 Member-states expressed their support as well as over [200 civil society organizations](#). Many religious leaders also endorsed the initiative, including Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Archbishop Justin Welby is a member of the Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation, and echoed the UNSG's message on Twitter, writing: "This is a profoundly important call for peace. Let us pray that it is heard." The ACOUN continues to monitor the push for the UN Security Council Resolution in support of the global ceasefire and work with Lambeth Palace to lift up voices around the Communion that are calling for unity and an end to violence.