

# Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations Newsletter

*Bringing the United Nations to the Anglican Communion*

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## Anglican Communion and World Council of Churches urge Lebanon to end gender inequality in nationality laws



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The Anglican Communion and the World Council of Churches have called for Lebanon's discriminatory nationality laws to be reformed. The current rules, in violation of the country's constitution which states that all citizens are equal without discrimination, strips rights from children whose mother is Lebanese but whose father is a foreigner. Without citizenship, children of Lebanese women are without the basic rights to own property, vote, or access healthcare and free public education, and are at a higher risk of becoming stateless.

Concerns about these failings have been made for over a decade but have yet to be adequately addressed. In response to this pressing issues, the Anglican Communion and the World Council of Churches (WCC) submitted a report to the United Nations Human Rights Council on Lebanon's nationality laws, which will be made publicly available in December.

The submission to the Universal Periodic Review, drew on information and experiences from local partners in the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East on gender discrimination, the right to nationality, and the risk of statelessness and criticized nationality laws that prevent Lebanese women transferring their nationality to a foreign spouse or to their children. The submission urged the Lebanese government to reform nationality laws to grant women equal rights with men with regard to transmission of their nationality to their children. Lebanon’s progress on human rights will be reviewed in full in January 2021.



ACOUN Twitter Campaign

## Anglicans urge action on inequality and climate change at High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

New research published by the United Nations suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing gaps in our society and has pushed those most vulnerable further behind. The [UN Secretary-General António Guterres](#) and UN agencies such as [UN Women](#) have raised fears that coronavirus and the socio-economic impact of the pandemic will undo years of development progress in addressing poverty and inequality.

Finding solutions to these and other pressing global issues was the focus of this year’s High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Jack Palmer-White, Anglican Communion Permanent Representative to the UN, sees the HLPF as an important moment in the UN calendar: “The HLPF is an opportunity for the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations to raise up examples of the work Anglicans are doing throughout the world to combat inequality and encourage the UN system and governments to work more closely with churches to achieve the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and leave no one behind”.

The unequal impact of climate change on the most vulnerable was high on the agenda for the ACOUN at this year’s event. The ACOUN and other members of the Climate Working Group of the Committee of Religious NGOs at the UN (CRNGO) co-sponsored an event focused on faith-based solutions to climate action obstacles. The discussion focused on how faith actors are working collaboratively and within their own contexts to address climate change. Speakers proposed solutions for progress at the local, national, and international level, such as advocating with decision-makers for bold legislation to tackle the drivers of climate change.

Isaac Oindo, from Anglican Development Services in Kenya, also highlighted that young people are driving the innovation of technologies to address gaps in energy access, sustainability and the green energy transition, many of which have been exacerbated by COVID-19. Participants in the event are already looking ahead to the next UN climate negotiations (COP26 in November 2021)



Image: pixabay.com

as an opportunity for increased collaboration on climate action between faith actors. Work will begin in early 2021 to identify an Anglican delegation for this important event.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Forum was held virtually and focused on the urgency of and obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in this challenging global moment. To highlight these risks and open up the opportunity to identify solutions from within the church, the ACOUN team ran an educational campaign on Twitter. You can find out more [here](#).



## UN body urge organizations to do more to tackle domestic abuse during COVID-19 pandemic



ACOUN Twitter Campaign

In June, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a call to all organizations, states and individuals to report on the surge of domestic abuse witnessed throughout the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries like France, Argentina, and Singapore have reported a 30 per cent increase in reports of domestic violence since the beginning of lockdown as women are increasingly forced to quarantine with their abusers.

In response to this call, the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations submitted a report on the increase in domestic and gender-based violence during the COVID-19 to the OHCHR office.

In collaboration with the Mothers' Union and the Anglican Communion's Director for Gender Justice, the report collected information from respected members of Anglican dioceses and provinces, and leaders of local Mothers' Union chapters. The report highlights evidence of increased domestic and gender-based violence in communities and countries, efforts to combat the "shadow pandemic" of gender-based violence, and best practices employed by faith communities.

The report includes perspectives from Australia, Burundi, Canada, DR Congo, Guyana, Liberia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Uganda, and the regions of the Indian Ocean, North Eastern Caribbean and Aruba, and Southern Africa.

This report is an important collaborative moment among groups across of the Anglican Communion—a partnership model we hope to continue for future submissions to the UN. You can read the full submission [here](#). The ACOUN hopes to use the information gathered from the countries and regions consulted to support future submissions to other UN bodies.

## Anglican delegate reflects on how young people can do great things to transform communities

An Anglican medical student from Burundi has encouraged UN leaders to work more collaboratively with young people to solve the COVID-19 pandemic. Speaking during an online event about the role young women of faith can play in the COVID-19 response, Martine Dushime, a member of the Anglican Communion delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women, told participants, "[During the pandemic] I learned that I can do small things in a great way as a leader in my community. Young people don't need an organization to do great things." Addressing her own experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, Martine spoke passionately about love and compassion for those with or suspected of having COVID-19. She highlighted that desperation is leading to widespread fear and stigma, which she has even witnessed within her own extended family.



*Martine Dushime*

This event, co-hosted by the ACOUN with UN Women, the Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, and other faith-based organizations aimed to have an intergenerational conversation among young women of faith on the often unnoticed role that young women play in their communities, and particularly in context of the COVID-19 response. Watch a recording of the event [here](#) and read Martine's blog post reflecting on these issues [here](#).

## Looking Ahead – Events at the UN in Autumn 2020

### 14 September – 6 October:

45th Session of the Human Rights Council (including focus on the rights of indigenous peoples, human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the human rights of migrants)

### 21 September

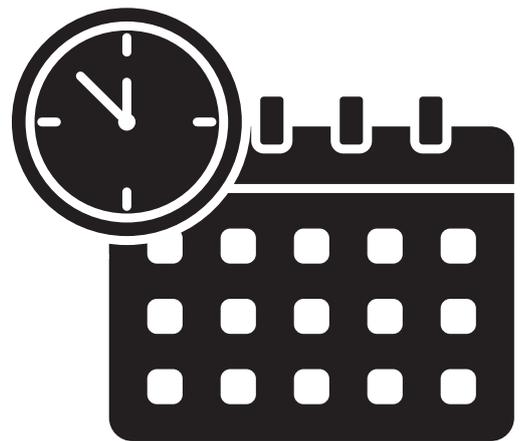
Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the UN

### 30 September

UN Biodiversity Summit

### 1 October

Meeting to Celebrate 25th Anniversary of Beijing Women's Conference



**Check out our next newsletter for a roundup of ACOUN activity**

*Working on any of the issues listed*

*in this edition of the newsletter? Contact us to discuss how we can work together!*

Email us at [un.rep@anglicancommunion.org](mailto:un.rep@anglicancommunion.org) or go to: [bit.ly/acoun](https://bit.ly/acoun)