

Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations Newsletter



Bringing the United Nations to the Anglican Communion



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The 74th Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly took place from 17 – 30 September in New York City. This annual meeting of 193 governments from across the globe is the main policy and decision-making body of the UN where every state within the General Assembly has one vote on some of the most critical issues of our time. This year's Assembly featured a "Summits Week" of five high-level Summits for world leaders. Most notably, the week began on 23 September with the Climate Action Summit, convened by the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, with a focus on the urgent need to address the climate emergency. This Climate Summit was meant to ignite new commitments and strategies from all attending states. Despite this aspiration and the inspiring movement of young people from around the world who demanded stronger and more effective measures to combat climate change, very few of the commitments made matched the substance and urgency required to safeguard the planet. Although 60 countries pledged to reduce their net carbon emissions to zero by

2050, those that did, such as the Bahamas, the Marshall Islands, and the Maldives are both very low emitters, and among those most affected by climate change. The Anglican Communion Office at the UN commended these countries, saying "It is our hope that the other countries who fell short of the required ambitious response took note of this courageous and humble leadership" ('The Climate (In)Action Summit: Has the international community failed the most vulnerable?', *Anglican Communion News Service*, 9 October 2019). The Anglican Consultative Council has committed to supporting the development of action plans and resources for sustainable living at individual, parish, diocesan and provincial level, including policies and procedures to minimise waste, increase use of renewable energies, and incorporate creation care into liturgical practice. To read our full statement and to find out more about our commitments to the 2019 Climate Action Summit, visit our website.

ACOUN Staff Member Receives Spirit of the United Nations Award



Image courtesy of Loretto at the UN Twitter

On 23 October, Jillian Abballe, UN Advocacy Manager and Head of Office in New York received the Spirit of the United Nations Award. Awardees are nominated and selected by the NGO Committee on Spirituality, Values and Global Concerns, which nominates individuals who have persistently demonstrated the spirit, principles and values on which the United Nations was founded. Other awardees included the Permanent Representative of St. Vincent and

the Grenadines, H. E. Rhonda King; Assistant Secretary-General for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Hon. Elliott Harris; and the Director of the Interfaith Initiative to End Child Poverty at Arigatou International, Revd. Fred Nyabera. The ACOUN team is immensely proud of this fantastic achievement: congratulations Jillian!

The UN Security Council Open Debate on Reconciliation

On Tuesday, November 19th, the Security Council held an open debate on "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace: the role of reconciliation in the maintenance of international peace and security" to discuss reconciliation as a powerful process through which societies can heal after mass atrocities and war. Over 60 speakers, including the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, shared their experience on the theme, emphasising that reconciliation efforts are not easy but that they are extremely effective if properly implemented. The critical role of faith leaders in supporting reconciliation efforts was noted by a number of speakers. The debate, led by the United Kingdom as Council President for November, built on the themes of a 2018 debate where the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, had a major role in briefing Council as an expert adviser. In that debate, he stressed the importance of mediation as a tool within the larger context of reconciliation. He also reflected on the role of churches in conflict zones, noting that they are on the front line of mediation and reconciliation, "intimately present where there are conflicts" and that they "cannot and will not walk away" from those affected by conflict. The Archbishop was invited to speak in the 2018 debate as a member of the UN Secretary General's High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation.

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