

# 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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## UNPFII18: Outcomes and Recommendations

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) was established in 2000 with the mandate to deal with indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. Each year a different area of focus is chosen for the Forum, with this year's theme being the transmission and protection of indigenous traditional knowledge and its role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 18th Session of the UNPFII highlighted a number of themes relevant to the concerns of the Communion. Among these were the role of youth and technology in preserving indigenous languages; indigenous people's advocacy and their fight against climate change; and violence against indigenous women. ACOUN has produced a full report on UNPFII18 that explores each theme and proposes actions for ACOUN's work. If you wish to read the full report please go to:

## Protection of Civilians: The Role of Religious Leaders



*Image courtesy of unu.edu*

From May 21st to the 24th, the United Nations hosted "Protection of Civilians Week" on the margins of the Security Council's open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The targeting of civilians by armed groups remains a major issue, with a rise in the destruction of schools, as well as the blocking of access to hospitals and the targeting of medical personnel. Throughout the week's discussions, a common thread emerged: the critical role of religious leaders

in leveraging their moral authority to inspire the protection of civilians when engaging with armed parties themselves. Presenters throughout the week emphasized that religious principles play an important role in shaping culture and society, including those who may engage in violence. This makes faith leaders even more critical in the protection of civilians, as armed parties are less likely to target civilians intentionally when their religious leaders condemn the targeting of the innocent and uphold international law in sermons and private conversations. During the ongoing dialogues taking place during Protection of Civilians Week, it was also emphasized that member states should be investing in training for armed groups on how to avoid injuring civilians during armed conflicts and uphold international law.

## Universal Health Coverage: The UN's Mission for 2030

On April 29th, the UN convened to discuss a path to achieving universal health coverage (UHC) for all and removing the potential threats of financial hardship to the user. The ultimate goal is to shift the general perception of healthcare as a profit-driven industry, towards healthcare as part of a social contract. While some may be hesitant to support UHC because of the perceived financial burden to the state, the data shows that it is an economically sound policy to ensure healthcare coverage for entire populations. For example, data shows that when life expectancy goes up, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increases on average by 4 percent. UHC also creates new jobs, which in turn increases domestic income. Obstacles remain to achieving UHC, including lack of financing, fragmentation of care, and difficulty in quality assurance for the care provided. Nonetheless, this issue remains a priority on the UN's agenda and will be followed by a High-Level Meeting on 23 September 2019 in New York where member states and civil society will have a chance to strategize further.



*Image courtesy of uhc2030.org*

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