

# NewsNotes

*a bi-monthly newsletter on international justice and peace issues*



Maryknoll Office  
for Global Concerns

January - February 2025 | VOL. 50, NO. 1

## CONTENTS

Fifty Years of NewsNotes	1
Advocacy as a Pathway to Sustainable Peace	2
Pope Francis Offers Three Actions for Peace in 2025	3
Jubilee Campaign 2025: "Turn Debt into Hope"	4
Korea Peace Advocates Confront Challenging Future	4
Immigration Concerns Under Trump Administration	5
USCCB Statement of Solidarity with Immigrants	7
Tanzanian President Meets with Maasai	7
U.S. Policy Toward Sudan Under Trump	8
UN Mulls Permanent African Security Council Seats	9
UN Biodiversity Conference Lets Indigenous Lead	10
Finance Feud Clouds UN Climate Change Conference	11
Report Reveals Global Healthcare Inequity	12
Resources	13

**50** years

# Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

*Peace, Social Justice, and Integrity of Creation*

Maryknoll Sisters • Maryknoll Lay Missioners • Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers

Washington Office  
200 New York Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 832-1780

New York Office  
PO Box 311  
Maryknoll, NY 10545  
(914) 941-7575

[ogc@maryknollogc.org](mailto:ogc@maryknollogc.org)  
[www.maryknollogc.org](http://www.maryknollogc.org)

Susan Gunn, director	<a href="mailto:sgunn@maryknollogc.org">sgunn@maryknollogc.org</a>
Fr. Francis J. Breen, MM	<a href="mailto:fjbreen@maryknoll.org">fjbreen@maryknoll.org</a>
Anna Engelmann	<a href="mailto:aengelmann@maryknollogc.org">aengelmann@maryknollogc.org</a>
Thomas Gould	<a href="mailto:thomas@maryknollogc.org">thomas@maryknollogc.org</a>
Sr. Margaret Lacson, MM	<a href="mailto:mlacson@mksisters.org">mlacson@mksisters.org</a>
Dan Moriarty	<a href="mailto:dmoriarty@maryknollogc.org">dmoriarty@maryknollogc.org</a>
Sr. Susan Nchubiri, MM	<a href="mailto:snchubiri@mksisters.org">snchubiri@mksisters.org</a>
Fr. John Sivalon, MM	<a href="mailto:jsivalon@maryknoll.org">jsivalon@maryknoll.org</a>
Lisa Sullivan	<a href="mailto:lsullivan@maryknollogc.org">lsullivan@maryknollogc.org</a>

To contribute to NewsNotes, please contact Thomas at [thomas@maryknollogc.org](mailto:thomas@maryknollogc.org)

## Take action - Email, call or write U.S. decision makers:

President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

President  
World Bank Group  
1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433  
[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

Secretary of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520  
(202) 647-6575 phone  
[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

Vice President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
[vice\\_president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:vice_president@whitehouse.gov)

Managing Director  
International Monetary Fund  
700 19th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20431  
[www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Secretary of Defense  
The Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301  
(703) 695-5261 phone  
[www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil)

White House Comment Desk  
(202) 456-1111 phone

Capitol switchboard:  
(202) 224-3121  
[www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)

U.S. Representative to UN  
799 United Nations Plaza  
New York, NY 10017  
(212) 415-4000 phone  
[www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov](http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov)

Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
(202)353-1555 phone  
[AskDOJ@usdoj.gov](mailto:AskDOJ@usdoj.gov)  
[www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov)

Current status of bills:  
<http://thomas.loc.gov>

# Fifty Years of NewsNotes

*Michael Gable, editor of NewsNotes from 1980 to 1988, recalls the best and worst of times working for the Maryknoll offices for Peace and Justice to commemorate fifty years of NewsNotes editions.*

**I**t was in 1975 when a dozen of my fellow missionaries and peasant labor leaders were violently killed in Olancho, Honduras some months after my return to the United States. Central America was about to blow apart and I badly needed to find an organization to support my calling to end the growing number of slaughters there. I sent my stories to Frank Marovich and Moises Sandoval at the Maryknoll Magazine and was eventually hired to write NewsNotes with Fr. Tom Marti for the Justice and Peace Office in the fall of 1980. Moving my wife Kathy and sons to Ossining was a major move for us that would forever mold and direct us. By 1989, we were accepted into the Maryknoll Lay Missioners to serve in Venezuela.

Looking back now to the early 1980s when I first started at the Justice and Peace Office at Maryknoll, NY, I notice those were indeed the best of times and the worst of times. Orbis Books was taking off, lay missionaries were growing in numbers, and collaboration between the Sisters and Fathers and Brothers in the Justice and Peace offices was becoming urgent.

[Editor's note: the separate Justice and Peace offices would later merge in 1997 to form what is now the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, a cooperative ministry of the Maryknoll family, based in New York and Washington, DC.]

Working also with Fathers Dan Driscoll, Ed Killacky, John Geitner, and Sisters Helene O'Sullivan and Molly Mertens were powerful, inspirational experiences for us all. Liberation giants of that time would walk our halls, i.e. Penny Lernoux, Marie Dennis, Betty Anne Donnelly, Fr. Miguel d'Escoto, Archbishop Dom Helder Camara, Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, Cesar Chavez, Br. Karl Gaspar of the Philippines, and many others.

They were also the worst of times. Archbishop Romero had just been killed in 1980. Brother Marty Shea returned with horrific accounts of Guatemalan villages being slaughtered. Violent crackdowns on South Korean and Filipino social justice leaders and their followers, the terrible crushing of Black South Africans with Nelson Mandela—were sometimes overwhelming. But the profound faith of these followers of Jesus was striking and uplifting. So there was no shortage of compelling issues and real heroes to be covered in NewsNotes. Among the first persons I interviewed for NewsNotes in August of 1980 was Jean Donovan, the lay missionary who was

returning to El Salvador. When I ask if she would stay in the United States for her protection, she replied, "I want to remain in solidarity with the people, especially the children who I love there... and so I want to rejoin them." That vibrant message was repeated by many others I interviewed as they passed through the Knoll in the 1980s. Over time, NewsNotes proved to be a valuable resource for many of our supporters and members of other social justice and peace organizations with whom we collaborated. And in that time frame, it felt like the world was watching us to determine how we would deal with the United States and other governments bent on crushing movements for the oppressed. Some of us believed that our offices' phone were being tapped.

How did my work on NewsNotes and with the Justice and Peace Office inform what I did after? Having met so many inspiring missionaries, it was natural for me, my wife Kathy, and our four sons to join the lay missionaries and serve in Venezuela. Upon our return to our hometown of Cincinnati, I worked for a parish to involve parishioners in serving low-income areas. But eventually, Orbis Book author Dr. Paul Knitter invited me to teach theology at Xavier University and lecture in Nicaragua, Ghana, and India. He urged me to complete a doctorate in Missiology that would allow me as an adjunct to teach Liberation Theology, Social Justice, World Religions and Missiology for the past 30 years. Also for the past 25 years, my full time work has been serving as the Director

***"I want to remain in solidarity with the people, especially the children who I love there...and so I want to rejoin them."***

of the Mission Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to promote the Pontifical Mission Societies and lay missionary work. We now have about 40 parishes in twinning relationships in Central and South America, Caribbean, Africa, and rural Kentucky. We may soon build new relationships with parishes in El Paso.

What a Godly gift it was to write for NewsNotes for nine years. It would open amazing doors of compassion and life experiences for me and my family.

May God bless those who carry on the writing of NewsNotes and may it continue to inspire others to walk in the liberating footsteps of our Lord Jesus and go for another 50 years. ✧

# Advocacy as a Pathway to Sustainable Peace

*Iqbal Ahmad, Kroc Institute Fellow from the Keough School of Global Affairs at the University of Notre Dame, shares what he has learned as a peace and nonviolence intern for the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.*

**I**n many parts of the world, true peace does not simply mean stopping the sound of gunfire. While ending direct violence is critical, lasting peace requires more than ending conflict when it erupts. It requires building conditions of fairness, equality, and well-being that help people feel safe and included. Advocacy—organized actions to influence policies, raise awareness, and involve different parts of society—is an important way to bring these ideas to life.

The idea of “positive peace,” introduced by Johan Galtung in 1969, defines peace as more than the absence of war. It calls on us to fix the deep social problems that cause tensions and unrest, not just reduce physical violence. From this view, peace is an ongoing effort, and communities and leaders must keep working to improve systems and conditions for everyone.

Advocacy fits well into this vision. By highlighting problems, guiding policymakers, and bringing attention to community voices, advocacy can help remove the hidden barriers that lead to conflict. These efforts often involve local communities, decision-makers, and international actors working together. When these groups cooperate, advocacy doesn’t just inform policy; it ensures that changes match what people really need. Over time, this can create better policies rooted in the daily experiences of those affected.

Research by Chenoweth and Stephen shows that non-violent civil resistance succeeds more often at achieving goals than violent campaigns. Nonviolent movements tend to gain wider support and achieve longer-lasting results.

Advocacy, as a form of nonviolent action, can shape the environment before violence breaks out. Even in peaceful times, advocates can prevent small problems from growing bigger, nudging society toward fairness and trust.

For any effort to achieve a peaceful and just society, it must connect different layers of society and act as a bridge between grassroots realities and the halls of policymaking. Without linking local stories to broader policy debates, solutions risk being too narrow and disconnected.

Similarly, focusing solely on top-level decisions often results in changes that fail to resonate with people’s everyday lives. The beauty of advocacy lies in its ability to weave these layers together. By bringing communities

and decision-makers into dialogue through well-coordinated efforts, advocacy ensures that policies are informed by real experiences and genuine aspirations.

This alignment not only amplifies the voices of those most affected but also lays a stronger foundation for meaningful, lasting reforms that address the complexities of everyday life.

At the same time, local advocacy can face serious challenges in environments marked by immediate violence. In places where safety cannot be guaranteed and fear dominates, public discussions may be difficult to arrange, and people might be reluctant to speak openly. Still, the principles of nonviolence and positive peace encourage persistence. Even if it means waiting until conditions improve or relying on trusted intermediaries, advocates strive to find ways for important voices to be heard. As fighting subsides, advocacy can help societies move beyond a fragile ceasefire to address deeper issues, ensuring that peace is not only restored but strengthened over time.

This focus on ongoing improvement reflects the essence of positive peace, which acknowledges that progress is a continuous journey rather than a destination. As communities address one challenge, new complexities inevitably emerge, requiring a dynamic and responsive approach.

Advocacy and peacebuilding thrive on this adaptability, allowing for growth through experiences, whether successes or setbacks. This ability to adjust and evolve is not a weakness or uncertainty but a profound strength. It ensures that advocacy remains attuned to changing circumstances, deeply rooted in human needs, and capable of driving meaningful, lasting impact.

Ultimately, advocacy can help ensure that peace is not defined solely by the absence of violence, but by the presence of enduring social stability. By influencing policies to be more just, amplifying the voices of those often ignored, and encouraging nonviolent solutions to problems, advocacy contributes to a more inclusive and hopeful vision of the future. It reveals that peace is not a single event but a continuous process—an evolving journey of growth, learning, and cooperation. Through advocacy, communities can create the conditions under which everyone can flourish, reinforcing the idea that peace is not something won and then forgotten, but carefully nurtured and continually renewed. ✧

# Pope Francis Offers Three Actions for Peace in 2025

*In his annual World Day of Peace message, Francis urges the forgiveness of international debt, the abolition of the death penalty, and the reallocation of military funds toward ending hunger.*

Every New Year's Day since 1968, popes have issued a World Day of Peace message. This year, 2025, has the added distinction of being a Jubilee year, and in that spirit, Pope Francis' latest message is titled "Forgive us our trespasses: grant us your peace."

In his World Day of Peace message, Pope Francis reflects on the biblical roots of Jubilee as a time for seeking forgiveness and justice as the way to peace.

Francis begins by reflecting on the Jubilee year as a time for "listening to the plea of an endangered humanity."

"The inhuman treatment meted out to migrants, environmental decay, the confusion willfully created by disinformation, the refusal to engage in any form of dialogue and the immense resources spent on the industry of war," Francis writes, "represent a threat to the existence of humanity as a whole." In the Jubilee year, then, we are called "to break the bonds of injustice and to proclaim God's justice. Sporadic acts of philanthropy are not enough. Cultural and structural changes are necessary, so that enduring change may come about."

Reflecting on the phrase "forgive us our trespasses" – translated as "sins" in some languages, "debts" in others – Francis says it is when we lose sight of our relationship with God, who creates all things to be shared by all for the common good, that "we begin to cherish the illusion that our relationships with others can be governed by a logic of exploitation and oppression, where might makes right." He points to foreign debt as emblematic of such exploitation.

Alluding to international relationships in which poorer countries provide raw materials to wealthier countries, and are unable to mitigate the ecological impact of such resource extraction as they service insurmountable debts, he says "Foreign debt and ecological debt are two sides of the same coin, namely the mindset of exploitation."

Connecting economic and ecological justice to peace and nonviolence, Francis makes three concrete proposals for the Jubilee year.

First, he recalls and builds upon the Jubilee call of Pope John Paul II in 2000, to substantially reduce or cancel outright the "international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations."

In a press conference at the Vatican on Dec. 12,

Cardinal Michael Czerny, SJ, Prefect for the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, noted that the Jubilee year marks merely the launch of what promises to be a longer campaign for structural change. Francis writes, "lest (debt forgiveness) prove merely an isolated act of charity that simply reboots the vicious cycle of financing and indebtedness, a new financial framework must be devised, leading to the creation of a global financial Charter based on solidarity and harmony between peoples."

Second, asking for "a firm commitment to respect for the dignity of human life from conception to natural death," Francis proposes "a concrete gesture that can help foster the culture of life, namely the elimination of the death penalty in all nations."

Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, Executive Director of the Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN), a U.S. organization working to end the death penalty, also participated in the press conference. She framed CMN's abolition work within the nonviolent pursuit of restorative justice as a response to crime and violence. "No matter the harm someone has suffered or caused, we're looking for healing; we're not just looking for who can pay with a punitive price and exacting vengeance."

Finally, Francis renews a proposal of Saint Paul VI and Pope Benedict XVI: "In this time marked by wars, let us use at least a fixed percentage of the money earmarked for armaments to establish a global Fund to eradicate hunger and facilitate... promoting sustainable development and combating climate change."

Just days after the pope's message was released, the U.S. Congress passed an \$895 billion Pentagon spending bill, even as speculation swirls around what government social programs may be cut under the incoming presidential administration.

Francis ends by noting that forgiving trespasses with the goal of peace requires disarming hearts – "hearts that see themselves as indebted to God and thus prepared to forgive the debts that oppress others; hearts that replace anxiety about the future with the hope that every individual can be a resource for the building of a better world... Lord, grant us your peace!" ✠

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Join the Catholic Mobilizing Network in working to end the death penalty in the United States. <https://catholicismobilizing.org/join/>

## Jubilee Campaign 2025: “Turn Debt into Hope”

*Sign the petition and join the global call to cancel and remedy unjust and unsustainable debts.*

**ON CHRISTMAS EVE**, Pope Francis opened the ceremonial door, the *Porta Sancta*, in St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome to launch the 2025 Jubilee Year. Jubilee years are declared every quarter century in the Catholic Church since 1300 AD. Rooted in Old Testament tradition, Pope Francis has declared the focus of this Jubilee year will be debt forgiveness for impoverished nations.

Twenty-five years ago, thanks to millions of people around the world working to “break the chains of debt,” the 2000 Jubilee year saw \$100 billion dollars of debt forgiven for 35 of the poorest countries. As a result, millions of people received access to health care and schooling.

But now, after the Covid-19 pandemic, and with the ongoing climate crisis and unjust international financial systems, too many developing countries find themselves in a new debt disaster, spending too much on servicing their debt and too little on health, nutrition, and education. The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) published a report in December titled, “Jubilee 2025: The new global debt crisis and its solutions.” It identifies why, following the historic success of the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign, the world once again faces

an acute global debt crisis, and what can be done this time to build a fair and functional system. Pope Francis urges wealthy nations to “acknowledge the gravity of so many of their past decisions and... forgive the debts of countries that will never be able to repay them.”

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns recently joined with our partners in CIDSE in a Jubilee year campaign with the theme “Turn Debt into Hope.” The campaign features a petition that individuals across the globe can sign. The petition has three simple requests of world leaders:

1. Stop the debt crisis now by cancelling and remedying unjust and unsustainable debts.
2. Prevent debt crises from happening again by reforming the global financial system to prioritize people and the planet.
3. Establish a permanent, binding, and transparent debt framework within the United Nations.

As of January, the petition over 600 signatures. ✂

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Sign the Jubilee campaign petition <https://mogc.info/Jubilee>

## Korea Peace Advocates Confront Challenging Future

*Peace Advocates from around the United States gathered in Pennsylvania to discuss goals and strategies for bringing about an end to the Korean War and peace with justice on the Korean Peninsula.*

**KOREA PEACE ADVOCATES** are organizing for an uncertain future. The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns joined the Mennonite Central Committee, American Friends Service Committee, United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society, Women Cross DMZ, and members of various Korean-American churches and civil society groups at the Mennonite Welcoming Place in Akron, Pennsylvania, November 11-13 to discuss working together to help end the Korean War and address root causes of the conflict. Despite an armistice in 1953, the war has never officially ended.

Before the meeting, experts reflected with the group on possible opportunities for peace. Since the breakdown of the 2019 Hanoi Summit between the United States and North Korea, peace talks have been stalled. The election of hardline South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol in 2022 made dialogue between the two Koreas a yet more distant goal. And in February of 2024, North

Korean leader Kim Jong Un renounced the long-stated goal of unification, declaring South Korea a hostile foe. Provocative U.S. military exercises in the region exacerbate tensions. It is unclear how incoming President Trump might impact the situation.

Despite such a grim outlook, several speakers suggested Kim’s demand that North Korean sovereignty be respected and the demilitarized zone (DMZ) currently separating the two countries be replaced with an internationally recognized border could provide a new opportunity for an end to the war. In turn, peace between the two countries could one day lead to denuclearization and even unification. Advocates in the United States and Korea will continue to work for a just peace. ✂

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Join Women Cross DMZ’s Korea Peace Now! Grassroots Network. <https://koreapeacenow.org/us-grassroots/>

# Immigration Concerns Under Trump Administration

*President-elect Trump has promised sweeping changes to immigration policy under his new administration starting on Inauguration Day, January 20, 2025.*

Some of the second Trump Administration's proposed immigration policies risk severe consequences, including the separation of families and the emotional and physical trauma for immigrants and their families. These policies also stand to hurt the nation's workforce and economy.

Below is an inexhaustive list of policies proposed by the incoming administration that stand to cause significant harm.

■ **ELIMINATION OF DACA.** In the first year of his first term, President Trump announced an end to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival program (also known as DACA.) The program offered employment authorization protections against deportation for undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children and who passed thorough background checks.

The Supreme Court blocked President Trump's effort to end DACA at the time, but left open the possibility that the program could be ended if other legal justifications were offered. Since then, President Trump appointed two new Supreme Court justices.

DACA was established by executive order by President Obama due to Congress' decades-long failure to pass an alternative solution into law. Congress has yet to codify any of the protections DACA offers, and the legality of the program is now being litigated in the court system.

If President Trump succeeds at ending the DACA program, over half a million Dreamers would no longer be protected from deportation. The average Dreamer arrived on U.S. soil at seven years old and knows no other country as home. These individuals willingly supplied their names, addresses, and personal information when they joined the program and are therefore easy targets should deportation protections expire.

DACA recipients came to the United States as undocumented children, but enough years have passed that, as a group, they are parents to over 250,000 U.S. citizens, contribute roughly \$420 billion to the GDP, and \$12.3 billion in taxes to Social Security and Medicare.

■ **RESTRICTIONS ON HUMANITARIAN PROTECTIONS.** The president-elect expressed his intention to end TPS (Temporary Protection Status) for certain countries and greatly reduce or even zero-out the number of refugees and asylees admissions to the United States. Temporary Protected Status is a designation the executive branch can make for migrants coming from countries that are

too dangerous for repatriation. Though not a pathway to citizenship, TPS allows immigrants to live and work in the United States legally, if temporarily. All TPS designations expire after two years, guaranteeing President Trump the chance not to renew these protections. Among the 17 countries currently on the TPS list, Trump named Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua, and Venezuela as countries for which he would not extend TPS. Haiti, in particular, poses a severe threat to the lives of those forced to return.

For those currently living in dangerous countries, would-be immigrants have the chance to apply for Humanitarian Parole. For example, Afghans and Ukrainians both received HP en masse after the Taliban takeover and the Russian invasion. Humanitarian Parole is usually limited to a year and subject to renewal.

The number of U.S. residents currently protected against deportation for humanitarian reasons subject to the president's discretion amounts to 2.7 million.

■ **REINSTATEMENT OF "PUBLIC CHARGE" POLICY.** Current immigration law, passed in 1882, allows the president to set policy that would prevent persons who could pose a "public charge" from entering the country. While this has been generally understood to bar those who would be eligible for direct cash benefits, President Trump in his first term expanded the definition to include individuals in households that have received noncash assistance such as Medicaid and children's health programs.

Reinstatement of President Trump's 2019 policy would result in an undue burden on families with mixed immigration statuses—comprised of citizens and non-citizens. These families will face the choice of accessing public benefits at the risk of creating grounds for a case of inadmissibility on "public charge" grounds. Nationwide, over 13.5 million Medicaid and CHIP enrollees, including 7.6 million children, live in a household with at least one noncitizen.

■ **ELIMINATION OF BIRTHRIGHT CITIZENSHIP.** President-elect Trump affirmed in an NBC interview after his 2024 election win his intention to end birthright citizenship via executive order, allowing him to deport people currently recognized as U.S. citizens. While birthright citizenship was enshrined in a constitutional amendment over a century ago, this challenge to the law is novel territory, and the outcome of litigation far from certain. President Trump may be vindicated by the Supreme Court judges,

a third of whom he appointed. Ending birthright citizenship will allow the government to revoke rights afforded to people born on U.S. soil and has the potential to leave individuals stateless.

■ **REINSTATEMENT OF “REMAIN IN MEXICO.”** The first Trump administration implemented the “Migration Protection Policy” in 2019, which required asylum seekers to remain in Mexico while awaiting immigration court hearings. The policy left asylum seekers vulnerable to organized crime that preys on desperate people through kidnapping, extortion, and sexual violence.

President-elect Trump has said he will reinstate Remain in Mexico and as a policy that was implemented last term, it will be relatively easy to re-implement.

■ **MASS DEPORTATION.** President-elect Trump promised to declare a national emergency and use the U.S. military to carry out mass deportations of the estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the United States. President Trump’s “border czar” Tom Homan, who oversaw Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) during the first Trump administration, assured the public this is not mere rhetoric.

“We’re going to start right here in Chicago,” Homan said in remarks at a holiday party hosted by donors in Illinois on Dec. 11. Homan has endorsed the detention or separation of families with U.S. citizen children, aggressive enforcement of immigration laws in sanctuary cities, prosecution of officials who “knowingly harbor” undocumented immigrants, and the withholding of federal funds from states that refuse to cooperate.

Homan has also proposed deputizing local and military forces to arrest undocumented immigrants, as well as using military bases to detain them and military planes to transport them out of the country. He characterized such operations as a years-long project with “no price tag.”

The United States has never deported more than half a million people in a year, and it is hard to imagine what mass deportation would entail. What is known is that mass deportation entails mass detentions. The total capacity of current immigration detention facilities in the United States (when empty) does not amount to more than two million. The federal government would need to build and establish detention centers and hire agents to process and deport large numbers of people. A conservative estimate of the cost of a largescale deportation program by the American Immigration Council (AIC) is \$350 billion dollars—more than what the U.S. government spent on veterans in 2023.

Mass deportation would negatively affect not only

those deported but also the communities they leave behind. Entire industries would be hobbled by labor shortages, particularly agriculture, where an estimated 50 percent of farm laborers are undocumented.

■ **ENDING SANCTUARIES.** Anonymous sources told major news outlets that President Trump plans to revoke the longstanding policy of restricting arrest of undocumented immigrants at “sensitive locations” including schools, hospitals and places of worship, as part of his mass deportation plans.

Such a change in policy will communicate the message that no place is safe. While the number of apprehensions in sanctuary spaces are likely to be small, the psychological effect of such a policy is likely to be chilling.

In response to a flood of questions from Catholic institutions, the USCCB issued a three page explanation of current policy and constitutional rights as of January 2, 2025, with the caveat that it would be updated in the event of any changes and made available at [www.usccb.org/migrationpolicy](http://www.usccb.org/migrationpolicy).

Ten Christian leaders in Arizona—including Catholic Bishops Edward Weisenburger of Tucson and John Dolan of Phoenix—spoke out against revoking the sensitive locations policy in an op-ed column published in the Arizona Republic on December 28, 2024.

“We find it unacceptable that undocumented persons might be intimidated from going to a church and thereby exercising their right to the practice of religion. We also assert that the disruption of any religious gathering for deportation purposes is equally an assault on our own right to the free exercise of our religion. We also acknowledge that the stability of our society is under grave threat when undocumented persons are too fearful to seek necessary health care for themselves or their children, access basic education or contact law enforcement when being victimized or observing criminal activity. We stand in solidarity with members of federal agencies, state agencies and local law enforcement personnel who may choose not to participate in deportation raids deemed unjust by their conscience. In accord with long-standing humanitarian principles, these conscientious objectors must be respected.” ✠

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Use these resources from the USCCB:

- Catholic Social Teaching on Immigration Parish Discussion Guide <https://mogc.info/CST-I>
- Catholic Elements of Immigration Reform <https://mogc.info/CEIR>



# USCCB Statement of Solidarity with Immigrants

*Archbishop Timothy Broglio, USCCB president, Bishop Mark Seitz, chair of the Committee on Migration, and Bishop Jaime Soto, chair of Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., issued a joint statement of pastoral concern on November 14, 2024.*

**COMPELLED BY THE GOSPEL** of Jesus Christ and recognizing the inherent dignity of each person as a child of God, we stand in firm solidarity with our immigrant brothers and sisters who live and labor in these United States.

From the founding of our nation, immigrants have been essential to this society's growth and prosperity. They come to our shores as strangers, drawn by the promises this land offers, and they become Americans. They continue to provide food security, health services, and many other essential skills that support our prosperous nation.

Our country deserves an immigration system that offers fair and generous pathways to full citizenship for immigrants living and working for many years within our borders. We need a system that provides permanent relief for childhood arrivals, helps families stay together, and welcomes refugees.

We hope that our country can develop an effective asylum system for those fleeing persecution and an immigration system that keeps our borders safe and secure, with enforcement policies that focus on those who present risks and dangers to society, particularly efforts to reduce gang activity, stem the flow of drugs, and end human trafficking.

The United States should have an immigration system that protects vulnerable migrants and their families, many of whom have already been victimized by criminal actors.

Together, we must speak out on behalf of the "huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and ask our government to provide fair and humane treatment for our beloved immigrant brothers and sisters. It is our hope, and our prayer, that all of us can work together to support a meaningful reform of our current immigration system. ✠

## Tanzanian President Meets with Maasai

*Indigenous Maasai community leaders met with the Tanzanian president in their ongoing struggle to defend their land and human rights.*

**ON DECEMBER 1**, 150 Maasai delegates from Ngorongoro, Loliondo, and Sale met with Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan at the State House in Arusha to air their concerns for land rights raised in protests last August.

Over the last two years, different actors have been urging the Government of Tanzania to open dialogue with the Maasai communities living in Ngorongoro and Loliondo to find solutions to the land disputes and threats of evictions. The six days of peaceful demonstration organized in Ngorongoro, August 18 - 23, seems to have prompted the government to finally listen.

At their meeting with the president, delegates focused on the current situation in Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) and the impacts of the June 2022 operation that displaced thousands of people in Loliondo to establish the Pololeti Game Reserve.

Community representatives offered a detailed account of the human rights crisis in Ngorongoro, including lack of adequate education and health services, and requested that a process be initiated to return the 1500 sq km of land taken from the Maasai people in the Pololeti Game Reserve.

The Maasai delegates requested the president halt ongoing forced relocation to Msomera and to ensure Maasai participation in conservation efforts. They also urged President Hassan to stop leveraging social services as a weapon to enforce relocation and to reinstate the operation of the Flying Medical Service (FMS). To avoid future mismanagement, community representatives recommended the president appoint a Maasai representative in the Board and management of NCA and repeal the Pololeti Game Reserve, allowing unconditional access to grazing for livestock in the area until a permanent solution could be made.

President Hassan committed to forming two inquiry teams: one to investigate the complaint of the community in Ngorongoro in relation to the relocation program, and another to assess the impact to the community brought by the establishment of Pololeti Game Reserve.

While the meeting marks a step toward addressing the community's grievances, significant skepticism remains about how to hold accountable those responsible for the ongoing human rights violations, including President Hassan herself. ✠

# U.S. Policy Toward Sudan Under Trump

*The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns joined a letter to Trump nominee for Secretary of State, Senator Marco Rubio, requesting he prioritize ending the violent crisis in Sudan through nonviolent interventions.*

The Sudanese American Physicians Association, an organization made up of physicians of Sudanese descent living and working within the United States, organized a letter to President-elect Trump's nominee for Secretary of State, Senator Marco Rubio, detailing their recommendations for U.S. policy to protect civilians in Sudan and end the war. Thirty faith and civil society organizations signed the letter, including the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

In the aftermath of the 2019 revolution in Sudan, Senator Rubio led a bipartisan resolution expressing support for the transition to a civilian-led government in African country. Fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) since April 2023 has derailed the transition and created the world's largest displacement and hunger crisis.

"Civilians have been both caught in the crossfire and directly targeted" the physicians' letter says. "Mass atrocities, gross human rights violations, food insecurity, and climate-related disasters have forcibly displaced more than 11 million people from their homes. More than half the country is in desperate need of humanitarian assistance, with several areas across Sudan at risk of famine."

In addition to humanitarian concerns and democratic aspirations, the situation in Sudan should be a national security concern for President Trump's administration, the letter states. "With violent extremist groups spreading across the Sahel, the U.S. cannot afford to let Sudan devolve into a failed state, providing these groups with access to the Red Sea."

The 2024 Director of National Intelligence's Annual Threat Assessment stated, "With Sudan at the crossroads of the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, and North Africa, it could once again become an ideal environment for terrorist and criminal networks."

The physicians group also raise concerns about actions by China and Russia in the conflict. "Both countries have a history of supplying arms to Sudan," the letter states. "China has been a top importer of Sudanese oil and has invested billions in Sudan's energy sector, and Russia is seeking to establish a naval base near Port Sudan."

The physicians group recommends four actions by the United States to protect civilians, end the war and promote democracy in Sudan:

■ **INCREASE DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON EXTERNAL ACTORS FUELING THE WAR:** The reason the conflict in Sudan has been able to continue for more than a year and a half is due to the support external actors are giving the warring parties. A concerted diplomatic effort must be made to engage with each of these external actors to use their influence over the parties to reach a diplomatic solution.

■ **APPOINT A SPECIAL ENVOY:** The situation in Sudan requires high-level bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement to ensure humanitarian access, a diplomatic solution to end the war, and a transition to a civilian-led government. A Special Envoy for Sudan is best positioned to coordinate Sudan policy at the highest levels and engage with Sudanese civil society to achieve peace in Sudan. All future negotiations and processes must have inclusive representation of youth, civil society, and women in line with the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017, of which Sen. Rubio was a cosponsor.

■ **PRIORITIZE SUPPORT TO LOCAL AID PROVIDERS:** Civil society in Sudan has proven to be capable, efficient, and effective at delivering humanitarian aid, healthcare, and protection services despite the extremely difficult operating environment. Many of these locally led initiatives have been able to secure access when large international organizations could not. The State Department and USAID should prioritize streamlining the process to support Sudanese NGOs, emergency response rooms, community kitchens, and other local initiatives.

■ **SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION OF ATROCITY CRIMES AND GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS:** A long history of impunity is a major contributing factor to the current crisis in Sudan. The same men who never faced justice for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity committed in Darfur, Blue Nile, South Kordofan, and elsewhere are leading this current war and committing a new wave of atrocity crimes. Accountability must be a priority after the war is brought to an end. Investments must be made now to support local documentation efforts and archives to prepare for eventual trials and tribunals. To that end, local NGOs have been pivotal in documenting human rights abuses and atrocities committed across the country and need financial and logistical support to continue their necessary work. ✧

# UN Mulls Permanent African Security Council Seats

*The international body that addresses peace and security currently has no permanent seats for the often underrepresented and historically marginalized continent.*

**O**n September 13, 2024, the United States declared to the UN General Assembly its support of the creation of two permanent seats for Africa, and one for small-island states, on the UN Security Council.

African nations have been advocating for greater representation at the United Nations since the African Union meeting in Sirte, Libya, in 2005, when they adopted the Ezulwini Consensus, which stated Africa's desire for "full representation in all decision-making organs of the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council." Sithembile Mbete of the University of Pretoria in South Africa has summarized three reasons why increased representation is called for: first, to repair the historical injustice of African underrepresentation in global governance; second, to recognize African contributions in shaping the contemporary world order; and third, to secure the legitimacy of the UN in the face of emerging threats to peace and security.

Reform of the Security Council is long overdue. Created in 1945, it was originally made up of five major powers, United States, Russia, China, Great Britain and France, with permanent membership and the power to veto. Six other seats would go to non-permanent member countries, elected from among themselves for two year terms. In 1965, the number of elected seats grew to ten. A common African position is that the continent should have two permanent members with veto power, and five other non-permanent members. The United States does not currently support giving veto power to new permanent African Security Council seats.

The UN recognizes 54 countries in Africa, which is 28 percent of the total number of countries (194) with UN membership. Africans currently make up 17 percent of the world's population. That number is projected to grow to 25 percent by 2045, the UN 100th birthday. In a mere five years, Africa is projected to be home to 75 percent of the world population younger than 35. Africa's youthful demographic will be the world's work force and consumer base, fueling the world's economy. The African continent contains some the world's most crucial minerals needed for the transition to a greener economy—cobalt, coltan, lithium, nickel, and copper. In the past 30 years, African security issues have taken up about half of the Security Council's deliberations and produced nearly three quarters of its resolutions.

Historical injustices are among the reasons for current unsustainable debt levels that burden most African

nations. The slave trade, depopulation, extraction of natural resources, exploitation of the Indigenous work force, nearly a century of colonial rule, and neo-colonial control of African economies through trade relations and finance are just a few such historical injustices that affect the continent today.

One need not look into the past to find systemic injustices against the African people. It is estimated that the continent loses \$203 billion a year due to illicit financial flows, profits by multinational corporations, and ecological damage. Despite all these issues, Africans have no permanent seat at the governing body that does the most to maintain international peace and security.

Anthoni van Nieuwkerk of the University of South Africa, while agreeing that African needs greater representation, suggests that it will not be easy for the continent to agree on which two countries should represent it on the Security Council. The two economic giants, Nigeria and South Africa, may not necessarily be the most representative. Furthermore, there are deserving countries without representation from other parts of the world too, including Asia and Latin America.

Essential criteria for permanent representation on the Council includes diplomatic expertise and sophistication; experience in peacekeeping; and the ability to finance peacekeeping missions. Once chosen, these countries would have to commit significant human and financial resources to the Security Council's peacekeeping and diplomatic efforts. Van Nieuwkerk warns that African nations would have to straddle a difficult line to not be coopted into rivalries between large and growing powers such as the United States, China, and India.

Van Nieuwkerk raises three questions: What are the benefits for an African nation taking up permanent seats on the Security Council? How would the continent contribute and what would it receive in return? Would it be able to set agendas and norms, or would it be forced to acquiesce to the demands of those who gave it a seat in the Council?

Africa already cooperates with the UN on serious issues such as conflict resolution, climate change, environmental challenges, trade relations, and exploitation of natural resources. Advocates for permanent African membership on the UN Security Council hope that, with permanent seats, Africans will be empowered to spotlight these issues and elicit global cooperation to address them. ✧

# UN Biodiversity Conference Lets Indigenous Lead

*Sara Kennel, climate advocacy intern, shares the outcomes of the UN conference on biodiversity.*

In the very last hours of the 16th bi-annual UN Biodiversity Conference (COP16) in Cali, Colombia, a celebration ensued with enthusiastically raised hands, tears, hugs, and chants of victory when the parties affirmed the creation of a subsidiary body of Indigenous peoples and local communities. This body will be endowed with the authority to make decisions on nature conservation.

The participation and leadership of the Indigenous people had been a primary focus of advocacy for the Maryknoll delegation to the conference, as explained in the last NewsNotes edition. The Maryknoll delegation included Maryknoll Sisters Dee Smith and Margaret Lacson and Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns senior program officer for Integral Ecology, Lisa Sullivan. Juan Felipe Martinez, the Executive Secretary of the Colombia chapter of the Pan-Amazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) and an advocate for the protection of Indigenous land defenders, also represented Maryknoll.

Indigenous groups steward over 80 percent of the remaining biodiversity on the planet, making it imperative to respect and protect both their right to stay on their land and to assume leadership in its protection. Now, for the first time at the UN, Indigenous peoples will have the formal power to influence decisions within the UN Biodiversity Convention.

Not all the Maryknoll delegation's hopes for the conference were met, however. Two years ago, the Biodiversity Conference in Montreal achieved a landmark agreement which committed countries to conserve 30 percent of their lands and water by 2030, an agreement colloquially known as the 30 by 30 Biodiversity Plan. This year, the conference was tasked with fulfilling the framework by financing efforts and following through on commitments. The conference fell short of an agreement on the 30 by 30 Biodiversity Plan financing, and the decision was punted to "Resumed Meetings" of the Biodiversity Conference, which will take place in February of 2025.

The Maryknoll team contributed to the conference by organizing an event titled "Biodiversity 2.0: Strengthening Indigenous and Local Community Partnerships to Halt Biodiversity Loss." Amazonian and Maasai land protectors shared powerful insights on how biodiversity conservation efforts can displace them, abuse their human rights, and misunderstand their role. They emphasized that sustainable approaches are ones that enhance biodiversity while respecting human rights.

Faith representation at the conference was exceptional, with groups collaborating in a Faiths for Biodiversity Network, which delivered a study to the conference president. The study, "Uniting for Nature: Faiths at the Forefront of Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF)," demonstrates how faith groups protect biodiversity. Other faith initiatives included an invitation from the Archbishop of Cali to strategize on Catholic engagement with biodiversity, and a Pax Christi International event honoring Sr. Gladis Montesinos for her work with Tsimane Indigenous people.

## NOTABLE CONFERENCE ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDED:

- **The Cali Fund:** A new fund was created to channel voluntary contributions from the private sector to compensate countries for the commercial use of genetic material from plants and animals. This fund supports the Indigenous and local communities, promoting an inclusive, rights-based approach to conservation.
- **Synergizing climate and biodiversity:** Countries agreed to address the climate and biodiversity crises together, aiming to build a bridge between the two UN Conventions on climate and biodiversity together.

## THE CONFERENCE SHORTCOMINGS INCLUDED:

- **No meaningful protections for ecology leaders:** Latin America is responsible for 85 percent of all land defender killings in 2023, with 79 killings in Colombia alone. The conference discussed better protections and enhancing negotiations for land defenders, but no new mechanisms for accountability were conceived.
- **A failure to agree to global biodiversity finance:** Tensions were high in discussions of a proposed global biodiversity fund under the UN's authority. Financial systems perpetuate biodiversity loss, and regulations are needed to align finance with biodiversity goals.
- **Few national plans for 30 by 30:** Of the 196 countries committed to the 30 by 30 conservation plan, only 44 had realistic National Biodiversity Plans that would move those countries to their goal. That said, 108 countries announced other, new conservation targets and 35 of those countries submitted National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to meet them. This sets a hopeful stage moving forward.

On a local level, people can make an impact by tending gardens, planting biodiverse crops, and supporting native species in neighborhoods or parishes. Despite the shortcomings of the Biodiversity Conference this year, hope pervades among the people on the ground. ✨

# Finance Feud Clouds UN Climate Change Conference

*The UN Climate Change Conference COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, will be remembered as the moment climate advocates stayed strong in the face of weak commitments from wealthy, polluting nations.*

The global association of 198 member states that gathered in Baku, Azerbaijan just before Thanksgiving in the windowless corridors of a sprawling stadium were fractured over an often-divisive family issue: money. At the heart of the gathering was the necessity for the finances needed to fuel solutions to rapidly cool down a world on fire.

The 29th Annual United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP 29) might go down in history as the moment when international efforts to solve the climate crisis almost went up in smoke. Whether due to sheer exhaustion, sheer determination, or simple lack of alternatives, this COP survived. But just barely.

COP 29 started just four days after the election of Donald Trump and ended as the planet's hottest year in recorded history (up until then) drew to a close. Both bookends contributed to the pessimistic mood. Trump campaigned on the promise to again pull out of the 2015 Paris Agreement, the heart of the COPs that lays pathways to keeping the globe under a 1.5°C temperature rise. Meanwhile, the problem of climate change roared: three cyclones tore through the Philippines in the time that the meeting gaveled from start to close. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that the world has few years left to transition from fossil fuels, or face dire consequences.

But that transition will cost money. Global consensus puts the annual sum in the trillion. Article 9 of the Paris Agreement states that this money must come from those who lit the fire: wealthy developed countries. With the previous finance target expiring in 2025, this COP was tasked with setting the new ten-year finance goal (NCQG). General expectation hovered around \$1 trillion per year.

It wasn't until 3 am, a day after the summit's scheduled end, that a room full of sleep-deprived country delegates received developed nations' final proposal: \$300 billion per year, less than a fourth of the most conservative estimated need. COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev's gavel drowned out the few with enough reserve to raise their voices.

To add to the collective shock over the paltry quantity of the fund were concerns its quality. No guardrails were set for loans masquerading as climate finance. Highly indebted nations are already forced to choose between meeting their population's basic needs or protecting

them from climate disasters.

While the finance goal squelched most of COPs air, another climate keystone was left unlaed. The new round of national climate action plans (Nationally Determined Contributions- NDCs) are due in February 2025. High-emitting countries were expected to submit ambitious NDCs at this COP, to prod the world back on track to 1.5C goal. While a handful did so, notably the UK with a commitment to reducing emissions by 81 percent, most did not.

Likewise, there was broad hope that the sister issues of climate, biodiversity and desertification would merge again at this COP. All three held separate conventions within weeks of one another this year, though they all emerged from same 1992 Rio Earth Summit (thus dubbed the Rio Trio.) Calls to find synergies on three issues in the name of efficiency and effectiveness we also kicked to next year in the cloud of the final finance fog.

In the aftermath from COP, many global voices questioned whether the COPs should continue. One prominent voice was Christina Figueres, who led the 2015 COP that created the Paris Agreement. She joined other prominent leaders in calling for a fundamental overhaul of the COPs. A few days later she posted a clarification: The COP process is an essential and irreplaceable vehicle for supporting the multilateral, multisectoral, systemic change we urgently need. Now more than ever.

The simultaneous frustration and determination of Figueres resonated among climate justice activists, faith leaders and representatives of climate vulnerable nations present at COP, many of whom devoted days, months, and years to seeking positive outcomes. Within days, a renewed determination began to arise, a commitment to work together on the Road to Belen referring to the Amazon city where COP 30 will be held. In a world of shrinking multi-lateral spaces, there remains a determination to not cede ground, but to double down on the road to a healthy global planet and people. ✨

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Read more about Maryknoll's participation at COP 29 from the two articles below.

- Catholic sisters at COP29 uplift unequal ways climate change impacts women. <https://mogc.info/NCR-cop29>
- A spiritual mandate to care for the Earth. <https://mogc.info/UCAN>

# Report Reveals Global Healthcare Inequity

*A Population Reference Bureau report shows a global dearth of primary care and its effects on life expectancy.*

**R**oughly 50 percent of the world's population lacks access to good primary health care, according to the Population Reference Bureau, a non-profit organization that tracks population indicators for more than 200 countries and territories. In their 2024 World Population Data Sheet, issued in September, the Population Reference Bureau estimated that 60 million deaths could be prevented by 2030 with reasonable investments in primary healthcare (PHC) in low- and middle-income countries. As a result, average life expectancy could increase by 3.7 years. Increased investment in primary health care can improve health outcomes and help nations achieve "Good Health and Wellness," the third Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) the UN has prioritized for 2030.

The report defines primary health care as "an approach to health that is integrated, tailored to individuals' and families' needs, and delivered as close as possible to people's daily environment." The definition is expansive, since adequate health service must meet a population's changing needs. This includes care at every age: during pregnancy, through childhood, and in elder care. It also includes noncommunicable diseases and maladies like high blood pressure. In essence, PHC helps people live longer and healthier lives.

The report suggests that investments to improve access to people-centered, continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated care across low- and middle-income countries can be achieved by increasing the availability and retention of staff. At the same time, the report acknowledges that many countries lack sufficient resources, and shortages in trained health professionals contribute to overworked personnel and degraded quality of care.

Other metrics from the report illustrate the disparities of care access around the world. Nursing and midwifery availability varies widely from country to country. While globally, there are 38 nursing and midwifery personnel per 10,000 population, this number is 137 in Australia and 119 in the United States. For other countries, that number is markedly lower: 35 in China, 23 in Guatemala, and 6 in Kenya. The report also provides data on the number of medical doctors and community health workers per capita, which reveals similar extremes of coverage.

The report also tracks the number of people aged 30 to 79 for whom hypertension is controlled. In eastern Africa, only eight percent of adults have hypertension

under control, the lowest percentages in the world. In comparison, the number of adults in the United States for whom hypertension is controlled is 48 percent.

Health spending per capita (in USD), includes total health spending and primary health care-specific spending. South Asia spends only \$29 per person on primary health care, among the lowest in the world.

The Population Reference Bureau captures the totality of each country's metrics to create a Universal health care (UHC) service coverage index, measuring average coverage of essential PHC services among general and most disadvantaged populations. The UHC service coverage index sits on a range from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating maximal coverage. Some scores include 27 for Somalia; 35 for Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Niger; 44 for Cameroon and Togo; 54 for Nepal and Haiti; 63 for India; 81 for China; and 91 for Canada.

While the report tells of the status of healthcare for the year 2024, it also looks to the future of population change. Population Reference Bureau projects the global population will grow from over 8 billion to nearly 9.6 billion by 2050. Eastern Europe's population is anticipated to fall by nine percent by 2050, while Africa is expected to account for 62 percent of global population growth in that same period. The report highlights that 10 percent of the world's population is aged 65 and older, while 25 percent is under the age 15. The world's youngest region is sub-Saharan Africa, where 41 percent of the population is aged 15 or younger. Southern Europe is the oldest region in the world, with 22 percent of its population aged 65 and older.

Population aging poses challenges such as shifts in the burden of disease to include more chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes and a higher demand for caregiving. Addressing these challenges may be more urgent at present in countries in East Asia, Europe, and Northern America, where the share of older adults is about 20 percent, than among countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where the share is 3 percent, but all countries need to prepare for aging societies. An aging population need not be a problem, provided it is planned for.

Primary health care (PHC) includes preventive measures that are crucial in delaying the onset of age-related diseases and maintaining older adults' health. It also helps reduce the long-term burden on health systems. PHC can decrease mortality rates for mothers and young children and improve outcomes across the life course. ✧

# Resources

1. **WEBINAR: "GUANTÁNAMO UNCOVERED"** A conversation with the New York Times' Serial Podcast and staff from the Center for Victims of Torture on **Thursday, Jan. 9 at 7pm ET**. <https://mogc.info/GU-1-9-25>
2. **STATEMENT: "RABBIS CALL ON U.S. TO STOP TRANSFER OF OFFENSIVE WEAPONS TO ISRAEL"** organized by T'ruah: The Rabbinical Call for Human Rights on Nov. 15. <https://mogc.info/Truah2024>
3. **GAZA HUMANITARIAN ACCESS SNAPSHOT #8:** The continued Targeting of Humanitarian Aid Workers and Looting of Aid Amid Israeli Military Presence in Gaza, published on Dec. 17. <https://mogc.info/cmep-Gaza>
4. **CHRISTMAS MESSAGE BY PATRIARCHS AND HEADS OF CHURCHES IN JERUSALEM** <https://mogc.info/LPJ2024>
5. **ARTICLE: HUMANITARIAN AID SHORTAGE AND ITS DEVASTATING IMPACT ON GAZA'S CHILDREN** by CIDSE. <https://mogc.info/CIDSE-Gaza>
6. **"ADVENT NOT ARMS" GLOBAL BISHOPS AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS LETTER FOR CEASEFIRE IN GAZA** organized by Churches for Middle East Peace. <https://mogc.info/cmep-ANA>
7. **PEACE STORIES** by Pax Christi International. Testimonies by peacemakers around the world. <https://mogc.info/PC-stories>
8. **ARTICLE: MYANMAR'S CARDINAL BO - 'PEACE IS POSSIBLE, DIALOGUE IS THE ONLY WAY'** by Vatican News. <https://mogc.info/Myanmar2024>
9. **REPORT: WORLD RISK REPORT 2024.** The risk hotspots remain in the Americas and Asia, hosting eight of the ten countries with the highest risk scores. <https://mogc.info/WRR2024>
10. **REPORT: A YEAR IN REVIEW - DISPLACEMENT IN SUDAN (2024)** by International Organization for Migration on Jan. 5. <https://mogc.info/DS2024>
11. **ARTICLE: CATHOLIC BISHOPS URGE SUDANESE TO LEARN "HOW TO SURVIVE TOGETHER", TO REJECT VIOLENCE AND WORK FOR PEACE,** by ACI Africa Nov. 21. <https://mogc.info/CBUS>
12. **ARTICLE: BIDEN'S MIXED IMMIGRATION LEGACY** by Migration Policy Institute. <https://mogc.info/MIP-Biden>
13. **RECORDING: THE U.S. ELECTIONS - NOW WHAT?** A conversation by the HOPE Border Institute with faith leaders at the US-Mexico border and Central America, including Bishop Seitz, <https://mogc.info/USENW>
14. **REPORT: JUBILEE 2025 - THE NEW GLOBAL DEBT CRISIS AND ITS SOLUTIONS** by the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD) on Dec. 24. <https://mogc.info/CAFOD>
15. **OP-ED: DEPORTATION PLAN MUST NOT RAID CHURCHES, SEPARATE FAMILIES,** published by The Arizona Republic. <https://mogc.info/RF-Deportations>
16. **ARTICLE: MIGRATION: - FIVE POLICIES THAT PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN DIGNITY,** part of the series, "A Human Rights Agenda for the Next U.S. Administration," by the Washington Office on Latin America. <https://mogc.info/WOLA-BM>
17. **JOIN CAMPAIGN: JUSTICE FOR IMMIGRANTS** by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, with news updates, calls to action, event announcements, and information. <https://mogc.info/JFI-join>
18. **ARTICLE: CLIMATE CHANGE IN BANGLADESH SHAPES INTERNAL MIGRATION AND MOVEMENT TO INDIA** by Migration Policy Institute. <https://mogc.info/MIP-BD>
19. **ARTICLE: FAITH AND CLIMATE JUSTICE, A COLLECTIVE CALL TO ACTION** by CIDSE on the role of Catholic actors at the UN Climate Change Conference. <https://mogc.info/CIDSE-CCA>
20. **RECORDING: BOOK SALON "GREEN SAINTS FOR A GREEN GENERATION"** by the Catholic Climate Covenant discussing the Orbis Book written by young Catholic women who connect their faith to concern for Earth. <https://mogc.info/CCCGSGG>
21. **REPORT: MAASAI CONSERVATION VISION,** a 24-page report representing the collective voices of over 520 Maasai community members who have united to assert their rights to land, pastoralism, and peaceful coexistence with wildlife. Published by the Maasai International Solidarity Alliance. <https://mogc.info/MaasaiCV>
22. **ARTICLE: PEPFAR DELIVERS OUTSIZED RETURNS—IT DESERVES MORE FUNDING.** Commentary by The Brookings Institution. <https://mogc.info/BrookingsPEPFAR>