



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

# NewsNotes

*A bi-monthly newsletter of information on international justice and peace issues*

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Dire Need for Global Vaccine Access.....	3
U.S. Return to Climate Action.....	4
Calls for Necessary Cuts to 2022 Military Budget.....	5
Brazil: Corruption Investigations Wreck Economy.....	6
Now is the Time to Close Guantanamo.....	7
Protecting the Oceans: 2021 Monaco Blue Initiative.....	8
Protecting Biodiversity and Restoring Earth.....	9
Special Drawing Rights Explained.....	10
Vatican Backs Debt Cancellation for African Countries.....	11
Migration: Hearing the Cry, Sharing the Journey.....	12
Hope for Palestinian Refugees.....	13
Israel-Palestine Recommended News Articles.....	13
Hong Kong’s National Security Law.....	14
Add Your Name for Nuclear Disarmament.....	14
Resources.....	15

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# Dire Need for Global Vaccine Access

*With cases rising in several regions around the world, the need for equitable global vaccine access is dire.*

COVID-19 cases and deaths in many countries are climbing rapidly as virus mutations increase and spread and safety measures are lifted by governments or ignored. Experts say the only way to reign in the evolving crisis is through a massive worldwide vaccination effort – but there are numerous roadblocks to its success.

Currently, the world's poorest countries are not projected to have widespread access to the vaccines until perhaps 2023 or 2024. This is due to a variety of factors, but largely to extreme inequality in vaccine distribution. As of February, the 10 wealthiest countries had bought up about three quarters of the global vaccine supply. Some have bought enough to vaccinate their entire adult population three times over.

Meanwhile, some of the same countries that have struggled with vaccine access and distribution are seeing another devastating wave of COVID-19 cases and deaths. India's early successful vaccine distribution has since regressed and the country is now overwhelmed with cases. In South America, a variant of the virus originally observed in Brazil is driving up cases across the continent.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), wrote in an April 22 Op-Ed for the New York Times about the factors driving this new wave of the crisis: "Here's the thing about an inferno: If you hose only one part of it, the rest will keep burning."

The solution, he says, "comes down to a simple choice: to share or not to share." Global vaccine distribution is possible if wealthy countries commit to sharing the necessary information and financial help to distribute vaccines, he says.

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns has been working in conjunction with partner organizations to push for just and equitable vaccine access. On World Health Day, April 8, Chloe Noel, Faith Economy Ecology Project Coordinator, spoke on webinar about global vaccine access in which she explained the barriers to access and possible solutions for expanding it.

She explained that while production, distribution and vaccine hesitancy are major roadblocks, intellectual property rights remain an enormous barrier for developing countries' access to vaccines. While the COVAX initiative of the WHO seeks to facilitate vaccine donations from wealthy countries to low-and middle- income countries, the supply from COVAX is not nearly enough.

In order to produce vaccines at the scale to reach

herd immunity everywhere, more countries need to produce the vaccine. But they lack the patents for the vaccines, ingredients, technology and technological know-how to reproduce them. Patent rules at the World Trade Organization make this difficult. Currently, the only way to access the patents without legal consequences is for each country to seek a license for each individual patent.

Noel explained that this process would take too long and cost too many lives. That is why numerous actors and advocates, international leaders, Nobel Laureates, and Members of Congress have joined 100 WTO member and observer states, including the Holy See, to support India and South Africa's proposal for a narrow, temporary waiver of intellectual property (IP) rights, known as a TRIPS waiver, for COVID-19 vaccines at the WTO.

On April 23, a group of U.S. Members of Congress and a coalition of U.S. civil society organizations, including MOGC, delivered a petition of over 2 million signatures to President Biden asking him to support the TRIPS waiver at the upcoming WTO meeting. The Biden administration has expressed its willingness to take bold steps to prioritize global vaccine access, but has not committed to reversing the Trump administration's decision to block the waiver.

Proponents of maintaining the IP protections for COVID vaccines say they are necessary for incentivizing innovation and ensuring the quality of vaccine production and distribution. They claim the current IP barriers will not hinder the global vaccine rollout. But waiver proponents say it is the fastest and most effective way to guarantee global access and note that governments have already invested billions in research and development to produce them.

Dr. Ghebreyesus named the TRIPS waiver as one of a few possible avenues to increasing vaccine access through more equitable information sharing. "The solution is threefold," he wrote. "We need the countries and companies that control the global supply to share financially, to share their doses with Covax immediately and to share their know-how to urgently and massively scale up the production and equitable distribution of vaccines."

"In combination with proven public health measures, we have all the tools to tame this pandemic everywhere in a matter of months..." he continued. "Whether or not we do is not a test of science, financial muscle or industrial prowess; it's a test of character."§

# U.S. Return to Climate Action

*The new U.S. climate commitments represent the United States' return to global efforts to combat climate change.*

On Earth Day, April 22, President Joe Biden hosted 40 world leaders for a virtual Leaders Summit on Climate at the White House. Pope Francis spoke briefly as part of the summit, imploring the leaders to take courageous action to “take care of nature, because it takes care of us.”

At the event, the Biden administration released a new U.S. “Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC),” or emissions mitigation pledge, to re-establish the U.S. commitment to the Paris climate agreement. The Biden Administration also released the first ever International Climate Finance Plan.

In these plans, the United States pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50-52% below 2005 emissions levels by 2030 – double the U.S. original NDC. This is the boldest climate pledge in U.S. history.

It puts the United States on target to help achieve the Paris agreement’s lower ambition goal of limiting average global temperature rise to 2 °C (3.6 °F) by 2100, though it falls short of the targets for the 1.5 °C (2.7 °F) goal that is necessary to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. According to Climate Tracker, the United States would need to reduce emissions by 57% to be on the 1.5°C trajectory.

To reach the goals, the Biden administration plans to decarbonize the U.S. electricity and transportation sectors by 2035. The recently released Biden infrastructure plan is part of the roadmap to achieve the NDC. The infrastructure plan’s goals include building climate-resilient infrastructure and creating clean energy jobs in communities of color and low-income communities who are especially vulnerable to climate change impacts or whose jobs are impacted by the energy transition.

The new International Climate Finance Plan commits to double Obama-era climate finance levels and triple funding for international climate adaptation assistance by 2024, which would equal 5.7 billion and 1.5 billion respectively. This includes investments in renewable energy, sea walls, sustainable agriculture, and other climate-resilient projects.

This commitment remains far short of what the U.S. fair share contribution should be to reach the Paris agreement goal of mobilizing \$100 billion a year by 2020. For comparison, the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season cost the United States a record breaking \$306.2 billion in domestic relief expenditures alone. in domestic relief expenditures alone.

Faith-based advocates who attended this year’s an-

nual Ecumenical Advocacy Days conference had the opportunity to meet virtually with their Members of Congress, to ask them to approve an infrastructure bill that is climate resilient, equitable and just and to appropriate the remaining \$2 billion of the 2014 U.S. pledge to the Green Climate Fund, which prioritizes providing funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation for the world’s poorest countries.

The climate finance plan pledges to end financing for carbon-intensive projects abroad. This is an important step for the clean energy transition, but the plan has some shortcomings. The plan does not include a phaseout of natural gas which produces methane, a greenhouse gas even more potent and dangerous than carbon. The plan is short on details, directing agencies to develop their own agency-specific guidance.

President Biden will have the opportunity to deliver more climate commitments at several upcoming meetings with world leaders. These include the Spring G7 high-level diplomatic gathering and the NATO and U.S.-E.U. summits. Scotland will host the COP26 climate talks in November, during which all eyes will be on the United States as it comes back to the negotiating table.

The Biden administration is in a tricky position to make progress on climate, with a narrow majority in Congress and pressure from both progressives and conservatives. Without 60 votes in the Senate, there will be limited opportunities to include climate commitments in legislation with a simple majority unless advocates can sway 9 or 10 Republicans to vote for a climate bill.

Since the commitments are not binding, the Administration is aware that the rest of the world is concerned that a political change at the top could mean that the U.S. climate commitments could again go unfulfilled.

However, the auto and utilities industries are already moving towards a clean energy future, indicating the growing recognition of the business sector that addressing climate change is necessary. But more prophetic action is needed, and advocates will continue to call for the United States to take its fair share of action to protect our future. §

**Faith in action:** Urge President Biden and your Members of Congress to take bold action against climate change: <https://bit.ly/3nBnlsi>

# Calls for Necessary Cuts to 2022 Military Budget

*President Biden's proposal to increase the military budget comes at a cost for other integral human security needs.*

President Biden's budget proposal for 2022 includes a \$13 billion increase in defense spending. In a year when the White House has already introduced nearly \$4 trillion in spending packages for urgent needs, such as addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and responding to natural disasters, climate change, and crumbling infrastructure, cutting military spending offers a clear opportunity for massive, badly needed savings. Instead, the president's budget further increases debt while funding nuclear and other weapons programs that make people and the planet less secure.

Biden's proposal includes raising total defense spending from \$740 billion in 2021 to a proposed \$753 billion next year. The figure includes \$715 billion for the Pentagon, plus \$38 billion for Department of Energy-managed nuclear weapons and other armed defense spending. The initial "skinny budget" proposal offers only topline amounts for discretionary spending. A more detailed budget, including mandatory spending, expected in June, is expected to bring the total for armed defense spending even higher.

On a positive note, Pres. Biden's budget eliminates the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund – a kind of slush fund for war spending that faith groups had long lobbied to get rid of. However, the funds previously included in the OCO have simply been folded into the president's baseline budget.

On April 26, MOGC joined with 37 U.S. advocacy organizations in a statement calling on Congress to "significantly decrease spending on the military and nuclear weapons for FY2022 and to reallocate that money into true national priorities like public health, diplomacy, infrastructure, and addressing climate change."

The statement comes as part of the annual Global Days of Action on Military Spending April 10 to May 17, and coincides with the release of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) annual report on world military expenditures, according to which the United States spent more in 2020 than any other country in the world – a whopping 39% of all global military expenditures, more than the next twelve countries combined – once again topping "one of the world's most infamous ranking lists."

Lindsay Koshgarian, director of the National Priorities Project for the Institute for Policy Studies, a co-sponsor of the Days of Action, writes in Market Watch that "Biden's jobs plan is intended to address climate change, economic inequality, and racism" and asks, "Why is he also increasing the military budget, which will make all these issues worse?"

With slogans such as "Defund the Military; Defend People and the Planet," and "Healthcare Not Warfare," the Days of Action campaign draws a direct link between underfunded needs and the bloated military budget, an outsized investment in an armed defense model of security that fails to address – and exacerbates – the most immediate threats to integral human security.

In doing so, the campaign highlights a connection Pope Paul VI made over 50 years ago in *Popularum Progressio*, when he called for a "World Fund" by which all nations would take money originally designated for military spending and put it toward development and the needs of impoverished people. The pope reasoned not only that war was wrong and helping the poor was good, but that investing in development and addressing the root causes of conflict would promote peace and reduce the perceived need for more weapons.

Pope Francis renewed this call for a global fund in his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, and again in his 2021 World Day of Peace message: "How many resources are spent on weaponry, especially nuclear weapons, that could be used for more significant priorities such as ensuring the safety of individuals, the promotion of peace and integral human development, the fight against poverty, and the provision of health care. Global problems like the present Covid-19 pandemic and climate change have only made these challenges all the more evident."

In February, MOGC and 30 other faith groups echoed Francis in a letter to Congress: "Instead of spending money on weapons and war, we [must] address... climate change and build resilient communities," and fund "public health - an especially essential investment in this time of pandemic." In turn, over 50 members of Congress wrote to President Biden on March 16, urging a similar re-allocation of funds as part of his "build back better" plan.

The same week, MOGC and 27 other organizations wrote to members of the House and Senate appropriations and armed services committees outlining \$80 billion in specific programs to cut, including the controversial F-35 fighter jet and replacement of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

At a moment when human security is threatened like never before, we need to end wasteful spending on military projects and invest in human needs. The answer is clear: Congress must cut the military budget. §

**Faith in action:** Ask Congress to reduce military spending: <https://bit.ly/3vxDmSY>

# Brazil: Corruption Investigations Wreck Economy

*The economic consequences of the Car Wash corruption scandal match the far-reaching political turmoil that continues to overshadow Brazil.*

Most press coverage in Brazil of the long-running corruption scandal involving the energy corporation Petrobras, commonly known as the Car Wash scandal, has followed an overarching story that reads like a tele-novela.

A headstrong judge (Sergio Moro) and group of prosecutors take on corruption in a serious way, leading to the arrest of numerous corporate and political leaders, guilty of paying and receiving bribes to secure contracts, including former president Luis Inacio “Lula” da Silva, months before the presidential election, with polls showing that he would likely win by a large margin. This opens the way for a controversial candidate, Jair Bolsonaro, to win the presidency. One of his first acts as president is to place Judge Moro at the head of a new “super” Ministry of Justice with accentuated powers.

When Lula began a nine-year prison sentence in April 2018, the saga appeared to be over. But beginning in June 2019, *The Intercept* and other media outlets released hacked chat messages between Judge Moro and the team of prosecutors showing that Moro was far from impartial and had worked together with the prosecutors to find Lula guilty.

Now fortunes are reversed, with Lula released from prison and able to run for office once again in the 2022 election, and Moro facing possible consequences for his misconduct. As one Supreme Court justice noted, the world’s largest anti-corruption investigation has become the biggest judicial scandal.

Yet this telling of the story overlooks two important details of the investigations: the disastrous economic consequences for Brazil and the heavy hand of the United States throughout the process.

In the aftermath of the scandal, rather than just prosecuting the company directors involved in corruption, many of the companies were forced to shut down entirely. This led to significant economic losses for the Brazilian economy.

While prosecutors have bragged about the R\$4.3b (approximately U.S. \$1.5b) that they were able return to government coffers, this is a small fraction of the economic losses brought on Brazil by their actions. A recent study by the Inter-union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (DIEESE) shows that, between 2014 and 2017, the crucial period of the scandal, Brazil lost R\$172b (approx. U.S. \$57b) in investments and 4.4 million jobs vanished as projects were shut down around the world.

Paolo Cayres, president of the National Federation of Metalworkers, estimates that for every person imprisoned in the Car Wash investigative process, 22,000 jobs were lost. While few of these jobs have returned, not one of those found guilty of corruption is still in jail, and only a handful are under house arrest. As political scientist William Nozaki summarized, “In practice, businessmen are under house arrest, in luxury apartments and condominiums, and companies are prevented from entering into contracts and carrying out international operations.”

Additionally, internal U.S. documents released by Wikileaks and exposés by *Le Monde*, *The Intercept*, and *Agência Publica* have described the United States’ heavy-handed involvement throughout the investigations. In 2007, Judge Moro began regular relations with U.S. investigative counterparts that continue today, when the U.S. embassy was looking to create a network of local experts able to defend U.S. positions “without appearing to be pawns” of Washington, as Ambassador Clifford Sobel wrote in one diplomatic cable. Moro has participated in numerous events hosted by the U.S. government that have brought together investigators from across Brazil as well as various Latin American countries.

Some shocking realities were revealed in the exposés regarding this collaboration. Chat records between Judge Moro and the prosecutors show that they worked very closely with the Federal Bureau of Investigations, Department of Justice (DOJ), Central Intelligence Agency and other U.S. agencies, communicating almost exclusively outside of official channels, seemingly to keep their meetings hidden from the Brazilian Justice Ministry. The lead prosecutor joked with another that the arrest of Lula was a “present from the CIA.” The DOJ attempted to funnel a large part of the recovered money into a fund to be controlled by the Car Wash prosecutors, but the Supreme Court declared the fund illegal and the money was redirected into public coffers.

Looking at the overall results of the Car Wash scandal investigations, it is understandable that some consider it to be a good example of “lawfare,” the strategic use of the law with the purpose of delegitimizing an enemy. What was once a hopeful project meant to transform corrupt systems has left a tragic legacy of lost jobs, industries destroyed, and impunity for corrupt officials. §

# Now is the Time to Close Guantanamo

*Twenty-four Senators sent the following letter to President Biden on April 16, 2021.*

Dear President Biden,

We applaud your pledge to “put universal rights and strengthening democracy at the center of our efforts to meet the challenge of the 21st century.” One critical step toward doing so is finally closing the detention facility at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. As a symbol of lawlessness and human rights abuses, the detention facility continues to harm U.S. national security by serving as a propaganda tool for America's enemies and continues to hinder counterterrorism efforts and cooperation with allies.

The detention facility was established in 2002 to detain individuals suspected of involvement in the terrorist attacks on our country on 9/11. For nearly two decades, the offshore prison has damaged America's reputation, fueled anti-Muslim bigotry, and weakened the United States' ability to counter terrorism and fight for human rights and the rule of law around the world. In addition to the \$540 million in wasted taxpayer dollars each year to maintain and operate the facility, the prison also comes at the price of justice for the victims of 9/11 and their families, who are still waiting for trials to begin.

We welcome the recent announcement that the White House is leading in interagency review on closing the prison. Only 40 men remain in detention at Guantanamo – all of them aging and many with complex health problems. Six of those men have been approved for transfer by the executive branch, in some cases for over a decade. After years of indefinite detention without charge or trial; a history of torture and cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment; and multiple attempts at a thoroughly failed and discredited military commission process, it is past time to close Guantanamo Detention Facility.

With sufficient political will and swift action, your administration can finish the job that Presidents George W. Bush and Obama began.

Strong and effective leadership from the White House will be necessary. A senior White House official should be accountable for the closure process, including ensuring interagency cooperation and resolving any disputes that may arise. Because indefinite detention at Guantanamo is at its core a human rights problem – one that demands solutions rooted in diplomacy and that uphold U.S. human rights and humanitarian law obligations – the National Security Council's human rights directorate should play a leading role in both the review you have ordered as well as throughout the closure process.

Also critical is immediately re-establishing the special envoy for Guantanamo closure at the state depart-

ment, and rebuilding appropriate closure infrastructure at the defense department. Diplomacy is essential to the closure process, which is why President Obama established the invoice office. The state Department must lead in identifying transfer countries and negotiating transfer agreements, but President Trump discarded that capacity when he eliminated the invoice position. Once reappointed, the envoy should immediately begin the work of repatriating or resettling the six men who are already cleared for transfer, as well as preparing for the transfer of any remaining detainees who will not be charged with crimes.

We also urge you to make use of our federal court system in ways that are consistent with current law but that have been underutilized by previous administrations. For example, detainees' habeas cases provide an opportunity to expedite foreign transfers. If the Justice Department were not to oppose habeas petitions in appropriate cases, those detainees could be transferred more easily pursuant to court orders.

Article III court can also be utilized more directly at Guantanamo itself. Given the current statutory prohibition on transfers to the United States, we urge you to direct the Justice Department to explore pursuing plea agreements remotely, via video conference, with detainees for whom there are federal charges available and against whom the Department has sufficient untainted evidence to bring such charges. In the event that is changing is sentenced to a period of incarceration beyond time already served at Guantanamo, to allow the remaining time to be completed in the transfer country subject to the terms of the plea agreement.

Finally, in service of both closing the Guantanamo Detention Facility and upholding the United States human rights obligations, we urge you to reserve erroneous and troubling legal positions taken by the Trump Administration regarding the application of relevant international and domestic legal protections to Guantanamo, including, in particular, the position that the Constitution's Due Process Clause does not apply to the men detained there.

After the unprecedented damage of the last four years to America's standing in the world, closing the Guantanamo Detention Facility is more important than ever for sending a message about what we stand for as a nation we urge you to ask swiftly to ensure that message is loud and clear. §

**Faith in action:** Sign the Close Guantanamo petition: <https://bit.ly/3xCTbt9>

# Protecting the Oceans: 2021 Monaco Blue Initiative

*At a gathering in Monaco, ocean experts discussed how 2021 could be a year to catch up on ocean protection goals.*

While protection of ocean ecosystems is critical for addressing climate change, it is one of the many areas of progress on environmental issues that has stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, ocean activists and scholars are aiming for 2021 to be a year of catching up on ocean protection goals. At the Monaco Blue Initiative, a gathering of ocean scientists, governance leaders and advocates in Monaco in March, participants strategized about the best ways to use the momentum of COVID-19 relief as a window of opportunity to make big strides for ocean protection.

The problems facing ocean ecosystems are myriad, ranging from water temperature and acidity rise, over-fishing and stress on ecosystems, and extensive plastic pollution. The crisis facing the world's oceans is intimately tied to the climate crisis, as the ocean is a "carbon sink" for absorbing excess carbon dioxide coming from human activity, an important function which is threatened due to ocean temperature rise and rising ocean acidity.

John Kerry, U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, remarked at the Monaco Blue Initiative conference that "ocean stewardship and climate stewardship are really two sides of a single coin."

"We have to apply every lever to create a future for the ocean that is biodiverse, climate-resilient, and free from carbon pollution," Kerry added. "The health of our ocean is central to our economies, our ecosystems, our communities, and to life itself on this planet."

The Monaco Blue Initiative is an annual gathering of stakeholders and decisionmakers involved in ocean protection, convened by Prince Albert II of Monaco for the first time in 2010. The 2021 gathering included sessions focused on participation in ocean protection from the corporate and financial sectors.

One takeaway from these sessions was the need for benchmarks of progress on climate and ocean protection goals for the corporate and financial sectors. Participants noted that the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals were primarily aimed at governments, leaving it up to the corporate and financial sectors to develop their own goals and strategies for contributing to conservation efforts.

Complementing the week of discussion in Monaco, ocean experts Remi Parmentier and Kelly Rigg of the Varda Environmental Protection Group, which provides international strategic and campaign advice on environmental protection, co-authored a paper, "Blue Food for Thought," outlining what they consider to be the most critical and promising "bold" approaches to policy for ocean protection.

They argue that four ideas in particular can help advance the global endeavor to reach thirty-by-thirty, or thirty percent of the ocean protected by the year 2030.

The first solution they name is the development of "Marine Exploitable Areas" to replace the current system of "Marine Protected Areas." Right now, about 7.5% of ocean surface area is designated as a "Marine Protected Area," subject to marine life and habitat protections, but the vast majority of open ocean remains unregulated by any national or international body.

Parmentier and Rigg suggest using international legal tools to make protected areas the default, and instead designate the remaining portion as "Marine Exploitable Areas," so that those wishing to profit from the resources of a particular marine area would have to bear the burden of proof to demonstrate that they were acting with sustainability principles in mind.

The second and third policy suggestions have to do with mechanisms to better monitor fishing practices to prevent overfishing, a serious problem for ocean ecosystems and communities that rely on the fishing industry.

The final proposal has to do with eliminating plastic waste from ending up in the ocean. Currently, eight million tons of plastics enter the ocean every year as a result of human disposal. Much of it decays into micro-plastic particles which enter the food chain and can cause serious harm to animals and humans in the long term.

The authors suggest building a campaign to stop plastic disposal in the oceans modeled off a successful Greenpeace campaign in the 1980s, which prevented the dumping of radioactive and chemical wastes in the ocean. They believe that shining a light on their impacts, as Greenpeace did with radioactive waste in the 1980s, will help move the international community to action.

Parmentier and Rigg acknowledge that it would take an "uncommon degree of international cooperation, conviction, and perseverance" to advance the goals they name, but they remain hopeful, motivated by the scholars and activists who have made real strides in ocean protection in the last 30 years.

The Monaco Blue Initiative gathering is only the first of what they hope will be a series of influential meetings in 2021 that will help make 2021 a "super year" for ocean protection, building off the momentum of the movement to "build back better" from the COVID-19 pandemic. §

**Faith in action:** Visit the Ocean Unite action center to take action for ocean conservation:

<https://bit.ly/3gJbF5a>

# Protecting Biodiversity and Restoring Earth

*The Vatican hosted a webinar to promote protecting biodiversity as a means of restoring the Earth and human life.*

Dr. Jane Goodall and Cardinal Peter Turkson were the keynote speakers on a webinar on biodiversity hosted by the Vatican's Dicastery for Integral Human Development, in partnership with the Vatican Covid-19 Commission Ecology Taskforce on April 20, 2021. Watch the recording at <https://bit.ly/3vt853f>.

The online event, entitled "The Road to COP15," (referencing the UN Biodiversity Conference, rescheduled due to the pandemic for October in Kunming, China) aimed to "share wisdom, understanding, experiences and mutual insights drawn from various disciplines of knowledge including the indigenous and scientific traditions, the Holy Scriptures, and the Social Doctrine of the Church on biodiversity," Vatican News reported.

"These, together, will advocate and inspire biodiversity protection and restoration at the upcoming fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) and COP26 meetings."

"We need to reduce lifestyles of having way more than we need," said Dr Jane Goodall, famed British primatologist and anthropologist best known for her 60-year study of social and family interactions of wild chimpanzees.

"We must restore degraded ecosystems on church land," said Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, Archbishop emeritus of Cape Coast (Ghana), and Prefect of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

CIDSE, a network of Catholic social justice organizations of which the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is a member, released a press statement about the webinar.

"Today we face multiple crises," the CIDSE statement reads. "The COVID health crisis, the climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis are three interconnected crises calling us to change direction towards a regenerative civilization with an integral ecological story and pattern of life."

The statement by CIDSE goes on to point out the importance of biodiversity in addressing climate change and long-term food security, as noted in the 2020 UN Global Biodiversity Outlook Report. The report concludes that actions to protect biodiversity are essential for preventing future pandemics.

"The world is at an inflection point," the CIDSE statement reads, "with life altering consequences and a responsibility to act. It is time to amplify Pope Francis' teachings in *Laudato Si'* to co-create life-giving relationships with creation and inspire thousands of people to do the same with the output of our roundtable, public webinar, education and advocacy to regenerate healthy ecosystems on Earth. When biodiversity flourishes, human life flourishes."

The UN Foundation offers the following five reasons we need urgent action on biodiversity.

1. **Biodiversity is already suffering from human actions.** The extinction rate today is 10 to 100 times higher than the past 10 million years. Every animal and plant has a unique, essential role in nature. Each species extinction is like removing a brick from a tower – as more pressure is put on the other bricks, the risk of total collapse increases. Acting now to preserve biodiversity boosts the resiliency of ecosystems to other harms, including climate change.

2. **Biodiversity and human health are deeply interconnected.** The destruction of natural habitats leads to greater interaction between humans and animals. Biodiversity creates a barrier between humans and dangerous diseases such as COVID-19.

3. **Biodiversity is an essential tool in fighting the climate crisis.** Land and ocean ecosystems are currently the only way we have of trapping large amounts of carbon dioxide, and together they absorb 60% of human-caused emissions. Protecting our diverse ecosystems is critical to meeting our climate goals. Not only does biodiversity loss drive climate change, but as the climate changes, biodiversity faces a substantial risk. If we act now, biodiversity can be part of the climate solution. In fact, nature-based solutions – climate strategies with co-benefits for biodiversity – have the potential to provide more than a third of the necessary emissions reductions needed by 2030 to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

4. **Biodiversity loss disproportionately affects poor and Indigenous communities.** Because many of these communities rely heavily on biodiversity for food, livelihoods, and health, declines in biodiversity have a more severe impact on them, and in fact they are already experiencing this loss. A quarter of the land on Earth – representing a significant amount of the world's biodiversity – is home to Indigenous people.

5. **Sustainable development relies on biodiversity. A majority of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are threatened by declines in biodiversity and ecosystem functions.** From hunger and water, to gender and equity, achieving our global goals requires the protection and restoration of ecosystems, as well as the sustainable and equitable use of biodiversity.

Countries recently made commitments to protect biodiversity at the UN Summit on Biodiversity in September 2020. This upcoming October, they hope to approve new and updated targets at the UN Biodiversity Conference in China. §

# Special Drawing Rights Explained

*Since the pandemic started in March 2020, civil society across the world has been calling for a new allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) in response to the health, economic and social emergency.*

With global poverty on the rise for the first time in 20 years; serious doubts that Covid-19 vaccines will reach poor countries in the near future; jobs being decimated everywhere; and inequality on the rise, developing countries are in desperate need of additional resources to increase their fiscal space.

Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were created by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1969 to supplement the official reserves of its member countries when the need for international reserves arises due to a global emergency, as was the case in the 2009 global financial crisis, as is the case today. SDRs are the IMF's reserve asset, and are exchangeable for dollars, euros, sterling, yen and Chinese yuan. An allocation of SDRs requires approval by IMF members holding 85% of the total votes. Because the United States holds 16.5% of the votes, the U.S. effectively holds veto power.

The U.S. Treasury under President Biden has come out in support of the IMF issuing \$650 billion in SDRs while humanitarian organizations like Eurodad and religious institutions like the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops support a much higher allocation of \$3 trillion SDRs.

IMF First Deputy Managing Director Geoffrey Okamoto, following IMF and World Bank spring meetings in April where the Group of 20 countries signaled their support for an issuance, told reporters, "The goal would be to make that allocation some time this summer." What amount of SDRs is still up for debate.

Will it be the \$650 billion that the U.S. Treasury can support without Congressional approval? Or will it be the \$3 trillion that many more leading thinkers say are desperately needed – an amount that would require Congressional approval for the U.S. representative to the IMF to support?

To explain what SDRs are and how they are shared and used, the Center for Policy and Research and Action-Corp have created the following one-pager. To download the PDF, go to <https://globalcovidresponse.org> and click on "Take Action."

## **Special Drawing Rights (SDRs): A critical, no-cost tool for responding to COVID-19**

To help avoid global economic collapse, and the death of millions of people worldwide, Congress must act swiftly and decisively. Only Congress can authorize the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to release a financial resource called Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) at the scale and speed needed. These resources are not loans to the governments and have no cost to American taxpayers.

## **SDRs save lives and boost economic recovery.**

**Save Lives**—The global health crisis and deepening world recession could kill millions of people around the world if countries fail to take decisive action. SDRs would provide governments with vital resources to take necessary action against COVID-19.

**Help the U.S. Economy Recover**—The current crises will hurt trade partners, and ultimately American companies and workers. American exports fell sharply in the last recession, and recovery from the worse recession occurring now will help the U.S. economy and create jobs here.

**Build on Record of Success**—IMF's issuance of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) helped economies recover from the 2009 global financial crisis, reducing unemployment, poverty and suffering. But a bigger and faster response would have accelerated recovery.

## **SDRs will not cost the United States a penny.**

**No Cost to U.S. Taxpayers**—Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), an emergency financial liquid resource, come from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and are not financed in anyway by U.S. taxpayers.

**Not Foreign Aid**—Special Drawing Rights are not U.S. foreign aid, as they are issued by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

**SDRs are widely supported**—A major SDR issuance is supported by:

- Over 100 U.S. organizations, including: Amnesty International USA, Bread for the World, CARE, Church World Service, InterAction, International Rescue Committee USA, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Jubilee USA Network, Mercy Corps, ONE, Presbyterian Church (USA), Save the Children U.S., Union for Reform Judaism, and the United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society.
- Top experts at the Peterson Institute for International Economics
- Hundreds of global leaders, including current and former Heads of State
- Major U.S. allies, including Germany, France and other EU countries, and African countries
- Kristalina Georgieva, IMF Managing Director and António Guterres, UN Secretary-General
- The New York Times and Financial Times Editorial Boards
- Jim O'Neill, former Goldman Sachs Chief Economist §

**Faith in action:** For more information and to send a message to Congress in support of SDRs, visit <https://globalcovidresponse.org>

# Vatican Backs Debt Cancellation for African Countries

The Vatican has stated that it supports debt cancellation for African countries struggling to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic on top of other urgent crises. This article by AHGINGOS, a group of NGO representatives to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, was reprinted with permission: <https://bit.ly/3u3ii6n>.

Through a webinar, the Vatican COVID-19 Commission supports the campaign for debt cancellation for African countries.

In a statement released on 8 April, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development notes that along with the Vatican's Covid-19 Commission it is "supporting the campaign for debt cancellation for African countries."

The initiative was launched on Wednesday, 7 April, during a webinar organized by the Dicastery and the Commission itself, in collaboration with Caritas Africa, the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar (JCAM) and the Association of Consecrated Women of East and Central Africa (ACWECA).

Sister Alessandra Smerilli, Undersecretary of the Dicastery, noted that "this campaign, which is even more urgent because of COVID-19, starts in Africa where the local Church has given shape to a widespread demand in civil society.

## See, Judge, Act

Archbishop Gabriel Justice Yaw Anokye of Kumasi in Ghana, also President of Caritas Africa, opened the session by saying: "Now is the time to see, judge and act on behalf of the poor and vulnerable. In times of difficulty and crisis, we can see God's action in solidarity". Henry Akaabiam, Secretary General of SECAM, said: "We cannot fail to act, because if Africa lives in debt, the whole world will live in debt. If Africa is doing well, the whole world is doing well".

A question of justice

Fr. Augusto Zampini, Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery and member of the board of the Vatican COVID-19 Commission, added that "This is not just a ques-

tion of technique or mere solidarity, important though that is, but a question of justice. It is a question of inter-generational justice, because we cannot make our children and future generations pay for all the effects of our mistakes, and of spiritual justice.

"Debt and poverty are cousins, they go together unfortunately," said Sr. Hellen A. Bandiho, STH, Secretary General of ACWECA. "It is certainly an ethical issue, but it is much more than that," said Fr Charlie Chilufya, director of JCAM's Justice and Ecology office. The point is that the permanence of the pandemic in the peripheries of the globe, for lack of means, puts everyone's health at risk".

## Global justice

Jaime Atienza, from Oxfam, then drew attention to the link between all the forces that can help improve crisis situations. "We are at a time when we need to push finance towards social justice," he said.

"The urgency of debt cancellation", said Dominic Chai, SJ, a Jesuit economist for the Vatican COVID-19 Commission, "requires that we work steadfastly and continue this dialogue. In doing so, we will raise both awareness and commitment to a new level, not only in Africa, but also in all regions where the burden of unjust debt is felt."

## Guardians of our brothers and sisters

Finally, Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, noted that "the person, as the Social Doctrine of the Church teaches, has a dignity that cannot be compromised: no one can be left behind because of injustice. We are called to be guardians of our brothers: this is the heart of our solidarity."§

**Faith in action:** Sign this petition from the Jubilee USA network calling for greater debt cancellation for impoverished countries: <https://bit.ly/3aP4Xaa>

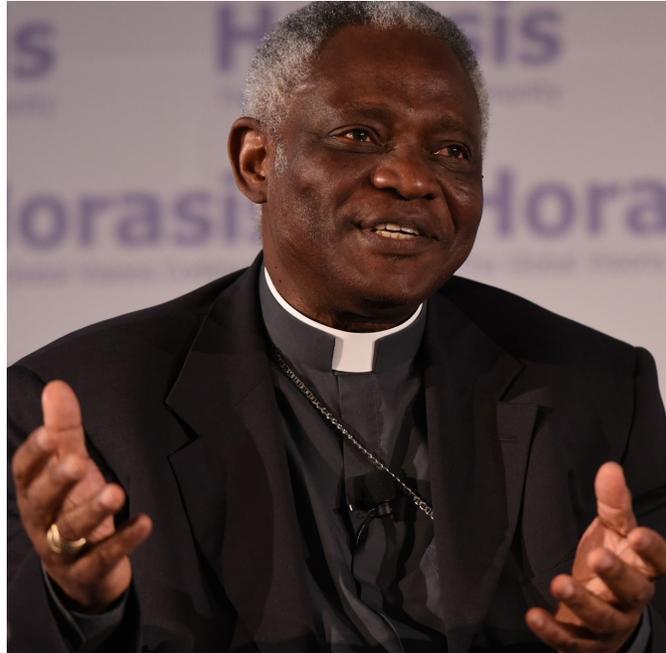


Photo of Cardinal Peter Turkson by Richter Frank-Jurgen -<https://bit.ly/2PKe44J>, CC BY-SA 2.0.

# Migration: Hearing the Cry, Sharing the Journey

*Scott Wright, Director of the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach, wrote the following article which is reprinted here with permission.*

This week, the Biden administration completes the first 100 days of its administration. While there are many things to celebrate, and many bold initiatives, we continue to be concerned about migrants, refugees, and the situation on the border.

Recently, the White House Press Secretary announced that the Biden administration had reached agreements with the governments of Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala to secure their borders: “We’ve secured agreements for them to put more troops on their own border. Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala have all agreed to do this. That not only is going to prevent the traffickers, and the smugglers, and cartels that take advantage of the kids on their way here, but also to protect those children.”

This signals a dangerous reversal of the administration’s promise to pursue a more just and compassionate response to migrants and refugees by rebuilding the asylum system, uniting families, treating asylum-seekers with dignity and compassion, and addressing root causes.

Instead of building a wall on the U.S.–Mexico border, such a policy would effectively build “walls” on the very borders of countries from which people are desperately fleeing from violence, hunger, and disasters.

The reality is this: we cannot reverse decades of U.S. support for corrupt, violent and authoritarian governments in the region, or ignore U.S. policies that favor corporate greed and privatization of resources, in time to stem the tide of those who are desperately fleeing for their lives. Until we can effectively do so, and that will take time, we have a moral obligation to respond to the migrants and refugees who are desperately fleeing.

## Sharing the Journey

These are dramatic times for migrants and refugees. More people are crossing borders or forcibly displaced from their homes than at any time in recent history, at least since the end of the Second World War.

For millions of people throughout the world, one’s place in the human family is defined by events beyond their control. Overnight, but often over weeks and months of violence and hunger, you wake up one morning to a new reality. You struggle to survive and protect your family, migrating from one place to another, crossing a border to become a refugee in search of asylum. Are you a migrant, a displaced person, a refugee, an asylum-seeker? Who are you?

Pope Francis is very clear: you are a sister, a broth-

er, a neighbor, the face of Christ whom we are called to welcome at every step of the way, and with whom we are called to share the journey.

Four years ago, Pope Francis launched a global campaign to support migrants and refugees called “Share the Journey.” The aim of the campaign is to promote a culture of encounter with migrants and refugees, as they journey from their homes, through foreign lands in search of refuge, until they reach a land they hope will welcome them.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), the number of forcibly displaced persons in the world surpassed 80 million in 2020, one percent of the world’s population. Of these 80 million, 29.6 million are refugees, and 45.7 million are internally displaced; 4.2 million are asylum-seekers. Eighty-five percent of the forcibly displaced come from countries where there is acute food insecurity and malnutrition, and many are fleeing from authoritarian regimes, failed states, violence and war.

But the most invisible of these, and also the most numerous, are the internally displaced persons (IDPs). In his message last September on the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis chose to focus on their plight. Unlike refugees who are granted international protection, IDPs “are victims of undemocratic political systems and environmental disorder which leads to hunger, war, and violence.” In the words of Caritas Internationalis Secretary General Aloysius John, “They are among the most vulnerable people on the planet, yet they are denied their basic right to live a dignified life.”

But what about us? Where are we in this global picture? We claim to live in “a nation of immigrants,” we take pride in the words at the base of the Statue of Liberty, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” but have we forgotten who we are? Do we not have a moral obligation to welcome those who come after in search of refuge?

Pope Francis’ words are a good reminder: “This is not a time for forgetfulness.” Let us remember who we are as a people, and welcome those who are suffering from the consequences of our indifference and greed. §

**Faith in action:** Urge President Biden to end the use of Title 42 health authority to immediately expel asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border:

<https://bit.ly/3xJchxR>

## Hope for Palestinian Refugees

*Pres. Biden reinstates U.S. funding for aid to Palestinian refugees and U.S. Congresswoman Betty McCollum introduces a new bill to protect the rights of Palestinian children and families.*

On April 8, 2021, Churches for Middle Peace (CMEP) released the following statement on President Biden's decision to reinstate U.S. funding for UNRWA, the UN agency that provides aid to Palestinian refugees. The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is a member of CMEP.

“Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes the announcement by Secretary of State Antony Blinken on April 7th that the Biden Administration will soon restart economic and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians in a manner fully consistent with current U.S. law. CMEP strongly opposed the Trump Administration's decision to suspend all bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). CMEP has pushed the Biden Administration to resume this much-needed assistance as soon as possible. After a complete cut off of assistance to the Palestinians, the distribution of funds including \$75 million to support humanitarian and development assistance, the \$10 million for peacebuilding programs through USAID, and \$150 million for UNRWA, is a welcome first step in addressing the considerable deterioration in the U.S. relationship with Palestinians over the past four years.

“Kyle Cristofalo, CMEP's Senior Director of Advocacy and Government Relations said: ‘We are grateful to the Biden Administration for acknowledging the critical

services provided by UNRWA and the humanitarian programs operating in the West Bank and Gaza. Yesterday's actions are consistent with longstanding U.S. support—both in Congress and the White House—for bilateral assistance to the West Bank and Gaza and to UNRWA.’

“The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the need for humanitarian assistance in the West Bank and Gaza. These funds provide vitally needed support to meet immediate humanitarian and medical needs in the occupied Palestinian territories. And yet they are only a first step. The Biden Administration must follow up these actions by continuing to rebuild diplomatic relationships with the Palestinians, by reopening the Consulate General in East Jerusalem, and by working with Congress to find a way to reopen the PLO Representative Office in Washington, D.C. Additionally, in the face of impending demolitions in East Jerusalem, CMEP calls on the Biden Administration to make clear the U.S. will not allow unilateral actions such as demolitions and expansion of settlements to move forward without tangible consequences.”§

**Faith in action:** Ask your Member of Congress to support a bill introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum that seeks to protect Palestinian children in Israeli military detention and oppose land annexation:

<https://bit.ly/2RmlcVq>

## Israel-Palestine Recommended News Articles

**“End U.S. Support for Israeli Apartheid?” Conference:** <https://www.wrmea.org/>

Washington Report on Middle Affairs offers recording of speakers at the two sessions of their virtual conference held April 17 and 21, 2021, available on their website. The major Israeli human rights organization has declared that apartheid is rampant both inside Israel and in the territories Israel occupies. The web-based conference considered whether the United States should now cut off aid to Israel or make any such future assistance conditional on negotiation of a genuine peace settlement, respect for Palestinian human rights, and adherence to international law.

**“On the occasion of Land Day, Israel forcibly laid hand over more than 85% of the total area of historical Palestine:”** <https://bit.ly/2RpfkuE>

Palestine News and Info Agency reported on March 30, 2021, that “Israel, since 1948, laid hand over more than 85% of the total area of the lands of historical Pales-

tine at a time when Jews in the era of the pre-1948 British Mandate exploited only 1,682 square kilometers, or 6.2% of the lands of historical Palestine, today said the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) on the 45th anniversary of Land Day.”

**“Israel's military courts for Palestinians are a stain on international justice:”** <https://bit.ly/3u9Pf0Z>

Sahar Francis writes in The Guardian that “the overwhelming majority of Palestinians in the West Bank were born into, and have spent their entire lives under, an Israeli military occupation that violates their right to self-determination. A new report by the UK charity War on Want exposes how a core part of what sustains that occupation is a military judicial system characterized by violations of international law. The report – Judge, Jury and Occupier – is a deep dive into the diverse ways in which Palestinians' rights are being violated – from arrest, through interrogation, conviction and jail time. §

# Hong Kong's National Security Law

*The Georgetown Center for Asian Law published a report on the impacts of the Hong Kong National Security Law.*

One year ago this June, Beijing passed the Hong Kong National Security Law (NSL), which has proven to enable the government to more easily punish protesters and reduce the city's autonomy. In a new 80-page report, authors Lydia Wong, research fellow, and Thomas Kellogg, executive director, at the Georgetown Center for Asian Law, assess the law itself, and the significant, wide-ranging, and deeply damaging impact of the robust implementation of the law over the first seven months of its existence.

The report also makes an attempt to track all arrests under the National Security Law that have taken place from June 2020 until February 2021. They came up with a total of 105 arrests by the newly-created Department for Safeguarding National Security (NSD), mostly for specific alleged NSL crimes. The authors conclude that such a high number over only seven months demonstrates the vigorous use of the law.

Some of the authors' key findings include:

- The cases that have emerged thus far raise serious concerns that the NSL is being used to punish the exercise of basic political rights by the government's peaceful political opponents and its critics. Prosecution of individuals for exercising their rights to free expression, association, or assembly would violate Hong Kong and Beijing's commitments under international human rights law.

- The impact of the NSL has been felt well beyond the more than 100 individuals who have been arrested by the Department for Safeguarding National Security (NSD). According to interviews, self-censorship – among journalists, academics, lawyers, activists, and members of the general public – has emerged as a serious problem, one that could blunt Hong Kong's longstanding tradition of freewheeling and robust public debate.

- If current trends continue, Hong Kong could become a fundamentally different place, one that enjoys fewer freedoms and rights, with social, political, and legal institutions that are less vibrant, less independent, and less effective than they once were.

The authors conclude that the National Security Law constitutes “one of the greatest threats to human rights and the rule of law in Hong Kong since the 1997 handover.”

But it is not too late for Beijing to back off and change course. “A fresh look at the costs and benefits of Beijing's current hard-line policy, though unlikely, might well encourage the Party leadership to embrace just such a shift: Beijing is paying a high price for its current hard-line policy, and the benefits – in terms of local stability and control – may well prove more ephemeral than they seem today.” Find the complete report at <https://bit.ly/3ug99HR> §

## Add Your Name for Nuclear Disarmament

*All are invited to sign on to a newspaper ad with a message for nuclear disarmament addressed to our Catholic President and Members of Congress.*

Pax Christi Metro DC-Baltimore invites individuals and organizations to sign on to their ad to be published in the June 11, 2021 edition of the National Catholic Reporter. Deadline to sign on is May 15.

To sign, go to <http://bit.ly/PXChristiAD>

The text of the ad is as follows:

**Tell Our Catholic President and Members of Congress: Start Now to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons!**

In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis reiterated the Church's complete opposition to nuclear weapons, describing the total elimination of nuclear weapons as “both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative.” The Holy See was one of the first countries to ratify the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which went into effect on January 22, 2021.

Join us in urging President Biden and Catholics in Congress to take prompt action to:

- Take all nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert and adopt a no-first-use policy
- Rejoin the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran without preconditions.
- End wasteful spending on the modernization of our nuclear arsenal and delivery systems and redirect the funding to human security needs.
- Reduce the number of deployed nuclear warheads by at least ten percent per year, challenging the other nuclear-armed nations to do the same.
- Use the extension of the New START treaty to negotiate further deep cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the U.S. and Russia, as required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- Ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

For a background paper and information on contacting your elected officials, go to:

<https://www.paxchristimdc.org/ncrad>. §

## Resources

1. Join us for a **30-minute webinar at 3:00 p.m. ET on Wednesday, May 5**, “Human Rights Advocacy and the Legacy of Sr. Dianna Ortiz.” Register here: <http://bit.ly/HRsrDianna>
2. Read the **latest statements from MOGC** on the new U.S. climate commitments, the conviction of Derek Chauvin for the murder of George Floyd, and the Biden administration’s refugee admissions commitments: <https://maryknollogc.org/statements>
3. Watch the recording of our 30-min webinar, “**Global Vaccine Access for a Faithful and Just Recovery:**” <http://bit.ly/MOGCYoutube>
4. Watch the recording of a **side event** for the UN Financing for Development Forum entitled “Financing Nature-based Solutions is Path to Holistic and Equitable Pandemic Recovery,” organized by **Sr. Marvie Misolas, MM**: <https://bit.ly/2QFcmSs>
5. Join the Maryknoll Society, Maryknoll Lay Missioners, and MOGC on **June 9 for a webinar in honor of the UN’s Year for the Elimination of Child Labor (2021)**. The event will feature **Sr. Mary Vertucci, MM**, of the Emusoi Center in Tanzania: <https://bit.ly/June9EndChildLabor>
6. Join the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers for a “**Food for Thought**” on **May 12 at 2 p.m. ET** featuring Susan Gunn, director of MOGC, speaking about the role of the Office for Global Concerns in the Maryknoll mission: <https://maryknoll.link/rkb>
7. Explore **www.CatholicCares.org**, a website sponsored by a coalition of 31 Catholic organizations promoting **equitable vaccine access** in the United States and around the world.
8. Read this article in America Magazine from Catholic leaders to advance **global vaccine access**, featuring quotes from MOGC director, Susan Gunn, and staff member Chloe Noel: <https://bit.ly/2QAiHii>
9. **Laudato Si’ Week** will be celebrated **May 16-24**. Sign up to receive updates and opportunities for prayer and action: <https://laudatosiweek.org/>
10. Read this article from the IMF blog, “**Engendering Recovery: Budgeting With Women in Mind,**” about investing in women to help society recover from the pandemic: <https://bit.ly/2Qz5Z3m>
11. Explore this new report on Catholic social teaching and **biodiversity** from CIDSE, a coalition of Catholic justice organizations of which MOGC is a member: <https://bit.ly/3aMba6U>
12. Read this statement on **vaccine access and distribution** by the directors of Catholic social justice organizations involved in CIDSE: <https://bit.ly/3eGSvdJ>
13. Explore the new Resource Center from the Georgetown Institute for **Women, Peace, and Security**, a repository of resources for those interested in the intersection of gender and conflict: <https://bit.ly/2QGfE8a>
14. From Nonviolence International, explore this free virtual **book on nonviolence**, including an interactive database of nonviolent tactics: <https://bit.ly/3gLMJKn>
15. The podcast, **Jubilee for the Earth**, produced by the Columban Missionaries, now has a companion study guide. Download the study guide here: <https://columbancenter.org/jubileepocast>
16. Download the new report “**Breaking the Israel-Palestine Status Quo**” by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: <https://bit.ly/3u3A0qd>
17. Sign the petition to tell Walmart to sign the Neptune declaration to **protect sea laborers from trafficking**. The petition is hosted by the U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking: <https://bit.ly/3eHZino>
18. Friends in Solidarity is hosting a “**Virtual Nurses Day Celebration**” on **May 12 at 2:00 p.m.** Eastern time to salute all nurses, especially the Healthcare personnel at the Catholic Health Training Institute in Wau, South Sudan. **Fr. Tom Tiscornia, MM**, former chaplain of the Institute, will speak. Register: <https://bit.ly/3e3Taac>
19. **Global Days of Action on Military Spending** are April 10-May 17. Learn how you can take action against wasteful military spending: <https://demilitarize.org/>
10. Read this article from the IMF blog, “**Engendering**