

October 2020

AFJN eBulletin

Over the last few months the Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) has welcomed new faces and said farewell to beloved friends. You joined us as we prayed for peace, true dialogue, and reconciliation for the United States (US). We examined modern slavery in its different forms like human trafficking, racism, and systemic injustice and we invited you to sign CALAR's "A Declaration: Africa Remember Who You Are."

AFJN, our African chapters, and coalition partners have embraced the 'new normal' of remote work and virtual communication. Together we found creative ways to advocate for justice and the dignity of all God's children. In Nigeria and Uganda, sisters and youth are a hit on the radio waves with their COVID-19 education and domestic and gender-based violence sensitization and advocacy. In Liberia and Cameroon, AFJN continues to promote a culture of transparency and accountability and we look forward to 2021's workshops. See some of the highlights of our work below and also on our website:

www.afjn.org.



The COVID-19 pandemic has presented our ministry with unforeseen challenges. Consider donating to support webinars and radio programs in Africa that cover important issues of the day like: domestic violence, human trafficking, corruption, and women and youth empowerment.

[Donate Today!](#)



A Declaration: Africa Remember Who You Are

The Coalition for Africa's Liberation and Restoration (CALAR), initiated by AFJN, was launched on the Anniversary of Africa's Liberation Day, May 25th, to mobilize Africans to claim their rights and dignity as God's children, and protect their heritage and resources against those whose actions continue to exploit Africa and subject Africans at home and abroad to all forms of indignities. Faith-based groups, SECAM staff, civil society organizations, and individuals have already signed.

To join the CALAR network
email: info@calarnetwork.org

- Read and Sign “[A Declaration: Africa Remember Who You Are](#)”
- Pray “[Africa Renewal: A Prayer of Gratitude, Repentance, and Commitment](#)”
- Watch the [video from the kick-off event](#)

(English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish versions available)

News and Events

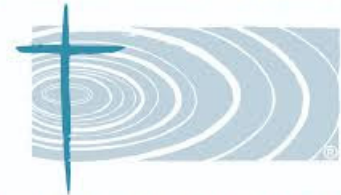
AFJN Welcomes New Organizational Member!

This Summer AFJN was happy to expand our organizational membership to include the [Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ \(PHJC\)](#). We thank them for their trust in this ministry and look forward to working with them on these important issues for Africa.

AFJN also welcomes **Sr. Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC** to [AFJN's Board of Directors](#). Sr. Iwuoha is a Nigerian member of the American Province of the PHJC where she is also on the Provincial Leadership Team. She has a legal and social education background with a focus on criminal justice and specialization in law and public policy.

Organizational Members consist of religious congregations or organizations interested in supporting AFJN work on US-Africa relations. To learn more about how your organization can become a member, email membership@afjn.org.

Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ



Partners in the work of the Spirit



Organizational Member Briefing

On May 12, AFJN held a briefing for organizational members. In the briefing, AFJN staff showcased how we continue to be good stewards of the resources given by organizational members, funders, and donors. The members were given testimonials of how, through AFJN workshops and outreach, people on the ground are being educated and empowered to create real change in their communities.

Organizational Members interested in additional briefings on our [Focus Campaigns](#) or to learn more about AFJN best practices may email [Lydia Andrews](#).

Join AFJN's E-Network!

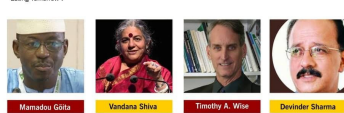
Action Alerts
Advocacy News
Annual Reports
E-Bulletins

Sign Up!

Webinar on AGRA's Failed Promises – Liberating our Agriculture

A recently released report by a coalition of German and African civil society groups, 'False Promises,' shows that the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa is failing on its own terms. Based partly on a research paper by Timothy A. Wise, the report underscores the destructive work of AGRA and similar models of agriculture in Africa.

HOMEF, in collaboration with AFJN, is hosting a webinar that will highlight the failed promises of AGRA and the so-called Green Revolution and chart the path for the liberation of our agricultural systems.



On August 6, 2020, AFJN co-sponsored a webinar on "AGRA's Failed Promises – Liberating our Agriculture" with [Health of Mother Earth Foundation](#) on the "False Promises: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa" report which shows that the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is failing on its own terms. The report underscored the destructive work of AGRA and similar models of agriculture in Africa. The event featured Vandana Shiva, Mamadou Göita, Devinder Sharma, Timothy A. Wise, and Nnimmo Bassey. To view the video of the event [click here](#).

AFJN Office Blessing

On October 14, 2020, AFJN hosted a virtual office blessing with AFJN's organizational members, chapters, partners, and supporters from around the world. The blessing featured prayers and reflections from the board, staff, and partners. Thank you for your prayers and support. Let us pray together that this is only the beginning of many new and exciting endeavors in the US and in Africa.

To view the event page, including video and text, [click here](#) or visit our [YouTube Channel](#). *AFJN has the same address but the Suite number is now the 2nd Floor.*



AFJN INITIATIVES

- Democratic Engagement
- Food Security
- Gender-Based Violence
- Good Governance
- Human Rights
- Land, Seed, and Water Rights
- Rule of Law
- Trafficking-in-Persons
- Youth and Women Empowerment

COUNTRIES

Cameroon
D R Congo
Ghana
Liberia
Kenya
Nigeria
Tanzania
Uganda

USAID Virtual Summit

AFJN presented a poster at the (virtual) USAID 2020 Evidence Summit on Strategic Religious Engagement from October 6-8. Our poster highlighted the importance of engaging the community in the planning and execution of projects such that the community takes ownership of the project from the outset. To learn more [click here](#).

Congressional and US Administration Meetings

AFJN increased our policy outreach due to the urgency of much needed [debt relief, disaster and recovery aid](#) brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic both in Africa and in the US. We asked Congress for a [moratorium on rents increases](#), affecting many Africans in the diaspora, during the pandemic. We advocated and continue to advocate for additional aid and resources for Africa that include just governance especially in the distribution of the funds to ensure the money goes to help the poor and vulnerable. We called for a return of US funding to the [World Health Organization](#). We also advocated for US support of the International Monetary Fund's [Special Drawing Rights](#) (SDRs). Members of AFJN and our coalition partners participated in virtual Hill meetings with the Offices of: Sen. Edward Markey, Sen. Tim Kaine, Sen. Jim Inhofe, Sen. Lindsey Graham, Sen. James E. Risch, Sen. Chris Van Hollen, Rep. Jamie Raskin, Rep. Karen Bass, Assistant Secretary Tibor Nagy, and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Stay informed and [Take Action!](#)

Tell Senate to Support a Global Strategy to COVID-19

To prevent and stop the global economy from further collapsing, as was the case in 2008, to protect further losses of US jobs, and to save lives, join AFJN in asking the Senate to support the issuance of SDRs by the IMF. SDRs are special bonds to member nations that do not cost the US anything. We are also asking for debt relief and additional foreign aid to respond to humanitarian crises and COVID-19 related challenges.

To learn more about SDRs [click here](#).

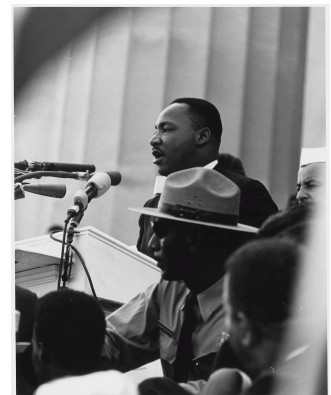
Email Your Senator Today!

We need you! -- To join us on the Hill and learn how to advocate for Africa, please email [Ntama Bahati](#).

AFJN Addresses Systemic Injustices Including Racism

Georges Floyd's death sparked a global movement calling on people of all colors and creeds to rethink systemic injustice. Read AFJN's [Press Statement here](#). Rev. Aniedi Okure, OP, AFJN's Executive Director, was quoted in several articles on systemic injustice, race relations, and police brutality. To read more, visit [AFJN in the News](#).

AFJN also advocated for the rights of people of African descent facing injustice in China as one of the signers of the Advocacy Network for Africa's (AdNA) letter to the Chinese Embassy. Learn more about our Focus Campaigns around [justice here](#).



AFJN Staff News

In Memoriam: Lucy Tyson Huffman, Accounting Volunteer



“Blessed are they who die in the Lord; they will rest in peace for their good deeds will accompany them.” –
Revelations 14:13

Dr. Huffman's Funeral Mass was presided over by AFJN's Executive Director Rev. Aniedi Okure, OP and concelebrated by Rev. Barthelemy Bazemo, MAfr.

On August 27, 2020, AFJN said goodbye to Dr. Lucy Tyson Huffman, a dear friend passionately dedicated to the mission. Not even ill health could deter her from serving. AFJN was able to pray with her and to tell her how much she touched our lives and the lives of the Africans on the continent, to tell her how many people around the globe knew her by name (if not by sight) for her great contributions to AFJN over the years (producing a small smile from her), to tell her how much we love and would miss her, and to tell her how grateful we are to God for blessing us with her – that we were so lucky to have had the privilege to have known and worked with her. We prayed to God for a peaceful transition and in thanksgiving for the blessing that was she. She made her Final Commitment into the Lay Discalced Carmelite Order before she passed. To read the full memorial [click here](#).

Thank You Father Aniedi for Your Years of Selfless Service to AFJN

After serving as Executive Director of AFJN for nine years (2011-2020), Rev. Aniedi Okure, OP is moving to a new assignment on another continent. Fr. Aniedi has been appointed the Dominican General Promoter for Justice and Peace and Permanent Delegate to the United Nations. AFJN is blessed to have had such a gifted leader over these many years. Father Aniedi brings a wealth of his experience to bear on his new engagements as he continues to advance the cause of justice around the globe. May God Bless you now and always Father Aniedi!

Fr. Aniedi has indicated his interest to serve as an [Expert on Africa](#) for AFJN so he is still connected with us. We look forward to future collaboration with him in his new role(s).





Rev. Bazemo panelist for Howard University's "Countering Violent Extremism in Africa: The Role of Religion" (Oct. 29-30)

Congrats Doctor Bazemo!

This past spring, AFJN's Policy Analyst, Rev. Barthelémy Bazemo, MAfr, successfully defended his PhD dissertation titled "*Citizen Engagement and Democratic Governance: The Significance of October 2014 Popular Uprisings in the Political Landscape of Burkina Faso*" at Howard University. He also made a presentation on his findings to the AFJN Board of Directors.

Please join us in congratulating Rev. Bazemo on such a wonderful and well deserved achievement!

Nmata Bahati - Chair of New AdNA Accountability Working Group

AFJN's very own, Nmata Bahati has been selected to Chair AdNA's "Accountability Working Group." Bahati was instrumental in the creation of this new working group that was "established to create, shape and lead AdNA's largely collaborative initiative to deploy accountability tools to contribute to eradicating centuries-old and ongoing exploitation of Africa."



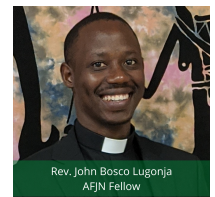
For information on how to apply for our Internship Program, [click here](#).

AFJN Internship Program - Now Virtual!

AFJN moved our Internship Program online this summer (due to COVID-19). To read the biographies of our interns, [click here](#). We are so grateful to our interns who participated in morning briefings on Africa, Congressional Zoom meetings on important policies, media outreach, and publications.

AFJN Welcomes Rev. Lugonja, A Priest from Uganda

Rev. John Bosco Lugonja is a Graduate Fellow with AFJN. He is a Catholic priest from Uganda studying International Affairs at



Notre Dame University. Read his full biography [here](#).

Womens Empowerment: Religious Sisters Hard at Work!



"I cannot make the mistake of going [working abroad] after listening to these stories [of victim-survivors]." - Uganda Workshop Participant

"We are enlightened, poised, and empowered to be agents of change in our local communities, and the world at large." - Ghana Youth Workshop Group Reflection

AFJN's [Women's Empowerment Project](#) continues to be making big strides on the continent even though our in-person workshops had to be postponed due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. **Sisters in Uganda** have been doing media advocacy on Jubilee Radio and Northern Uganda Radio Wa, they held workshops assisting victim-survivors of trafficking, including sensitizing communities about their plight and welcoming them back into society. They also held a "Youth for Social Justice" workshop tackling domestic and gender-based violence. **Sisters in Nigeria** have held radio programs on domestic violence in addition to several workshops and training. They visited high schools raising awareness on sexual and gender-based violence and spoke with Human Rights Commission staffers. **Sister in Nigeria and Ghana** co-sponsored "Youth for Change," an online workshop for youth around social injustice and Catholic social teaching where over 165 youth and 23 sisters participated. AFJN-Nigeria also has a social media campaign around [#WeStandForJustice](#). **Nigerian Youth** are holding Weekly Youth Chats (peer-to-peer education on rape), were featured on radio programs, and are advocating for children's playgrounds. **Ghanian Youth** created a Global Awareness Club. AFJN also held an online meeting with the President of Women Religious in Ghana and the National and Diocesan President for Catholic Women Organization about collaboration to advance justice in Ghana. To learn more about these programs visit our [Women's Empowerment page](#).

"This workshop is amazing [...] before now, I see cases of rape on television and social media and I feel little concern for the victims, but after this workshop, I feel I have a responsibility to humanity to be part of the movement to end rape and bring about change in society." - Nigeria Youth Workshop Participant

Promoting Good Governance and Justice

AFJN continues working towards a more just Africa. It is by improving the livelihood of Africans on the continent, by providing Africans more opportunities at home, that African lives matter and there will be no need for Africans to migrate to hostile countries.



In Cameroon, the Diocese of Bafoussam Justice and Peace Commission continues to be a model in the fight against corruption with AFJN partnership, even amid the pandemic the Birth Certificate and Identification Restoration Project is advancing. People are feeling empowered to stand up for themselves and are refusing to pay bribes. **In Ghana**, AFJN is working with the Diocese of Wa to gather research for a future campaign against land grabbing. **In Liberia**, the Bishop of Gbarnga has taken the advocacy project of "Promoting a Culture of Transparency and Accountability in Our Communities" to Radio Paraclete after the in-person workshop was halted by COVID-19. **In the D R Congo**, AFJN advanced the cause for justice for prisoners with minor offenses and won. AFJN also campaigned against two attempts to undermine the constitutional structure of the government, in June and July 2020. To read more about our campaigns on [Justice](#) and [Just Governance](#) visit our [Focus Campaigns](#) page.

Support Our Work

Africa Faith and Justice Network

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