

## Message from AFJN's Executive Director Dr. Steven Nabieu Rogers



Dear Friends in Christ,

As I travel around Africa and meet our hundreds of AFJN volunteers and team members, I'm filled with joy and gratitude seeing the impact of our 42-year-old mission to address the structures that keep people in poverty. We recently held a reflective memorial mass to honor the lives of our founders and all who have contributed to our work with Africa, giving thanks for their dedication to serving the least among us. This year, we're celebrating 10 years of advocacy against land grabbing, which has yielded positive results, such as in Ghana where communities are reclaiming their land and preventing predatory businesses from exploiting it, and in Uganda, where a pastoral community is exploring agriculture to improve their livelihoods and reduce child trafficking. As people of faith, we are called to stand in solidarity with the vulnerable and to advocate for justice. That is why our peace song "Let Us Live Together Without Tribalism" is promoting peace and reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We're also grateful for the reduction of the proposed 5% excise tax on remittances to 1% in the US, thanks to our joint advocacy efforts, which will help minimize the burden on African immigrants sending money to loved ones and ensure more resources reach families and communities in need. I invite you to also to take action by reading and sharing our newsletter and joining our advocacy in whichever way you can. May our work be a reflection of God's love and justice, and may we continue to serve as instruments of peace and reconciliation in the world.



Donations



Membership



### Celebrating the Legacy of Founders, Friends and Supporters

On August 19 AFJN celebrated the first [Annual Memorial Mass](#) at the Missionaries of Africa. This hybrid event brought together people from around the world to remember those who, served during their lifetime. Some were founders, directors, board members, volunteers and all were supporters of the mission. Thanks to the Main Celebrant Rev. Rev. Barthelemy Bazemo, MAfr with Concelebrants: Rev. Barwende Medard Sane, SJ; Rev. Alexander Balma, MI; Rev. Joseph Bukenya; Rev. Ebuka Mbanude; and Rev. Douglas Ogato, MAfr for making this celebration possible. [Video of the event](#) is on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Please join with us in keeping the following people in your prayers:

Cardinal Richard Baawobr, MAfr  
Rev. Jule Barret, MAfr  
Mr. Mohammed Bun Bida  
Ms. Carole Collins  
Rev. Joseph (Sjef) Donders, MAfr  
Rev. Bill Dyer, MAfr

Sr. Mary Jo Maher, IHM  
Sr. Janice McLaughlin, MM  
Rev. Jim Noonon, MM  
Rev. Ojamba  
Mr. Omega  
Sr. Maura Prendergast, SNDdeN

Mrs. Mary C. Furlong  
Rev. Girod  
Rev. Anthony J. (Tony) Gittins, CSSp  
Sr. Patricia Hafey, MM  
Rev. Ted Hayden, SMA  
Sr. Maureen Healy, SU  
Mrs. Lucy Huffman  
Sr. Frederika Jacob, SNDdeN  
Sr. Nancy Keho, MSHR  
Rev. Peter Landry, MAfr  
Rev. John Lynch, MAfr

Mrs. Angelina C. Puopolo  
Rev. Richard Roy, MAfr  
Ms. Nyemba Thérèse  
Mr. Al Gbi Toe, Sr.  
Rev. Thomas P. Tunney, CSSp  
Sr. Teresita Weind, SNDdeN  
Ms. Eileen F. (Crawford) White  
Sr. Madeline Wilcot, SHC  
Sr. Madeline Therese Wilholt, CSC  
Rev. Luigi Zanotto, MCCJ

## US Advocacy

### AFJN Joins Calls Supporting Diplomacy Over Sanctions in US - South Africa Relations

AFJN joins the Advocacy Network for Africa (AdNA) in urging Congress to reject [HR 4051](#) and [HR 2633](#), opposing punitive measures against South Africa and advocating for diplomacy grounded in mutual respect and international law. [Click here to learn more.](#)



### AFJN Hosts Ambassador Jean Bosco Barege of the Republic of Burundi

In August, AFJN welcomed Ambassador Jean Bosco Barege of the Republic of Burundi and his team to our office for a rich exchange on humanitarian diplomacy, cultural engagement, and renewed collaboration to promote peace and a deeper US-Burundi understanding. Discussions centered on opportunities that align with

AFJN's Africa-US relations mission. Previously AFJN worked on promoting [peaceful coexistence](#) in Burundi. AFJN looks forward to partnering with the Embassy to showcase Burundi's vibrant culture and provide a more balanced understanding of the country beyond common conflict-driven-news narratives.



### Exhibiting at the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in Atlanta

AFJN's Dr. Rogers with Board Chair, Sr. Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC (Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ) and Board Member Arleen Peterson exhibited during this year's [Leadership Conference of Women Religious](#) in Atlanta, GA. This event is key in sharing our mission among women religious communities in the US.



### Networking Event Around Modern Foreign Assistance

AFJN attended the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (MFAN)'s launch of the "[Consensus Principles & Recommendations for the Future of U.S. International Assistance](#)". The panel discussed the report and the current approaches to foreign assistance and the possibilities of future changes.



### Continued Advocacy Efforts for Peace in the DRC

While AFJN welcomed the June 27, 2025 peace agreement following the April 25 political declaration, AFJN continues to advocate for a genuine resolution, as M23 rebels still control a Congolese territory larger than Delaware and three times the size of Rhode Island. Despite claims of progress, the situation on the ground shows continued violence and increasing signs of de facto partition, in defiance of international appeals for respect of the DRC's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Read AFJN Policy Analyst, Mr. Jacques Bahati's article "[10 Million Dead, Territory Lost: The War in Congo Shows No Sign of Ending](#)".

On June 12 AFJN attended the "[Congolese Women Leaders Raise Concerns about President Donald Trump's Minerals and Peace Deal in the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)" event at the National Press Club with our student interns. The relationship between conflict minerals, mining, and instability in the region is why support for the "[Bridge to DRC Act of 2023](#)" remains a key policy. AFJN welcomed the peace agreement and draft peace deal in May between Rwanda and the DRC, respecting the DRC's sovereignty and emphasizing the need for complete de-escalation of violence.

Prior to this agreement, AFJN and coalition efforts contributed to the international condemnation as well as [measures](#) against Rwanda's actions and M23 including the April 30 "[Joint Statement on Efforts to Support Peace in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)" by the US Department of State.

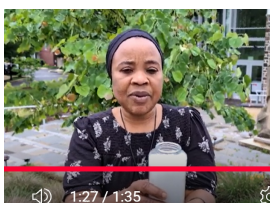
## Coalition Letter to Congress Calling for End to Arms Sales in Sudan

On June 4 AFJN was one of over 40 organizations that signed the Center for Civilians in Conflict's [letter to Members of Congress to end arm sales to the United Arab Emirates](#) due to their support of the Rapid Support Forces' in Sudan.



### Letters Opposing the One Big Beautiful Act

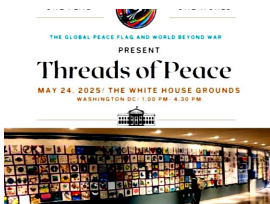
On June 3 AFJN was one of hundreds of organizations that signed a [letter to the US Senate](#) opposing the "One Big Beautiful Act" that would eliminate healthcare, create food insecurity, and deepen poverty especially in marginalized communities due to funding cuts. On May 23 AFJN's Policy Analyst, Mr. Ntama Bahati, with summer interns hand delivered a [letter against Section 112105](#), proposing a 5% excise tax on international remittances, of the Act to the to the US Senate Committee on Finance and individual Senators which AFJN believes unfairly burdens African migrants and their families.



### Relay of Hope - Jubilee 2024 Turn Debt into Hope

In June, Jubilee USA Network (AFJN is an organizational member) had a team outside the G7 in Canada raising awareness of the impact of the debt burden on nations, including African nations, calling for debt relief and restructuring, and improved financial mechanisms. Sign the "[Jubilee 2025: Petition to G7, G20, UN, IMF and World Bank](#)" here.

On May 28 AFJN joined other organizations in Washington, DC for the [Relay of Hope](#) bringing awareness to the crushing debt burden facing many African nations. AFJN also created a short video including a prayer and actions to take. Watch the [video here](#).



### Threads of Peace

On May 24 AFJN Executive Director, Dr. Steven Nabieu Rogers spoke at the [Threads of Peace](#) event, on the White House Eclipse, that uses fashion to raise awareness of global conflicts and to bring unity to the global community.

## Reintroduction of House Resolution 40 (Reparations)

On April 3 AFJN participated in Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (MA-7) Office's call providing updates on the reintroduction of House Resolution 40 (Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act) that [AFJN endorsed](#) earlier in the year.

## Responsible Minerals Trading and Tracing

The Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade (PPA) Leadership Team reviewed our April "[Call for Action on Mineral Traceability and Conflict Financing in Eastern DRC](#)" letter and said they will be circulating it to the wider membership for action. The message will include a post-Strategy-workshop communication for members alongside related resources and statements. This is a meaningful step forward in raising awareness and building solidarity across the PPA network.

## Just Governance

## Democratic Republic of the Congo





## AFJN's Unity Through Diversity: Children Sing for a United Congo

Believing that the Congolese people hold the key to resolving the ongoing conflict, AFJN continues to serve as a neutral voice - empowering communities in eastern Congo to choose peace by embracing the country's rich ethnic diversity as a source of strength. Division is not only a known trigger of armed conflict, but also a favored tool of those who oppose peace, rule of law, accountability, transparency, and democracy. In collaboration with partners, including local peace-promoting musicians, we released a [children's version](#) of the song "[Let Us Live Together Without Tribalism](#)," which has deeply resonated with the public. We invite you to support this message by watching, liking, and sharing the video to help amplify the children's call for unity and peace.

Watch the videos from the [Peaceful Coexistence Concert and Competition here](#).

## Ghana



## Reflecting on a Decade of Impact: Strengthening Land Justice and Responsible Investment in Ghana



This year, AFJN's land grabbing prevention and responsible investment initiative marked a significant milestone by returning to Ghana's Volta and Oti regions, where we organized a series of impactful town hall meetings. In communities such as [Anfoe](#), [Avevi](#), [Helekpe](#), [Zomayi](#), and [Morkplikpo](#), we engaged residents, traditional leaders, and local stakeholders in discussions on land rights and responsible investment.

AFJN recently convened with the Brewaniase communities, whom we've been engaged with since 2014, to evaluate the initiative's impact and strategize on reinforcing the gains while addressing ongoing challenges. This culminated in a working session between a delegation of landowners, local chiefs, and representatives of Volta Red—the agribusiness that acquired land initially leased by Herakles Farms. The parties explored practical steps to fully implement the terms of the lease, including the fulfillment of Volta Red's pledged corporate social responsibility. A detailed report is currently being prepared to document the stories behind the photos and videos captured during this mission.

These projects are made possible by funding from the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities and other organizational and individual members.



## Ghana - WEP

### Tackling Trafficking, Early and Child Marriage, and Domestic Servitude in Northern Ghana

Over the last several months AFJN with AFJN-Ghana and local organizations and government offices continue to raise awareness about the issues of human trafficking, child marriage, and domestic servitude using various forms of media (social media, TV, radio).

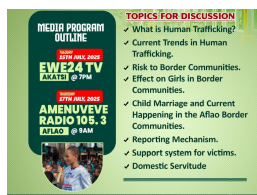


In collaboration with the local community, AFJN established a girls' club in Tusani Ayendi, Northern Ghana, as an alternative to support girls' education and prevent early and child marriage. The club has received positive feedback from local elders who value keeping girls in school and are supportive of initiatives that promote their well-being and education.



### YouTube Video "Stop Human Trafficking, Child Marriage & Domestic Servitude Now!!!"

AFJN co-sponsored the coalition "[Stop Human Trafficking, Child Marriage & Domestic Servitude Now!!!](#)" video as a resources to raise awareness of these issues, reduce their occurrences, and to highlight the work being done to protect and help victim survivors.



### AFJN-Ghana on EVE24 TV and Amenuveve Radio 105.3

[AFJN-Ghana](#) was featured on EVE24 TV and Amenuveve Radio 105.3 to discuss the following issues: human trafficking, child marriage, and domestic servitude. These programs also highlighted resources available to victims and ways to report violations.

## Nigeria - WEP

Content mainly provided by [Mr. Christian Nkanta](#), AFJN-Nigeria Communications Officer.



### Protecting Children Through Memorandums of Understanding in Nigeria

Throughout 2025, AFJN, in collaboration with AFJN-Nigeria, AFJN-Nigeria Youth Advocates, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons

(NAPTIP), the Dominicans for Justice and Peace, and other partners, has been conducting community outreach programs to raise awareness about protecting children from early and child marriage, domestic servitude, and child labor. As part of these efforts, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are being signed with local leaders, outlining provisions to safeguard children's rights, including parental declarations of intent to give out their child and community monitoring of children's whereabouts.

These MOUs aim to establish community safeguards to protect children from abuse and exploitation. During the outreach programs, community members expressed concerns about various issues, including unemployment, infrastructure development, access to electricity, poverty, education system improvement, and the need for government intervention and law enforcement. Additionally, community members emphasized the importance of involving a broader segment of the community, including women, and highlighted the need for police reform and anti-corruption measures to restore trust.

AFJN thanks the speakers including: Dr. Rogers, Rev. Sr. Teresa Sunday, Isaac Obot, Barrister Mrs. Amaka, Reverend Sister Stella Usen, Etido Ekpeyong, Chrisitan Nkanta, Ikot Ekpen, Abasiofon Udo, Mrs. Emem Ukpabio, Maureen Mfon, Mr. Etido Udo, and Mr. Peter Ewah (and many others).



### Akwa Ibom State



On August 6, the team visited the key community leaders, including the Village Head, family heads, women leaders, and youth leaders within the clan in Ekpeyong 2, Essien Udim Local Government Area (LGA) to educate and empower community stakeholders on the negative impacts of these issues that deeply affect the welfare and development of children and youth in the community. The Village Head expressed strong support for the initiative, encouraging continued advocacy within churches and schools. He emphasized that because the message comes from local youth advocates, it holds greater credibility and resonates more profoundly with the younger generation.



On August 2 the team visited the Amayan Clan in Ikot Ekpen LGA where they presented the MOU to the Clan Council and educated the members to the detrimental effects of these issues on the children and their community. Discussions also addressed the importance of community-level monitoring, tackling socio-economic factors, and a multi-level collaborative approach to enforcement especially including government officials.



On July 6, the team visited Ikpe Ikot Nkon, engaging with Presbyterian Church members and their pastor, who pledged to incorporate tackling these issues in his next sermon. The community signed the MOU and look forward to future collaboration.



On June 27 the team engaged the Council of Village Heads in Ini LGA. Many members of the council were enthusiastic inviting the team to go give similar sensitization sessions to their communities to further the advocacy engagement. Recommending the inclusion of the Christian Association of Nigeria to help disseminate the message among their congregations and the MOUs.

On June 5 the team visited an Ikot Ekwang community and successfully engaged leaders to participate in the MOU which highlighted their shared commitment to protecting children's rights. The chief promised to prioritize the MOU





as a topic in their upcoming community meetings and expressed interest in inviting the advocates back.



The Village Head of the Mbiaobong community in Ini LGA announced that as of May 3, it is officially law that children must have a signed agreement by him prior to leaving the community. The village town crier was tasked to publicly announce the new child safeguarding regulation. [Watch the video here](#). This community has a strong collaboration among key figures (including: the chiefs, the wife of the paramount ruler, the youth president, and the women leader, in addition to the Village Head) in their commitment to tackle these issues.



### Youth Advocacy Meeting with Leader Umoh of Ikot Ekpene Local Government Council

On May 28, the AFJN Youth Advocates met with Mr. Nkereuwem Umoh, the esteemed Leader of the House of Ikot Ekpene Local Government Council where they sensitized him on these issues and gave him the MOU that called on the local government council, to enact a formal law mandating the institutionalization of child protection within the community. Mr. Umoh was very receptive and enthusiastic to get things started to pass the law as it is a proactive approach to safeguarding children and preventing exploitation. He pledged to assign two councilors from the local government to actively participate in ward-to-ward visits.

### Ebonyi State:



On May 26 the group conducted a church outreach at the Assemblies of God Church Oguzuruonyeya, Ebonyi LGA where they successfully mobilized the church leadership and congregation to take a firm stand against child abuse, exploitation, and harmful traditional practices. The Reverend Pastor and the church community were proactive in accepting responsibility for child protection and advocacy which reinforces the importance of faith-based institutions as strategic allies in community-driven efforts to end child marriage and domestic servitude.



On April 28 the team visited Oswanka Village in Ezza Inyimaegu LGA and met with key stakeholders, youth, church, and women leaders in the community who were enthusiastic about the MOUs and creating additional awareness of these issues.

## Rivers State:

In July, AFJN held an event in Port Harcourt to end early and child marriage and domestic servitude. The event was lead by Sister Fidelia.

## MOU Implementation Following Ebonyi State High-Level Policy Briefing



In May, following AFJN's high-level policy briefing in April on ending early and child marriage and domestic servitude visit to His Royal Highness Eze Oliver Eze, His Royal Highness officially approved the implementation of the Community-Based Child Monitoring System and signing the MOU to regulate domestic child placements, ensuring protection, accountability, and child welfare. Additionally, in August he and other key stakeholders participated in a policy feedback

session that noted: the official adoption of the MOU and approval of the community monitoring system, with plans to continue the awareness campaigns across all villages. Over 3,000 households in Eke-Awoke stand to benefit from these historic decisions.

**“We must know where our children are, with who, and for what purpose.**

**Let us join hands to protect and give proper direction to our future**

**hopes, my good people of Eka-Awoke Kingdom.” - His Royal Highness Eze**

***Oliver Eze (August 2025)***



## Empowering Over 1000 Youth in Advocating Against Early and Child Marriage and Domestic Servitude in Ebonyi State





In August, AFJN mobilized and engaged over 1,000 youths, five youth representing every parish in the state, across 13 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ebonyi State to end early and child marriage and domestic servitude. The program established the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON) Diocesan Body as the official reporting channel for cases related to domestic servitude and child marriage. The CYON Leadership and Chairperson were also appointed to ensure effective coordination and community outreach. The events, facilitated by Rev. Sr. Teresa Sunday, witnessed strong commitment and active participation from the youth, leading to the creation of a sustainable youth-driven reporting and monitoring system across the state. These youth advocates have been empowered to observe, report, and work against child exploitation. The collaboration between AFJN, CYON, and local communities strengthens the ongoing efforts to protect children in Ebonyi State from harmful practices.

### "If You See Something, Say Something!" Youth Campaign in Akwa Ibom State



Watch the video about the ["If you see something, say something!"](#) Don't keep quiet and allow Domestic servitude, Early child marriage, and Child labor to continue in your state, area, or community" youth campaign.

### Uganda - WEP



### Youth Community Farms in Lokupo and Iriiri

The Youth Community farms in Lokupo and Iriiri are getting started. After learning about key farming concepts (including making their own fertilizers) the community has plowed the fields and planted seeds. Additionally, in Lukupo the community was made aware that there is a water project with much of the needed infrastructure ready, however local disputes have delayed the release of the water. Key stakeholders, now aware of the situation, are looking to remedy it and the community should have access to water.

Later this year AFJN plans to expand this pilot project to two other impoverished communities where women are burdened with the responsibility of providing sustenance for the families in this difficult



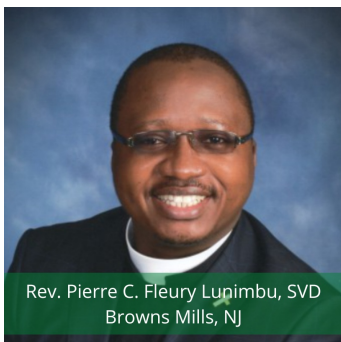
region. By training these women in sustainable agricultural practices, we hope to curb the food insecurity that is driving child migration. One woman who has been sponsored has started a bakery to be self sufficient and hopefully to build revenues and provide opportunities for the community.

Read Sr. Mary Lilly Driciru, MSMMC's article "[Women and Community Empowerment in Karamoja Uganda](#)" about the work being done.

This project is made possible by grants from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Base Communities, and other organizational and individual members.

## News and Events

### AFJN Welcomes New Board Members



Rev. Pierre C. Fleury Lunimbu, SVD  
Browns Mills, NJ



Rev. Uju Okeahialam, CSSP  
Baltimore, MD



Sr. Mary Tiernan, CSC  
South Bend Indiana

### AFJN Congratulates Sr. Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC on Her New Role



Join AFJN as we congratulate Sr. Nkechi Iwuoha, PHJC in her installation as Second Councilor on the [Congregational Council of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ](#) in Germany. Drawing upon her experience as Board Chair of the African Faith and Justice Network, Sr. Nkechi brings visionary leadership and deep commitment to justice to her new role. Her installation reflects a continuation of faithful service, now extended into global leadership within the congregation. We honor her spiritual dedication and look forward to the gift of her counsel and collaboration in the ongoing mission of accompaniment and upliftment.

### AFJN Giving Back with Catholic Charities' Share Food Network



On June 26, AFJN staff, volunteer, and interns gathered at the [Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington's Share Food Network](#) to give back to the local community. We were one of several organizations and individuals who prepare food orders for delivery to local churches, pantries, and other organizations.



"[A Juneteenth Reflection During the Jubilee Year of Hope](#)" by Dr. Rogers



"[Call to Compassion: Reflecting on the Ugandan Martyrs and Refugee Rights](#)" by Dr. Rogers



## Internships



Ms. Jahael Paul, AFJN Spring Intern from Illinois Wesleyan University; Ms. Mokua Makori Summer Intern and recent Masters Graduate from the University of Houston Clear-Lake; Mr. Roberto Castro Montano Summer Intern from the University of the Ozarks; and Ms. Natalie Blouin Summer Intern from La Salle University.

AFJN is looking for Summer, Fall, and Spring interns. More information can be found on [AFJN's Internship page](#). Learn more about [AFJN's Internship Program and apply online here](#).

## AFJN News



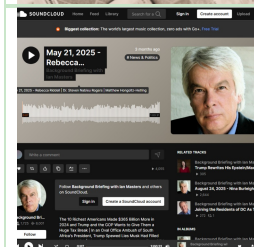
### AFJN WEP Featured in *Adom Online* in Ghana

On July 18, AFJN was mentioned as a partner in Ivy Priscilla Setordjie's article "Amewuga: Border town takes bold stand against human trafficking, child marriage, and modern slavery" featured in *Adom Online*. [Read it here](#).



### Press Statement on DRC-Rwanda Peace Agreement

On July 1, AFJN issued the "Press Statement: Africa Faith and Justice Network Cautiously Optimistic about the Brokered Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda Peace Agreement". [Read it here](#).



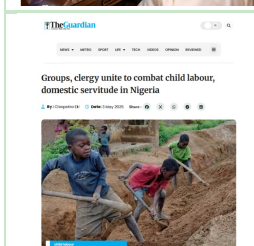
### Dr. Rogers on *Background Briefing with Ian Masters*

On May 21, Dr. Rogers was interviewed by Ian Masters on *Background Briefing with Ian Masters* on the heated US relations with South Africa. [Listen to it here](#).



### Sr. Eucharua Madueke, SNDdeN Featured in *National Catholic Reporter*

On May 15, AFJN Women Empowerment Coordinator, Sr. Eucharua Madueke, SNDdeN, was featured in Doreen Ajiambo's article "Sisters in Africa urge Pope Leo XIV to uphold Francis' commitment against trafficking" in *National Catholic Reporter*. [Read it here](#).



### AFJN WEP Featured in *The Guardian*

May 15, 2025, Sr. Bernadette Eyewan Okure, SHCJ was quoted in Cleopatra Eki's article "Groups, clergy unite to combat child labour, domestic servitude in Nigeria" in *The Guardian*. [Read it here](#).



### Press Statement on Pope Francis' Passing

On April 21 AFJN issued "Press Statement - AFJN Mourns the Passing of Pope Francis". [Read it here](#).

## Support AFJN in These Ways

## PRAY



## ADVOCATE



## DONATE



[Donate online here](#)

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