

April 2020

### AFJN eBulletin

The Africa Faith and Justice Network (AFJN) has been hard at work these last few months. When it became evident that the government would issue stay-at-home orders due to COVID-19, we moved our operations onto the cloud and have been busy ever since. With your support AFJN continues to move programs forward, influencing policy both in the United States and Africa, using whatever means are available to us. We have used this time to write to members of Congress, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), video conference with Congressional Offices, and work on moving forward our Strategic Goals. It is crucial that AFJN continue to influence policy decision makers on good governance practices especially when so many lives depend on COVID-19 funding, we hope that you will join us.



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#### Letter to Congress: Foreign Aid Must Include Good Governance

On April 16th, AFJN [sent a letter](#) to Congresswoman Nita Lowey, Chairwoman of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, warning that COVID-19 foreign assistance could end up in personal bank accounts without due diligence. Already too many US dollars going to Africa are not used for their intended purposes. While it is crucial that funding reach Africa to combat COVID-19, it is essential that there

#### AFJN Analysis on IMF's Debt Cancellation Announcement

On April 13th, the IMF announced 6-months temporary debt service relief due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Ntama Bahati argues that any debt cancellation or relief must not become another opportunity for corrupt leaders to embezzle. He quotes Democratic Republic of Congo Professor as saying "If politicians do not change their selfish behavior, it will be difficult to design and implement public policies that meet the economic

are mechanisms in place to ensure transparency and accountability so that funds are used as intended to help the poor and most vulnerable.

[Read more.](#)

and social concerns of African populations.” Read the article [“International Monetary Fund Must Tie Debt Cancellation to Transparency Measures.”](#)

## Womens Empowerment: Religious Sisters Hard at Work!



### AFJN-Nigeria Launches Newsletter!

The coalition of sisters under the umbrella of AFJN-Nigeria published their first newsletter in January 2020 to highlight their recent activities. It was circulated to various channels, including being distributed to major superiors of women and men. ACI Africa published remarks given by Sr. Teresa Okure on the activities of AFJN in Nigeria and the newsletter at the Joint Conference of Major Superiors.



### Uganda Sisters on the Radio!

Sisters in the in Kabarole District of Uganda have been very active raising awareness about human trafficking. They have hosted several outreach and awareness campaigns in local communities and churches, schools and youth groups. They were on a radio program that covering an estimated population of 600,000 of the Kabarole District and various communities.

## Advocacy Letter to Congress and Administration: COVID-19 and African Relief and Policies

On April 7th, the Advocacy Network for Africa (ADNA) sent a letter to Congress and the Administration about relief and aid for Africa amid the crisis. In the letter, which AFJN helped draft, ADNA called on the U.S. for the: expedient relief and aid to Africa, “Global Jubilee” or debt forgiveness for Africa, creation of a sustainable health infrastructure, recognition of the connection between climate change and pandemics, implementation of good governance including transparency and accountability practices, end of deportations and immigrant detention centers, and call for immediate global ceasefire. Read [“ADNA Statement on Responding to the COVID-19 Crisis in Africa.”](#)

### Congressional and US Administration Meetings

AFJN met with with the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Tibor Peter Nagy, Jr. to discuss: Immigration policy, displaced persons and refugees, Africa’s shrinking civic space and worrisome US alliances in Africa, the Youth Bulge in Africa and US investments, foreign & humanitarian aid, militarization and violations in the war on

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terror, and troop withdrawal concerns. We also had a video conference with Congressman Chris Van Hollen's Office to discuss the COVID-19 relief package for Africa and to encourage US funding of the World Health Organization.

Sign Up!

## AFJN Signer of Joint Letter to Congress for Charitable Support Funding

On March 18, AFJN was one of over 100 organizations that signed "[The Charitable Sector: COVID-19 Relief and Economic Stimulus Package](#)" letter to Congress that requested \$60 billion in stimulus funds to support charitable organizations. We are expecting all charitable organization to see a contraction in contributions and other sources of revenue. The economic instability caused by COVID-19 and state governments mandating stay-at-home orders, is widespread affecting the lives of millions of Americans and people around the world. Many charitable organizations rely on donations (like AFJN) and when individuals are being furloughed and laid-off their primary concerns is paying for food and rent, not donating to charities. However, it's important to remember that now it the time that these organizations are essential to speak on behalf of the poor an marginalized who might not have access to policy makers.

## Interfaith letter to the IMF on debt relief and aid for countries impacted by COVID-19

AFJN co-signed, Jubilee USA Network's [interfaith letter to the IMF](#) on March 23, 2020. The network called for the IMF to: expand debt relief and aid for developing countries impacted by COVID-19; enhance debt restructuring; issue debt payment moratoriums; create expedient debt reprofiling processes; mobilize additional financing resources; advise countries on public budget transparency, financial crisis prevention and raising revenues.

Sign the Petition  
to the IMF!

## No African Guinea Pigs for Coronavirus Vaccine

On April 4, 2020, in response to the Coronavirus controversy around untested vaccines being used on Africans, AFJN interviewed the DRC's Human Rights Minister, Andre Lite. In the interview the Honorable Lite, stressed that as a Cabinet Member, he had no knowledge of any vaccine testing in the

## Hope for COVID-19: DRC Sets Example with Ebola Containment and Clinical Trials

On April 19, [Voice of America](#) reported that in "BENI - An Ebola flare-up in eastern Congo" was possible due to an escaped patient. However, several prominent health experts have acknowledged the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) success in containing the Ebola outbreak (August 2018)

DRC. He was outraged on behalf of the African people. The interview is posted on the AFJN website and has been widely circulated in other forums. AFJN used the opportunity, when speaking to the Human Rights Minister, to advocate for humane measures for imprisoned persons in the DRC and to learn what was being done to protect them during this Pandemic. [Read more](#)

including John Hopkins Professor Andrew Pekosz and Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, [WHO](#) General Director while the world focuses on COVID-19. These hopeful remarks are a stark contrast to the fear from 2018 and are in large part due to the measures the DRC is taking to contain the outbreak and global advances in medical treatments from 2019 clinical trials. The success of the DCR with Ebola should give the rest of the world hope for the containment and treatment of COVID-19. [Read more.](#)

Support Our Work

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