

The Episcopal Church and the United Nations

- The Episcopal Church is a Christian denomination with 2 million members in 17 countries. It is known at the United Nations by its legal corporate name, the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (DFMS). As a faith-based organization, it is associated with the UN via the Department of Public Information (“DPI association”) and, in 2014, was granted accreditation of “special consultative status” in the Economic and Social Council.
- The Episcopal Church also is a member province of the Anglican Communion (“Anglican Consultative Council” at the UN) and participates alongside the Anglican Communion and with several ecumenical and interfaith working groups, coalitions and networks at the UN.
- The Global Relations Officer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society serves as the main representative to the UN on behalf of the Presiding Bishop and The Episcopal Church, representing the Church’s positions through advocacy, presence and hospitality. The Global Relations Officer communicates with Permanent Missions and UN staff along with senior Church officials and fosters the building of relationships between Episcopalians and the UN. The Global Relations Officer also liaises and collaborates with the Anglican Communion’s representatives and offices to the UN.
- Episcopalians serve at the UN in many other ways, including as UN staff and representatives of governments and other non-governmental organizations.
- Episcopal congregations and dioceses worldwide educate, raise awareness and develop programs on substantive issues discussed at the UN, including those featured below.
- DFMS staff and Episcopal congregations and dioceses refer to UN observances and special days to highlight areas of ministry of the Church and to focus on the spiritual and material needs of Episcopalians worldwide. Examples include World Refugee Day, World Health Day, International Women’s Day and World AIDS Day.

Environment and Climate Change

- In March 2015, the Presiding Bishop hosted a churchwide forum on climate change that referred to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and included 30 Days of Action with daily action suggestions for individuals to reduce their carbon footprints.
- The Presiding Bishop is sending a delegation of Episcopalians to the UNFCCC meetings to advocate for a strong and just international climate agreement. The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society is also providing church-wide education about the UNFCCC negotiations process and advocacy opportunities for Episcopalians to engage this process from their homes and parishes.
- The Episcopal Public Policy Network organizes grassroots advocacy in support of the Green Climate Fund, a critical financial mechanism within the structure of the UNFCCC to fund climate mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing states.

Human Trafficking

- Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society staff and New York-based Episcopalians participate in UN discussions related to human trafficking and in the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons.
- In 2013, the Society hosted a live and online churchwide educational and advocacy conversation on human trafficking during the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW).

Humanitarian Assistance

- Episcopal Relief & Development coordinates regularly with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on matters of disaster response, including the Haitian earthquake, Japanese tsunami, and American Gulf Coast rebuilding.

Indigenous Peoples

- Indigenous Episcopalians and DFMS staff participate annually at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In 2015, The Episcopal Church brought its first official delegation and submitted its first official statement, on youth, self-harm and suicide. Episcopalians also participate in the annual International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.
- DFMS staff participated in the high-level plenary meeting known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014.
- In 2012, the Presiding Bishop led a delegation that collaborated with other churches in written and oral statements repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery.

Interreligious and Ecumenical Cooperation

- DFMS staff and Episcopalians participate regularly in ecumenical advocacy and interfaith/interreligious events at the UN, including World Interfaith Harmony Week each February.
- From 2013-2015, The Episcopal Church served as co-chair of the faith-based advocacy coalition Ecumenical Women at the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

Migration and Refugee Resettlement

- The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society partners with the U.S. State Department and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to coordinate refugee resettlement in multiple US locations. Through the Society's Episcopal Migration Ministries service, we worked closely with UNHCR to resettle nearly 5,000 refugees in 2014.
- DFMS staff from Episcopal Migration Ministries and the Office of Government Relations annually observe World Refugee Day to highlight the Church's ministries and the contributions of its refugees.

Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development

- Supporting the Millennium Development Goals has been a churchwide mission priority since 2006, with pledges of 0.7% of the Church's annual budget to global development priorities beginning in 2010. The MDGs have shaped the programmatic and advocacy work of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society since their inception.
- DFMS staff closely followed the negotiations on the emerging Sustainable Development Goals and Post-2015 Development Agenda and have participated actively in educating the Church about the new Sustainable Development Goals via social media.
- UNICEF has provided funding to Episcopal Relief and Development for the NetsforLife® malaria-prevention program's work in the Congo, Ghana and Liberia.

Women and Girls

- Since 2000, up to 100 Episcopalians have participated annually in events for the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In 2015, the Episcopal Church submitted its first written statement and brought its first official delegation to UNCSW.
- Through social media and participation in live events, Episcopalians raise awareness of girls' rights and concerns, including those identified through the UN Working Group on Girls and the International Day of the Girl Child.
- Episcopalians participate annually in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence in November-December.

Youth and Young Adults

- The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society offers workshops and training that connect youth and young adults with UN activities. Youth and young adults have participated in multiple UN events, including the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.