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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Anglican Consultative Council, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[16 August 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.

Work with Faith Communities for a World Free of Slavery

More than 40 million people are still victims of modern-day slavery, with above 70% of them being women. Most victims of modern-day slavery are in forced labour, which can range from domestic work through to sexual exploitation.

While this appalling abuse happens in nations all across the world, countries that are more autocratic and have poor levels of democracy stand out as havens for modern-day slavery, while 60% of those in slavery live in some of the most populous countries on earth (1).

Connected with this, where there is little respect for human rights and inadequate recourse to protection under law, modern-day slavery is more prevalent. This is especially true for women: where laws fail to protect, safeguard and give voices to women, there the subjugation and enslavement of women proliferates.

The growth in conflicts across the world, the increasing destruction caused by climate change, and the lack of access to resources and opportunities in the global south are all factors contributing to increased migration and refugee movements. More than 120 million people are displaced by conflict, within their own country or across borders (2). Being displaced and on the move renders people even more vulnerable to exploitation and to becoming victims of modern-day slavery. Few countries provide adequate legal protection to those who arrive as refugees or informal migrants, failing to recognise the inherent value and dignity of each human.

Whilst the challenges are immense, Christian churches, alongside other faith communities, are working constantly to prevent human trafficking. Building on a joint statement by global faith leaders signed in 2014, including by the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury (3), we continue to work for a world free of slavery (4). We encourage states and rapporteurs to work alongside faith communities in their efforts, to recognise the contributions being made and the local knowledge and insight that our communities bring to the table.

Anglican churches across the world have worked together with other groups, such as the Salvation Army, to bring people together in consultations to increase their understanding of how trafficking and slavery happens in their areas and contexts, thus training local communities to learn how to prevent human trafficking and identify and help victims on a pathway to recovery. These consultations have left behind working groups to carry on the work and ensure continued training and vigilance.

Attention to the issue of slavery is also raised in safeguarding training that is mandatory for all clergy and anyone working as part of volunteer teams within churches across the Anglican Communion. This increases ability to spot issues and take action, and brings principles from the UN's Palermo Protocol into institutional functioning.

We urge states to support our work across the world, partnering with faith communities in educating and empowering local communities to look out for victims of slavery; to build legal systems in which the fundamental God-given value of every person is recognised and protected; and to work together to address the causes of so much misery in economic injustice, increasing conflict, climate change, and lack of equality for women.

(1) <https://anglicanalliance.org/what-is-human-trafficking/>

(2)

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/ecosoc7173.doc.htm#:~:text=%E2%80%9COver%20120%20million%20are%20forcibly,the%20Economic%20and%20Social%20Council.>

(3) https://www.pas.va/en/events/2014/religious_leaders_slavery/addressarchbishopwelby.html

(4) https://www.pas.va/en/events/2014/religious_leaders_slavery/final_statement.html