

Promote peaceful societies, justice for all and inclusive institutions

The end of the cold war between East and West looked like a promise for a more peaceful world. Yet 25 years later parts of the world are in chaos and humanity is threatened by new conflicts which have created a massive movement of refugees and migrants. Major causes of wars and violent conflicts are the growing inequality between rich and poor and militant religious ideologies which vie for world domination. A rise of nationalism blocks efforts to find global solutions. At the same time the interdependence of all countries cries out for efficient global institutions capable of giving global solutions to global problems. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can only succeed under conditions of justice and peace.

What do the SDGs call for?

The rule of law, good governance and functioning institutions are conditions for sustainable development. The SDGs suggest different means:

- Significantly reduce all forms of violence; end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children
- Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- Reduce illicit financial and arms flows; fight corruption and bribery
- Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance



What can we do?

In colonial times missionaries rarely denounced the injustices of the colonial powers. But they made a remarkable contribution to the emancipation of women, to the emergence of a democratic culture and to sustainable and holistic development.

Through the Africa-Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN) religious congregations have participated in campaigns against arms trade, child soldiers, human trafficking, land grabbing and other injustices.

An Important future orientation should be centred on climate change and its effects on Africa and the transformation of our economic system so that is ecologically sustainable, socially more just and respecting the global common good.

Words to challenge us

- Sin is manifest in all its destructive power in wars, the various forms of violence and abuse, the abandonment of the most vulnerable, and attacks on nature. (Laudato Si' 66)
- The natural environment is a collective good, the patrimony of all humanity and the responsibility of everyone. If we make something our own, it is only to administer it for the good of all. (LS 95)
- An interdependent world not only makes us more conscious of the negative effects of certain lifestyles and models of production and consumption which affect us all; more importantly, it motivates us to ensure that solutions are proposed from a global perspective, and not simply to defend the interests of a few countries. Interdependence obliges us to think of one world with a common plan. (LS 164)
- What is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach to handling the different aspects of the crisis... A strategy for real change calls for rethinking processes in their entirety, for it is not enough to include a few superficial ecological considerations while failing to question the logic which underlies present-day culture. (LS 197)
- The economic and financial sectors, being transnational, tends to prevail over the political. Given this situation, it is essential to devise stronger and more efficiently organized international institutions, with functionaries who are appointed fairly by agreement among national governments, and empowered to impose sanctions. (LS 175)