



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



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COVER PAGE PHOTO:

A large group of Dominicans joined their voices to the thousands of protestors in the Climate March in Madrid on the 6 December, 2019

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Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

As 2019 drew to an end, after having been elected Master of the Dominican Order in July, I assumed my new role as President of Dominicans for Justice and Peace. In continuity with the profound vision of my predecessor, fr. Bruno Cadoré OP, assisted by sr. Marie-Therese Clement, the Vice-President, I am proud to be given the opportunity, with our new Vice-President, sr. Margaret Mayce, and the other Board members and staff, to strengthen the Dominican Order's presence in the United Nations.

Ever since our Dominican friar, Francisco de Vitoria, identified the principles of a Law of Nations (International Law) in the early 16th century, sparking a consciousness of which the United Nations today is a fruit, a concern for global governance and law has been integral to the Dominican preaching mission. As all branches of the Dominican Order listen to the cries of suffering and of joy of people in all corners of the globe, especially those who are most marginalised and oppressed, the urgency of ensuring that their voices are heard and reflected in government policies at the local, national and global levels is shouting out at all of us. Our presence at the UN is a vital part of assisting this to become a reality.

While the challenges recorded in this report were daunting, the many achievements of our small Delegation to the UN are a cause for hope in a world too often filled with despair. As we now look ahead in the context of the frightening COVID-19 pandemic, we see too many states which are exploiting the fear and uncertainty to justify perpetrating human rights violations and dictatorial policies. All the gains of multilateralism over the past 75 years are also under threat which could lead us to dangerous new conflicts which will leave all of us as the losers. There is therefore an urgent need to strengthen our UN presence so that we can collaborate more effectively with the many other people of goodwill trying to minimise this alarming tendency.

I hope and pray that this short report will inspire all of us to seek new ways to strengthen the United Nations so that it can ensure greater justice and peace in our fragile world.

*Fr. Gerard Francisco P. Timoner III, OP
President of Dominicans for Justice and Peace
Master of the Dominican Order*

About Dominicans for Justice and Peace

OUR VISION

Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers) represents the Dominican Order at the United Nations (UN). Created in 1998 by the International Dominican Justice and Peace Commission and endorsed by the General Council of the Dominican Order as a permanent presence of the Order at the UN, the Organisation has its seat in Geneva. Dominicans for Justice and Peace [henceforth “the Delegation”] obtained official recognition of its work in the UN in 2002 when it was granted Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC).

Overall, the Delegation is dedicated to the promotion of the Good News of justice and peace in the world, proclaimed by Jesus Christ and concretized in the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church, which is integral to the Order’s mission to preach the Truth. The Order is made up of men and women from over 120 countries who, in continuity with Dominican human rights advocates of the 16th century (Antonio de Montesinos, Bartolomé de las Casas, Francisco de Vitoria, ...), are involved in many fields of action related to justice and peace. Some examples are: struggles against land grabbing by multinationals or large industries in various countries of the South, defence of indigenous rights in the Brazilian and Peruvian Amazonia, Mexico or Guatemala, struggles against religious intolerance in Vietnam, Indonesia, Pakistan or Nigeria, care for vulnerable or street children in Burundi, India or Ukraine, struggles against trafficking in persons and slavery in

Brazil, Philippines, Spain and USA, mediation of conflict in Colombia and Central African Republic, empowerment of women, support for refugees and people displaced by war, struggles against torture, enforced disappearances and corruption, advocacy for demilitarization, for a healthy environment and sustainable development ...

Since these actions at the local level are often confronting issues that only a global response can effectively address, the Delegation was established to provide a connection between Dominicans and their partners working at the local level and decision-makers at the international level. Working with people in very isolated outlying areas, far from the big cities, enables the Delegation to play a distinctive role in the UN by ensuring a rare visibility of their actions through our advocacy.



*Peasants and the Dominican Family
demanding the right to land in front of the
Statue of Dominican human rights
defender, Antonio de Montesinos,
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
© Amigo del Hogar*

OUR OBJECTIVES

The general objective of Dominicans for Justice and Peace is to support and deepen the engagement of Dominicans in working for justice and peace through an active presence at the United Nations.

The specific objectives are to:

1. **accompany and empower** Dominicans and their partners on the ground in the defence and promotion of human rights, the care of Creation and the common good, by providing the necessary tools to work with the United Nations;
2. advocate in the United Nations for the issues addressed by Dominicans at all levels, especially by **highlighting abuses** in the fields of human rights and the environment;
3. provide a Dominican contribution, as a civil society actor, to **strengthening the work of the United Nations** and to deepening the reflection on key contemporary issues.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

With its headquarters in Geneva and representations in Vienna and Nairobi, Dominicans for Justice and Peace plays a consistent role in denouncing violations of human rights and destruction of the environment in the various UN instances and in supporting Dominicans and other civil society actors involved on the ground in these issues.



UN GENEVA

Since the creation of the League of Nations in 1919, Geneva became the hub for the development of international diplomacy and multilateralism. 100 years later, Geneva continues to be the key human rights and humanitarian centre in the world. With an office located a stone's throw from several offices of the UN, such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the Delegation is at the heart of international debates and negotiations on key contemporary issues.

The Delegation in the Francisco de Vitoria Hall at the UN Office in Geneva with fr. Gerard Timoner OP
© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

UN VIENNA

Vienna is the seat of a number of UN Offices dealing with a diversity of crucial topics such as transnational organised crime, criminal justice, narcotic drugs, corruption and nuclear energy. The Delegation in Vienna primarily engages with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and more specifically with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ). The focus areas identified by the Delegation, related to issues confronted by the Dominican Family on the ground, are Human Trafficking, Prison Reform, Forest Crime, and Education for Justice.



The Vienna team in front of the United Nations in Vienna

© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

UN NAIROBI

Nairobi is the UN Headquarters for its Environment and Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT) programmes. The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is the principal global organisation dealing with environmental issues. It plays an important role in supporting nations to deliver on their environmental commitments. It deals with all environmental issues such as climate change, ecosystems and biodiversity, chemicals and waste, air, water, oceans, seas and forests. Since 2018, Dominicans for Justice and Peace is an observer to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of UNEP, enabling Dominicans to have an active presence in the various sessions of the UNEA and its subsidiary bodies.



The Nairobi Team

© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

Our Programmes

In order to achieve its objective to empower Dominicans and their partners in monitoring the human rights in their countries and to accompany them with effective advocacy at the UN level to leverage systemic and long-term changes, Dominicans for Justice and Peace has two main programmes:

- an Advocacy Programme
- a Training Programme

Through these programmes, in 2019, the Delegation supported more than 200 Members of the Dominican Family and civil society partners in the promotion and protection of human rights.



Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Palais Wilson), Geneva
© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

ADVOCACY PROGRAMME

History shows that effective advocacy campaigns can lead to exponential positive results. A change in a policy or the adoption of a new law, for example, can bring long-lasting and nationwide progress. Through its advocacy programme, the Delegation seeks to create a space for Dominicans, civil society organisations and the most vulnerable population groups to have their voices heard in the different UN offices and to boost ambitious and sustainable changes in government agendas.

In [Geneva](#), the Delegation participated in all three sessions of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in 2019, in two country reviews by the Treaty Bodies¹ on Mexico and in the reviews by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)² on Dominican Republic, Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It also engaged with the Special Procedures³ on the right to freedom of assembly in Dominican Republic.

Since 2015, the Delegation has regularly participated in the annual Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)) in order to reinforce its advocacy in the field of climate change and human rights. In 2019, Dominicans for Justice and Peace was admitted as an observer organisation to the UNFCCC, enabling the Delegation to represent Dominicans officially in the various sessions of the Convention.



Claribel Álvarez, victim of forced evictions in Dominican Republic, bringing her voice to the UN
© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

¹ The UN Treaty Bodies consist of human rights independent experts who monitor the implementation of the 10 human rights treaties by each UN Member which is a signatory (State Party). Each treaty has its own committee of experts, who review State Parties on a regular basis. Civil society members have the opportunity to participate in this review process and to send reports of information with their own reflections and concerns about the human rights situation in the country under review.

² The Universal Periodic Review is a mechanism of the Human Rights Council, initiated in 2008, that assesses the human rights practice of each Member State of the UN every four and a half years. This review process is a unique opportunity for civil society members to share their views on the human rights situation in the country under review and to raise concerns in a report.

³ The Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council are independent human rights experts with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. As part of their mandate, special procedures mechanisms can intervene directly with governments on receiving allegations by civil society actors of violations of human rights that come within their mandates by means of letters which include urgent appeals and other communications.



In [Vienna](#), Dominicans for Justice and Peace ensured an effective presence and participation in the annual sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) and the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC).

Tobias Krachler and sr. Luma Khudher in a side event on Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq organised by Dominicans for Justice and Peace during the CCPCJ, Vienna

© Adam Rokosz

In [Nairobi](#), an operational team of two Dominican volunteers was established in 2019 and an advocacy strategy for engagement with UNEP was developed. With the focus on the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), UNEP's governing body which meets every two years, the Delegation began to follow regularly the quarterly sessions of its main intersessional organ, the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), and, at times, the two-weekly meetings of its subcommittee.

COLLABORATION AND COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY

Since single NGOs can achieve little in the UN without an effective collaboration with others, the Delegation engaged in collective advocacy activities in 2019 through several NGO platforms and working groups:

Geneva Climate Change Coalition (GeCCco)

A group of NGOs working on questions related to climate change. Regular meetings continued to be held in 2019 to reinforce joint advocacy on climate change and human rights in the UN mechanisms in Geneva as well as in the UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Madrid, Spain.

UPR Platform

A platform of Catholic NGOs created by the Geneva International Catholic Centre (CCIG) aiming at coordinating actions around the UPR. In 2019, Dominicans for Justice and Peace continued to support the call of the Platform for the strengthening of the UPR process at the HRC.

International Coalition on Papua (ICP)

A global coalition addressing serious human rights violations in West Papua (Indonesia) and supporting a peaceful solution to the conflict. In 2019, the Delegation collaborated with members of ICP in Geneva as well as with the West Papua Network of religious congregations in Rome.

Ginebra ONG LAC

A working group of NGOs in Geneva working on Latin America and the Caribbean. A meeting of the working group with the High Commissioner, Michelle Bachelet, was successfully organised in July 2019, in which the members brought a regional approach to the main human rights concerns in Latin America and the Caribbean.

NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion and Belief (FoRB)

Committee of NGOs in Geneva facilitating coordinated actions on questions related to freedom of religion and belief. In 2019, besides the sharing of information about activities, meetings organised with the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief were facilitated.

Geneva Forum of Catholic Inspired NGOs

The Delegation pursued its involvement in the Geneva Forum of Catholic Inspired NGOs, comprising about 22 NGOs, and in its related working groups on education and on the right to development. It also participated in the two-yearly global General Assembly in Rome in December, 2019 with 310 organisations.

Geneva Interfaith Forum (GIF) on Climate Change, Environment and Human Rights

In 2019, Dominicans for Justice and Peace joined this group composed of faith-based NGOs in Geneva. The aim of the group is to coordinate advocacy actions at the UN and address climate change within a holistic perspective, recognizing its environmental, developmental, political, economic, social and cultural implications.

Alliance of NGOs for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice - Vienna

The Alliance brings together a broad network of 47 civil society organisations in Vienna, ensuring that civil society is recognised and heard in advancing the crime prevention and criminal justice agenda and in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies. In October 2019, the coordinator of the Delegation, Tobias Krachler, was elected as the Secretary of the Alliance.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Delegation organised training sessions in four different countries in 2019 responding to specific needs on the ground. These workshops provided a space to identify and analyse the key local and national issues requiring a response. They equipped 120 members of the Dominican Family and other civil society partners with:

- knowledge of, and ways to engage with UN human rights and climate change mechanisms and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- skills to conduct a collaborative and effective advocacy on human rights issues in local, national and international fora in order to hold governments accountable to citizen concerns and ensure that the rights of people are understood and upheld.



Fr. Mike Deeb OP in the training of Dominicans in Iloilo (Philippines)
© Dominican Family for Justice, Peace and Care for Creation - Philippines

These human rights workshops trained 23 Dominicans and partners in the Dominican Republic (El Seibo), 28 in the Philippines (Iloilo), 28 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Isiro) and 41 in Ivory Coast (Abidjan). The first three sessions were organised outside the major cities, to

facilitate access for people in rural or outlying areas.

Besides the in-country training, the Delegation also hosted Dominicans and students from the Philippines, Brazil, Italy and France to provide an exposure to the work of advocacy at the UN in Geneva.

Our Priorities

After extensive consultations with engaged Dominicans throughout the world the Delegation identified priorities and divided them into two main approaches:

- a cross-cutting thematic approach
- a country approach

THEMATIC PRIORITY

ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION, CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

2019 was marked by unprecedented uprisings by citizens and especially young people from all over the world calling governments to take urgent and concrete actions to address climate change. 2019 was the second hottest year in history according to the World Meteorological Organisation. CO² emissions from fossil fuel use continue to grow every year and the climate-induced human rights impacts are already enormous.



Thousands of people joined the Climate March during the COP25 in Madrid
© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

With their proximity to the most vulnerable and at-risk populations around the world, Dominicans are very aware of the immense threat climate change and environmental destruction are posing to people's lives and to the effective enjoyment of their rights, especially for groups in situations of vulnerability. The degradation of the environment by large industries, in particular, fuels climate change and endangers the lives and livelihoods of millions of people and their rights to life, health, food, water, culture, housing, a healthy environment,, are simply ignored.

With this in mind, the action of the Delegation in 2019 was driven by the desire

- to hold corporate actors accountable for their environmental destruction and abuses of human rights;

- to pressurise governments at the national and international levels to adopt climate- and environment-friendly policies to protect the present and future lives and livelihoods of people; and
- to bring a spiritual perspective in the discussions around the care for the environment in line with *Laudato Si*, the encyclical letter of Pope Francis.

Using the rich body of knowledge and experiences of the Dominican Family in this area, the Delegation strengthened its international advocacy through collective activities at the UN in Geneva, at the UNEP in Nairobi, at the UNODC in Vienna (focus on forest crime), and at the 2019 International Conference on Climate Change (COP25) in Madrid.



The effects of climate change are unequally felt in the world and the low-income populations are the most affected.

Iloilo (Philippines)

© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

The 40th and 41st sessions of the HRC offered several opportunities for the Delegation to support partners' initiatives. Two oral declarations were delivered:

- on the importance of a legally binding instrument on transnational corporations and human rights; and
- on women's rights and climate change.

The Delegation also organised a side event at the 41st session on "Integrating a human rights perspective in climate action" in close collaboration with the members of the Geneva Interfaith Forum on Climate Change, Environment and Human Rights – GIF.



Flyer of the side event organised at the 41st session of the HRC

©Franciscans International



Press Conference at the COP25 on Interfaith Dialogue on Hope and Action

© COP25

From 2 to 13 December 2019, Dominicans for Justice and Peace participated in the annual International Conference on Climate Change (COP25) in Madrid. Together with 7 other members of 4 Dominican organisations - *Dominican Sisters international (DSI)*, *Acción Verapaz*, *Samba Martine-Observatorio de Derechos Humanos* and *Selvas Amazonicas* - the Delegation brought a rich diversity of experiences and perspectives into the discussions on climate change. Many activities were jointly organised including:

- a training on Human Rights and Climate Change for 20 participants;
- an Interfaith Dialogue on Hope and Action, in which nearly 90 people participated; and
- a prayer service for the Care of our Common Home, which enabled several local people to participate in the event.



"In the entity to which I belong, Selvas Amazónicas, we are increasingly aware of the close relationship between human rights, justice and climate change. Participating in the COP25 through Dominicans for Justice and Peace gave us the opportunity to deepen our understanding of that relationship and how it affects the places of mission where we work." Mar Díaz Barba, Selvas Amazónicas

COUNTRY PRIORITIES



While Dominicans in many countries are seeking the support of the Delegation to assist their local efforts, in order to achieve real impacts on the ground, the Delegation has focused its action on 6 countries in 2019.

In each country chosen, the Delegation seeks to build on the priorities that the Dominicans and their partners have and the work they already undertake in the area of justice and peace. It then seeks to promote initiatives and build capacities that will deepen their involvement and enable their action to have greater and more concrete impacts in the long run.

The main objectives of the work in the country priorities are to ensure:

1

that there is a strong, coordinated and articulated involvement of Dominicans and their partners on the ground in justice and peace issues;

2

that the concerns on the ground are heard and considered at the UN;

3

that those involved are recognised locally and internationally as key actors in the promotion and protection of human rights.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Despite its relative democratic stability, Dominican Republic still presents massive economic inequalities and a few powerful national and multinational corporations exercise significant economic and political influence. Recurrent forced evictions and land insecurity, the use of excessive force during peaceful demonstrations and the lack of respect for basic economic, social and cultural rights continue to undermine the social stability in the country. In the face of this, in 2019, Dominicans for Justice and Peace continued to support the engagement of Dominicans and their partners through capacity building and communication campaigns.

Having organised an initial capacity-building training workshop in 2018, the Delegation held a follow up workshop in 2019 to deepen the knowledge of the Dominicans and their partners on advocacy tools at the national and international levels. Three thematic commissions – on the rights to land and adequate housing, on corruption and human rights, and on the rights of the child and adolescents - were created to better monitor the human rights situation in the country. A solid partnership was established with the local branch of the Dominican Association *Acción Verapaz* to supervise the work of the thematic commissions, and to liaise with the Delegation in Geneva to enhance the international advocacy. The work of the commissions soon began to bear fruit. The commission on land and housing, in particular, inspired a collective action resulting in a pilgrimage of peasants a few months later, organised by the Dominican Family (see below the movement *Peregrinos del Seibo*).

Besides its support for this courageous struggle, Dominicans for Justice and Peace continued to accompany the victims of forced evictions perpetrated in 2016 by the sugar company Central Romana. The Delegation multiplied its efforts in accompanying them in holding the company accountable and in getting reparation, including through a media campaign. The victims are now calling Central Romana to court in the USA.

On the occasion of the adoption of the UPR report on Dominican Republic at the UN, the Delegation reaffirmed the urgent need to develop a national plan on business and human rights and the importance of keeping an open dialogue with civil society. In addition, in the Human Rights Council, the Delegation raised the issue of the high level of statelessness of children and adolescents of Haitian descent which continues to be a major concern.



Follow up human rights workshop in El Seibo, May 2019
© Jafet Murgua

PEREGRINOS DEL SEIBO *(Pilgrims of El Seibo)*

2019 was marked by the remarkable struggle of peasants and the Dominican Family for the right to land, originating from another case of violent evictions of hundreds of peasants in 2018 by a private landowner. In order to claim back their land and to demand reparations, the group called *Peregrinos del Seibo*, initiated by fr. Miguel Ángel Gullón Pérez OP, organised a 5-day pilgrimage from El Seibo to Santo Domingo, followed by a series of peaceful demonstrations. These events



© Jafet Murguia

were violently repressed by security force agents on two occasions.

From the outset, the Delegation supported the movement through assisting a massive

publicity campaign and engaging with diplomats. Thanks to the determination of the group and the international support of the Dominican Family, the movement gained an extraordinary visibility in the country. The Government could not ignore the peasants' claims and finally initiated steps to give back plots of land.



Fr. Miguel Ángel Gullón Pérez OP
© María del Mar Díaz Barba

FR. MIGUEL ÁNGEL GULLÓN PÉREZ OP

Fr. Miguel Ángel is a Dominican friar involved in the region of El Seibo in Dominican Republic, one of the poorest regions in the country. Fr. Miguel Ángel is a publicly outspoken and ardent human rights defender in the country. His unwavering determination in denouncing human rights abuses committed by sugar giants and in campaigning for peasants' rights has earned him international support from the Dominican Family. For years now, Dominicans for Justice and Peace has been supporting his battles for dignity through international campaigning and UN advocacy and tailored human rights trainings on the ground to reinforce the impacts of his work. The Delegation invited him several times to the UN in Geneva to ensure that his voice and those of hundreds of victims in El Seibo be heard by the international community.

"Fr. Mike and Laurence have put their minds and hearts into designing strategies to accompany the 80 families brutally evicted by Central Romana in 2016. The two workshops they coordinated in El Seibo have helped us to open our eyes on how our struggle for dignity can be channeled through the UN. This has strengthened our monitoring of the enjoyment of human rights of those who suffer most and has given us hope on the way to building a more fraternal world."

MEXICO

In Mexico, 2019 was marked by the establishment of the newly elected Government of Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador. Despite promises of the new Government to improve the human rights record of the country, the effective implementation of its human rights obligations has been lacking. Extreme violence spread by groups of organised crime, extrajudicial killings and torture perpetrated by security forces, denigration of civil society organisations, attacks on journalists, lack of adequate protection for women and girls, violation of the rights of migrants, asylum seekers and indigenous peoples and ignorance of the work of human rights defenders continued to be issues of concern in the country in 2019. In this context, Dominicans for Justice and Peace supported the *Centro Fray Francisco de Vitoria OP* (CDHVitoria) in its human rights monitoring and in scrutinizing the implementation of the promises made by the Government.



CDHVitoria accompanies indigenous peoples in their struggle for greater recognition of their rights in Mexico
© CDH Vitoria/ Utopía 21

Throughout the year, the Delegation backed up civil society efforts in Mexico by securing a steady presence and in-depth participation in the review of Mexico by various UN bodies. Through the UPR, the Human Rights Council and the reviews by the Human Rights Committee (for civil and political rights) and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Delegation played a supportive role in conveying messages and recommendations coming from the ground to the Mexican Government on the following themes: gender-based violence, protection of human rights defenders, justice for victims, the struggle against impunity, strengthening of democracy and citizen participation, development, social justice and collective rights. These interventions proved to have an impact as they generated effective channels of dialogue between local partners and the authorities.

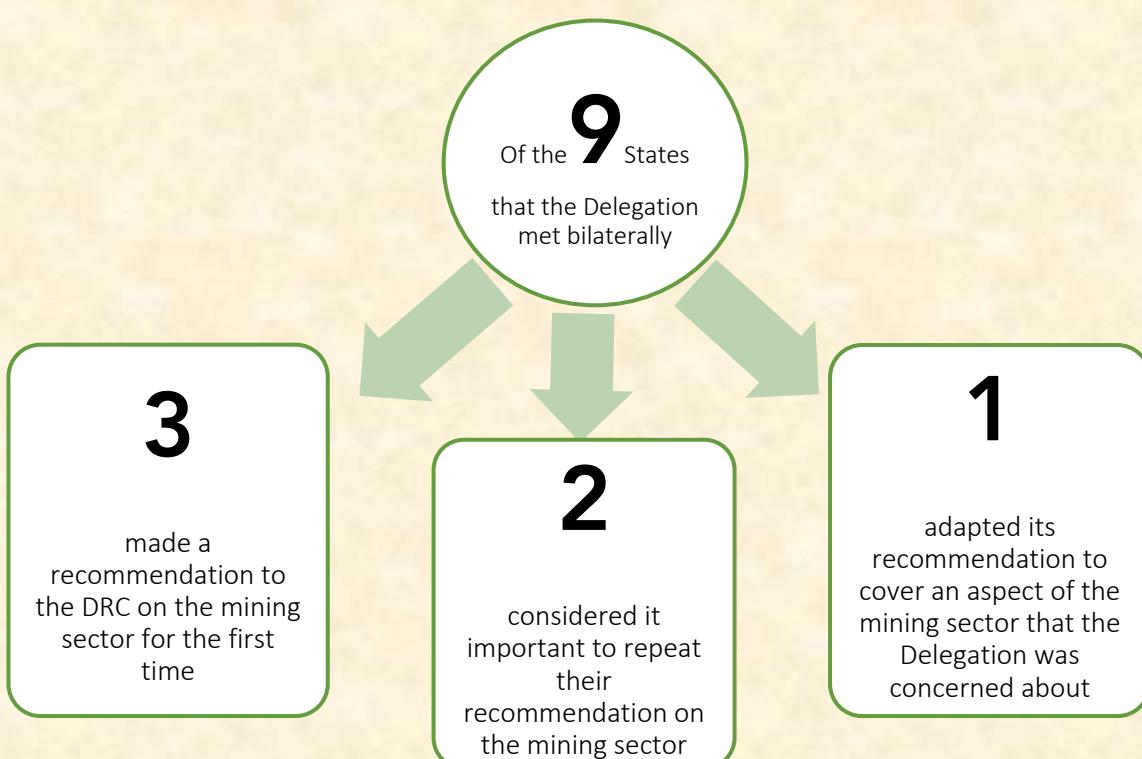
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The elections of 30 December 2018 in the DRC raised hope among the Congolese people of a break with the old regime and system of governance. The political climate in 2019 regained a certain stability, with a decline in the number of violations of fundamental freedoms. Despite this apparent stability, entire populations in many parts of the country were still subjected to severe violence by armed groups and Government forces. Mismanagement of revenues from the mining sector, forced evictions of local communities and child and women's labour in artisanal mines also continued to be issues of concern for the Dominicans in 2019.

In this context, the Delegation pursued its advocacy activities:

- In all three sessions of the Human Rights Council, it continuously sent clear messages to the new Government, through oral declarations and side events, to establish good governance, especially in the mining sector.
- It participated in Berne in a regular meeting of the Great Lakes Platform, a gathering of representatives of the Swiss Government and of Swiss and international NGOs concerned about the political and economic conflicts in the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda.
- The Delegation actively worked on the preparation of the UPR of the DRC. With effective coordination between the Delegation and those on the ground, Dominicans met with several States in both Kinshasa and in Geneva to encourage them to raise specific issues during the review, especially on the adverse impacts of the mining sector on the enjoyment of human rights. The Delegation then invited a lay Dominican from Kinshasa to Geneva to reinforce the impact of the key messages.

This intense advocacy work bore many fruits:



In 2018, the Delegation organised two initial capacity-building workshops in both Kinshasa and Isiro to prepare Dominicans and their partners for the UPR. Building on the subsequent positive impacts of this participation in the UPR, the Delegation decided to organise one follow up human rights training workshop in 2019 in Isiro, gathering activists from both Kinshasa and the north-east provinces (Haut-Uélé, Ituri, Tshopo). In this workshop, a Dominican national coordination on justice and peace was created to enable them to speak with one voice on national issues. Bringing together Dominicans, civil society partners and a representative of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the workshop identified four regional and national priority issues and commissions were established to address each of them:

- the insecurity and community conflicts in the Haut-Uélé and Ituri Provinces;
- the exploitation of natural resources;
- domestic violence; and
- the rights to education and health.

Before and after the workshop, these key preoccupations could be directly shared with senior officials in the capital: the Human Rights Minister, Mr. André Lite, and the Director of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the DRC, Mr Aziz Thioye.



Fr. Jean Nkongolo OP
Justice & Peace Promoter in
the DRC – South sector

"Thanks to the two trainings I received from Dominicans for Justice and Peace and their follow-up, I became aware that respect for human rights must be subject to increased monitoring by civil society and that the Human Rights Council is one of the mechanisms where injustices can be denounced at the UN."



Sr. Félicité Mani and sr. Gracielle Mabusandrodu during the training workshop
© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

IVORY COAST

Since the creation of the Dominican Justice and Peace Commission in Ivory Coast in 2017, the engagement of the Dominican Family in justice and peace issues has significantly increased. In a country where human rights guarantees, security and stability are still fragile, the work of this Commission, and the need to strengthen it, are essential. Thus, Dominicans for Justice and Peace kept Ivory Coast as one of its priority countries in 2019 and supported the efforts undertaken on the ground.



The Abidjan correctional facility and penitentiary (MACA)

© Dominicans for Justice and Peace

21

States were reached
during the UPR joint
advocacy in Geneva
and Abidjan

6

of the recommendations
proposed by the
Delegation were taken
up by States in the UPR

In 2018, the Delegation began its engagement with the Dominicans in Ivory Coast by organising a training workshop in partnership with two international organisations in Geneva having a strong local presence in Ivory Coast: the *Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance* (BICE) and *La Fondation Mariste pour la Solidarité Internationale* (FMSI). In 2019, this partnership was reinforced both at the local level and in Geneva. Collective advocacy actions on questions of juvenile justice were organised in Abidjan ahead of the UPR on Ivory Coast. One of the main concerns was the presence of the Observation Centre for Minors within the perimeter of the Abidjan correctional facility and penitentiary (MACA - Maison d'arrêt et de correction d'Abidjan). The local Dominicans gained significant experience by taking part in different meetings with embassies. In Geneva, follow up meetings with permanent missions were also organised, and the Delegation then participated in the UPR on Ivory Coast. The 42nd session of the Human Rights Council in September was another opportunity for the Delegation to stress the concerns of the Dominicans and their partners in the area of juvenile justice.

"My experience with Dominicans for Justice and Peace has allowed me to know, understand and use the human rights mechanisms of the United Nations to sensitise those who govern in my country to consider human rights as a priority in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals."



Evelyne Gabala
Member of a Dominican Secular Institute

Secretary of Communication of the Dominican Justice and Peace Commission in Ivory Coast

The Delegation conducted a follow up training workshop in Abidjan on human rights monitoring and advocacy at the national and international levels. This second workshop was attended by 41 people, many of whom also attended the first training in 2018. Its main objectives were the consolidation of the participants' knowledge of the UN mechanisms and of human rights monitoring, the clarification and reinforcement of the existence of the thematic commissions established in 2018 and the development of a clear and realistic action plan for each commission. These goals were considerably well met, and three commissions were developed:

- on the right to education;
- on prison conditions; and
- on the right to free and transparent elections.

CAMEROON

In 2019, the security situation in the anglophone regions of Cameroon reached critical proportions with serious daily human rights violations. A regular contact was established with Dominicans on the ground, with NGO partners and some country missions in Geneva to clarify information and to identify possible advocacy strategies at the UN.

The Delegation reached out to a French senator and the French Ambassador to the Holy See to highlight the dire situation. The concerns raised were communicated to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs in France, Mr Jean-Yves Le Drian, who responded, acknowledging France's attempts to push Cameroon to improve the human rights and humanitarian situation and to ensure an inclusive dialogue.

The Delegation, with its NGO partners, also shared documented evidence on the human rights violations in the country with several African and European country missions in Geneva. These initiatives contributed to a growing outrage at the deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. An increasing number of countries expressed their concern in the Human Rights Council, a decreasing number of African countries supported the Cameroon position, and the High Commissioner for Human Rights conducted a visit to the country.

PHILIPPINES

Since the so-called “war on drugs” of President Duterte, the human rights record in the Philippines has worsened dramatically. In 2019, dissident voices coming from opposition members, human rights defenders, religious leaders and journalists were violently repressed. Killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detentions continued to take place and created a climate of terror among the population. This alarming situation was brought to the attention of the Human Rights Council in June 2019. Civil society, religious leaders and States delegates called for the adoption of a resolution on the situation in the country. The Delegation supported this call and co-sponsored a side event in which grassroots activists provided an update on the human rights situation in the country. The Council finally adopted this resolution in which States urged the Government of the Philippines to take all necessary measures to prevent extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, among other things.



Dominicans and Franciscans marching in the Global Climate Strike to stop the use of fossil fuels in the Philippines

© Ecological Justice Inter-Faith Movement (ECOJIM)

Philippines is also a country particularly vulnerable to climate change. It is severely hit by some of the deadliest typhoons on the planet, resulting in thousands of lost lives and millions of displaced persons. Many religious communities in the Philippines are particularly concerned by the dependence of the country on non-renewable energies and are very active in raising awareness and advocating for climate justice at the local and national levels.

Given the highly restrictive environment in the country and the concerning environmental situation, the UN mechanisms provided one of the few viable platforms for civil society and religious actors to raise their voice. In that context, the Delegation organised a training workshop on human rights monitoring and advocacy at the UN in August 2019 for Dominicans and their partners in Iloilo on the island of Panay, far from the capital. To ensure coordinated action, committees were formed around the issues of:

- extrajudicial killings;
- environmental destruction; and
- job security, forced labour and trafficking of children.



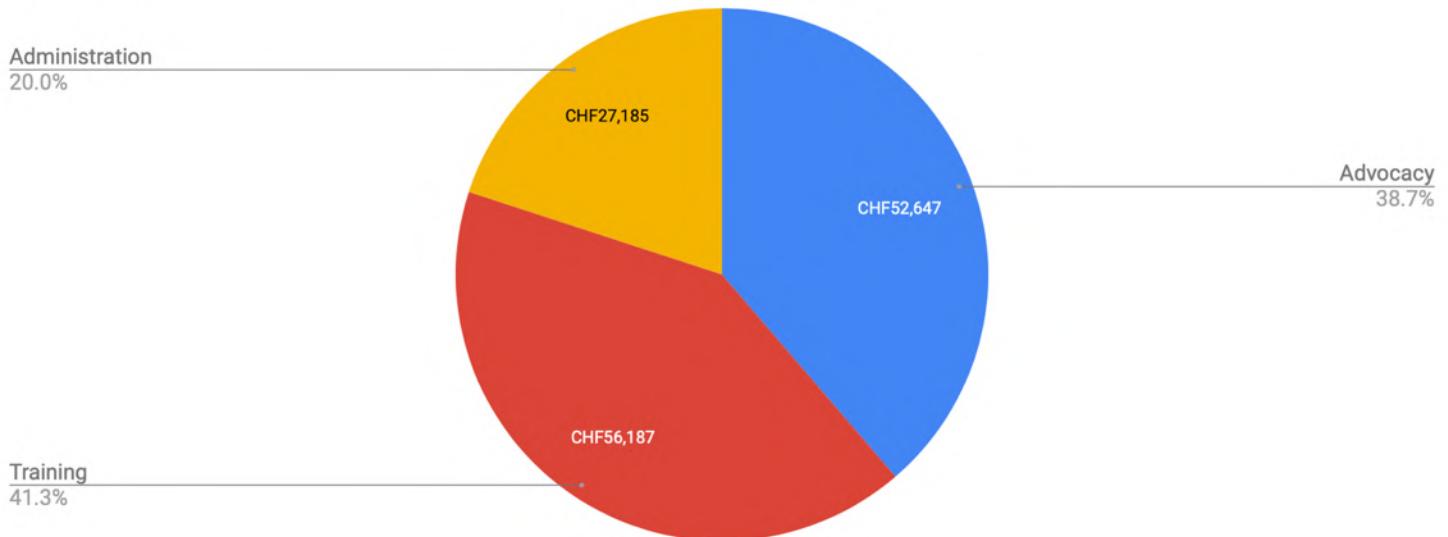
“This workshop training has enriched me on the UN mechanisms. We have to deepen our understanding of our human rights.”
John Ian Alenciaga, Human rights defender participating in the training workshop

Financial Report 2019

Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers) Financial Activities 2019

	2018	2019
CHF (= € 0.95)		
INCOME		
Funding	157 449,65	98 794,45
Interest	2,59	181,66
Total INCOME	157 452,24	98 976,11
 EXPENSE		
PROGRAMMES		
Advocacy	65 183,82	52 647,40
Training	33 081,15	56 187,31
Total PROGRAMMES	98 264,97	108 834,71
 ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	34 486,52	27 184,81
Total EXPENSE	132 751,49	136 019,52
 Net Income	24 700,75	(37 043,41)

Expenses 2019



Future Prospects

Committing to continuously engage with people on the ground

The Delegation is committed to always putting Members of the Dominican Family and their partners working for the promotion and protection of human rights at the centre of its action and to continue deepening collaboration with them. In 2020, the Delegation will continue to implement its programme for each priority country. DRC, Ivory Coast, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea will be the primary focus of the actions of the Delegation. Mexico and Dominican Republic will be follow up priority countries and continue to receive special attention.

Creating links with Dominican academic institutions

In the protection and promotion of human rights, conflicts sometimes arise between different rights, opening the door to polarisation between stakeholders and States within multilateral forums. In recent years, since the Dominican Order has a strong intellectual tradition, the Delegation and the Board have wanted to strengthen a Dominican contribution to the reflection on some key contemporary issues, especially conflicts of rights, that emerge in the UN. With the creation of a new programme – the Academic Engagement Programme – the Delegation hopes to develop collaboration with Dominican academic institutions and reflect on those topics. The fruits of such reflections will then be used to provide Dominican contributions in the discussions at the UN.

Providing a coordinated and comprehensive response to climate change, human rights and environmental destruction

The Delegation wishes to continue addressing issues related to environmental destruction, climate change and its impacts on human rights and to provide a coordinated and comprehensive response. 2020 is an important year as States need to drastically raise their ambitions in the field of climate change to avoid its dire consequences. The human and social dimensions have to be at the core of all climate actions and faith-based organisations have a key role to play in pushing governments to recognise this. The Delegation will pursue its advocacy in this area. It will also develop greater synergies with the work of UNEP and connect more with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Improving communication and diversifying funding sources

In 2019, the communication capacity of the Delegation improved significantly, especially with the development of a new visual identity. In 2020, the Delegation hopes to create new communication tools to reinforce the visibility of its activities taking place at the UN in Geneva and around the world. Major efforts will also be put in diversifying the funding sources of the Delegation.

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Two Dominican friars joined the Delegation in Vienna in late 2019: Br. Simon HACKER and br. Dominik AHLERS

Special thanks to fr. Scott STEINKERCHNER OP, our Webmaster and IT Consultant, to fr. Jean-Ariel BAUZA-SALINAS OP for arranging the translation and to Ms. Claire PONCET PACCHIANI and Ms. Mónica MARCO for proofreading the Annual Report!

Dominicans

for justice and peace



Annual Report 2019

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