



The African Pulse

October - December 2025

Issue 16



Churches in Africa together for life, peace, justice and dignity

The African Pulse

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The African Pulse is published periodically by the All Africa Conference of Churches as an information, educational and advocacy channel for the ecumenical movement in Africa.

AACC is a continental ecumenical body that accounts for over 200 million Christians across the Continent and a member of the world wide ecumenical network. It is the largest association of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and African Indigenous Churches. AACC has 210 members comprising Churches, National Councils of Churches (NCCs), Theological and Lay Training Institutions, and other Christian organizations in 43 African countries.

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Message from the General Secretary

Dear reader, seasonal greetings from the All Africa Conference of Churches. This issue of the African Pulse share some of the work we did between October and December 2025, making it the last issue of the year 2025. We are indeed grateful to God for all the accomplishments, lessons learned, and mile stones reached in that year.

This quarter was really packed with several memorable events from the 6th Annual Symposium on addressing misleading theologies at the beginning of October to the end of year staff retreat. One of the major highlights of this quarter was the 2nd All Africa Youth Congress held during the African Youth week in Nairobi. This was a dream come true for the young people in our member churches and its success blew a breath of renewal in the rise of African Patriotism and Pan-Africanism. I am confident that you will

bear witness to this as you read about this week long gathering of youth leaders from across the continent and the diaspora in this issue.

Before signing off this message, I would like to congratulate all members of the Pioneering class of the Master of Theology in Ecumenical Leadership (MTEL) degree who graduated from St. Paul's University in November 2025. Congratulations and may God bless you as apply the knowledge, skills and experiences you gained in your service to God and humanity.

Thank you and may God bless you as you engage with this issue.

Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki,
AACC General Secretary



Governance, Membership Development & Networking

01 ▶

Ms. Faith Muthithi
& Ms. Ann Kioi



AACC General Secretary Engages Master's Students and Local Community at Mindolo Ecumenical Institute

The AACC General Secretary taught the new cohort of Master's students in Ecumenical Studies from 13th to 26th October 2025, focusing on the historical development of the Ecumenical Movement. The intensive teaching period offered students a unique opportunity to engage closely with the General Secretary through interactive lectures, discussions, and reflections on the movement's mission and legacy.

In addition to his academic engagement, the General Secretary visited the Chilobwe Community, where the Mindolo Ecumenical Institute has donated 300 hectares of land to support the livelihoods of more than 300 families. The visit underscored Mindolo's dedication to community empowerment and sustainable development. A borehole has been drilled to provide access to clean and safe water for the community, reinforcing strengthening the Institute's holistic approach to theological education and social transformation.



Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki with the second cohort of the MTEL students in Mindolo

Faith Communities United in Prayer and Action for Tax Justice



The General Secretary delivering the welcoming remarks

On Sunday, 9th November 2025, the AACC hosted an Interfaith Prayer and Action on Tax Justice at its Chapel. The programme was jointly organised by the AACC, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), and other partner organisations, bringing together faith leaders, practitioners, and advocates committed to social and economic justice.

The inter-faith service created a sacred space for prayer, reflection, and collective action on issues of taxation and public finance, recognizing their profound impact on human dignity and sustainable development. Faith representatives from different traditions participated in prayers and reflections, affirming the shared moral responsibility of faith communities to speak out against injustice and inequality.

In his welcoming remarks, AACC General Secretary Rev. Dr. Mwombeki emphasized that tax is not merely a technical or economic matter but a deeply moral issue. He noted that unjust tax systems

disproportionately affect the poor and vulnerable, limiting governments' ability to provide essential public services such as health-care, education, and social protection. Rev. Dr. Mwombeki challenged faith communities not to remain silent but to raise their prophetic voices in defense of fairness, accountability, and the common good.

He further underscored the urgent need for international tax rules to be negotiated under the United Nations framework, arguing that the UN provides a more inclusive and equitable platform for global decision-making. Such a move, he noted, would ensure that the voices and interests of developing countries, particularly those in Africa are adequately represented.

The inter-faith gathering concluded with a renewed commitment to prayer, advocacy, and action for just tax systems that promote equity, transparency, and sustainable development for all.

AACC General Committee Charts Path Toward the 13th General Assembly

From November 18th to 21st, 2025, the General Committee of the AACC met at the Desmond Tutu Conference Centre and successfully engaged with the General Secretary's report on the implementation of the AACC strategy. The General Committee members commended the General Secretary for the efforts made in accomplishing the reported results and received the report with gratitude. The AACC staff were also commended for their competence, hard work, and dedication towards the growth of the organization.

One of the major highlights noted was the clearance of the long-standing AACC loan, which was settled ahead of the anticipated timeline. The declaration of AACC as debt-free was warmly celebrated by the delegates and commended as a significant milestone achieved by the institution.

In addition to the General Secretary's report, the General Committee also received the report and recommendations from the Finance and Personnel Committee, the Board of Trustees, and the Presidium. The Committee approved the budget for 2026, as presented by the Finance and Personnel Committee, and strongly commended the financial report, noting the high level of accountability reflected therein. Moreover, the General Committee endorsed the decision by the AACC Board of Trustees to rebuild and transform the current Desmond Tutu Conference Centre into a modern hotel, which is expected to generate more income for the organization. The new face of AACC, including the

repainting, rebuilding of the perimeter wall, and placement of cabro paving on the pavement, was highlighted as a great achievement that has given AACC a modern outlook.

The General Committee also received with gratitude the report on the preparations for the 13th General Assembly, scheduled for 2028, and commended the steps taken. The committee authorized the General Secretary to continue with the preparations towards the Assembly.

The General Committee also appointed Dr. Nigussu Legesse as the new Vice President of AACC, representing the Orthodox Communion. Consequently, Mr. Samson Waweru assumed Dr. Nigussu's position as a member of the General Committee, in accordance with the AACC constitution and Standing Orders.

On the second and final day of the meeting, the delegates had an opportunity to experience one of Kenya's renowned wildlife conservation centers, the Giraffe Centre, and afterwards had a closing dinner with AACC staff, where they fellowship and interacted more informally.



Group Photo of the AACC 2025 General Committee Meeting

AACC General Secretary Participated the **Centenary Celebrations of the Holy Band Seraphim and Cherubim**



The official book launch session

in Lekki, Lagos. After the sermon he actively participated in the launch of the “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence” campaign - a programme aimed at raising awareness, promoting justice, and empowering communities to respond to gender-based violence. Rev. Dr. Mwombeki underscored the moral and spiritual responsibility of faith communities to confront societal injustices and uphold human dignity, urging church members to become proactive agents of change in their localities.

The AACC General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Mwombeki, was invited to take part in a book-launch organised by the Underpinning of the Holy Band of Cherubim and Seraphim, a member church of the AACC. The event was held on 21st November 2025 in Lagos, Nigeria, and attracted church leaders from around the world, creating a vibrant platform for theological reflection, fellowship, and celebration. The host church expressed deep appreciation for the presence of the ecumenical community, emphasising the importance of collaboration and solidarity among churches in Africa and beyond.

On Sunday, 23rd November 2025, the General Secretary preached to a congregation of the Cherubim and Seraphim Worldwide Church

The visit strengthened the bonds between AACC and its member churches while highlighting the crucial role of faith-based advocacy, community engagement, and ecumenical partnership in promoting social transformation across the continent.



Rev. Dr. Fidon Mwombeki with the church leaders

AACC Attends the PARD Annual Forum and General Assembly of Members

By Ms. Ann Kioi



A cross section of participants at the General Assembly and Annual Forum

The AACC was represented at the 2025 General Assembly of Members (GAM) by Ann Kioi – Director for Gender, Women, Youth and Sustainable Population. The GAM brought together PaRD’s global membership for a full day of dialogue, exchange, and strategic reflection. Held on 6th October 2025 in Istanbul, Turkey, the GAM preceded the Annual Forum on Religion and Sustainable Development which took place from 7th–9th October 2025, setting the tone for three days of collaboration and inspiration.

The key objectives of the gathering were threefold namely; to showcase faith-inspired initiatives that build resilience, address inequality, and drive transformative change across different regions, strengthen collaboration by fostering cross-sector trust and ethical leadership amid disruptions in political, social, and funding landscapes and to engage in strategic reflection on PaRD’s 10th anniversary in 2026 by evaluating its structure, relevance, and future direction.

Youth inclusion was highlighted as a critical priority, with a focus on quality over quantity in membership expansion.

Participants acknowledged the urgent need to recalibrate efforts to meet the Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing food security as a flagship priority. To enhance local relevance, PaRD's Africa and Asia regional clusters proposed improved communication through dedicated chat groups. Members also stressed the importance of diversifying PaRD's membership by integrating academic, governmental, and multilateral actors while retaining faith-based engagement. Youth inclusion was highlighted as a critical priority, with a focus on quality over quantity in membership expansion. Clear criteria and accountability mechanisms were advocated to ensure members contribute meaningfully to PaRD's mission.

Key Recommendations and Outcomes were: -

a) Reimagine PaRD's Role with the UN:

Members called for deeper institutional partnerships with the UN, including sustainable financing, structured accountability frameworks, and policy influence beyond symbolic engagement.

b) Leverage Faith-Inspired Action:

Faith-inspired initiatives were recognized as vital for mobilizing resources, fostering community-driven resilience, and addressing root causes of hunger and inequality. Examples included long-term programs that blend immediate aid with systemic change.

c) Collaborative Funding: Participants urged collective efforts to secure funding through consortia models, such as leveraging Italy's Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda, to tackle global crises effectively.

d) Digital Transformation: Faith actors were encouraged to engage in AI development and digital innovation, ensuring ethical frameworks that align with human dignity and the common good.

The forum concluded with renewed momentum for collaboration, innovation, and results-oriented engagement. Members acknowledged the need to adapt to evolving global dynamics while maintaining PaRD's faith-based foundation. By 2026, PaRD aims to finalize a new strategic outlook centered on localized action, inclusive partnerships, and a stronger institutional presence. The event underscored the partnership's commitment to bridging faith, sustainability, and multistakeholder action to drive equitable development in a complex world.



Theology and Interfaith Relations

02 ▶

Rev. Fr. John Njoroge



First Cohort of AACC Master of Theology in Ecumenical Leadership Graduate as Ethical Leaders



The 34th graduation ceremony of St. Paul's University held on 7th November 2025 spotlighted the success of the first cohort of the AACC Master of Theology in Ecumenical Leadership (MTEL) program. The MTEL is a one-year master's degree offered at the Mindolo Ecumenical Institute by St. Paul's University in Kenya in partnership with the AACC. The first cohort of this program included; Rev. Gatebuka David, Rev. Ibyimana Athanase, Rev. Akintaju Oladapo, Rev. Jackson Simon, Rev. Munayani Zulu, Rev. Ntandazo Skonje, Mr. Geoffrey Mugadizi, Rev. Jubilate Deo AVALLA and Pastor Victoire Wamuyu.

During the graduation, Pastor Victoire Wamuyu from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) shared that the MTEL was a *"transformative experience"* that shaped his personality and deepened his understanding of ethical and servant leadership.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony St. Paul's University Vice Chancellor, Prof. James Kombo, charged the graduands to go forth and serve God and humanity as ambassadors of faith, lifelong learning and innovation. In his remarks, the University Council Chair, The Most Rev. Ole Sapit, affirmed that faith is a *"moral compass"* essential for leadership and public service. He stressed that leaders must choose truth and justice in all their endeavors.

The University Chancellor, Prof. Margret Kobia, reminded the graduates that *"Education without character is not very useful."*

During the MTEL graduates' thanksgiving ceremony held at the AACC General Secretariat, in Nairobi, Kenya, Rev. Fr. Dr. Njoroge warmly described the graduates as *"ecumenical firstborns"* acknowledging their pioneering status as the first cohort of the master's degree.



Speaking on behalf of the AACC General Secretary, the organization's Director for Finance, Ms. Phyllis Brewah encouraged the newly minted Masters graduates to utilize the knowledge, experiences,

and skills obtained during their stay at the Mindolo Ecumenical Institute and throughout their studies to set a good example of ethical and transformative leadership.



MTEL Graduates with the SPU heads of department for theology and the AACC Executive Secretary for Theology and Interfaith relations.

African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS)



Gender & Women

03 ▶

Ms. Ann Kioi &
Ms. Faustina Nillan



AACC participated in a Global Consultation on **Transformative Masculinities Against GBV**

By Ms. Ann Kioi

In December 2025, the CWM hosted a three-day Global Consultation on Transformative Masculinities Against Gender-Based Violence in Johannesburg, South Africa, as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (25th November - 10th December). The AACC was represented by Ann Kioi, Director for Gender, Women, Youth, and Sustainable Population, alongside representatives from CWM's global member churches, ecumenical partners, gender justice advocates, youth, and storytellers. The event aimed to redefine traditional masculinity as a tool for eradicating GBV through faith-based action, emphasizing dialogue, shared experiences, and practical frameworks for churches and communities to promote gender equality.

The consultation aligned with the 16 Days of Activism, an annual campaign against GBV, and culminated CWM's efforts throughout the period that had been carried out through daily devotional

reflections. Key objectives included: examining masculinity's role in GBV; showcasing faith-based and cultural interventions by men; engaging youth and faith leaders in gender justice; and creating actionable frameworks and a collective statement for churches to lead GBV eradication.

Participants explored theological foundations for transformative masculinity, womanist and feminist intersectional perspectives, and global policy frameworks on GBV. Topics included:

a) **Theological and Faith-Based Approaches:**

How theology and scripture can challenge patriarchal norms.

b) **Intersectionality and Women's Realities:**

Feminist critiques of systemic gender oppression.



Group Photo of Participants at the consultation. Photo: CWM

c) Policy and Advocacy: Strategies for faith communities to influence legislation against GBV.

d) Youth Engagement: Mobilizing young leaders to reshape masculinity and gender norms.

e) Embodied Healing: Prioritizing individual healing and liberation from violence.

f) Church as Agent of Change: Role of theology, policy, and practice in addressing GBV, with insights from AACC, World Council of Churches (WCC), and others.

The consultation produced a joint statement that outlined actionable steps for churches to combat GBV, including: Theological Reforms: Reforming teachings to reject harmful gender norms, Advocacy and Communication: Strengthening public campaigns against GBV, Youth and Men’s Role: Nurturing young men as advocates for gender equality, Policy

Integration: Leveraging faith-based influence to support national GBV legislation.

The statement emphasized commitment to fostering empathy, accountability, and protection of women and girls. AACC’s contribution, including Ann Kioi’s presentation on “Churches as Agents of Change,” highlighted practical strategies for faith communities to address systemic violence.

This consultation marked a pivotal moment for CWM and partner organizations, uniting diverse voices to address GBV through transformative masculinity. The collective statement will guide future CWM initiatives, inform resource allocation, and support national and community-based programs. The AACC will integrate learnings into its regional networks, reinforcing the role of faith in societal transformation. The event underscores the necessity of multi-generational, culturally rooted approaches to dismantle GBV, positioning churches as critical allies in advancing gender justice.



Ann Kioi Making her presentation on practical methodologies in relation to “Churches as Agents of Change.” Photo: Princess – UCZ

AACC Advisory Group Met to **Chart Pathway to Gender Equity**

Ms. Faustina Nillan



The AACC Gender and Women Advisory Group photo

The AACC continues to strengthen its commitment to equitable participation of women and men in ecumenical engagement through its Gender and Women Advisory Group (GWAG). The advisory group provides programmatic guidance to the Programme Executive and supports the implementation of key gender-focused initiatives across the continent.

On 19th November 2025, the seven-member GWAG convened a hybrid meeting to review November programmatic updates and prepare for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV). The discussions set the stage for pre-event dry runs, including women's meetings on 20 November and male champions' meetings on 21 November, in anticipation of the official webinar launch on 24 November 2025.

Building on the global UNITE 2025 campaign and the AACC's own **#LetLoveLead** slogan, the webinar aimed to equip church leaders, women and youth leaders, and male champions to engage in activism addressing GBV. The advisory group also reviewed 16 key messages targeting digital violence against women and girls, ensuring alignment with global priorities while highlighting Africa's unique context and urgency in responding to this challenge.

The meeting reaffirmed AACC's dedication to gender justice, leadership inclusivity, and advocacy, providing a strong foundation for mobilizing churches and communities across Africa.

African Women Leaders Met Over Generational Gaps

Ms. Faustina Nillan

The AACC hosted a continental webinar series on 20th–21st November 2025, focused on bridging inter-generational gaps in leadership. The sessions brought together 47 women and 32 men to examine the role of older and younger generations in tackling GBV and fostering collaboration for a safer, inclusive society.

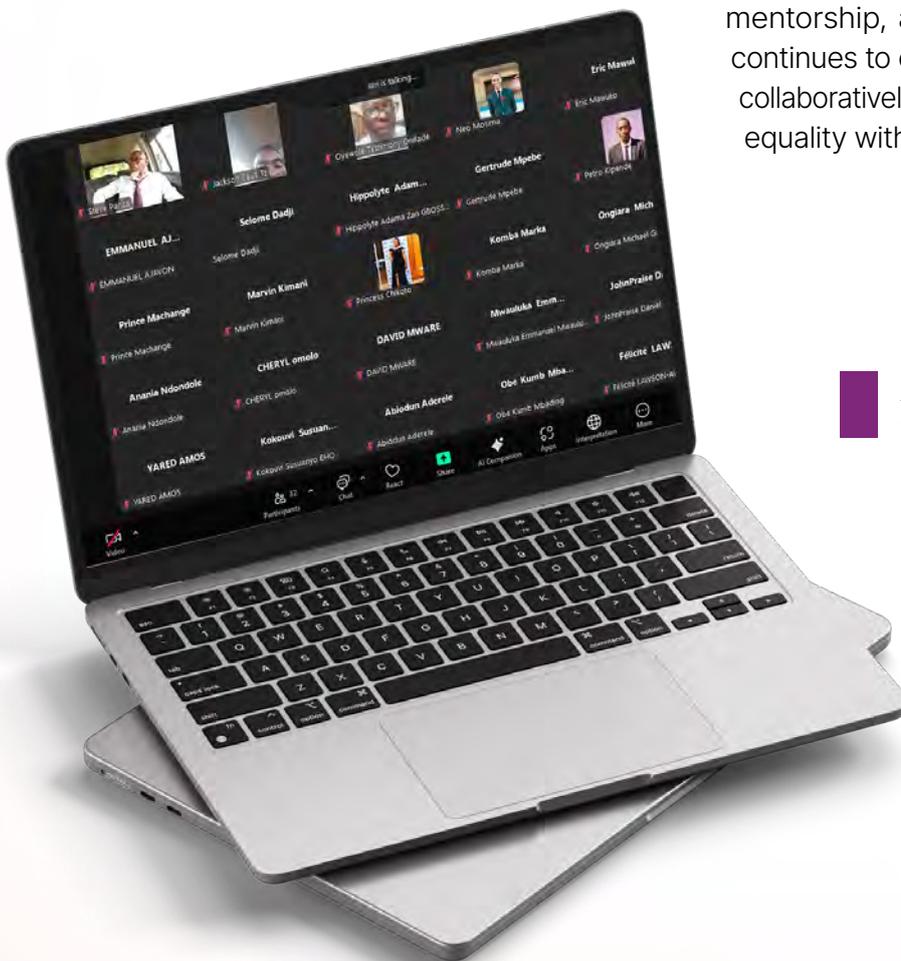
Participants explored challenges that create generational divides, including technological gaps, sociocultural shifts, political changes, and differing communication styles. They discussed strategies to overcome these barriers, such as establishing

mentorship programs, creating cross-generational small groups, and designing intergenerational worship experiences that address issues relevant to all age groups.

Speaking on the importance of solidarity in the digital era, Rev. Dr. Rachel Lateju from Nigeria encouraged participants to listen to one another's perspectives with empathy and respect.

"The more we listen, the more we learn. Together we are stronger. Without unity, there will be no progress or strength," she emphasized.

By fostering inter-generational dialogue, mentorship, and mutual learning, the AACC continues to empower women leaders to work collaboratively against GBV and promote gender equality within churches and communities.



A section of participants during the webinar

16 Days of Activism Against GBV Launched Virtually

Ms. Faustina Nillan

On 24th November 2025, the AACC launched its 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) virtually, amplifying efforts to combat digitally enabled violence targeting women and girls.

Ms. Ann Kioi, AACC Director for Gender, Women, Youth and Sustainable Population, opened the event by acknowledging the organization's milestones in gender justice advocacy, and aligning her remarks with this year's UN theme: *"Unite Against Digital Violence on Women and Girls."*

The keynote speaker, AACC President Rt. Rev. Lydia Neshangwe, described abuse in digital spaces as a pandemic, calling for a conscious effort to protect users while embracing digital opportunities. *"We have no choice but to use digital technology... I must congratulate the AACC for involving men in this fight because there is no activism for female protection that does not involve men," she said.*

Other speakers highlighted both the blessings and curses of digital platforms. While technology enhances financial services, education, political engagement, and health information access, gaps in digital access leave many behind, particularly across Africa. Participants also learned that half the world's population lacks internet access, and only a few languages dominate online spaces, exacerbating inequalities.

The event emphasized threats such as cyber harassment, misinformation, hate speech, impersonation, and video manipulation, particularly targeting women, girls, politicians, and journalists. Leaders called for faith-based advocacy, education, safe digital spaces, and robust policies to protect users, fostering a culture of respect, safety, and inclusion online.

Webinar Poster

The poster features the AACC-CETA logo and the slogan "Let Love Lead End GBV Now!". The main title is "16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2025 LAUNCH WEBINAR" and the subtitle is "UNITE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls".

Keynote Speaker	Other Speakers		
 Very Rev Lydia C. Neshangwe President, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)	 Claudina Shimanda AACC Youth, CCIN Namibia	 PROF. JEAN-CLAUDE HOUNMENOÛ AACC Male Champion Benin	 Rev. Dr. TRIMOZAFY RAFARAMALALA AACC Women Leader Madagascar

#let love lead: End SGBV

24 NOVEMBER 2025
2:00PM EAT

ON ZOOM

AACC Called for Justice for African Women in **The African Union's Year of Reparations (2025)**

By Ms. Ann Kioi

The AACC participated in the NGO Forum preceding the 85th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), held from 17th–19th October 2025 in Banjul, The Gambia. Under the overarching theme *"The Year of Reparations: Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations,"* the forum convened over 250 participants from across the African continent and the diaspora, including representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs), government institutions, academia, traditional and religious leaders, and

regional and international bodies.

A key highlight of the AACC's engagement was its high-level side event titled *"Justice for African Women in the Year of Reparations,"* moderated by Ms. Ann Kioi, AACC Director of Gender, Women, Youth, and Sustainable Population. The event brought together experts, policymakers, and faith leaders to explore how reparative justice can address historical and structural inequalities faced by African women.

The keynote address was delivered by Hon. Janet



Group photo of AACC delegation at the NGO Forum L-R Kokou Atohou – Male Champion, Ann Kioi, Mavis Mavis Naa Korley & Felicity Mburugu representing the All Africa Youth Network and Gorden Simango

SIDE EVENT AT THE NGOS FORUM PRECEDING THE 85TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS (ACHPR)

Justice for African women in the AU Year of Reparations (2025)

Moderator

- Ann Kiol**
AACC Director
Gender, Women, Youth and Sustainable Population
Kenya

Speakers

- Gordon Simango**
Director
AACC Liaison Office to the African Union & Advocacy
Ethiopia
- Hon. Janet Ramatoulie Sallah-Njie**
Vice Chairperson
ACHPR and Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa
Gambia
- Kokou Atohoum**
YNCA Male Champion
Togo
- Mavis Naa Korley Aryee**
Presbyterian Church of Ghana Youth Leader
Ghana

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African woman,” — Hon. Janet Ramatoulie Sallah-Njie

She emphasized the strategic importance of engaging with special mechanisms like the Office of the Special Rapporteur, calling upon faith leaders and institutions to utilize reporting channels, participate in country visits, and collaborate on awareness-raising campaigns. Drawing on the moral authority, grassroots reach, and community trust enjoyed by FBOs, she affirmed that such actors are uniquely positioned to identify violations, advocate for victims, and promote a culture of justice and accountability.



Hon. Njie addressing the participants at the side event

Ramatoulie Sallah-Njie, Commissioner and Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa at the ACHPR, who also serves as Vice-Chairperson of the African Commission. Her insightful remarks underscored the indispensable role of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in advancing women’s rights and strengthening regional human rights mechanisms.

“Our work is fundamentally about ensuring that the rights enshrined in the Maputo Protocol are not just on paper, but are a lived reality for every

Ms. Mavis Naa Korley Aryee, representing the AACC’s youth network, stressed youth-led reparations, advocating for investments in education, entrepreneurship, and local projects to counter colonial exploitation. She linked reparations to Africa’s future, urging a *“Pan-African Youth Engagement Platform”* and campaigns like *“End GBV Now.”* *“Reparations must secure a future worth fighting for,” she asserted.*

Mr. Atohoum Gérard representing the AACC Male Platforms for Gender Justice showcased the AACC’s Male Champions Platform, uniting men across Africa to challenge patriarchal norms and promote gender equity. By leveraging influence in communities and institutions, the initiative seeks to foster inclusive environments.

The event underscored the AACC’s commitment to *“Let Love Lead: End GBV Now”* and initiatives such as the *“Africa: My Home, My Future,”* blending faith-based advocacy with policy action.



Youth

Mr. Brian Muyunga

04 ▶





Highlights of the **Second All Africa Youth Congress**

Between 31st October and 5th November, 500 youth leaders from across Africa and the diaspora gathered at the Desmond Tutu Conference Center for the second All Africa Youth Congress (AAYC). The AAYC is held as a flagship project of the AACCs' campaign for youth and Pan-Africanism, running with the theme, *"Africa: My Home. My Future."* The Second AAYC builds on the outcomes of the Inaugural Congress held in Accra, Ghana 2022, with close to a thousand African youth from 43 African Countries and the diaspora participating.

To inspire the African youth to be Patriotic, Pan-African, and transformative Christians who invest in

the realization of the vision and aspirations of Africa We Want, the congress activities were organized under four subthemes: **Pan-Africanism and Active Citizenship, Human Dignity and Socioeconomic Justice, Ethical leadership and Eco-Stewardship and Peace and Security.**

The AAYC was a time for ecumenical fellowships with delegates worshipping together every day. It was also a special time for promoting Pan-Africanism and celebrating the African young people's agency in the continent's sustainable development and their African heritage. The next three pages provide some highlights from the congress.

The opening ceremony

The official opening ceremony commenced with a grand procession, as delegates proudly showcased each country's flag. In his opening remarks, the AACC Executive Youth Secretary, Mr. Brian Muyunga, acknowledged the presence of each region, emphasizing that the gathering in Nairobi was an opportunity to inherit the legacy of our forebears and to envision a similar legacy for Africa: My Home, my Future.

Ms. Ann Kioi, AACC's Director for Gender, Women, Youth and Sustainable Population, expressed gratitude to the partners of the AAYC for their instrumental role in ensuring the event's success and acknowledged all those who supported the convening of the congress, invited guests and dignitaries present.

"You are a new Joshua and Esther generation, born in ordinary circumstances but doing extraordinary things," stated AACC President Rt. Rev. Lydia Nashangwe. She encouraged young people to become builders of unity and to resist the divisions that permeate the continent.

The keynote address was delivered by Rev. Dr. Mwombeki, AACC General Secretary. He noted that many youths perceive their countries and

continent negatively, largely due to unemployment, conflict, corruption, poor democratic practices, and systemic social injustices.

"Disillusioned, many become vulnerable to trafficking, modern slavery, radicalization, and violent extremism, while others risk their lives in desperate attempts to migrate," he observed.

Rev. Dr. Mwombeki urged participants to recognize Africa's untapped potential. Highlighting the continent's wealth of natural resources, innovation, and talent. He noted that Africa's resilience during the pandemic—rooted in uniquely African approaches—surprised the global community. With proper resource management and political will, Africa has the capacity to outpace global competitors.

"The rest of the world now recognizes Africa's potential, hence the rising influx of delegations, strategic conferences, loans, scholarships, and infrastructure support," he added. While acknowledging genuine partnerships, Rev. Dr. Mwombeki cautioned against new forms of colonial influence.

"Young people must remain vigilant, safeguarding Africa's future and ensuring its resources prioritize the benefit of Africans first," he emphasized.



Speaking on behalf of the diaspora and the World Council of Churches (WCC), Philip Tia Azia interpreted the gathering's theme as a *"prophetic declaration of hope and responsibility."*

In a recorded goodwill message from the African Union Commission Chairperson, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, extended heartfelt greetings to all participants. Describing the event as a *"movement of hearts and hands"*—a testament to African youth ready to build the Africa we desire—he urged young people to recognize their pivotal role.

"You are not merely participants in a conference but architects of a new chapter in our shared history," he affirmed.

Elaborating on the AU's commitment, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf stated:

"The African Union stands beside you as a steadfast partner and champion of youth leadership, innovation, and participation across all spheres of life—from governance and entrepreneurship to peacebuilding and environmental stewardship," affirmed H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf



AACC General Secretary delivering his Keynote address



AACC president welcoming the 2nd AAYC to Nairobi



Ms. Ann Kioi Addressing the Congress



Mr. Brian Muyunga mobilizing the youth at the congress

Main Plenaries

The congress held four thematic plenaries, each focusing on one of the congress subthemes. Following the first main plenary, which served as the opening plenary run on the sub-theme, “Active Citizenship,” the second main plenary was held on 3rd November and its theme was, “Accelerating Sustainable Development in Africa, through fostering ethical leadership and Eco-stewardship Ethical leadership, for the Africa we want.”

The plenary highlighted the shared call for ethical, sustainable and inclusive leadership across Africa. Speakers emphasized that the continent’s future depends on integrity, environmental stewardship and a collective commitment to building just and life-flourishing societies.

The third plenary focused on “Transforming Injustices that Undermine Human Dignity,” focusing

on the urgent realities of migration, modern slavery and human rights across the continent. The session challenged participants to “understand to protect life,” drawing attention to the deep injustices that continue to strip Africans, particularly youth and migrants, of their dignity. Speakers underscored that migration, while a natural human phenomenon, has become a site of suffering, exploitation and inequality.

The forth main plenary focused on fostering peace and security in Africa and it featured conversations addressing violent extremism in Africa, Tech-facilitated violence, elections, democracy and governance, and border control and security. Participants shared experiences on best practices for peacebuilding in Africa and also deliberated on how to address the major barriers to silencing the guns on the continent.



Panelists presenting during one of the main plenaries

Thematic Parallel sessions

Following each main plenary, participants split into 10 parallel thematic sessions where they engaged on matters raised during the plenaries, among other matters of their interest, in smaller groups of 30 – 80 people. These sessions provided the

opportunities for participants to actively participate in the congress activities. These sessions were run and facilitated in collaboration with several ecumenical partners such as the WCC Arigatou international, Arise Africa, CWM, LM international, Foundation for Aid to Reformed Protestantism (FAP), East African Youth Assembly, among others.



Participants contributing to the thematic sessions



Celebration of the African Youth Agency in Sustainable Development

Following the Inaugural AAYC, the All Africa Youth Network initiated and ran various transformative initiatives, significantly contributing to Africa's sustainable development. Among these include the Churches' Campaign against GBV in Africa, Youth Campaign for tax and economic justice and the Youth Entrepreneurship Forum, among others.

During the Second AAYC, a number of business sessions were held to celebrate these initiatives. During the business session celebrating the church's campaign against SGBV in Africa, the congress engaged in a short documentary showcasing the work done in mobilizing faith communities to promote transformative masculinities and

femininities to end all forms of GBV. Participants highlighted the role of transformative ecumenism in the struggle to end SGBV and recognized several youth leaders who offered dedicated service to the campaign.

In the business session celebrating Youth entrepreneurship, the congress celebrated various youth whose creativity and innovations are inspiring sustainable and life flourishing economic growth in their countries and communities. The AACC Director for Gender, Women, Youth and Sustainable Population used this opportunity to unveil and launch the AAYN Entrepreneurship award programme for 2026-2027.



Mr. Keith Muhati, the AACC Programme Assistant receiving a medal during the AAYC

Celebrating the African Cultural Heritage

Every day of the congress featured cultural evenings where delegates showcased their cultural heritages through music, dance, drama, poetry, and demonstration of rituals. Cultural evenings

were exciting moments of jubilation, learning and cultural exchanges strengthening the Pan-African unity beautifully held together by shared beliefs expressed through diverse practices and languages.



South Sudanese delegates show casing their cultural dance

The memorable closing ceremony

The Second AAYC concluded in a spirit of joy and gratitude on Tuesday evening with a colorful closing dinner and awarding ceremony where awards and gifts of appreciation were given to members of the AAYC Steering Committee, national coordinators and support staff who played a crucial role in planning and delivering the successful continental youth gathering.

In his remarks, Rev. Dr. Mwombeki commended the youth for their passion, creativity and commitment to transforming Africa through faith and action. He emphasized that the Congress had not ended, but rather *“planted seeds of transformation that will grow across the continent.”*

The final 30 minutes were spent in prayers and intercessions where participants prayed for one another, their countries, the continent and the world at large.



AAYC stewards showing off their certificates of appreciation and gifts with the AACC Executive Secretary, Youth



Members of the AAYC steering committee during one of the sessions

African Youths Embrace 'Let Love Lead: End GBV Now' Campaign

Across Africa, the 16 Days of Activism against GBV (25 November–10 December 2025) became a concrete expression of the continental campaign, **"Let Love Lead; End GBV Now."** Coordinated through church and youth networks, the campaign mobilized communities in multiple countries to confront gender-based violence as a threat to human dignity, peace, and sustainable development. In line with the 2025 global emphasis on ending digital violence against women and girls, activities addressed both offline harm and technology-facilitated abuse, while grounding responses in faith-based values of love, justice, and protection.

Implementation took diverse but complementary forms. Digital advocacy ran consistently through daily posts, posters, videos, and hashtags that reinforced prevention messages and encouraged speaking out. At the community level, churches hosted sensitization talks, youth dialogues, and question-and-answer forums that challenged silence and normalized discussion of GBV. Schools and universities were also central: outreach sessions engaged students and staff in learning about consent, boundaries, reporting pathways, and survivor support. Health settings contributed through structured education in clinics and outpatient departments, highlighting GBV's health impacts and the role of referral systems. Many country teams used participatory methods, such as drama, role plays, art exhibitions, mind games, candle-lighting ceremonies, and awareness walks to enhance empathy, deepen learning, and create safe spaces for disclosure.

The participating 14 countries reflected the breadth of engagement: Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Gabon, Mozambique, Sudan, the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), South Africa, Ethiopia, Namibia, and The Gambia. Nigeria combined daily online advocacy with church and school sensitization and webinars that included legal and human-rights expertise. Ghana's Kind Light Network (KLN) paired sustained digital sensitization with community outreach in a high-traffic public space. Kenya blended youth and community sessions with a university-based sequence including remembrance, dialogue, and an awareness walk. Tanzania's *"Voice of Peace Against GBV"* used drama and dialogue circles across church and school sites, while Uganda demonstrated two models: one linking climate stressors to GBV risk through community

Digital advocacy ran consistently through daily posts, posters, videos, and hashtags that reinforced prevention messages and encouraged speaking out.

dialogues and action, and another reaching large student and clinic audiences through structured education.

Gabon expanded awareness through church sensitization, a visit to an Equality Center, and Protestant radio engagement; Mozambique combined Christian teaching with door-to-door outreach and flyers; Sudan delivered school- and church-based workshops for teachers, students, and youth; and Brazzaville strengthened public sensitization through youth mobilization and national television engagement. In the DRC, a youth conference/debate emphasized the Church's responsibility in prevention and survivor support, and

the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) youth ran a multi-diocese social media drive culminating in a webinar. Ethiopia focused on early marriage as a rights violation affecting girls and congregational wellbeing; Namibia ran an extended program addressing survivor support, prevention, child safeguarding, reporting channels, and gender norms; and The Gambia reinforced school-based work with posters, wall stickers, and partnerships with community organizations. Taken together, the campaign demonstrated that when love is practiced as public action through prevention, solidarity, and accountable support, communities become better equipped to end GBV.



An intergenerational TV Talk show on ending SGBV during the 16 Days of activism in DRC.

Youth-led Contextual Bible Study Manual on **SRH and Sustained Population Growth** Launched

During the second All Africa Youth Congress, AACC launched two publications developed by the All Africa Youth Network, as part of AACC's agency to respond to the various challenges to human dignity in Africa. The two publications are Contextual Bible Studies (CBS) for use in shaping, inspiring and informing faith-based efforts, promoting sexual and reproductive health rights, and sustainable population growth for quality life in Africa.

The CBS Manual on Sexual and Reproductive Health and rights is titled, 'Young People's Resource Pack on Faith, Love and Life' while the CBS Manual on Sustainable Population Growth for Quality Life in Africa is titled, '**Young People's Resource Pack on Faith, Fertility and the Future.**'

"To develop these resources, we received contributions from lay and ordained young theologians and youth leaders with various professional training and experiences including medical practitioners." Expressed the AACC Executive Secretary, Youth and Editor of the two publications, Brian Muyunga.

While launching the Young People's Resource Pack on Faith, Love and Life, the AACC President, Very Rev. Lydia Neshangwe appreciated the youth who developed the manuals for taking this leadership and described their work as a significant contribution to theology and the church's mission work in Africa.

Youth and Students in Africa Urged to Shun GBV.

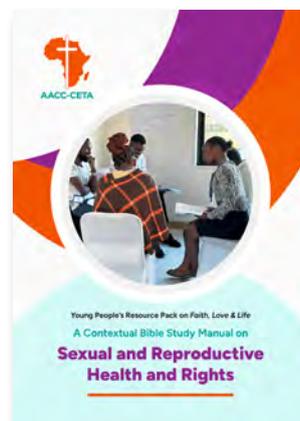
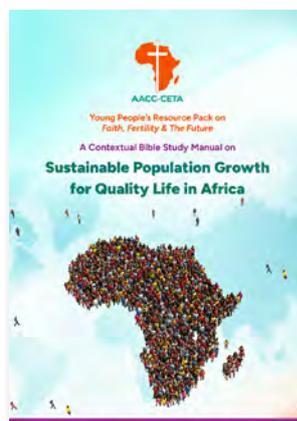
Between 8th and 13th December 2025, the Anglican Church of Uganda held its 12th Annual Provincial Youth and Students' Convention in Mbarara,

Uganda. The convention was held under the theme "*Leadership That Imitates God's Goodness*" (Galatians 6:9) and it attracted more than 900 youth leaders from across the country. While opening the gathering, the Archbishop of the Church of Uganda, The Most Rev. Dr. Stephen Samuel Kaziimba Mugalu urged young people to shun violence and instead become agents of peace, dialogue, and reconciliation as the country prepared itself for the 2026 General Elections.

The Keynote address was delivered by the AACC Executive Secretary, Youth, Brian Muyunga. In his address, he emphasized the role of Christian young people in ending GBV and in creating the Africa We Want. Building on the convention theme, Brian titled his address as, '*Love as the blueprint for a leadership that imitates God.*'

Speaking to the value of loving others, he encouraged the young people to shun GBV and all forms of violence is a sin.

He invited all youth to join the AACC campaign against SGBV dubbed "**LET LOVE LEAD — END SGBV NOW**" as leaders working for a world free of GBV and all forms of violence.



Botswana and Nigerian Youth Engage in Dialogues to Promote SRHR and Sustainable Population Growth

Promoting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and Sustainable Population Growth (SPG) among young people is key to ensuring and protecting human dignity and holistic health and healing in Africa. Youth leaders of two AACC members: the Botswana Council of Churches (BCC) and Motailatu Church Cherubim and Seraphim Worldwide, kicked off community-based initiatives advocating for increased access to SRHR services among faith communities and creating a culture of establishing sustainable families among young people in their constituencies.

In October – December 2025 BCC conducted a series of training workshops for youth and religious leaders in Botswana on the role of faith in promoting SRHR. The first workshop took place from 13th to 16th October 2025, at BOFABONETHA conference room. The training workshop was graced by BCC Acting General Secretary, BCC Treasurer Rev. Mpho Moruakgomo. In her remarks,

The youth regularly held bible studies on various topics around Sustainable Population Growth (SPG) and also preached in their local congregations

she highlighted the importance of breaking the silence and talking about SRHR matters in church, emphasizing that the mission of the church involves equipping young people with skills and knowledge for making informed sexual and reproductive choices. The workshops engaged the Botswana Christian Youth leaders in dialogues addressing stigma and shame around SRHR conversations in churches, the rise and prevalence of teenage pregnancies, prevention and treatment of STIs, menstrual hygiene and SRHR policies in Botswana.

In Nigeria, the Motailatu Church, Cherubim and Seraphim Worldwide Youth Fellowship launched the **'THRIVE Campaign'** to promote responsible family formation and sustainable population growth through biblically grounded engagements in Nigeria. During the reporting period, the fellowship leaders held peer-facilitated capacity building sessions on faith based advocacy for family planning and developed training materials for use to facilitate intergenerational and peer-to-peer dialogues on family planning.

The youth regularly held bible studies on various topics around Sustainable Population Growth (SPG) and also preached in their local congregations sermons imploring people to learn to plan for their families and take care of members of their households. Three online theological discussions aiming at addressing misconceptions on family planning and misleading theologies and religious teachings on production and multiplication were also held via zoom bringing together 70 individuals participants to share and exchange knowledge and experiences.



Ecological Justice

05 ▶

Dr. Tinashe Gumbo



AFAN-CJ joined faith actors in a push for **climate justice** at **COP30**

The African Faith Actors Network for Climate Justice (AFAN-CJ) participated in COP30 in Belem, Brazil and called for climate justice, especially for grassroots communities at the frontline of the climate crisis. The delegation comprised the AFAN-CJ leadership and the AACC Program Executive for Ecological Justice. The AFAN-CJ called for serious action, and not just mere pledges that have been synonymous with previous COPs, followed by evident delaying tactics instead of implementation. The COP30 ran from 10 to 21 November 2025.

In its message, the AFAN-CJ sought faster operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, adding that evidence from various scientific studies continues to project escalating frequency and intensity of climate disasters that will worsen the humanitarian crises. The AFAN-CJ emphasized that no response should be profit-driven, as that would defeat the purpose.

The AFAN-CJ delegation, led by the AACC Vice President for Central Africa, Madame Victoire BOUBA and the network's Vice Chairperson, Sheikh Dr Hassan Kinyua Omari, reiterated that genuine action must be geared towards adaptation, mitigation and resilience, hence the need for response with grants, and not loans from developed countries.

The AFAN-CJ indicated that the Loss and Damage features prominently in its advocacy because it touches on the most vulnerable, human survival and the future of Africa. Besides, the AFAN-CJ leadership asked for more involvement of faith-based organizations, whose understanding of the environment they live in and the moral leadership they offer can be the desired shot in the arm for locally-led climate action.



Dr Tinashe Gumbo, AACC Program Executive, Ecological Justice, contributing to a side session on Just Energy Transition. Photo Credit: PACJA

“We must recognize the moral authority that religious institutions and community leaders wield in conservation of our environment and in provision of potential solutions to the current climate crisis,” said Dr Tinashe Gumbo, the Program Executive, Ecological Justice. This was echoed by Sheikh Kinyua Omari during several sessions that AFAN-CJ attended at COP30. The AFAN-CJ continued to call for more accountability and integrity in climate action, with maximum transparency in

climate finance and general support to vulnerable communities. The AFAN-CJ’s main aim was to humanize the conversation at Belem and make it as relevant and applicable to Africa as possible for a more effective global response. The AFAN-CJ participated in several side sessions organised by the AACC, faith actors from across the globe, civil society and African governments in and outside the official COP30 venue.



AFAN-CJ Delegates Participating in one of the daily reflection meetings for non-state actors. Photo Credit: Rev Dr. Olivier Munyansanga



AFAN-CJ delegates seen here with Legislators and Government Officials from the Central African Republic (CAR) after a side session in the CAR Pavilion



Economic Justice

06 ▶

Mr. Adrian Chikowore



AACC and Faith Actors Coalesced at the 13th Pan-African Conference on Illicit Financial Flows and Taxation



Former South African President Thabo Mbeki delivering Opening Guest Speech at the PAC (Credits: TJNA)

The AACC participated in the 13th Pan African Conference (PAC) on Illicit Financial Flows and Taxation convened by the Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA). The conference took place from 7th to 10th of October 2025 under the theme, *“Honouring a Legacy, Building a Future.”* and in collaboration with the AU, and the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) and the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The PAC 2025 reaffirmed that curbing IFFs and advancing progressive tax reforms remain defining pillars of Africa’s struggle for economic justice. Delegates that included AU representatives, civil

society and church-related organisations recognized that without a reformed and equitable global tax system, Africa’s capacity to mobilize sufficient domestic resources will remain constrained.

The conference provided a valuable platform for the AACC to strengthen partnerships with other institutions towards sustained joint advocacy on fiscal and economic justice. The AACC also committed to advancing the faith-based moral narrative in fiscal governance, emphasizing that the fight against IFFs and unjust debt is central to achieving human dignity and sustainable development.

Faith Actors Call for **Progressive UN Tax Negotiations**

From the 10th to 19th of November 2025, the third round of negotiations for the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation took place in Nairobi, Kenya. This marked a historic moment as it was the first time these negotiations were hosted on African soil, reflecting the growing momentum for a more inclusive and equitable global tax architecture. The AACC, in collaboration with other faith actors including Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the Methodist Church, the WCC and Norwegian Church Aid, during this period advanced faith-based tax justice policy positions that are drawn from initiatives such as the Zacchaeus Tax Campaign, the Jubilee debt cancellation agenda, as well as from its researches and policy insights.

Through the leadership of the AACC, NCA and LWF at the 3rd Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the UN Framework Convention on Tax, faith actors managed to make a submission on Article 9 that focused on Sustainable Development. The submission highlighted the inadequacies of development

finance for key social protection aspects such as health, education, climate finance, entrepreneurship and youth employment which can be attributed to both internal national governance and broadly a global tax architecture that does not serve the interests of the global South but rather siphons from them via tax evasion, avoidance and illicit financial flows. This culminated in having faith actors' policy proposals on tax, tackling IFFs and reform of the tax system being captured as proposals into negotiations text.

Before the negotiations, on the 9th of November, in partnership with NCA, Christian Aid, Act Alliance and the LWF Federation, the AACC hosted and co-convened the Interfaith Prayer and Actions on Tax, where faith leaders made commitment statements towards influencing the UN Tax Convention process. This convening provided space for faith actors to understand the state of affairs regarding the UN tax negotiations, especially the politics at play, the protocols and articles to be discussed and how faith actors had to convene themselves to ensure that they are heard.



Cross-section of participants of the Interfaith Prayer and Actions on Tax held at the AACC Headquarters (Cred: Act Alliance)

AACC Partnered with AU-ECOSOCC for Joint Advocacy at the G20 Social Summit



Cross-section of participants at the AU-ECOSOCC Pan African Solidarity Forum on the G20 (Credits AU-ECOSOCC)

From the 5th to the 22nd of November, the AACC partnered with the African Union Economic and Social Council (**AU-ECOSOCC**) to advance faith actors and civil society policy advocacy proposals to the G20. The engagements formed part of the AACC's official participation in the G20 process, following an invitation to co-organise the Pan African Solidarity Forum on G20 and serve as a knowledge partner in the G20 Social Summit convened in South Africa.

To advance faith actors' voices in the run up to the G20 leaders' Summit, the AACC participated at the High-Level Virtual Dialogue on African Civil Society Perspectives on the G20 Summit convened on the 5th as well as on the 17th and 18th of November 2025 which run under the theme *"From Burden to Breakthrough: Reimagining Africa's Economic Inclusion in the G20 Era."* The dialogue set the stage for Africa's unified messaging to the G20. Adrian Chikowore, the AACC Economic Justice lead, presented on Debt, Tax and Climate Finance- A Faith Actors' Lens for a Just Global Economy. Within this convening, issues raised included the cancellation of illegitimate and odious debt with hindsight of the fact that 2025 is a Jubilee year and the African debt crisis is undermining sustainable development efforts, as well as progress towards

the Africa We Want. The COP 30 aligned proposals that were tabled included the need for faith actors and civil society to dig deeper in advocacy and policy influencing on the New Collective Quantified Goal to ensure that the global South accesses climate finance as grants and not loans and the need for progressive actions by African governments to also domestically mobilise resources towards adaptation finance.

The engagements at the Pan-African Solidarity Forum and the G20 Social Summit reaffirmed that Africa's advancement requires a collective commitment to justice, equity, and people-centered development. Through its active participation, AACC elevated the indispensable role of faith actors as moral anchors and trusted community leaders who bridge divides, foster reconciliation, and strengthen social cohesion.

The Forum and Summit highlighted the growing recognition of faith-based organizations as essential partners in shaping Africa's voice in global policy processes. The AACC's contributions ensured that peacebuilding, governance, debt, and financial issues were integrated into the G20 Social Summit Declaration.



Lomé Regional Office

07 ▶

Rev. Angele Dogbe



Training of Trainers workshop on Addressing Migration, Human Trafficking, and Religious Tolerance Held in Atakpamé, Togo

In commemoration of Human Rights Day on 10th December 2025, the AACC Regional Office in Lomé, led by Director Rev. Angele Wilson-Dogbe, conducted a Training of Trainers (ToT) session in Atakpamé, Togo. The event brought together 50 youth and community leaders from the central region to strengthen their capacity as faith and community actors in promoting interreligious understanding, inclusion, and peaceful coexistence through development initiatives.

The training, based on the comprehensive module *“Understanding the World’s Religions: Promoting Mutual Respect, Tolerance, and Peaceful Coexistence,”* underscored the central role of religion in human experience and its influence on values, behaviors, and social cohesion. In an increasingly interconnected and diverse society, the session emphasized that understanding different religious traditions forms the foundation for fostering mutual respect, tolerance, and harmony. A key focus was addressing exclusionary practices, with a call to church and community leaders to actively counter discrimination and ensure inclusivity in development programs. Participants were reminded that sustainable development and social cohesion are best achieved through the active respect and embrace of diversity.

On 11th December 2025, the training expanded to address pressing issues of migration, human trafficking, and the protection of children and young people. Utilizing the module *“Immigrant Status, Protection of Persons Against Trafficking, and Social Reintegration of Survivors,”* the session highlighted the growing challenge of irregular migration among African youth aged 12 to 22. Participants explored critical concepts, including

forced and irregular migration, human trafficking, child trafficking, and the risks associated with unsafe migration routes.

The training also examined push and pull factors driving irregular migration, traffickers’ recruitment methods, and sectors prone to exploitation—such as mining, agriculture, domestic work, and sexual exploitation. Emphasis was placed on the vital role of faith communities and local organizations in prevention, awareness-raising, and protection efforts. Church leaders and community actors were encouraged to guide youth toward informed, safer life choices and to advocate for the rights of vulnerable populations.

This initiative, held on the heels of Human Rights Day, reinforces the importance of collaborative, faith-informed approaches in tackling contemporary challenges. By equipping leaders with tools to foster interreligious dialogue and combat human trafficking, the AACC Regional Office continues to champion inclusive, sustainable development across Togo.



Rev. Angele Dogbe facilitating the training

A Journey to Yola: Faith Leaders Building Pathways to Trauma Healing

Ms. Faith Wa'thiongo

Northern Nigeria carries stories of remarkable resilience, but also deep wounds. Years of insurgency, displacement, and insecurity have left communities grappling with loss, fear, and fractured trust. Yet amid these challenges, faith leaders continue to stand as quiet guardians of hope.

On November 3, 2025, the AACC, through the Peace and Ecclesial Leadership Department, embarked on a journey from Nairobi, Kenya, to Adamawa State, North of Nigeria, to convene a capacity-strengthening forum on Trauma Healing and Mediation. What was planned as a gathering of 20 participants became something much larger. The initiative saw attendance by 41 church leaders from 12 churches across Northern Nigeria, filling the space and signaling the urgency of the moment.

Each day began with prayer and reflection. One of the reflections reminded participants of their calling as watchmen over the nation, entrusted to navigate communities through pain and uncertainty. This spiritual grounding set the tone for the entire meeting and the conversations, which were both honest and transformative.

During the activity, the leaders and participants reflected on their roles as mediators, agents of social cohesion, and bridge builders, drawing especially on lived experiences in communities affected by conflict.

Another very engaging conversation was centred on gender participation in meditation. There was representation from women leaders from the churches represented. The session highlighted the perspectives that women bring to peacebuilding,



Rev. Dr. Lesmore Ezekiel, Facilitating the training

grounded in empathy and community trust. Participants were urged to include women and youth in these spaces because sustainable peace must be inclusive.

Trauma healing was another theme that emerged. The participants explored how churches can become safe spaces for healing through empathetic and compassionate pastoral care. The sessions on trauma healing turned out to be safe spaces for the participants as well. There were also conversations around religious diplomacy and ethical engagement with artificial intelligence, further affirming that faith leaders must be responsive to both human suffering and global and contextual realities.

As the gathering drew to a close, participants made collective commitments to carry these lessons back to their communities. A WhatsApp group was formed and now serves as a living network of accountability, support, and shared learning. In Yola, faith leaders from diverse traditions discovered once again that unity is not uniformity. It is a shared resolve to heal, to listen, and to rebuild. In a region longing for peace, this gathering offered more than training. It offered hope.



Advocacy at the African Union

08 ▶



Faith, Justice, and the Quest for Reparations: **Highlights from the 5th AU Interfaith Dialogue Forum**

Dr. Gorden Simango

The 5th African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum (AU-IFDF) General Assembly, held in Windhoek, Namibia, on November 5-6, 2025, served as a critical platform for faith-based organizations and leaders to align their efforts with the AU's 2025 Theme of the Year: *"Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations."* The consultation was co-branded with the AACC, underscoring the organization's key role in the conceptualization, preparation and implantation of it.

Attended by representatives from Interreligious Councils, Faith-Based Organizations, and the African Union Commission, including Ambassador Amr Aljowaily, Director of the African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO). The forum was organized to harness the influence of faith groups in addressing historical injustices and advocating for reparative action. Dr. Gorden Simango, representing the AACC, was on two panel discussions: the first panel being on *"Faith Leaders as Advocates for Reparations and Justice in which he represented the*

This highlights a rising movement focused on identity, interfaith dynamics, and the resilience of indigenous knowledge systems.

AACC General Secretary Rev. Dr. Mwombeki; and then on the second panel discussion on "Building a Reparations Movement – Faith, Policy, and People of African Descent". He then facilitated a parallel group session on "Developing a Faith-Based Reparations Roadmap"

A key issue that anchored the call for reparations was the Herero and Nama genocide in German



Gorden Simango with the microphone on one of the panels

South West Africa (modern-day Namibia) between 1904 and 1908. This event, widely recognized as one of the first genocides of the 20th century, involved the ethnic extermination of the Herero and Nama peoples by the German Empire.

A significant secondary theme in the consultation was the increasing recognition and participation of African Indigenous Spirituality (AIS) in interfaith platforms. This movement is fundamentally driven by the decolonization of religion and the reclamation of African identity. Advocates argue that major world religions were largely introduced through colonialism and conquest, leading to the active

marginalization and suppression of traditional African spiritual practices. Reasserting AIS is viewed as a vital step in healing historical trauma, restoring cultural authenticity, and correcting the injustice where the continent's authentic spiritual foundation was replaced by the spiritual tools of the conqueror. This highlights a rising movement focused on identity, interfaith dynamics, and the resilience of indigenous knowledge systems.

The AACC's continued participation in the AU-IFDF remains crucial to amplifying the voice of faith in continental policy frameworks on justice, peace, and human rights.

AACC Organized a Webinar to Reflect on Elections Observation and Governance in Africa

Ms. Jessie Kalepa

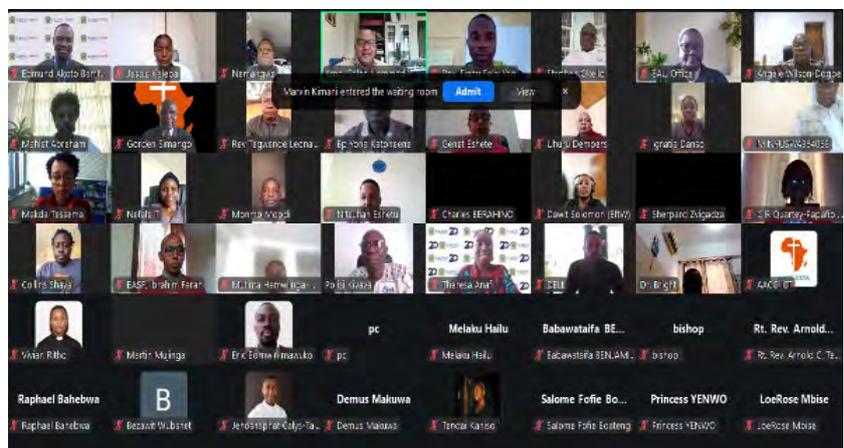
On 27th November 2025, the AACC convened a virtual Africa Regional Webinar on Elections and Governance, focusing on election observation and monitoring as essential pillars of democratic governance. The webinar brought together 62 participants from across the continent and featured expert panelists Ms. Makda Tessema, Ms. Theresa Ansa Anafi, and Mr. Edmund Akoto Bamfo, with Ambassador Salah Siddig Hammad moderating the discussion.

Opening the session, Dr. Simango, Director of the AACC Liaison Office to the African Union and Advocacy, underscored that electoral integrity is fundamental to sustaining peace, justice, and credible electoral processes. His remarks framed the discussions around the urgent need to protect democracy amid growing electoral tensions and risks of democratic backsliding in Africa.

Ms. Makda Tessema, Senior Democracy and Governance Expert at the African Union's AGA-APSA Secretariat, highlighted the importance of the entire electoral cycle—before, during, and after elections—rather than focusing solely on election day. She emphasized that credible elections enable peaceful transfers of power, strengthen public accountability, and safeguard democratic institutions. She also noted the value of international and regional observation missions in enhancing transparency, building public trust, and deterring electoral malpractice.

Ms. Theresa Ansa Anafi of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) provided practical insights into election observation, describing it as a systematic process of gathering and analyzing information to improve transparency and accountability. Anchored in the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), she outlined KAIPTC's work in training observers, offering technical support, and deploying observation teams, with a strong emphasis on women's participation and violence-free electoral processes.

Concluding the webinar, Mr. Edmund Akoto Bamfo of KAIPTC highlighted the strategic role of churches and youth in election observation. He emphasized churches' moral authority and grassroots trust, alongside the energy and digital skills of youth in verifying and reporting electoral information. The webinar reaffirmed the importance of inclusive participation, early warning systems, digital tools, and partnerships in strengthening democratic governance across Africa.



A section of participants during the webinar

Advancing Youth Engagement in Democratic Governance at the AAYC

Ms. Jessie Kalepa

On the margins of the 2025 AAYC, the AACC AU Liaison Office hosted two side sessions on Youth, Democracy, and Governance, aimed at equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to advocate for democratic governance and inclusive participation across Africa.

The first session took place on 1st November 2025 and was facilitated by Ms. Catherine Njuguna, a Youth and Advocacy expert. The session brought together 50 young participants from different African countries and focused on introducing foundational concepts of democracy, governance, and youth participation. Discussions explored the role of young people in promoting democratic values within the African context, while participants reflected on both the opportunities and challenges facing youth engagement across the continent. The interactive format enabled participants to deepen their understanding of democratic processes and their relevance to local, national, and regional governance.

The second session was held on 3rd November 2025 and featured a moderated panel discussion

showcasing country-level experiences of youth participation in democratic processes. The panel included Rev. Kobi Emmanuel (Uganda), Hon. Bakanga Magashula (Botswana), and Victor Paasewe (Liberia), and was moderated by Abigail Calulo (Angola). Drawing on personal experiences, the panelists shared insights into youth leadership, political participation, and the challenges faced by young leaders. Hon. Bakanga Magashula, the youngest local government councillor in Botswana, highlighted her leadership journey and the barriers young women often encounter in political spaces. The session was attended by 35 young people.

Collectively, the two sessions created a safe and inspiring space for dialogue, learning, and networking among young Africans. Participants gained foundational knowledge, exchanged ideas, and built cross-country connections, with many expressing interest in continued collaboration beyond the Congress. The discussions reaffirmed that meaningful youth engagement is essential for democratic renewal in Africa and that democracy thrives when young citizens are informed, empowered, and ethical in their participation.



Ms. Catherine Njuguna facilitating the first session

Faith-Based Voices at the 11th Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa

Ms. Mahlet Abreham

The AACC participated in the 11th Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa, held from 24th–26th October 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Forum, organized by the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) of Addis Ababa University, was convened under the theme *“Africa in an Evolving Global Order.”*

The Forum brought together high-level policymakers, former heads of state, AU officials, researchers, civil society leaders, and youth peace ambassadors. Notable participants included H.E. Dr. Gedion Timothewos, Ethiopia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs; H.E. Mahamoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission; former Presidents Joyce Banda of Malawi and Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique; and senior experts from the AU, UN and regional institutions. The AACC was represented by Dr. Gorden Simango and Ms. Mahlet Abreham from the AACC Liaison Office to the AU.

A major highlight of the Forum was the Meles Zenawi Lecture Series, which paid tribute to the late President Samora Machel of Mozambique. The lecture underscored Pan-African values of moral leadership, justice, and self-determination, resonating strongly with AACC’s faith-driven call for ethical and people-centered governance. Other key discussions focused on redefining Pax Africana, Africa’s positioning in a multipolar global order, youth and digital transformation, climate justice, and strengthening African-led conflict prevention mechanisms.

AACC’s participation enhanced interfaith visibility within AU-level peace dialogues and positioned the organization as a credible partner in advancing faith-based contributions to peace, security, and governance in the Horn of Africa and beyond.



On the right Ms Lettie Tembo, Interim Director/Head of Tana Forum Secretariat, Middle Dr Gorden Simango and Ms Mahlet Abreham of AACC on the left

Youth Lead Faith-Based Action Against Digital Extremism

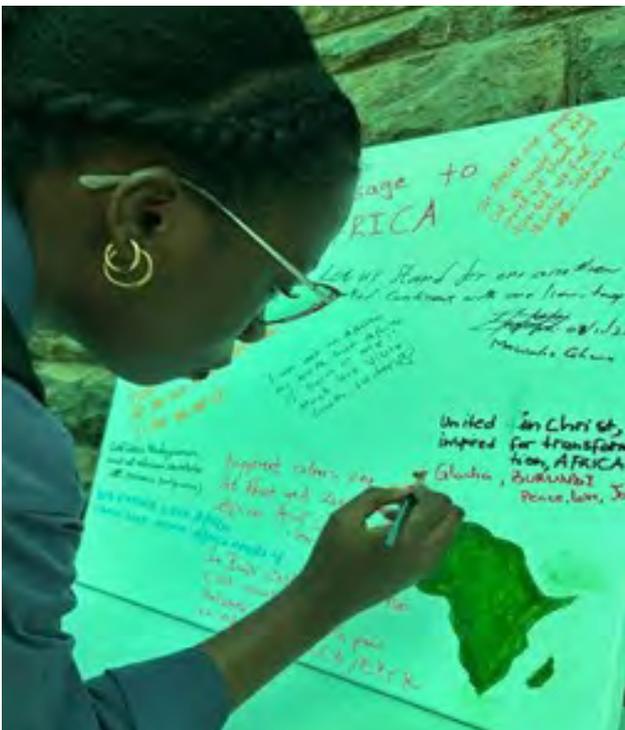
Ms. Mahlet Abreham

The AACC, through the Horn of Africa Peace Project, convened a side Event at the 2nd AACC Youth Congress on Eradicating Technology-Facilitated Violent Extremism (TFVE). The activity took place throughout the Congress period, engaging youth in structured dialogues, creative expression, and digital advocacy.

The main objective of the side event was to empower young people as proactive peacebuilders and responsible digital changemakers, capable of countering technology-facilitated violent extremism through interfaith dialogue, critical thinking, and innovative engagement. Specific objectives included strengthening youth understanding of extremist dynamics, enhancing digital literacy and media skills, promoting interfaith collaboration, and encouraging creative approaches to peace messaging.

On 2nd November 2025, a Roundtable Dialogue on TFVE engaged 40 young women and men in critical discussions on online radicalization, digital manipulation, and governance gaps, grounding solutions in ethical responsibility and the Ubuntu philosophy. During the discussion, Mr. Sam Bob, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Youth Envoy, underscored the link between online extremism and real-world frustrations faced by young people, including exclusion, unemployment, and weak governance. He called on youth to move beyond being seen as “at risk” to becoming regional actors for prevention, digital accountability, and peace leadership, aligning grassroots youth action with IGAD’s regional peace and security priorities

On 3rd November 2025, the Peace Wall art activity enabled youth to express messages of unity,



Youth expressing messages of unity, reconciliation, and solidarity through a collective mural dedicated to conflict-affected communities, including Sudan and the DRC

reconciliation, and solidarity through a collective mural dedicated to conflict-affected communities, including Sudan and the DRC. On 4 November 2025, the #FaithAgainstFear digital campaign mobilized youth to share peace narratives across social media platforms, culminating in an award for the most impactful message.

As an outcome, the side event strengthened youth leadership, interfaith solidarity, digital resilience, and creative peace advocacy. Participants emerged better equipped to challenge extremist narratives, responsibly engage online, and promote social cohesion within their communities, reinforcing the central role of youth in regional peacebuilding efforts.



Youth during the round table discussion on TFVE

African Civil Society and Faith Based Organization **Engaged Europe for Peace in the Horn of Africa**

Ms. Mahlet Abreham

The AACC, in collaboration with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) convened the European Union (EU) Advocacy Week in Brussels, Belgium, from 8th–12th December 2025 under the Horn of Africa Peace Project. The week-long initiative aimed to strengthen engagement between African civil society and European institutions through public events, roundtables, and targeted advocacy meetings focused on peace, justice, and stability in the Horn of Africa.

The core objective of the Advocacy Week was to translate lived experiences from conflict-affected communities into actionable European policy responses. The program brought together twenty delegates, including faith leaders, youth representatives, researchers, and civil society actors from across the Horn of Africa, alongside Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), EU officials, and policy experts. The AACC was represented by Rev. Dr. Mwombeki, General Secretary of AACC; Mahlet Abreham, Programme Executive for the Horn of Africa Peace Project; Rev. Tut Thomas Simon

Kun, Head of Programs, South Sudan Council of Churches; and Dr. Agum Adut, Member of the AACC General Committee.

A key highlight was the conference on 9th December 2025 at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), titled *“A Call for a Stronger Partnership between the Horn of Africa and Europe.”* The event featured opening remarks from EESC, AFSC, and AACC leadership, followed by expert panels on the conflict in Sudan and broader regional peace and security trends. Rev. Dr. Mwombeki delivered AACC’s message, stressing the centrality of local peace infrastructures, research, and inclusive civil society engagement in achieving durable solutions.

The EU Advocacy Week elevated African faith and civil society voices within European policy spaces, advanced concrete policy recommendations, and reinforced AACC’s role as a trusted advocate for inclusive, locally grounded peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa.



At the Global Voices for Peace: The Horn of Africa and Europe, Marco Tarquinio, MEP; Marta Temido, MEP and European Parliament Rapporteur on the Horn of Africa; Dario Nardella, MEP; Kerri Kennedy, AFSC Associate Secretary General; and Rev. Dr. Fidon Rwezahula Mwombeki



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