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Executive Directors Reflection

Dear Friends,

I am writing this reflection in Dublin, Ireland on the first day of Celtic Spring in this part of the world. We are celebrating the very stirrings

of new life. We hope that you are beginning to feel the earliest hints of spring rising within your spirit as well. Depending on where you are, you may be seeing your spring flowers beginning to show signs of life. Whatever this time is showing to you now, it is a time of new life where things are emerging from the darkness of this past year and we move to a new time of hope.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 is still with us, and the pandemic continues to challenge us in many ways. No country was spared the COVID-19 virus. It brought us the news of many deaths among our members and those we minister to, especially the homeless. We do believe that the numbers of homeless have increased globally in the past year, and that their human rights have been violated in all parts of our world. We will be highlighting some of these issues in this Newsletter with our members from the Philippines, where there have been human rights violations of families being evicted from their homes, leaving women, children, and girls homeless. We are hearing about systemic inequalities facing minority groups and Indigenous Peoples. We are also hearing about the lack of access to safe housing with support for vulnerable families. The Right to



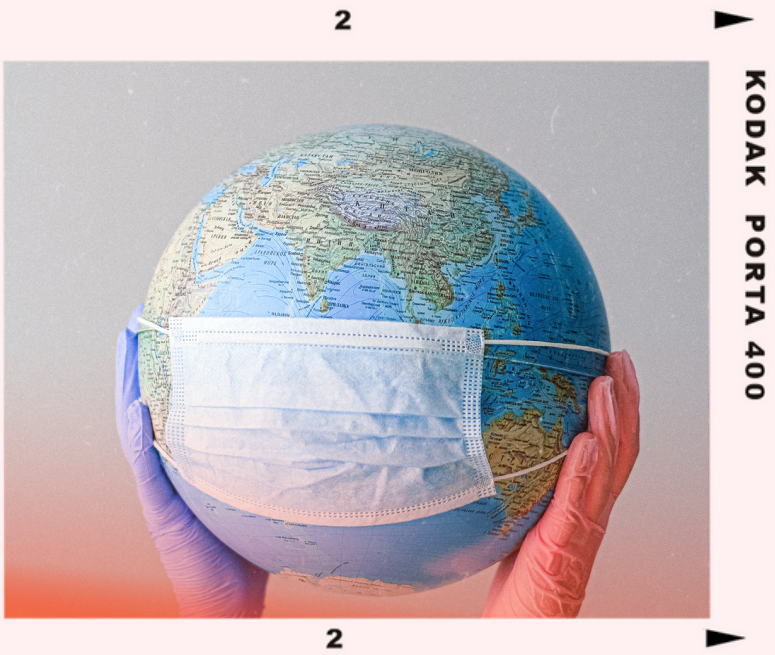
housing is the right to an adequate standard of living, and must be inserted in all Constitutions and laws around the world.

But of course, we always remain hopeful, and it is in times of crisis as we well know, that new life can happen. UNANIMA International will continue to seek International human rights for homeless women, children, and girls. But it does require a societal-wide paradigm shift to realize the full potential of human rights for all.

As it is St. Brigid’s Day, I will end with her blessing

May Brigid bless the house wherein you dwell.
Bless every fireside, every wall and door.
Bless every heart that beats beneath its roof,
bless every hand that toils to bring it joy.
Bless every foot that walks its portals
through.
May Brigid bless the house that shelters you.

Jean



Upcoming Dates

20 February

World Day of Social Justice

3 March

World Wildlife Day

8 March

International Women's Day

15 – 26 March

65th Commission on the Status of Women

20 March

International Day of Happiness

21 March

**International Day for the Elimination of Racial
Discrimination**

21 March

World Poetry Day (

22 March

World Water Day

7 April

World Health Day

22 April

International Mother Earth Day

UNANIMA International's Homelessness and the SDGs Webinar Series

UNANIMA International's webinar series on Family Homelessness/Displacement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals was a great success. Not just because of the high level of attendance and engagement, the community atmosphere, and the wonderful range of expert panellists (including people with lived experience of homelessness/housing insecurity). But also because of the clear, yet under explored interlinkages between Family Homelessness and each and every SDG, which we were able to help clarify for the international community.

The SDGs are sometimes referred to as the "5 Ps". Family homelessness relates to P1: People, because homelessness is a product of people's governance systems and affects everyone because of the ripples such experiences form in one's family, community, and even the world. Family Homelessness relates to P2: Planet, because our current ill treatment of the planet increases displacement, and nations and companies who abuse natural resources and encroach on territory that should be protected, create vulnerability to homelessness for an unimaginable amount of people. Family Homelessness relates to P3, 4, & 5: Peace, Prosperity, & Partnership, because our visions of peace and justice must include the fulfillment of safe, adequate housing as a human right. This is impossible to achieve without a coordinated global effort from civil society, businesses, and governments at all levels. It requires political will, education, addressing the issues as they exist, and preventing them from occurring systemically. The COVID-19 pandemic increases our concerns about rising rates of homelessness, displacement, and trauma globally. Thus we are doing all we can to raise awareness of the urgency surrounding these issues, including in relation to

the fulfillment of United Nations goals and agendas which the webinar series explored.

Webinar One: Family Homelessness and the "Planet" SDGs
- Webinar

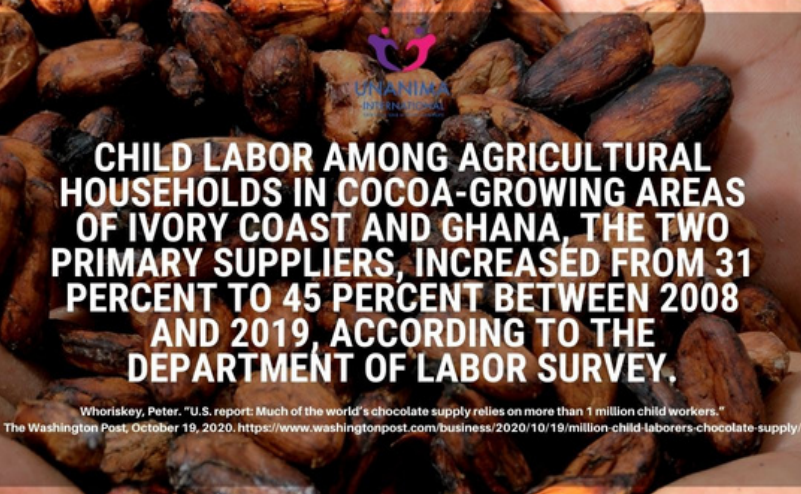
Full recording - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWF09Bmc45I&t=594s>

Webinar Two: Family Homelessness and the "People" SDGs
Full recording - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qipy2xvPDw0>

Webinar Three: Family Homelessness and the "Peace," "Prosperity," and "Partnership" SDGs
Full recording - <https://youtu.be/3zImBIDuvGI>

All Presentations:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uJlCcszpOIR8rrfzi6HJlgGcjewYw9Xq?usp=sharing>





Research Update/ Publication launch

UNANIMA International is in the process of finishing our latest publication: The Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking. As Jean Quinn, DW shares in her foreword, "we are focusing on the intersections of human trafficking and homelessness—two very traumatizing situations that are often addressed individually, rather than together. In order to address the intersections, all of us in society must link the two issues to each other. When our services, research and advocacy are continually interacting, then we can make a difference to the suffering and exploitation caused by homelessness and human trafficking." Through literature reviews, testimonies of lived experience, and expert inputs, the connections between homelessness, housing insecurity, and how vulnerability to these experiences can in turn create vulnerability to human trafficking in its different manifestations (from labor, to forced marriage, to sex trafficking) is shown.

The publication explores other social, economic, and political issues which are related to both Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness. The publication uniquely shares analyses from a diverse range of stakeholders, including a lawyer who makes recommendations on the basis of her extensive engagement with homeless families. Long time UNANIMA International supporter and collaborator, Sister Winifred Doherty, shares her analysis, and comments, "testimonies show that there is a dark intricate web of abuse of human rights and exploitation of persons when homelessness and human trafficking intersect. A step towards a solution is zero homelessness." We look forward to launching this publication soon and seeing and hearing from many of our grassroots members in the process!

Whats Happening At the UN?

NGO Committee Updates

Working Group to End Homelessness

The Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH) still continues to be co-chaired by Jean Quinn, DW, and Kirin Taylor remains a part of the Education Committee. In November, Kirin presented on Family Homelessness and Technology, to help the group in their preparations for connecting the upcoming Commission for Social Development's priority theme to the themes of the previous two years (namely social protection floors and homelessness). UNANIMA International has been active in keeping the group up to date on our own research and advocacy, as well as contributing to group needs, such as reviewing event concept notes and proposals. On February 9 Kirin moderated a WGEH side event for the Commission on behalf of UNANIMA International, called "Leaving No One Behind: The Role of Data and Digital Technologies in Ending Homelessness." The WGEH has also co-sponsored UNANIMA International's Oral Statement for the Commission.

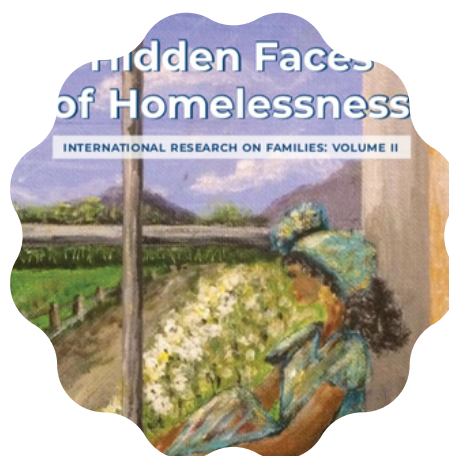
NGO Committee for Social Development

For the past several months the CSocD group has been focused on preparing for the Commission, including the Civil Society Forum which is hosting several events throughout the two weeks. The Civil Society Forum is a unique political gathering, open to anyone, which unites non-governmental organizations and politically engaged people throughout the world. UNANIMA International remains actively engaged with the group and has appreciated the time put aside in meetings for networking and celebrations—such as Christmas carolling in December!



Mining Working Group

The Mining Working Group has been active in communicating with UN Member states and personnel about our concerns, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. On February 4th UNANIMA International attended a group meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation, where we shared our concerns about these topics at their intersection with Family Homelessness, and the human right to safe, adequate housing. The Amazon subcommittee has been discussing partaking in research to help the UN community understand the effect of COVID-19 on Indigenous communities. UNANIMA International has contributed resources (for example our "Family Homelessness in Indigenous Communities" Case Study on page 59 in the Hidden Faces of Homelessness: International Research on Family Volume Two publication. We also shared some examples of our research protocols, and research information and disclosure paperwork to help the group in their planning.



Hidden Faces of Homelessness:
International Research on Family Volume Two

59th Commission for Social Development (CSocD59) Review

The 59th Commission for Social Development (CSOCD59) took place from February 8-17th, 2021 as a primarily virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With a delegation of 17 people tuning in from around the world as well as members, friends and invited speakers in attendance at various sessions, UNANIMA International was active and contributed significantly across the Commission. With the theme “Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all,” the Commission explored a vast number of cross cutting issues from the 2030 Agenda, and offered the opportunity for us as a global community to discuss the ways in which highlighting and exploring such intersecting issues can contribute to meaningful solutions.

The Commission’s program included a vast range of high-level panel discussions, civil society events, and side events, each offering the opportunity for state and non-state actors to contribute to the global conversation. In conjunction with our own preparation for the Commission, UNANIMA International contributed to the various efforts and events of the Working Group to End Homelessness and the NGO Committee for Social Development. Throughout the Commission we worked with our attending delegates and colleagues at the UN to ensure the voices of Civil Society and individuals and families with a lived experience were heard. For further information on the Commission and to view its outcomes as they are released in the coming weeks you can visit the website: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csodc-social-policy-and-development-division/csodc59.html> or catch up on a range of events on UNTV: <http://webtv.un.org>

If you were unable to make our webinars or CSocD59 side events, we hope to see you at our next online event! As always, stay tuned to our Social Media and Website for more information on upcoming events and instructions on how to register!



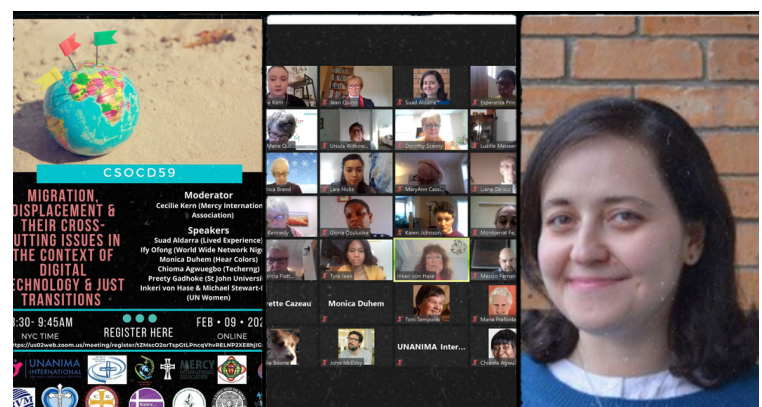
CSocD59- Migration, Displacement & their Cross-cutting Issues in the Context of Digital Technology & Just Transitions

During the first week of the 59th Commission for Social Development, UNANIMA International together with our co-sponsors (the NGO Committee on Migration, Justice Coalition of Religious, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, International Presentation Association, Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council of North and South America, Casa Generalizia della Societa del Sacro Cuore, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Loreto Generalate, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Soroptimist International, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Sisters of Charity Federation) hosted an official side event titled "Migration, Displacement & their Cross-cutting Issues In the Context of Digital Technology & Just Transitions". With over 100 people in attendance the event explored and addressed the Commission's theme in the context of migration and displacement. Staying true to our mantra "don't talk about us, without us" The event highlighted a vast range of inputs including lived experiences. It also provided concrete links between the priority theme of the 59th Commission as well as its past priority themes, specifically that of CSocD58 (Homelessness).

Inherently connected to the topic of Homelessness, this event explored displacement in the context of the theme through various lenses—specifically that of Migrants. Unfortunately, like many vulnerable groups globally, Migrants and Refugees are subject to violations of human rights, discrimination, and exploitation. According to the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), "Violations of economic, social and cultural rights are daily experiences for countless migrants who are denied access to digital technology, public health care, adequate housing, and essential social protection." Women, children and girls continue to be disproportionately represented and comparatively vulnerable within this population.

Inkeri von Hase, a migration specialist from UN Women, opened the event by highlighting the intersections of the Commission's theme and people experiencing displacement—specifically migrants and refugees. Followed by Chioma Agwuegbo (Lead Strategist, CC Consulting Services Limited and founder of Techerng) who spoke on the topic of Grassroots empowerment and advocacy, each of the speakers discussed drivers, outcomes, and policies, and contributed recommendations and solutions. The topic of the role of digital technologies on social development was discussed by the CEO of Hearcolors, Monica Duhem. Ifeyinwa Ofong from Worldwide Network Nigeria focused on how to ensure Digital Inclusion and Addressing the needs of vulnerable peoples especially women, children and girls. Professor Preety Gadhoke from St John's University delivered a perspective on the intersections between the displaced, health and the Commission's theme. Our final speaker was Suad Aldarra, a Syrian storyteller, data scientist, and a software engineer based in Dublin, Ireland, who detailed her Lived Experience.

Each of the women spoke eloquently, contributing their distinct and thought-provoking ideas, giving both advocacy and policy recommendations and pushing for the voices of people with a lived experience (especially women and children) to be heard. You can watch the event live on UNTV as well as on our Facebook page.



CSocD59 Side Event Youth Perspectives on Family Homelessness and Technology

UNANIMA International will be hosting a side event co-sponsored by Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur at the United Nations 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD59) called "Youth Perspectives on Family Homelessness and Technology." In panel format, the event will primarily give voice to the perspectives of people with lived experience of homelessness/displacement. We will also hear from university students on how Family Homelessness is affected by technology. This will include the examination of the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all, especially the most marginalized of our world (migrants, refugees, visible and hidden homeless populations).

Our youth speakers include: St. John's University students: Arianna Papponne (Italy), Rocio Moron (Spain) Ammaar Dawood (USA); Ajifanta Marenah, also a St. John's student who also has lived experience (The Gambia/USA); Mason Modiste will share about their lived experience as a youth who faced homelessness (USA); and Kirin Taylor, UNANIMA International's Research Fellow (USA) and our moderator, Molly Gerke (Australia) is UNANIMA International's Executive Assistant.



"We as interns and volunteers at UNANIMA International have seen the need of speaking up and educating through a thorough research on the reality that surrounds us. At the same time, we recognize the necessity of creating a space for learning and evaluating our own work through theoretical lenses so our work can improve and hopefully improve humanity's well-being. We believe that this event is necessary in order to present a deeper view on relevant topics. Our panel will offer insight on essential areas such as human trafficking, women's empowerment, inequality as a driver of homelessness, experiences of hidden homelessness, and experiences of displacement. In order to further advance in these topics, testimonies of people who have experienced how technology has influenced situations of homelessness and housing insecurity are essential. Hearing a specific testimony might aid individuals to realize how these issues discussed in the panel actually affect the population."



UNANIMA International's Board of Directors

Back Row: Margaret Fyfe CSB, Hortense Demia SP, Eileen Davey SUSC, Maureen Foltz CCV, Barbara Spears SNJM, Janet Peterworth OSU, Cathy Sheehan DW, Pereka Nyirenda RSC, Ellen Sinclair SDS, Fran Gorsuch CBS, Margaret Scott AIC, Barbara Jean Head OSU, Pat Flattery CND.

Middle Row: Barbara Linen SHCJ, Jean Quinn DW, Gloria Caixeta MSC, Sharon Sullivan OSU, Noelene Simmons SM

Front Row: Ces Martin NDS, Renaude Gregoire, Josee Therrien RJM, Janice Belanger SASV,



UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS FEB '20

Intern Introductions

In January, UNANIMA International welcomed three new interns from Syracuse University, all committed to extending UNANIMA International's research for education and advocacy, with a focus on climate-induced displacement. We expect the interns to contribute to research publications and presentations, as well as engage in political representation for our organization, bringing attention to Family Homelessness and our priority groups (women, children and girls, migrants, refugees, and the earth) in political spaces including civil society events and UN Commissions. Below you can learn a little bit about them!

Tyra Jean is a passionate and driven personality attending the 12-month Master of Public Administration Degree at The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Hailing from Freeport, New York, Tyra is the daughter of two Haitian immigrants. Due to her upbringing, Tyra understands the importance of empathy, lifting up the voices of the marginalized, and using relevant data to combat issues of poverty and social determinants of health. She previously held positions as a Health Assessment Data Team Intern at the Onondaga County Health Department and was one of 30 change-makers selected for the Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Fellowship Program at UC Berkeley. She currently holds a position as a Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion Research Affiliate, and publishes research briefs when she feels inspired. She is honored to be on board this semester as a Spring Intern at UNANIMA International!



Xiaowen (Abby) Cui is a Public Diplomacy student from Syracuse University with an undergraduate studies background in Broadcast and Journalism. Her interests lie in environmental protection, urban planning and development, educational inequity and reform, and ethnic minorities' human rights violations and advocacy. Abby pays particular attention to effective communication practices that have the potential to address or transform conflicts resulting from these societal issues. Born and raised in China, she is also a self-taught chef.



Lara Hicks is a Master of Public Administration student at Syracuse University concentrating on international development and completing a Certificate of Advanced Study in Civil Society Organizations. She graduated as a University Scholar from Syracuse University in May 2020 with her bachelor's degree in international relations. Passionate about serving displaced families and refugees, Lara focused her studies on the politics of migration issues and how the UN system responds to protracted global crises. Her undergraduate honors thesis research sent her to Geneva, Switzerland to interview UN officials at the UNHCR and IOM. In addition to her academic interests in global governance and migration policy, Lara currently serves as the Assistant Manager for Adult and Family Programs for a Syracuse non-profit and as an advocate for relationship violence survivors in SU's Take Back the Night committee. In her spare time, Lara enjoys singing, classical and contemporary dance, and cheering on sports teams from her home state of Minnesota.





Women & Children



Homelessness/Displacement



Migrants & Refugees



Climate

Grassroots Stories

Mining Tragedy in North-eastern Brazil Loss of Homes – Adding Chaos During Covid 19 Pandemic

Givaldo Pinheiro, associate member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, reports that he and many other residents in his neighbourhood have to abandon their homes and properties at the beginning of 2021. This is a direct result of a mining tragedy that occurred in 2018 and continues to cause havoc adding to stress and anxiety during the present Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2018 Braskem, a multinational mining company, left at least seven thousand sites, including homes, schools, hospitals, churches, and businesses, unsafe in four neighbourhoods of Maceió, Alagoas, Brazil: Mutange, Bom Parto, Pinheiro and Bebedouro. For forty years Braskem, a petrochemical company, has been extracting rock salt from the area at a depth of more than 800 meters. A lack of care for the earth and proper inspection by public authorities has led to the chaos that these neighbourhoods are currently suffering. The land is actually sinking due to large craters caused by the exploration. "All of this is the result of exploitation and greed without due care for the environment and the people." declared Givaldo.

There is also an agreement involving the government, the justice department, and Braskem for the removal of all personnel from this region. "People in the affected region are practically evicted from their homes and businesses.

Churches are closed and banned, schools and hospitals are deactivated, streets closed and banned, total chaos." Givaldo continues. Concerning the relocation of the people, the Civil Defense places a stamp on the residence or building and the people have to start looking for a place to rent. Once they find a place, they receive a monthly stipend to help pay for the rent. It will take a long time before people receive adequate compensation for their losses. Several legal procedures have to occur. Currently, this is taking up to two years or more. There have been several protests, attempts at resistance, but no authority has really been on the side of the people suffering the loss, not even to facilitate the process for receiving rightful compensation.

In addition to the pandemic, that has increased the problems of emotional illness, high levels of fear and depression, there is now a lack of available housing, even more so for housing of the same quality families once had. People in this region have to deal with the loss of their homes, their workplace and their community. They are experiencing many broken dreams in a cruel and inhumane situation. They also feel they have no real voice in the matter. Givaldo, a man of faith and courage, adds the following: "It remains for us to fight and to keep alive the hope of better days to come."

Report from Givaldo Pinheiro of Maceió, Alagoas- Brazil

Article adapted and written in English by Janice Belanger, sasv - USA
Jan. 17, 2021

Vedruna Sisters in the Philippines sharing a quick "visual" of the Bakhita project

In January the Vedruna Sisters' CIJPIC fundraiser sent money to a Vedruna community in the Philippines who are doing follow-up outreach after the cyclones, amidst the COVID-19 rampage across the country. It is a dual project, they are combining the food program in the cemetery groups (1) with workshops of education/prevention in Human trafficking. (2)

The sisters purchase and prepare big plastic tubs of chicken and rice and take them to the cemeteries...and also to the families who live under the bridges (3) where the sisters have been sharing life and caring for years. These people are the most vulnerable who are at risk for all kinds of exploitation.

(1) Cemetery groups are the homeless persons/families who live ON cemetery plots because they have no homes. The cemetery plots/sites are not their property. The people are, essentially, squatters.



(2) The workshops and educational outreach programs are preventive projects to educate the impoverished, the young, the hungry and homeless women and young people to be alert to the exploitative trickery of the traffickers. This community networks materials through the international TALITA KUM program.

(3) homeless persons/families also live under the bridges and bathe, wash clothes and cook next to the river. At night, they must move up to the road as the river snakes move up to the riverbanks.

- Maureen Foltz, CCV

Resources

Missed a United Nations event you wanted to see? While not go and check out UNTV where you can watch events live or catch up later <http://webtv.un.org/>

Want to find out more about the upcoming Commission for the Status of Women?

Visit this page: www.unwomen.org

Want to find out more about the recent Commission for Social Development?

Visit [this](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csod-social-policy-and-development-division/csod59.html) page:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csod-social-policy-and-development-division/csod59.html>

Find more Trafficking infographics and resources among many more on the UNANIMA International website! Head to our resource and blog section!



UN Web TV

The United Nations Live & On Demand

