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with hearts as wide as the world

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur | Making Known God's Goodness

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Dear Readers,

In a world marked by accelerating environmental, social, and technological change, the year 2025 stands as a pivotal moment for global reflection and collective action. From the Second World Social Summit in Doha to the preparation for the landmark COP30 negotiations, diverse communities, institutions, and movements are reassessing their roles in shaping a just, sustainable, and dignified future for all. Faith-based communities, including the Churches, continue to offer moral leadership as humanity confronts ecological crises, widening inequalities, and the urgent call of Laudato Sí to care for our common home. At the same time, emerging challenges such as digital violence against women and girls demand renewed vigilance, solidarity, and global cooperation. The articles in this issue examine the outcomes of major international forums, reflect on spiritual and ethical responsibilities, and advocate for a world where human dignity, climate justice, and digital safety are upheld without compromise.

SECOND WORLD SOCIAL SUMMIT – DOHA 2025

SECOND WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DOHA 2025

The Second World Social Summit was held in Doha from 4 to 6 November 2025. Global leaders, civil society, and youth representatives came together to renew their international commitment to social justice and inclusive development, guided by the principle of leaving no one behind.

The first summit, convened in Copenhagen in 1995, thirty years earlier, had its central objective of securing a global commitment to social development around three main pillars:

- Eradication of global poverty
- Expansion of productive employment: promoting full employment and improving access to decent work

- Promotion of social integration: building more inclusive societies by reducing inequalities, discrimination, and social exclusion

These objectives were formalized in the Copenhagen Declaration and Program of Action, which guided international social development policies for three decades. The second summit, held this year, served as an evaluation, and sought to reinforce the goals set in 1995.

The outcome of the Doha Summit was the adoption of the Doha **Doha Political Declaration** which also emphasizes eradicating poverty, expanding decent work opportunities, and strengthening social protection systems. Delegates highlighted the growing gap between development ambitions and available financial resources, calling for reforms of global financial institutions and increased support for developing countries.The Summit also launched the Doha Solutions Platform, designed to highlight and scale innovative social initiatives. Civil society, private sector, and youth group organized a Parallel Forum that contributed perspectives on digital inclusion, gender equality, and community resilience. During discussions, participants stressed how intricately connected social development, peace, and stability are. They also noted that in this time of many challenges, the costs of war are surpassing the funds invested in development. This highlights the necessity of working to promote peace.

The Doha Summit concluded with a strong call to transform commitments into action. The Declaration set a clear direction, and leaders acknowledged that significant progress would require sustained financing, greater accountability, global cooperation, and above all, a political will to translate agreements into concrete actions. The world advances toward the 2030 agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals. The Summit reaffirmed that investing in people remains essential for building just, resilient, and prosperous societies.

See: Second World Summit for Social Development 2025 | Second World Summit for Social Development 2025

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES BEFORE AND DURING COP30

Photo credit World Council of Churches

At the time of COP30 in Belém, Christian churches: Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, and Orthodox mobilized strongly to influence the global climate debate. Their engagement on climate issues intensified as the summit approached. They also drew on their moral authority and the reach of their networks to highlight the urgency of an ecological transition that is just, demonstrating solidarity, and centered on human dignity.

Before COP30, numerous initiatives were launched to raise awareness about the climate challenges among the faithful in countries where the churches are present. In Brazil, for example, the National Conference of Bishops (CNBB) supported campaigns to protect the Amazon, denounced deforestation, and the illegal exploitation of Indigenous lands. Globally, ecumenical movements such as the World Council of Churches and the *Laudato Si'* Movement organized webinars, marches, advocacy actions, and public mobilizations to put pressure on political leaders.

Religious leaders emphasized the close link between climate justice and social justice, reminding the world that protecting the Amazon means defending Indigenous peoples, the poor, and global biodiversity

During COP30, the churches maintained a strong presence through interreligious delegations active in both official and parallel spaces of the summit. They consistently reminded decision-makers and the public of the need for profound changes in lifestyles, production, and consumption patterns if climate policies are to be truly effective. In Belém, a space for prayer and dialogue was created to bring together religious leaders, scientists, NGOs, Indigenous representatives, and political actors—fostering a dialogue that connected faith, social action, and ecology. Brazilian churches, rooted in communities directly affected by environmental crises, bore witness to the daily realities of climate change.
The churches were not given the opportunity to participate directly in diplomatic negotiations, but they exercised significant moral influence. They continually urged governments to adopt more ambitious commitments and encouraged them to become agents of change. Pope Francis's teachings in *Laudato Si*' and *Laudate Deum*, as well as the message of Pope Leo XIV, guided the Catholic Church to promote an integral ecology linking environment, economy, and human dignity. Protestant and Evangelical leaders, for their part, stressed the collective responsibility toward creation.

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The churches' presence in Belém clearly demonstrated that the fight against climate change is not limited to political and scientific spheres, but touches the very heart of social life, solidarity, and our shared future. At a time when decisions taken at COP30 will shape the decades to come, the churches remind us that protecting the planet also means protecting humanity.

See: Before COP30: mobilization and preparation
Faith Leaders position COP30 as the people's COP
Catholic Leaders urge global cooperation on climate change

COP30'S HOPEFUL STEP AND ITS LIMITS

The 2025 global climate summit took place from 10–21 November 2025 in Belém, Pará, Brazil. The meeting was presented as the "Implementation COP," with a key objective: to shift momentum from pledges to concrete action in line with what we learned from the first global look of the Paris agreement. The summit brought together governments, civil society, Indigenous representatives, private-sector actors, and scientists.

Under the presidency of Brazil, COP30 sought to implement a more action-oriented approach. Beyond setting new climate-policy ambitions, the summit aimed to mobilize various stakeholders — governments, cities, business sectors, investors, non-state actors — through a unified framework called the COP30 Action Agenda.

The Action Agenda is structured around the themates: mitigation, adaptation, land and biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, infrastructure and resilience, social development, finance, technology, and capacity building See: Climate Action UNFCCC+2COP30 Brasil+2

Major Agreements & Outcomes

At its conclusion, COP30 produced a final package of decisions — commonly referred to as the "*Mutirão* Decision" (from a Portuguese term meaning collective community effort) — which bundles multiple tracks ranging from climate finance to trade and adaptation. House of Commons Library+2UN DESA+2

Among the most important outcomes:

- Increased climate finance for developing countries and adaptation funding: Parties agreed to ramp up support, in effect calling for adaptation finance to be tripled by 2035. RMetS+2United Nations+2
- Formal recognition of "just transition" and associated mechanism: A new instrument — the Belém Action Mechanism for a Global Just Transition (BAM) — was created, aiming to embed labor rights, equity, social inclusion, and human rights within the climate transition process. Climate Governance Hub+2RMetS+2
- Commitment to translate global stocktake findings into practical action: The conference re-energized efforts to operationalize the results of the first global stocktake via the Action Agenda, with 117 concrete "Plans to Accelerate Solutions" emerging from over 480 existing initiatives. COP30 Brasil+1
- Focus on land, forests, nature, and ecosystems: Recognizing the necessary role of forests, biodiversity, and land use, COP30 emphasized ecosystem protection, sustainable agriculture, and nature-based solutions as essential components of global climate strategy. World Economic Forum+2Climate Action+2+2

At this summit, more Indigenous peoples took part than at any previous COP. Their strong presence showed how important Indigenous rights, traditional lands, and cultural knowledge are in the fight against climate change. World Economic Forum+1 Despite these advances, COP30 also faced significant setbacks and criticism:

Photo credit: The World Council of Churches

- **No binding fossil-fuel phase-out roadmap:** Although many countries pushed for language phasing out fossil fuel use, the final agreement deliberately avoided explicit commitments to cease fossil fuel production or consumption — a major point of contention. Al Al Jazeera+3Climate Governance Hub+3UN DESA+3

- **Weak/inadequate financing baseline:** While the conference called for tripling adaptation finance, the baseline for that commitment was weak, and many observers noted the pledged amounts remain far below the scale needed to address climate risks in vulnerable countries. RMetS+2World Economic Forum+2

- **Non-binding language and voluntary measures:** Much of the framework, including the "just transition" and adaptation commitments, remain largely voluntary, depending on subsequent national policies and funding to become effective. RMetS+1

The world is still polluting too much. Even though many countries have promised stronger climate actions, these promises are not enough to keep global warming safely below 1.5 °C. Climate Action+2World Economic Forum+2

COP30 reflects a transitional moment for global climate governance. On one hand, it marks a shift toward implementation over setting unrealized ambitious goals, bringing together a broad array of actors under a coordinated Action Agenda, emphasizing inclusion, social justice, ecosystem protection, and mobilization across sectors. The creation of mechanisms for just transition and increased adaptation finance can lay important groundwork for more equitable climate action going forward.
On the other hand, leaders could not agree to stop using fossil fuels. The promises they made are nonbinding, and the money set aside to date is far too little. This shows a big gap between what politicians are willing to do and the big changes the world actually needs. The world is getting closer to dangerous climate limits. Whether COP30 makes a real difference will depend on what happens after the meeting. Most pertinent question for the future is: Will governments, companies, and communities actually turn their promises into real action to cut emissions, adapt to changes, and make big shifts, or will COP30 end up as just another round of weak compromises that do not match the urgency of the crisis?

See: House of Commons Library+2United Nations+2
House of Commons Library+2Climate Action UNFCCC+2
World Economic Forum+1

A REFLECTION FROM THE LAUDATO SI TEAM – EAST-WEST PROVINCE TEAM

How the Global Climate-Change Summit (COP 30) in Belem, Brazil, is connected to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Belem, where the Summit was being held from Nov. 10 – 21, is the capital of the State of Pará, Brazil (in the Amazon Region)
Geography: Where are SNDdeN in the Amazon Region? Currently, two of our Notre Dame ministries are in the State of Pará
Anapu (Jane Dwyer, Katy Webster, Maria Oliveira da Silva)
Breves –Marajó. (Sandra Araújo dos Santos, Luciane Diniz, and Carla Maria Souza de Vasconcelos)
And **Oiapoque** our third ministry is in Amapá also in Amazon region. (Rebeca Spires, Maria de Jesus Borges Costa, and Josineide Maria de Silva)
And our central Notre Dame office is in Belem.
The Spirit: You have seen the photo of our sisters, Lucyane R. Diniz, Sandra Araújo dos Santos, Katy Webster, and Jane Dwyer at the summit on the First Class Icon –SND NEWS.
How the Spirit and Legacy of our **Sister Dorothy Stang** are alive at this Summit.

On the streets of Belem, *o povo* (the Brazilian people), thousands of farmers, workers, women, Indigenous tribes, grassroots communities marched and protested, **demanding respect for the Amazon forest and its people, and for the end of fossil fuels**. Many carried posters of Sr. Dorothy, remembering that it is 20 years since she gave her life for the forest and its inhabitants.

During Lent 2025, the Brazilian Church across the whole country held community discussions on *Ecologia Integral* (Integral Ecology) in what is called the **Fraternity Campaign.** A video about Dorothy, narrated by our Brazilian sisters, was part of this reflection on how the ecological crisis affects all forms of life on this planet. (Video is on YouTube)

Marina Silva, Brazil's Secretary of the Environment, knew Dorothy and described her in the following terms: "*Sr. Dorothy's struggle laid the foundation of what researchers and scientists say today about the possibility of making a new cycle of prosperity based on biodiversity in the Amazon. She dedicated her life to love, justice, and peace."*

Marina Silva called for an ethical shift as COP30 faces fossil resistance: *"This is an ethical question. Ethics impels us convey this sense of urgency. More people have died due to climate change in 2 years than from COVID-19. And CO_2 emissions from* ***fossil fuels*** *now cause more deaths than wars. 500,000 people die each year from heat waves."*

To Ponder: We always remember that Dorothy Stang gave her life to protect the forest, its people, and its inhabitants, and to save the planet. **Here and now, how are we raising our voices and actions against fossil fuels? As an international congregation?**

Questions for reflection:

Do people know about climate change where you live, or are they only stunned by the changes they experience?

What actions have you taken about climate change where you live?

See: Fraternity campaign

THE POWER OF ACTIVISM: WOMEN FIGHTING BACK AGAINST ONLINE ABUSE

Photo credit: World Health Organization

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual global campaign organized by UN Women. It begins on November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and continues until December 10 (Human Rights Day). This commemoration mobilizes voices around the world to demand an end to violence against women and girls.

The 2025 theme, "**UNITE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls**", highlights the growing dangers women and girls face in online spaces. As technology becomes central to daily life, digital platforms must be safe, inclusive, and free from abuse.
Digital violence refers to harmful acts committed online, including:

- Harassment and cyberbullying
- Hate speech
- Image-based sexual exploitation
- Abuse through deepfakes
- Coordinated disinformation campaigns

Digital violence is not an isolated incident but an extension of gender-based violence in the physical world, infiltrating the digital sphere. The consequences for women and girls are profound, affecting their safety, dignity, and participation in society. This year's focus is on combating this new form of violence against women, as the world marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action—a historic commitment to women's rights that has enabled progress. Yet the digital revolution has also brought new vulnerabilities.

By framing digital violence as a human rights issue, the campaign underscores that online safety is inseparable from broader struggles for justice, equality, and sustainable development.

The call to "**UNITE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls**" demands that governments, businesses, communities, and individuals establish strong protections against abuse.
The campaign challenges us to imagine and build a digital world where women and girls can thrive safely, with confidence and without fear.
Related concern: More than three hundred Catholic students, boys and girls, were abducted in Nigeria in November. Let us keep in our thoughts and prayers those still in captivity and their families.

See: Watch the video
16 days of activism against gender based violence
World Health Organization and 16 days of activism against gender based violence
Nigeria sees one of the worst mass abductions as 315 taken from the school

UN FORUMS AND CONFERENCES

Commission on Social Development: 2 to 10 February 2026 in New York.
Commission on the Status of Women: 9 to 20 March 2026 in New York.
Can also be watched on UN WEB TV

Sr. Isabelle Izika, SNDdeN, Representative at the United Nations. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur is an accredited non-governmental organization (NGO) at the United Nations since 2001