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## JUST COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND MEN

Geneva, October 31, 2024

Dear Colleagues, Delegates of Member Churches, Ecumenical Partners, and Friends

I greet you with expectancy for the transformation we crave. Two programmatically-related, though somewhat dissimilar events invited me to take stock, and offered hope for the transformation we seek. Within an 8-day period, I was privileged to participate in an online gathering of minds with the United Church of Christ Gender & Sexuality Justice Ministries, as well as a Civil Society Roundtable on Violence Against Women and Girls. Given the Chatham House Rules, I cannot get into the details of the latter; but the former has recordings worth watching.

**UCC Thursdays in Black Summit:** On Wednesday November 13 and 20, under the auspices of Thursdays in Black ambassador Rev Dr Karen Georgia Thompson, participants assembled with facilitators to learn more about how to partner in breaking the chains of gender and sexual based violence through deconstructing biblical narratives, witnessing through various actions, overturning social media's influence on youth, violence prevention and anti-trafficking work. It was an era of discovery, challenge and engagement. Watch [Day 1 here](#), and [Day 2 here](#).

What are you doing to observe 16, or to end Sexual and Gender-based Violence? Share your plans with us, we're happy to promote it for you.

Please attend to the following:

### **WCC UPDATES**

#### **16Days Activities**

16Days observances begin on Monday, and several of us are commemorating this in various ways. Here at the WCC, we will host an exhibition, and an advocacy training. Along with other ecumenical colleagues, we will host morning prayers rooted in the 12 Critical Areas of Concern from the Beijing Platform for Action, and we join the LWF on Monday for a special conversation with Human Rights advocates from Latin America and the Middle East.

#### **WCC 16DAYS ADVOCACY TRAINING FOR CHURCH WORKERS**



The Just Community of Women and Men at the World Council of Churches invites you to join our online training for religious leaders, lay leaders, educators, seminary students and interested individuals will provide skills to effectively integrate advocacy into preaching, liturgy, and Bible studies.

Facilitated by global experts from our 8 WCC regions, the seminar is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 27 at 8:30-11:30 am or 2-5pm (CET)** to accommodate variances in time zones.

For more information and to register, please visit:

<https://www.oikoumene.org/events/advocacy-training-for-church-workers>

❖ **ECUMENICAL PRAYER CYCLE**

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle takes us through every region of the world over the course of a year. For more details and to access resources, please visit [the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle landing page](#).

✚ Other Updates

❖ **People Powered Policy-making Capacity-Building, Training, Mentorship, and Digital Tools Programme for Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia**

People Powered has launched a call for applications as part of efforts to strengthen citizen participation in policy-making, under its **Inclusive Democracy Accelerator (IDA)** to help public institutions and civil society organizations engage youth, women, and displaced people more effectively in participatory decision-making. Apply for the opportunity to receive a six-month practice-oriented training opportunity, including attendance at a two-day international workshop in Nairobi, Kenya (travel expenses covered). Eligible organizations (public institutions or civil society organizations) should be located in Latin America, Africa, Asia, or Eastern Europe ([check full eligibility here](#)).

The deadline for the submission is **24 November 23:59 UTC**. Find more information and an application link [Here](#)

❖ Call for Proposals:

Justice Denied: Fighting Widespread Impunity for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV) (June 2–3, 2025, Melbourne, Australia).

A two-day conference, hosted by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (CEVAW) and the Australian Institute of International Affairs Victoria (AIIA-VIC), will focus on addressing impunity for CRSV, fostering collaboration, and identifying innovative approaches to justice and accountability, specifically in the Indo-Pacific region. Submit application by **31 January 2024**. Find more information [here](#).

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On a different note, are you familiar with the concept of non-state torture? By virtue of the definition – extreme and intolerable violence committed in the private or domestic sphere by non-governmental parties – one realizes that non-state torture covers many

facets of Sexual and Gender-based Violence. A website on non-state torture indicates that NST is committed by parents, spouses, other kin, guardians, neighbours, trusted adults, strangers, human traffickers, johns, pimps, or pornographers in various public and private places. Let's think together on how we can end non-state torture in our contexts.

May God's grace continue to carry you throughout this season, especially as you plan your 16Days activities.

In Christ's Love and Grace

Rev Nicqi Ashwood  
Programme Executive  
Just Community of Women and Men