



March 28, 2023

The Honorable John Kerry  
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change  
The White House  
1000 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

**Re: Support of Resolution A/77/L.58 International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Climate Change and Human Rights**

Dear Secretary Kerry,

As religious organizations and people of faith, we are writing to ask you to support [Resolution A/77/L.58](#) in the United Nations General Assembly initiated by Vanuatu and other states, requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate change and human rights. Supporting this resolution would demonstrate US commitment and global leadership in addressing the profound implications of climate change. It will also offer a powerful testimony to the connections we share with the earth and our global human family; connections we are called to honor by every sacred tradition.

We celebrate the concrete steps the US has taken toward achieving ambitious climate mitigation and adaptation goals, including:

- net-zero by 2050
- actively encouraging other governments to pursue ambitious climate action in their climate policies
- U.S. leadership on the establishment of the Loss & Damage Fund
- leading numerous multilateral climate initiatives, such as the Global Methane Pledge.

The Biden Administration has already shown a strong commitment to centering justice in US domestic environmental policy, including through its [Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#). Supporting the UNGA resolution would demonstrate a similar commitment on the global stage.

By supporting efforts to secure an ICJ advisory opinion, you can build on this necessary record of US climate leadership and strengthen critical international partnerships with countries advancing this initiative. The initiative already has 117 co-sponsors, the formal endorsements of the Caribbean community (CARICOM), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the co-sponsorship of 26 of 27 members of the European Union. We are called, as ancestors in the making and faithful stewards of this precious planet, to act with humility, courage, and determination. The US has the opportunity to be a bold, imaginative, and powerful voice needed in this moment.

The UNGA resolution seeks to ensure that all States' rights and obligations are considered without singling out any one State or government. The Court's decision will help clarify how existing international laws and commitments, including human rights and environmental frameworks, should shape or drive global climate well-being efforts,

bringing consistency and coherence to the way that international laws grapple with one of the world's most complex problems.

We implore you to be a champion for climate justice and for our collective future by voting yes and further advocating for the UNGA resolution for an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on climate change. Endorsing this resolution as it is tabled would send a clear signal to present and future generations that their governments are responding to climate change with the necessary resolve and a recognition that it is fundamentally linked, as both cause and effect, to other global challenges. Our communities of faith are watching. The issues of climate justice and human rights cannot be separated. Vote yes on March 29th.

In faith,

Mary Katherine Morn  
President & Lead Executive Officer  
*Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC)*

Rev. Fletcher Harper  
Executive Director  
*GreenFaith*

Karen Kortsch  
President  
*International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women (IWC)*

Sharif Aly  
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Head

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Rev. Sofía Betancourt, Ph.D.  
Special Advisor on Justice and Equity  
*Unitarian Universalist Service Committee*

Scott Stearman, Ph.D.  
U.N. Representative  
*Baptist World Alliance/ Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (DGC)*  
Vice-Chair Board of Trustees: *Parliament of the World's Religions*

CC.

Secretary Antony Blinken, U.S. Department of State  
Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, US Ambassador to the UN  
Ambassador Lisa Carty, US Ambassador to ECOSOC