

# Join Our New Frontier: The Online Justice Pilgrimage

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This quarter, the last of the year, is a beehive of crucial international political processes involving Africa, beginning from the France-Africa summit of 8 October to the COP 26, November 1-12. These political processes, and similar ones that occur at other times of the year, have the potential to turn around the fortunes of the African rural communities. However, the shadow agenda of the protagonists of each of the processes have continued to shrink the spaces for the robust participation of civil society. The outcomes of the various processes have show the content of the shadow agenda glaringly.

In this vein, AEFJN seeks more active involvement of the Church actors in the available civic spaces to ensure that the voice of the voiceless are heard in the different political processes. Otherwise, the Church in Africa stands the risk of having her pews empty as we have it in Europe, not because of secularization but the silence of the Church in the struggles of the poor for survival.

AEFJN as an active member of *Our Land is Our Life*(OLOL), that supports the CGLTE (*Coalition globale pour lutte de la terre et de l'eau*) organized Caravan that links communities suffering the adverse economic outcomes and human rights violations of these various political processes. It supports the efforts to

ensure that their plights are made known in the appropriate quarters. The next edition of the caravan will take place from October 28 to November 18 beginning from the Gambia and traversing through Senegal, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry and terminate in Sierra-Leone. As a matter of fact, AEFJN is preparing and working closely with CGLTE to participate actively in the caravan.

In addition to the Caravan, the Church actors within the platform (OLOL) have developed an online Justice pilgrimage to support the caravan. It is a unique contribution of the Church actors in the platform (OLOL) to compliment the Caravan. The objective of the online justice Pilgrimage is to give the Church in West Africa an opportunity to bring her faith to do justice in the world through being a listening Church; hearing the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth more concretely on the issues raised by Pope Francis in Laudato SI such as agroecology, climate change, land justice and peoples' rights. It further seeks the Church to bring her moral and materia support to the local communities in the 2020 edition of the CGLTE caravn and echo the voices of the communities to the different political processes (Cop 26, UN Binding Treaty session in 2021, EU-Africa partnership) and ecclesiastical processes (The plenary of the RECOWA bishops in May, 2022).

The online Justice pilgrimage will be anchored by Regional Episcopal Conferences of West Africa (RECOWA) in aglignment with our Africa driven advocacy principle. In contrast to the CGLTE anchored Caravan, the online justice pilgrimage begins on 15 October (targeting the World Food day) and terminates towards the plenary session of the RECOWA bishops in May 2022 with a call out to the bishops and the entire Church in Africa to play a more active role in civic spaces.

The online Justice pilgrimage is another unique moment for members Congregation of AEFJN and their communities in Africa to participate directly in the advocacy activities of the network. Those who have communities are called to participate actively in the scheduled activities of the caravan, those outside the route of the caravan are hereby called upon to participate in the online justice pilgrimage. With our network of communities working in different rural African countries, you will consider a 3-5mins video built around the themes of the AEFJN work plan, something concrete and practical that we can contribute to the online

Justice pilgrimage. You will find through this link a [guide to participation](#) and [the action plan](#); and through this link [the messagings](#) that could accompany your video. It is more or less demonstrating how each congregation has incarnated the values of the AEFJN work plan and Laudato Si. The Secretariat team will be available to accompany your communities in the making of their videos.

A RECOWA anchored Facebook page is dedicated to this online Justice pilgrimage. The AEFJN Secretariat relies on the contact persons to link their communities in Africa for the Caravan and the complimentary online Justice Pilgrimage. Now is the time to bring our energy together to do great things. As the saying goes, “when the spiders unite their webs, they tie a lion.”