



ONE PAGE

Carmelite NGO: United Nations Advocacy Project of the Carmelite Family

English

June 1, 2025

Dear Members of the Carmelite Family

On April 1, 2025, the leadership of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel appointed new leadership in the Carmelite NGO. Sr. Jane Remson, the founder of the NGO, resigned earlier after serving over 20 years building the Carmelite NGO into an effective team of advocates accredited to the United Nations. She worked selflessly and tirelessly, and the Carmelite Family owes her a debt of gratitude. I know firsthand that our NGO exists today because she and a small group of committed collaborators worked hard to make our presence at the UN relevant for both the Carmelites and the UN itself. Hopefully she will continue to be involved as she enjoys a well-earned retirement.

I was appointed to replace Sr. Jane as president, and I look forward to working with the various members who I hope will continue to be involved in our advocacy work. I was a member of the Carmelite NGO Board from the organization's early days. However, when I was elected prior provincial of my province in 2013, I found I could not give the time required. My work on the NGO was mostly in communications—particularly with the website and *CarmeNGO*. I also participated in several of the annual UN meetings in New York as well as one in both Bonn and Paris. I also represented the Carmelites at the Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development in 2008.

My ministries as a Carmelite have been primarily in education and administration. As a young Carmelite I taught high school classes and was the campus minister at our secondary school in Tucson, Arizona. I moved into school administration for 10 years, and then provincial administration. Beginning in 2001, I served six years in Rome on the General Council of the Order. I continue to be involved in communications—both as director of the Order's communications office and my own province's publishing house. I keep my hand in education by serving on the boards and several committees of two of the Carmelite schools in the United States.

Fr. Eduardo Agosta Scarel, O. Carm., was appointed vice president. He has worked with the Carmelite NGO on several levels since 2010, particularly in climate change. He is currently vicar of the Virgen del Carmen parish in Onda, rector of Santa Ana in Artesa and superior of his convent in the Virgen de la Esperanza sanctuary in Spain. He heads the Department of Integral Ecology of the Spanish Episcopal Conference and is a visiting researcher in climatology at the University of Valencia. He is also part of the Chair of Integral Ecology at the Catholic University of Valencia. His work focuses on climate variability, atmospheric teleconnections and large-scale climate factors, as well as the relationship between climate science and integral ecology from a theological perspective. He holds a degree in Physics, specializing in Atmospheric Sciences, and obtained his PhD in Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences from the University of Buenos Aires in 2006.

Eduardo has published scientific articles and written book chapters on the relationship between science, faith, spirituality, and ecology. He was an assistant professor of Atmospheric Dynamics at the National University of La Plata and has taught at other academic institutions. He has participated as a visiting professor at the University of Salamanca and the Pontifical University of Salamanca on topics related to integral ecology. Since 2016, he has collaborated as an external expert for the Pontifical Council for Integral Human Development and represented CELAM at climate meetings of the Holy See. He was part of the Vatican delegation at the COP27 and COP28 climate summits. He has represented the Carmelite NGO at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. He is also a member of the Carmelite Order's International Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. He has advised episcopal conferences in Latin America on integral ecology and led interdisciplinary research teams on climate change.

Eduardo, referring to the transitions in leadership, wrote, "I am hopeful that the Carmelite NGO is embarking on a new phase of service to the Church and humanity from the UN's Areopagus, consolidating itself as an instrument of justice, peace, and care for creation for the entire Carmelite Family." I think we will all second Eduardo's hopes.

Dennis Kalob will continue in his position as chief administrative officer. Dennis is a sociologist and has taught at several colleges and universities. His lifelong commitment to peace and justice—and his activism—connected him with Sr. Jane many years ago. When she invited Dennis to serve in the NGO in 2015, he jumped at the opportunity. "I have known Sr. Jane since the 1980s," Dennis says, "and I have always been incredibly impressed by her leadership abilities, her commitment to justice, and her faith. I am grateful for every minute I got to spend working with her in the NGO. Now, I look forward to continuing my work as our efforts to promote social justice and creation care are more important than ever."

While some organizational work will be happening in the coming months, the advocacy work of the Carmelite NGO will continue as before. We will continue to focus on the areas we have since our founding: care for the environment, human trafficking, freedom of belief, education of children and youth, hunger, and poverty.

The UN is made up of representatives from governments, businesses, and civil society organizations. As a religious family, with members throughout the world, and faced with many of these problems for many years—for centuries in some cases—we have something to contribute to the resolution of these issues. We are willing to join with others in this work so that our voice will only be stronger. We admit we are not going to solve all these issues. But we need to be present in the discussions. The world needs to hear the Carmelite perspective which comes from our rich spiritual tradition. Not providing our voice to be heard at the UN would be to squander a God-given opportunity we are blessed to have.

Besides the usual meetings of the various groups we have allied with, the next big event for the Carmelite NGO is participation in the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4). We will be co-sponsoring a side event during the conference. Our delegation includes the Archbishop of Seville, the Executive Director of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, a professor from Francisco de Vitoria University, the Vicar for Social Pastoral of the Seville Archdiocese, and Eduardo. Our next *One Page* will have an update on that meeting as well as other news about our advocacy work.

You can receive more frequent updates on the Carmelite NGO and its associated organizations by subscribing to our feeds on Facebook, Twitter (X), and Bluesky.

We look forward to a long association with you in our work of advocating for a better world on many different levels. In the meantime, I pray you may have

peace,



V. Rev. William J. Harry, O. Carm.
President, Carmelite NGO