



Quaker United Nations Office

September 2020

Quaker Peace and Service ANZ
50 Glenross Street
Glenross, Dunedin

Dear Friends,

CH-1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel +41 (22) 748-4800

Fax +41 (22) 748-4819 *Email* quno@quno.ch 30

We are grateful for your generous donation of NZD 4470 for our work on Climate Change in QUNO Geneva. We send you our sincere thanks; we are moved by the faith in our work that comes with your financial support, especially in these strange and difficult times.

Like people and organizations all over the world, we are adjusting our ways of working to the Covid-19 pandemic. I am glad to say that our staff are safe, well, inspired by the challenges and adapting our longterm work which is more necessary than ever. Following Swiss government guidance, many staff worked from home between mid-March and June.

Covid-19 is a traumatic experience that offers insights that are directly relevant to QUNO's areas of work. There are insights on shared vulnerability; on public health as critical to social and economic stability; on the fragility of unsustainable and unjust economic systems; on the human cost of inequality, discrimination, marginalisation and violent conflict; on the visible human influence on nature degradation (and regeneration); and on the show of solidarity when acting for the common good. Although causing suffering for many, and complicating our work, it is an opening for QUNO to explore more deeply the just transitions in society that Friends seek.

The pandemic has severely disrupted multilateralism and the meetings, events and processes through which QUNO works. Some international meetings that were a focus of

our work in 2020 – and that also would have helped build contacts and reputation for programme and fundraising - have been postponed for a year. They include the quinquennial Crime Congress in Japan; the World Trade Organization Ministerial meeting in Kazakhstan; and the COP 26 climate change conference in Glasgow with preparatory sessions in Milan and Bonn. We have developed strategies to take the same issues forward and to complete other strands, particularly recent publications on using international law to seek climate justice; and on supporting the human rights of migrants through UN regional fora.

Despite the challenges, multilateralism continues and is adapting to these circumstances in which collaboration between countries is needed more than ever. The Human Rights Council, for example, was suspended in March but held informal meetings online until it was resumed as a hybrid (in-person and online) in June. Physical distancing and other measures make the usual reliance on informal discussions at the margins of the main meetings much harder, for diplomats as well as for QUNO and other NGOs. We continue to adapt too and to engage where we can; so far this year QUNO has delivered seven statements to the Human Rights Council focussing on the work of three of our programmes. We also helped orientate other Quaker bodies to a ground-breaking emergency debate, tabled by African nations, on systemic racism.

We continue to adapt across all areas of our work. The 66th Quaker United Nations Summer School was the first to be run online. Our Programme Assistant (PA) team created 30 hours of sessions over 10 days for 25 young adults from 15 countries. It was a remarkable success,

a highlight in a year of cancellations and postponements, as they were able to replicate online the human connection and experience of diplomacy. While we hope to hold an in person Summer School in July 2021, our PA team showed what can be done virtually – and has attracted many enquiries about methods.

Since July, we have celebrated resuming in-person meetings at Quaker House, with appropriate physical distancing, in both our garden and our house. They have covered sustainability and trade; prevention of violent conflict; and (planned shortly) human rights aspects of climate change. It is good to reconnect in person and find that the appetite for our ways of working remains strong. People working in isolation in and around the UN really appreciated reconnecting with others through QUNO's "human" approach. We are also experimenting in all our programmes with recreating our unique "quiet diplomacy" online, adapting our methods to help participants feel comfortable.

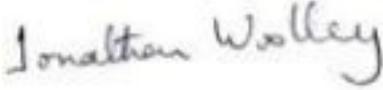
As usual, more detail on these and our other work can be found at www.quno.org, in our Annual Review of work published each March and in the Geneva Reporter newsletter whose next issue is due shortly. Do please contact us to subscribe electronically or to receive a hard copy if you wish.

We feel gratitude, to those who have come before us and those who guide us, for the spiritual grounding of our work in QUNO and its clear ethics and innovative methods. It

leads us to trust that results will come from carefully discerned long-term commitment, and agility in taking innovative routes to those goals, in the face of external shocks like the present one.

Thank you for helping make our work possible. Your continued support inspires and energises us.

Best wishes from all of us at QUNO Geneva,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Jonathan Woolley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jonathan Woolley
Director