**WHY ARE THE AUGUSTINIANS AT THE UNITED NATIONS?**

I. A first step to answer this question is to begin with paragraph 185 of the Order’s *Constitutions*.

*Motivated by this social commitment of ours,*

*We are to listen attentively to the concerns of the Church and of society,*

*And offer assistance so that*

*The questions, which the groups among whom we work present to us,*

*May be more clearly identified and more easily resolved, such as:*

*The defense of life, human rights, the situation of migrants, the dignity of women,*

*The protection of youth, justice and peace,*

*A more balanced economic order, the conservation of nature, etc.*

*Therefore, superiors, in their respective jurisdictions,*

*Are to promote those activities, which lead communities and friars*

*To participate in undertakings of the Church and civil society,*

*Especially with the non-governmental organization (NGO) of the Order*

*At the United Nations*.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**II. What is the purpose of the United Nations (founded: 1945) and why is it important?**

* C.838: *Dag Hammarskjold: Instrument, Catalyst, Inspirer*. ([Kindle edition](https://www.amazon.com/Dag-Hammarskj%C3%B6ld-Instrument-Catalyst-Inspirer-ebook/dp/B009D09K7M?ie=UTF8&me=&ref_=mt_kindle)); cost $4. Page numbers are "locations." (Secretary-General: 1953-1961). [See Hammarskjold](http://www.un.org/sg/formersg/hammarskjold.shtml).
* "It is not the Soviet Union or, indeed, any other Big Powers who need the United Nations for their protection; it is all the others." (3 Oct. 1960). (Loc 95). (689)
* (188) Questions regarding "world organization." Illusions regarding the UN in terms of what it can and cannot do in 1945. The UN Charter never said it was to enforce peace and impose the settlement of political disputes. So, what is the role of the UN? (209): *That the West and Communist world must learn to live with each other as the only alternative to World War III - "a suicide of civilization."*
* "The world today has become inescapably interdependent in ways that it never was before, because of our technology, our industrial civilization and our communications … [and] this interdependence does not recognize any ideological or racial barriers."
* ((251) The UN has a *moral purpose* where diversity meets. It is a *meeting place,* and what Eisenhower has said, a "sheer necessity" for the common instinct of self-preservation.
* "We can look at the Organization as a body where ideologies are permitted to clash inside the wider framework of a fundamental unity of purpose for peace. Utilized in this way the United Nations can shorten our road to a world without fear."
* (529) Why the UN? Because present forms of diplomacy - bilateral and regional - are no longer sufficient. There is need for more definitive forms of international cooperation. It is not a "super government" (540). Need new forms of negotiation.
* “We are not permitted to choose the frame of our destiny, but what we put into it is ours.” —Dag Hammarskjöld, from “Markings” (1432)).
* Resources: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org); library: <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/>; FACT SHEETS: <http://visit.un.org/sites/visit.un.org/files/FS_UN_Headquarters_History_English_Feb_2013.pdf>

[Wikipedia: UN](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations)

**III. Augustinians International as UN NGO MISSION (**[**www.augustinians-un.org**](http://www.augustinians-un.org)**)**

* Booklet by Emeka Obiezu, OSA: [*It Is Good For Us To Be Here*](https://www.amazon.com/Good-Us-Here-Religious-Institutes-ebook/dp/B01864XFEE)*.* Cost: .99 cents.
* 1997 (UN DPI); 2010, Inter Gen Ch (Philippines) apply for ECOSOC – obtained 2014
* Multilevel approach; linked to Secretariat for Justice and Peace
* St. Augustine: *City of God* 19: 7 and 17 for multilevels of community; *City of God* 4:3,4 for analysis. *Peace is not possible without justice* (Com. On Psalm 84).
* See “Augustine as ‘Father of Christian Political Activism’”, Secr. Of JP, Rome, vol 6, 2001.
* *The Augustinians at the UN . . . as an NGO associated to the UN in response to the call of the Holy See to become more actively involved in the major topics of our times. Concretely, the Augustinians have concentrated their energies in three major areas: education/literacy, civil and human rights, and social/economic development. The flow of information and collaboration is in both directions: our concerns are brought to the forum of dialogue that the UN provides, and the policy discussions at the UN are brought to us for our information . . . As Augustinians we have a special gift to share with the world, a particular manner of announcing the good news: in community, as community, for the building up of community. That process is one that reaches out, in ever-broadening circles, to the human family* (Secr. For JP, vol 6, 2001, 4).
* ***The new evangelization*** *has to include in its essential components the proclamation of the social teaching of the Church (see Centesimus annus,* 5).
* The Rule for Augustine’s monastery is *a new form of living together, in which the boundaries between the level of slaves and those who are land owners are suppressed. In the monastery each one discovers the possibility of living with others on the basis of equality and fraternity and, as far as possible, in friendship* (Com on Ps 84, 86). “The religious community is a seed and ferment of the new order, of a new world, based on universal fraternity” (Clodovis Boff, *A via da comunhao de bens*).

(rdueweke 6/1/16: [www.dueweke.net](http://www.dueweke.net))

1. (Footnote 65 in Constitutions #185): The Second Vatican Council promoted the presence and participation of Catholics in international alliances; cf. GS 89-90. Hence the Order is enrolled as a non-governmental organization at the United Nations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)