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BURMA Aung San Suu Kyi calls for solidarity between different faiths in her address to CSW conference

Aung San Suu Kyi appealed for solidarity between people of different faiths to work for the good of all humanity, in her recorded address to Christian Solidarity Worldwide's (CSW's) annual conference, "Freedom for the Nations", held in London on 26 November.

"The most admirable achievement of Christian Solidarity Worldwide has been to achieve solidarity between those of different religions. Although we call it Christian Solidarity Worldwide, it is well known that peoples of all races and religions have been protected and helped by your organization. This is such a good example for the whole world. We do not have to be divided because we belong to different countries, or different races, or different religions. We can all unite together in solidarity, for values that are shared by those who love humanity," she said.

In the message, which has been made available online today on [CSW's youtube channel](#), Aung San Suu Kyi also recalled hearing news of CSW's work on the radio during her years of house arrest.

Also online today is a [message from Reverend Carlos Lamelas](#), who was granted asylum in the US this year after spending 126 days in jail in Cuba on trumped up charges, following years of government persecution. He described how he was "torn from the warmth of my family to the darkness of a prison cell". He described how his faith sustained him while he was forced share a tiny, windowless cell with three other prisoners. Reverend Lamelas and his family also expressed how they were encouraged by phone calls and visits from CSW staff, as well as cards and letters from CSW supporters.

Reverend Carlos Lamelas said, "When people from CSW came to visit me, I realized that I was not alone. They encouraged me." His wife, Uramis Lamelas, said, "It was incredible. It was comforting to know that someone was thinking of us and suffering with us. It was encouraging us a lot. Those visits gave me strength because there were times where we felt we were nobody in our own country. Visits, letters, phone calls, they all encouraged us to keep going. I felt a huge relief in my heart, both then and now."

Video footage of the other speakers at the conference will soon be made available on [CSW's youtube channel](#).

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "I am sure that like me, everyone who attended this year's conference was inspired to stand in solidarity with those suffering for their faith around the world. As we heard about the situation in Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan and other countries around the world, it became clear that religious freedom is vital for the protection of Christians and other religious minorities, and an important element in the creation of a stable and just society."

Notes to Editors:

1. Videos of the event will be made available on [CSW's youtube channel](#).
 2. Other speakers at the conference include:
- Alistair Burt MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

- Tina Ramirez, Director of International and Government Relations at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.
- His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom (UK).
- Baroness Berridge of the Vale of Catmose in the County of Rutland.
- Rt. Rev. Dr. Benjamin Kwashi, Anglican Archbishop of Jos.
- Group Captain (retired) Cecil Chaudhry, Pakistan.
- Sam Yeghnazar, Director of Elam Ministries, who will focus on the pressures faced by Christians in Iran.