

# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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### NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE UN

The MIA Mercy Global Action at the UN Office would like to wish you all a Happy New Year! May 2018 be a year with renewed commitments to justice and advocacy through collaboration with communities and organizations centered on peace, inclusion, equality and solidarity. We have a call to respond to the crises of our time. With our continued efforts and being living examples of mercy, we can eliminate poverty, racism, violence, ecological abuse, and oppressive policies and structures that exploit communities and the earth.



including: displacement and marginalization, inclusion and justice. This timely theme was imperative as the Global Compact on Migration will be adopted at the end of the year. It brought faith leaders and religious organizations from around the world to create dialogue, engage, and cooperate to create a unified faith-based voice on issues of migration.

Faith-based organizations have a large responsibility to use their political voice to assist the international dialogues on migration. "Around the world, faith-based organizations are found on the frontlines of crisis, providing food, shelter, education, and medical and psychological support to migrants and refugees...work[ing] tirelessly to assert their human rights and dignity, independent from national and regional political interests" emphasized Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammed. Faith-based organizations must be present and involved in these processes on migration in order to be a moral voice for our nation's leaders. MIA Mercy Global Action at the UN continues to be actively engaged in the process towards a Global Compact on Migration with Member States, other organizations and grassroots ministries, especially in the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations.

### MIA MGA ATTENDS SYMPOSIUM ON THE ROLE OF FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

This year, the Fourth Annual Symposium on the Role of Religion and Faith-Based Organizations in International Affairs had a thematic focus on perspectives on migration,



To watch the opening session of the Symposium, [click here!](#)

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *Honing in on Homelessness*

The Commission for Social and Economic Development began at the United Nations on January 29th; this year's theme is "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all". As this is the first commission of the new year, the President of the Economic and Social Council, Her Excellency Marie Chatardová, communicated her high hopes that it will set an example for the rest of the commissions this year towards building a more inclusive society.

Continuing, Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammed, described the hopes of achieving the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. This year's commission, in particular, has a key role in addressing the challenges of extreme poverty of women, children, indigenous and those with disabilities, as well as identifying how countries must work to empower those experiencing poverty and address the evident root causes. She explained the importance of establishing social policies that ensure social protection, including safety nets, and how governments are responsible to keep those most vulnerable at the center of their work. She detailed how an absence of such mechanisms in many countries is unacceptable. To conclude Amina Mohammed encouraged Member States to "be creative and to prioritize accelerating action" for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.



Photo: MIA GA of the UN

The first High-Level Panel of the commission focused on the priority theme of poverty eradication. Speakers of this event included Ana Helena Chacón Echeverría, Vice-President of Costa Rica and Mark McGreevy, Group Chief Executive of DePaul International and founder of the Institute of Global Homelessness, among other notable panelists. Ms. Echeverría stressed how governments may not be "as committed as [they] should be" and how sustainable development policies must have human development at the heart, as well as gender equality. She described how Costa Rica has developed a holistic approach through identifying areas in which the greatest poverty exists, in addition to creating an index to account for factors such as housing, education, social protection and health. This index combined with political will has assisted in reducing poverty within the country.

Sharing an important grassroots perspective on poverty, Mark McGreevy described his work with those who suffer from street homelessness. He highlighted an important detail that there is no such indicator within the Sustainable Development Goals to combat it, and that many countries do not have a data collection system due to the varying definitions of homelessness across the world. How does this ensure that no one is left behind? McGreevy described the many circumstances in which people are rendered vulnerable and experience homelessness such as those affected by climate related events, religious issues, and even indigenous. His organization, FamVin Homeless Alliance, is working on a data collection system in 50 countries around the world which has seen promising results in regards to criteria such as prevention and response, as well as education and affordable shelter. Mark McGreevy's work was also highlighted at a side-event of the commission entitled "A Systemic Approach to Ending Homelessness" which included individuals who have, and still do experience homelessness, representatives of grassroots organizations and UN Member States such as Ireland. Those that



Photo: public domain

experienced homelessness in New York City presented the daily challenges of stigmatization, poor diet, heavy medications, decline in health, shunning, and days filled with television at shelters. With lack of job training programs that can adequately sustain individuals with benefits and earnings above minimum wage, they risk being caught in a cycle that won't advance them onward. They are not their situation. Through it all, they offered ways to strengthen lobbying for structural change and insights into being partners in knowledge, right to adequate housing, and the right to water and sanitation for those experiencing homelessness around the world. Their lived experiences and testimonies are our impetus to make change in our communities and our world.

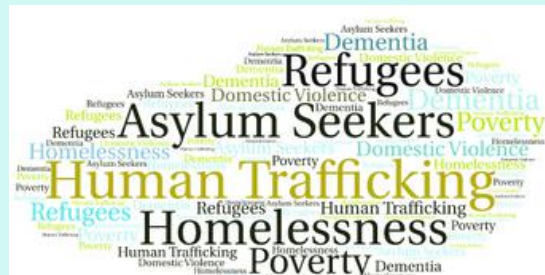
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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



- ***"Making Migration Work for All" Report of the Secretary General***

On January 11th, the General Assembly met for a briefing regarding Secretary General Antonio Guterres' report entitled "Making Migration Work for All"; his report will be used to exemplify the priorities to be addressed in the upcoming Global Compact on Migration. The event began with a moment of silence for the former Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) on International Migration, Peter Sutherland, who passed away earlier that week. Sutherland's commitment and support for migrants was later commended by many Member States, and as President of the General Assembly Miroslav Lajcak stated "it is his passion that has led us here today to better protect the rights of migrants and refugees".

At the briefing, Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, presented the contents of his report. He emphasized that this year Member States have the opportunity to fashion the first ever global response to migration; it is an opportunity for leaders of the world to counter the myths and make migration work for all of our nations. The Global Compact must maximize the contributions that millions of migrants have already been making in our societies, and above all, ensure that the rights of all migrants are respected. This can be done if Member States stress a rule of law, create more legal pathways, and a solutions based Global Compact on Migration that protect migrants, especially those in vulnerable positions..

Three highlights that were stressed by the Secretary General include: (1) a desperate need for action that focuses on implementation; (2) engagement with all sectors, we all have a role to play and it is not just a state responsibility but the responsibility and commitment for all (municipalities, civil society, private sector, migrants themselves); (3) demonstrate that the UN is fit for purpose. With this, we may see change, migration out of hope rather than despair.



Watch Antonio Guterres' briefing  
to the General Assembly



Read the Secretary General's Report  
"Making Migration Work for All"

- ***One on One with Ms. Jane Connors***

Ms. Jane Connors was appointed the Assistant Secretary General and Victims Rights Advocate for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. Her role at the United Nations was established as part of the Secretary General's zero tolerance approach of abuse and violence and efforts to support the victims of violence and end sexual exploitation. In her new role, Ms Connors will seek to put the rights and dignity of victims of sexual exploitation at the forefront at the UN. She seeks a policy approach to victims in order to combat gender inequality, stigmatization, and lack of vetting with the assistance of civil society, government institutions, human rights organizations, academia and UN networks.

During her appointment as a Victims Right's Advocate for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Ms. Connors described her plan of action to map victims' services for prevention across the UN System, collect best practices, improve accountability mechanisms, and craft communication systems for those affected to receive the assistance they need and track the issues. She yearns to hear the stories and experiences of victims across the world and bring their voices to global concerns at an international level. This can both give hope and demonstrate an opportunity for change to happen. To watch the "One on One" with Assistant Secretary General Jane Connors, click here!



Photo: MIA GA at the UN

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*Continued*

# DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- *"Water and Peace: A matter of survival"*

On January 19th, MIA MGA at the UN attended the International Peace Institute hosted, with the Geneva Water Hub, an event titled "Water and Peace: A matter of survival". The event began with Danilo Türk, the Chair of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, discussing the fundamental nature of water. Water is a measure of survival and unfortunately, no Member State of the United Nations is immune to water challenges. We see the consequences with inadequate water management, rising water scarcity, and the need to articulate new ways in which the world will need to find food when our resources are diminished. In this time of global fragility, ensuring water cooperation among countries will in turn, become an "instrument of peace"; but how does one improve water cooperation?

As a means of aiding this conversation and strengthening the global framework on issues of water, the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace launched their report "A Matter of Survival". Their report includes topics such as international water law and trans-boundary water cooperation, strengthening knowledge-based and data driven decision making with water, inter-sectoral people's diplomacy, financial innovation, and new means of water diplomacy. Currently, the international response has been fragmented and this report can work as a mechanism towards coherence and action.

Panelists provided their insights of water management and cooperation within their native countries and professional experiences. Sundeep Waslekar, President of the Strategic Foresight Group detailed how "water cooperation is not only good for good water governance and sustainable development, but it is also essential for comprehensive peace and political stability". In addition, Mike Hammah, former Minister for Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana reiterated the "undeniable fact that the lack of safe drinking water is not only a health issue but a security and development challenge as well", citing challenges and considerations from his own country. To learn more about this report and the work of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, follow the links below!



Read "A Matter of Survival"  
Report of the Global High Level  
Panel on Water and Peace



Watch "Water and Peace:  
A Matter of Survival"

Read more <https://www.ipinst.org/2018/01/water-and-peace#12>

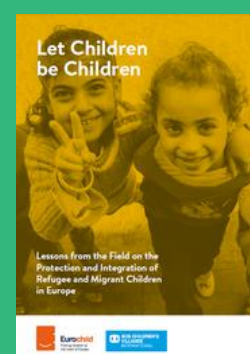
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## USEFUL RESOURCES

# IOM's World Migration Report 2018



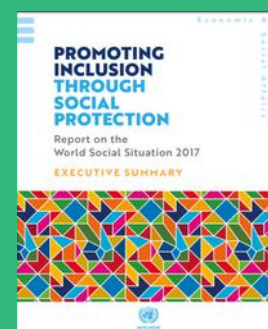
## Let Children be Children



# ILO World Social Protection Report



# Report of the World Social Situation 2017





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## • Taking a Closer Look at SDG 6 "Water and Sanitation for All"

In the light of recent global reports on water and the state of South Africa, in particular Cape Town [[click to read more](#)], understanding the implications of Sustainable Development Goal 6 is imperative. You will recall that in previous issues of our newsletter, we focused on specific parts of the water guide. Previously we focused on sections covering the water crisis and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). This issue we will focus on the actual water goal (p7). It is important to note that of the 17 SDG's there is a stand-alone goal to "ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all". Considered a cross cutting issue, the water goal is seen as interdependent with other issues including sustainable agriculture, health, gender equality, energy, sustainable cities, inequalities, sustainable consumption and production, climate change and terrestrial ecosystems.

As with other SDG's the water Goal is broken down into targets. This section of the guide breaks down the targets and assesses them in the light of human rights obligations and principles (p8). Attention is drawn to Target 6.5 in which a particular paradigm of water management Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is introduced. This particular paradigm is considered controversial and a question is raised concerning its viability.

Key to this section is understanding the importance of the means of implementation. The guide clearly states, 'The test of all international cooperation under 6a will be whether it increases the State's ability to guarantee access to water, sanitation and hygiene for all persons in a non-discriminatory manner, prioritizing the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the population (p8).' As Mercy Justice Advocates this test is critical.



## USEFUL RESOURCES

Expanding on our call to care for our "common home" from *Laudato Si*, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas Institute Justice Team, through the Inter-religious Working Group on Extractive Industries, produced materials to deepen their commitment both to education and action. These resources offer insights into the negative impacts of extracting natural resources, such as through mining, and work towards developing your own advocacy on the subject. To learn more see:

- Two-page introduction to extractivism ([click here](#))
- Background paper on extractives ([click here](#))

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*MIA at the UN will be attending*

- 29th January- 7th February -Commission on Social and Economic Development
- 30th January - Youth Employment as a Strategy to Eradicate Poverty
- 2nd February - Civil Society Forum
- 12th February - Holy See Workshop on Migration for "Catholic-Inspired NGOs
- 20th -23rd February- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact Migration



# NEWS FROM THE

## MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

Since returning after the Christmas break, the Global Action Team have been engaged in drawing up the year's programme in line with the Strategic Plan for Mercy International Association (MIA). Working closely with our colleagues in New York it also entails seeking the views of Mercy Global Action Network Working Group, who are the contact persons in the different Institutes or Congregations that comprise the Mercy Family. Via a conference call meeting we will prioritise the key justice areas the Global Action Team will focus on throughout 2018. Our Team is continuing our active participation in the global campaign to ban one-use plastic, which many grocery chains are using for vegetables and fruit packaging.

Pressure is building on the big multi-national chains to take responsibility for this packaging as it contributes to the destruction of our seas and oceans leading to the death of marine life.

We have attended a couple of important seminars organised by our colleagues in Oxfam – The Jordan Compact; plus the 'Feile Brid' Justice Event focussing on 'Light Out of Darkness' – Caring for Our Global Village?

Hopefully 2018 will be a productive and successful year in our collective work for justice.

### 'CARING FOR OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE'

#### Peadar Kirby, Professor Emeritus of University College Cork

On Saturday 3rd February, Denise Boyle attended the annual justice event known as 'Feile Bride' organised by AFRI, St. Patrick Mission Society (Kiltegan Priests) and the Brigidine Sisters, to mark the feast of St. Brigid as one of the patron saints of Ireland. The keynote address was delivered by Professor Peadar Kirby, an academic and activist of international renown.

In a stimulating and passionate address, Peadar shared his concerns about Earth. He began his talk by posing the question: 'Are we caring for our Planet?' Pre-empting a response he shared that a look at statistics gleaned from the 'Ecological Footprint' of different countries provided a disturbing answer.

In 1961 all countries combined were using 74% of the planet's resources.

In 1991 this had risen to 114% of earth's resources

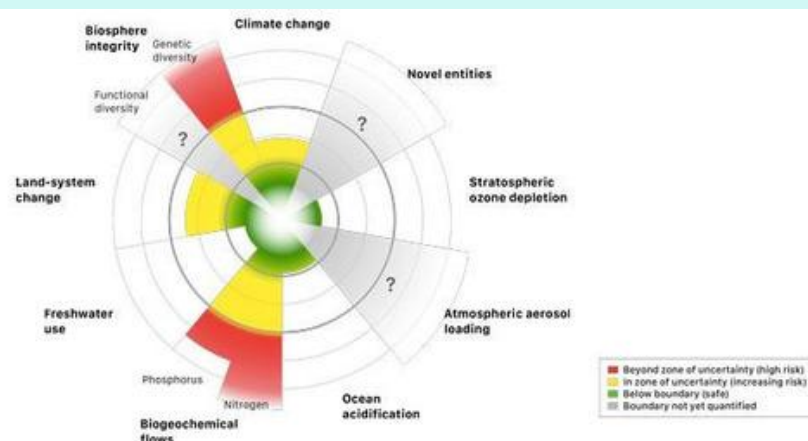
In 2017 the use of resources equaled 164%!

Turning to individual countries the statistics are both sobering and alarming. Compiling the data from areas that include carbon emissions, use of forest and agricultural land, plus energy and water use scientists worked out that:

- The United Arab Emirates needs 5.4 Earths.
- France needs 2.5
- The United States needs 4.5 Earths.

**NB.** Peadar suggested that each of us take the 'personal ecological footprint' test to ensure we each become aware of how we are treading on the Earth's surface. See: [www.footprint.wwf.org.uk](http://www.footprint.wwf.org.uk)

He then introduced the topic of 'Planetary Boundaries', a concept of nine Earth system processes devised in 2009 by



28 environmental and Earth system scientists, led by Johan Rockström from Sweden and Will Steffen from Australia. Their concept is based on scientific evidence that human actions since the Industrial Revolution are the principal driver of global environmental change. The set of nine planetary boundaries are defined as a 'safe operating space for humanity' within which all peoples can continue to develop and thrive for generations. Not crossing these boundaries is a precondition for sustainable development.

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## CONTINUED...

The diagram above estimates how the different control variables for seven planetary boundaries, which are measureable, have changed from 1950 to the present. The green shaded polygon represents human activities that are within safe margins; the yellow indicate those that may or may not have exceeded safe margins, whilst the red areas represent human activities that have exceeded safe margins! And the grey areas with question marks, represent activities for which safe margins have not yet been determined. Source: Steffen et al. 2015.

Of the three red areas where human activities have led to exceeding the boundary, bio-diversity is the most serious, followed by the poisoning of soils with nitrogen from artificial fertilizers. Additionally pouring tar macadam over fertile agricultural land has serious consequences for food sustainability. All of the above according to Peadar Kirby means: 'Our activities are not getting us to where we need to go!' He quoted extensively from Pope Francis' ground breaking encyclical 'Laudato Si – On Care For Our Common Home', in the context of its urgency and the Pope's courage as the only world leader who has clearly stated the root cause of the exploitation of our fragile Earth.

L.S. 56 *'... economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment. Here we see how environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked.'*

In paragraph 139 Pope Francis according to Peadar, succinctly states the problem:

*'...We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.'*

Drawing on the wisdom in Laudato Si, plus the positive energy and goodwill following the signing of the Paris Climate Agreement in December 2015 by 195 world leaders, Peadar with his colleague Tadhg O'Mahoney wrote a book just published this year. It is called 'The Political Economy of the Low-Carbon Transition - Pathways Beyond Techno-Optimism', which addresses the global need to transition to a low-carbon society and economy by 2050.

Highlighting the techno-optimism that informs our current understanding and policy options, the authors draw on the lessons of international development to situate the transition to low carbon, within a political economy framework.

Kirby and O'Mahoney do this by critically examining the range of pathways being implemented by developed and developing countries, which they collectively identify as climate capitalism, a version of neo-liberalism, led by technology. As we are all increasingly aware of, this approach will not lead us to a low-carbon and sustainable society. Instead we need an alternative approach that the authors believe is emerging from community initiatives – bottom up - plus discussions on post capitalism and debates about wellbeing and limiting growth. The term they use for placing society and environment at the core of development is 'ecosocialism'.

In concluding his excellent presentation, Peadar stated his strong belief that the future of our Planet and human survival depends on the 'bottom up' approach. This is where real change will come from and is happening!



<https://www.pinterest.ie/explore/carbon-footprint/>

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### JORDAN AND THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES



Jordan has long been a host to refugees in the Middle East region. Collectively, Jordan and Lebanon make up less than one percent of the world's economy, but host around 20 percent of the world's refugees! Today, by some estimates, Jordan is thought to host as many as 1.3 million refugees from the Syrian conflict alone, equivalent to 20% of the country's total population. The UN General Assembly in approving the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, is now developing the Global Compact on Refugees, to encourage all countries to share responsibility for refugees. Globally there are millions on the move, pouring out of nations where war and conflict is rife.

Nicki Monga, Oxfam country Director in Jordan, spoke to an assembly of NGOs on January 24th in the Oxfam offices in Dublin on how Jordan is already implementing and benefitting from the Global Compact on Refugees. They are tailoring aspects of the global compact to adapt and find mutual benefit for the host and refugee communities. This is known as the 'Jordan Compact.' Nicki spoke about the initiatives Jordan with the assistance of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) is developing in relation to the compact. Since the Syrian Refugee Crisis, Jordan has assumed a heavy burden due to its open border and welcome to refugees fleeing violence and war. The influx of refugees has however stretched limited resources and imposed severe stress on Jordan's economy and public services.

While the international community has helped, matching resources with needs is increasingly difficult. Nicki spoke briefly on the education system in Jordan and said that it is just about adequate, with teachers taking on double shifts so all children are able to go to school. The health system is also completely overloaded and barely able to cope. She said that the Jordan Compact must take account of the refugees and the pre-existing inequalities of poverty. Speaking about the Middle East in general, Nicki said that poverty is not seen, it is hidden. While people may not appear emaciated or poorly dressed, massive poverty is rampant. She described Jordan as an 'anomaly' – during the Arab Spring, there were just some minor protests because the king is all powerful and well respected. Overall, Jordan is a safe place to live and there is very little threat from ISIS and other terrorist groups.

Speaking on the influx of refugees, Nicki said that 80% live in the suburbs, not in camps, which in some instances has led to tensions between the poorer Jordanians and the refugees. Recently Jordan became the first Arab nation to ease the provision of work permits for Syrian refugees by waiving the usual fees and loosening the administrative requirements. The government pledged to create up to 200,000 opportunities over several years for Syrian refugees, in return for international loans, trade benefits and investment by the international community that would also benefit the local Jordanian population.

Unfortunately the visas issued to Syrians restrict the jobs refugees may apply for i.e. in the areas of agriculture, the services industry, manufacturing and construction. Teacher, doctors and nurses with Syrian qualifications are not allowed to work in their professions, thereby depriving the country of their specialised skills and frustration for those involved. This can lead to a loss of identity, or purpose and depression, which are difficult areas to address as part of a humanitarian response. With such large numbers of refugees and migrants, many become vulnerable to people who want to exploit them, so they can be subjected to eviction from their homes which is a huge problem. Some, especially adolescents and women on their own, are open to being trafficked, whilst others may be sexually harassed.





# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

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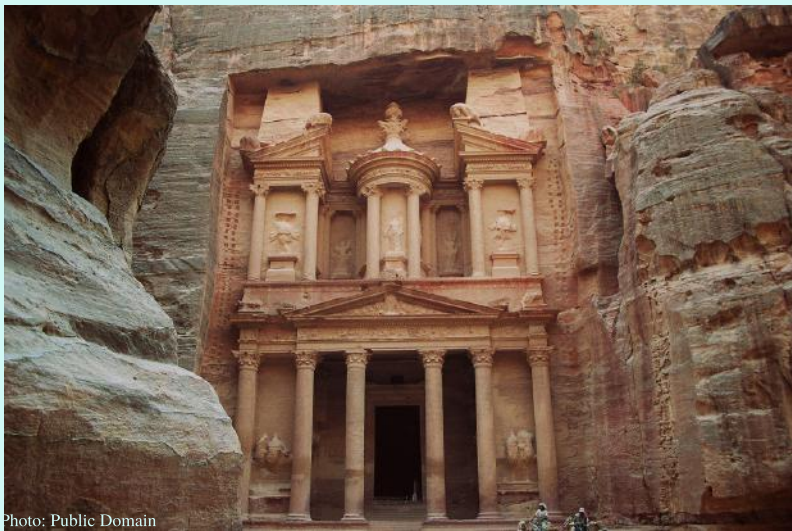
Speaking about ‘people on the move’ Nicki said that Jordan is serious about this crisis and wants to treat refugees fairly. She cited ‘Turkey can teach us a lot about how to re-settle refugees’ because the Turkish government allows refugees to use their skills, talents and expertise according to Nicki.

In terms of moving forward and the future, new investment in Jordan is essential. A vital part of attracting business and stimulating economic growth is improved access to other markets, so to provide this, host communities need to be better supported. Additional assistance is urgently needed to address Jordan’s financial problems, ideally through grants and as part of an approach agreed with the IMF.<sup>1</sup>

The Jordan Compact expects to identify three priority areas and they are:

1. Water and sanitation
2. Economic justice
3. Gender justice.

In Jordan, water is a critically important issue. Due to being landlocked water is more important than food. Jordanians could not afford water without water subsidies and without these, no one could afford to live in Jordan. This is an area where tension can arise between Jordanians and Syrians, because the latter use water with abandon as their country has a plentiful supply. Jordanians not understanding this, think Syrians are disrespectful in their use of water as they use too much. This friction leads to further tensions between the two groups. Nicki believes the interconnection between humanitarian aid and development cannot be over stated and this is the only way that Jordan can move forward.



On a positive note she told us about an initiative that began in a refugee camp in Jordan. In 2011, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees arrived in neighbouring Jordan, to Za’atari camp. Back then, rubbish was everywhere. The regular aid distributions of food and essential items, while crucial to meeting refugees’ immediate needs, were in part causing the waste problem. Waste facilities in the form of mobile ‘dumpsters’ were present throughout the camp, but they overflowed to the point that there was nowhere but the ground to throw rubbish. In 2015, Oxfam began piloting an innovative recycling project with the aim of mitigating the waste management issues in the camp while providing

livelihood opportunities to refugees. Drawing on the know-how of both Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities, and reaching out to the camp community, Oxfam expanded the project and now collects, sorts and processes waste from the whole camp. This project demonstrates how the collective expertise of Syrians and Jordanians when used together, can lead to an expansion of new productive sectors within Jordan’s economy. Creating new jobs is an important step on the way forward, thereby harnessing the skills of more people, to make a viable contribution to Jordanian society for everyone.

1. <https://reliefweb.int/report/jordan/jordan-compact-new-holistic-approach-between-hashemite-kingdom-jordan>

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**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



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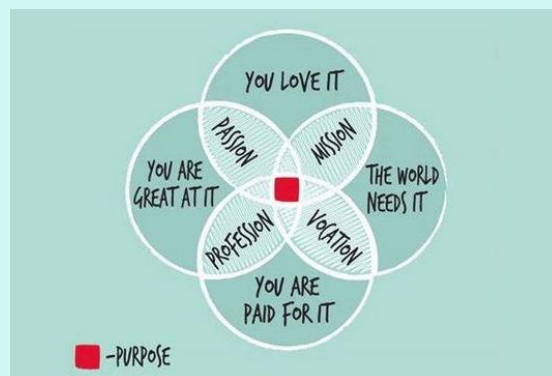
The MIA Mercy Global Action at the UN Office undertook strategic planning days with other faith based NGO's at the UN in Sea Girt, New Jersey to plan ways in which to effectively advocate at the United Nations in the coming year.

In addition to analyzing issues based strategies, a guiding **reflection** shone through on finding our 'reason for being'. In Japanese, the word Ikigai, represents just that. As a way to ground ourselves during our planning days, we looked deeper into our own missions, passions, professions and vocations. An individual's Ikigai is said to be a convergence of:



Photo: MIA MGA at the UN

- What you Love (your passion)
- What the World Needs (your mission)
- What you are Good at (your profession)
- What you can get Paid for (your vocation)



A notable quote that MIA Mercy Global Action at the UN chose from the reading reflection was:

*"Sacred Activism, encourages us... to find our purpose by 'following our heartbreak'. Andrew Harvey calls us to discover that which is most deeply disturbing in our world and to use this as a catalyst to propel our actions and discover where we can make the biggest difference. Meanwhile, philosopher and civil rights leader Howard W Thurman said: "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and do that... Because what the world really needs is people who have come alive."*

What is your Ikigai?

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *UN women places a Spotlight on Gender and the SDG's*

MGA at the UN attended the launch of UN Women's new report entitled, 'Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. Considered to be the first of its kind, this report considers the intersectionality of gender across all of the 17 sustainable goals.

### **So what does the report reveal?**

UN Chief of Research and Data, Shahra Razavi, presented some of the major findings of the report. Despite the illusion of progress we still have far to go. Extraordinary measure must happen to address the gender gap.

- Globally there are 122 women aged 25-34 living in extreme poverty for every 100 men of that age group.
- The gender gap is most pronounced during women's productive and reproductive years
- Women are up to 11 percent more likely than men to report food insecurity.
- Globally, 303,000 women died from pregnancy-related causes in 2015. The rate of death is declining much too slowly to achieve target 3.1 of goal 3.
- Globally, 750 million women and girls were married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone FGM.
- Women are less likely than men to own a mobile phone, and their internet usage is 5.9% percent lower than that of men.

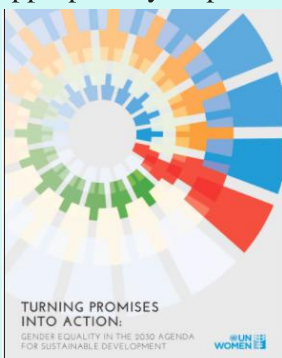


The report focused on micro data, taking specific information from Columbia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the United States.

Significantly, the report reveals that there is a growing disparity between women who are poor and women who have access to greater resources.

### **Turning Promises into Action**

A key issue is the need for better data. The need for current data, monitoring progress for women across all ages, over every country, over a long period of time was identified as critical. The reader is challenged not to be 'gender blind'. It was noted that 6 out of 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals have no specific indicators tracking progress for women and girls. There needs to be a revolution in data, which will then enable the reality of women's experiences to be fully understood and appropriately responded to.



The report also argues for greater accountability, calling for transformative policies which allocate funding to currently chronically underfunded infrastructure for women and girls. The report places a spotlight on the predicament of poor, rural and remote areas in which women and girls are currently being left behind. Primarily, there is a need for public sector investment.

A key action stressed by Gita Sen concerned the role of civil society. Sen petitioned civil society to broaden their perspective and look closely at data and to not only focus on shadow reporting but bring in outsiders who can speak to the experience. The High Level Political Forum was noted as being a place of serious accountability with civil society being encouraged to vibrantly engage.

### **Inside the Report**

You can access the entire report online. The report provides a large spectrum of information through a gendered lens. Helpful sections include being able to view individual country data with fact sheets which are downloadable. Chapter 3 is interesting as it breaks down each of the Sustainable Development Goals through a gender lens. There is also a section on who is being left behind, indicating those particularly vulnerable to poverty and disadvantage. The report also focuses on violence against women and girls and makes some valuable recommendations.

Mercy Global Action at the UN recommends this report for all who wish to gain insight into the issue of gender and the SDGs.

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# THEMATIC AREAS DISPLACED PERSONS



## • *Breaking Down the Proposed Global Compact on Migration: A First Glance*

The **Zero Draft of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration** was released on February 5th. **At first glance, what do you need to know?**

- The Global Compact on Migration consists in a six part framework: a Preamble, outlining the underlying principles treaties, conventions and frameworks; a Vision and Guiding Principles section discussing the collective purpose, understandings and responsibilities; a Cooperative Framework and Objectives section followed by 22 Actionable Commitments for Safe Orderly and Regular Migration; a section on Implementation; and lastly, commitments to track progress through Follow-Up and Review mechanisms.
- The Global Compact on Migration is NOT legally binding. The Compact states "Our success rests on the mutual trust and determination of States to implement the actionable commitments contained in this Global Compact" (p.3) "...We recognize that [migration] can be a source of prosperity, innovation, and sustainable development in our globalized world...it is crucial that international migration unites us rather than divides us" (p. 2)
- While it may not be legally binding, "This Global Compact is a milestone in the history of the global migration dialogue" (p.1). While a "milestone", it is also "not the end to our efforts" (p. 3)



- The Guiding Principles of the Compact include the following: people-centered, international cooperation, national sovereignty, rule of law and due process, sustainable development, human rights, gender-responsive, child-sensitive, whole-of-government approach, and whole-of-society approach.
- Some key "Actionable Commitments" (not conclusive) include: Objective 2. "minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin", Objective 6. "Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work" and Objective 10. "Prevent and combat trafficking in persons in the context of international migration".

MIA MGA at the UN attended the first rounds of intergovernmental negotiations towards a Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration from February 20th - February 23rd. Over the course of the week, the global community, consisting in governments, civil society organizations, and UN agencies, shared their first impressions of the Zero Draft. Some preliminary observations from MIA MGA at the UN include a positive response on how the Zero Draft reflects what the co-facilitating states heard during the consultation phase; many of the commitments are ambitious and there are many specific objectives that refer to Mercy concerns, for example climate (Objective 2) and trafficking (Objective 10). However, despite all we have critiques, regarding how the Zero Draft successfully outlines the "what needs to be done" but does not mention a "how" or "why". For example, there is a lack of referencing the financial implications and contributing stakeholders such as international human rights and civil society organizations. In addition, there is no reference to the Global Compact on Refugees, although many are advocating the complementarity of the two compacts.

Intergovernmental negotiations will continue until July. This gives civil society organizations, such as Mercy Global Action at the UN, four months to complete visits to Member State missions to continue advocating for human rights, vulnerable and marginalized groups, the empowerment of women and girls as agents of change, protection of children, those affected by climate induced displacement, zero toleration for discrimination, and more within the Compact. We commit to following and reporting on the negotiations, updating you with how the Compact changes along the way. Stay tuned!

Further reading and more responses on the Zero Drafts: <https://us9.campaign-archive.com/?u=8093208e6abb2fb927fe1267f&id=77c6955224>



# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

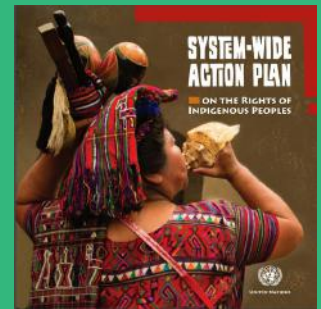
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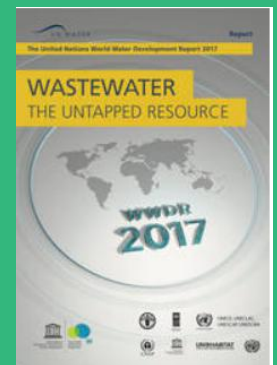
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## USEFUL RESOURCES

### System Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



### 2017 UN World Water Development Report, Wastewater: The Untapped Resource



### Pope Francis's Video on welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating migrants and refugees



### Civil Society Declaration from the Commission on Social and Economic Development



### • *Water, "the Lifeblood of Humanity"*

Mercy Global Action at the UN attended event "Science for Water: Effective Solutions for Achieving SDG 6 and Water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda" on February 20th. This event was highlighted at the United Nations due to President of the General Assembly, H.E. Miroslav Lajčák's recognition of the issue of water, marking water as one of his main priorities during his term. He also announced that he will convene a High Level event on March 22nd, World Water Day, officially declaring 2018-2028 the Decade of Water. The event gathered esteemed panelists, bringing together policy, diplomacy and science to discuss the future of water. Water is life, and is the core of sustainable development, energy, human survival and healthy ecosystems. However, it is exacerbated by the effects of climate change and exploitation. To see change for good, panelists encouraged building upon political will, science, and the development of new and innovative partnerships.

H.E. Miroslav Lajčák started his opening remarks at the event illustrating the sobering reality of the issues of water scarcity and pollution. "Scientists predict that on June 4th Cape Town will have to start rationing water. As we approach this imminent "Day Zero", human health and life hang in the balance...we need water to survive. We can all agree on this. It is not by accident that ancient civilizations grew along the banks of rivers – from the Nile and the Yellow River, to the Tigris and the Euphrates. Technology has enabled people to settle further away from these cradles of civilization. But water will always be the lifeblood of humanity...". His solution for these issues? Science and fostering the innovative technologies that are sparking change in areas around the world.

To tackle the issues related to water the world needs coordinated action by all stakeholders at all levels. In addition, there are many technological advances that can assist this stark reality. Panelists offered best practices through both scientific and holistic approaches, along with tools to guide decision making and policies on water. While science and innovation are of primary importance, for MGA at the UN, human rights is always at the center. To learn more, watch event below!



Watch "Science for Water: Effective Solutions for Achieving SDG 6 and Water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda"

Read more: <https://www.un.org/pga/72/2018/02/20/science-for-water/>

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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

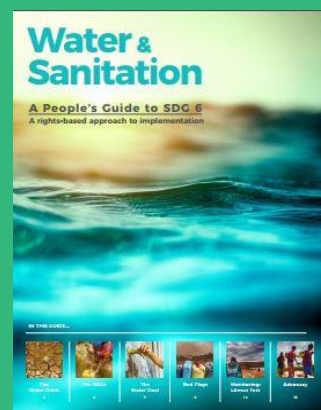
## • *Taking a Closer Look at SDG 6 "Water and Sanitation for All"*

In this issue of the newsletter, the focus of the water reflection is on the Red Flags section of the water guide. Red flags help us to ensure that we are aware of risks and possible loopholes in the understanding and implementation of the SDG water goal, targets and indicators. This is a critical section of the guide.

The points below name the red flags, for greater detail see pages 9-11. Be on the lookout for:

- Outcomes measured without reference to human rights dimensions
- Data that isn't disaggregated by different sectors of the population
- Attempts to create justifications for privatization; lack of public financing
- International co-operation restricted only to self-interested overseas development aid
- A narrow focus on water efficiency
- Market Based Conservation Strategies
- Integrated Water Resources Management

It is critical that the SDG's truly achieve what they set out to do. Therefore water advocates need to keep a close eye on water projects that claim to be responding to SDG 6. The above red flags indicate that there is a risk of overlooking the human rights dimension of water. The challenge is to be mindful of the risks and subtle ways in which dialogue and action on water can so easily take a narrow focus. As the issue of water justice is at the heart of our Mercy calling, you are encouraged to delve more deeply into the red flags section of the People's Guide to SDG 6. Try looking through a "red flag" lens with some of the resources within this edition of the Newsletter such as the "Science for Water" UN Event and the World Water Development Report. What do you find?



## USEFUL RESOURCES

The Good Shepherd International Foundation is releasing their newest documentary, "Mahila: a Women's Movement Rising," on March 8th International Women's Day, to celebrate the power of women helping each other and to support a movement of women walking together to enforce their rights. "Mahila" tells stories of empowerment from India's rural Dalit communities. Many Dalit women have suffered from a triple discrimination based on their gender, their caste and their impoverished economic class. The women of "Mahila" have found a rare voice and an important standing in their communities. They've achieved this through education, through access to credit and training to form businesses, and through awareness of their rights as citizens. Watch the film and find more information on this project at <http://www.mahilafilm.com/>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be attending*

- 8th March - International Women's Day
- 12th March-23rd March -Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- 12th March- 15th March- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact Migration
- 12th March - Preventing the Trafficking of Rural Women and Girls
- 15th March - Wisdom, Water and Rural Women: Unmuting Women's Voices
- 22nd March - World Water Day



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

In addition to regular meetings and networking with colleagues on the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, February was challenging with the migration of our email service from Outlook to Gmail. A positive outcome was that we checked and cleared hundreds of emails dating back a number of years. This in turn led to a ruthless clearing out of old reports and studies, followed by a similar 'purging' of dated articles and news items from our micro-site on the Mercy World website, in preparation for a change over to a new service.

Betty and I were very pleased to meet with Tomas Insua the Executive Director and Amy Echeverria, Board Chair of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM), see article on this meeting below. Since meeting, Shay Dougall and the people of Chinchilla in Western Queensland, who are dealing with the consequences of unconventional gas mining in their area, we have supported their plans to participate in a Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT). Tom Kerns is chairing the planning committee for this; he and Denise had a productive Skype call to discuss progress to date and how the Mercy Family could support this initiative. See Tom's concise article on the PPT.

During the month we had productive conference calls with the Mercy Global Action Coordinators and the Working Group engaged in Cosmology and Eco-justice within the global Mercy Family. An important element of our meetings was how best to develop our programme, to incorporate further issues related to Earth and to Refugees / Migrants. More information on this in subsequent news updates.

Denise Boyle fmdm  
Leader Global Action Team

## GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT – A Call to Action....

The Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) held their Board meeting in Maynooth earlier this month. Betty Lacey and Denise Boyle representing MIA-Global Action met with Tomás Insua, CEO and Amy Echeverria, the Chair of the GCCM Board, to discuss ongoing collaboration between the two organisations and to explore ways to expand our shared network. Like many members of the Mercy Family, Global Action has been an active member of GCCM since the organisation was set up in 2015.

In a relatively short time GCCM has grown into a global network with over 400 member organisations and thousands of individual members, many of whom are young people. The GCCM mandate is simple, respond to Pope Francis' call to action as clearly stated in his environment encyclical **'Laudato Si – On Care for Our common Home'**. As Tomás shared, GCCM was set up in January 2015 knowing that the Pope's encyclical was 'coming down the track'. When Laudato Si was launched in June of that year, GCCM was ready to embrace its message wholeheartedly and to share it globally, through its excellent communication strategy.



Via an informative power point presentation to about 40 people, Tomás shared the mission of GCCM and how it is implementing it: *"The Global Catholic Climate Movement is a first-of-its-kind international coalition of Catholics from many nations, continents, and walks of life. We are laity, religious, and clergy, theologians, scientists, and activists from Argentina, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Kenya, Australia, the United States... united by our Catholic faith and our work in various roles and organizations on climate change issues"*.



# NEWS FROM THE

## MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

### CONTINUED...

**1. SPIRITUAL DIMENSION:** We promote Laudato Si' and encourage local communities to undergo the 'ecological conversion' needed to overcome consumerism and heal our relationship with creation and the poor; the Season of Creation is the flagship project.

**2. LIFESTYLE DIMENSION:** We encourage lifestyle changes through the Eco-Parish program to reduce the carbon footprint from Catholic parishes worldwide and the Divest-Reinvest program to shift Catholic financial assets from dirty fossil fuels to clean renewable energy.

**3. PUBLIC POLICY DIMENSION:** We raise our voice in the public sphere to call for bold climate policies, by mobilizing in the streets, supporting advocacy efforts in the halls of power and amplifying the Laudato Si' message in the media.

Using a map of the world Tomás indicated how the organisation has grown rapidly across the five continents. GCCM has appealed to a huge audience of people, who are committed to working together, to tackle the climate change crisis. Laudato Si provides the way, which GCCM is highlighting in three dimensions or a three pronged approach i.e. spiritual, lifestyle and the public sphere. See diagram to the left.

The 'Spiritual' encompasses the promotion of Laudato Si and is a call to an ecological conversion. 'Lifestyle' is linked to changes that reduce my / our carbon footprint, plus it is an invitation to divest from fossil fuels and to reinvest in renewable energy. And the public sphere is a call to advocacy through mobilising on the streets, speaking truth to power wherever possible and amplifying the message of Laudato Si in the media.

Tomás emphasised the critical link between the global and the local. He was very keen to hear “stories“ of implementation and change effected at grassroots level from those present and to establish links between the various organisations. He ended his talk on a positive note quoting paragraph 13 in Laudato Si: *“The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for **we know that things can change.**”*

Lorna Gold from Trocaire, who is internationally known for her work on climate change and is a member of the GCCM Board, spoke about the Laudato Si Working Group in Ireland. They are liaising with the Irish Bishops' Conference, to implement the call to action in Laudato Si.

With participants from many different countries present, Lorna spoke of the importance of holding political candidates to account when they are looking for our vote to be elected. Unless we all speak about it, prospective politicians will not get the message that climate change is an urgent, moral issue. Candidates will listen if there is a group of one hundred people gathered in a room discussing their concerns around climate change, especially if they think there is an opportunity of winning votes!

In the area of education, there were many contributions from the floor. The general impression was that the schools are far more advanced in sharing the 'good news' of Laudato Si than other sectors and we should be encouraged with the advances they have made. This was particularly apparent in the primary or grade school sector.

The upcoming papal visit in August 2018 for the World Meeting of Families in Dublin was mentioned. It is anticipated that the Pope's visit will highlight the urgent issue of climate change. One concrete way is through speaking of the environmental footprint related to his visit. If the message of Laudato Si is to be translated into action, we could all get involved in promoting a 'zero rubbish campaign' i.e. to leave venues clean in the aftermath of the outdoor Papal Mass and family celebration, where thousands will gather to celebrate with Pope Francis. It was agreed to make contact with the organisers and engage with others to keep these venues rubbish free. If water fountains are made available, this will minimise the use of plastic water bottles. One participant shared that the US Super Bowl is now a zero waste event – encouraging all of us to emulate this for the papal visit.

**“It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face.”**

Pope Francis, Laudato Si'





### The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on the Human Rights Impacts of Fracking and Climate Change

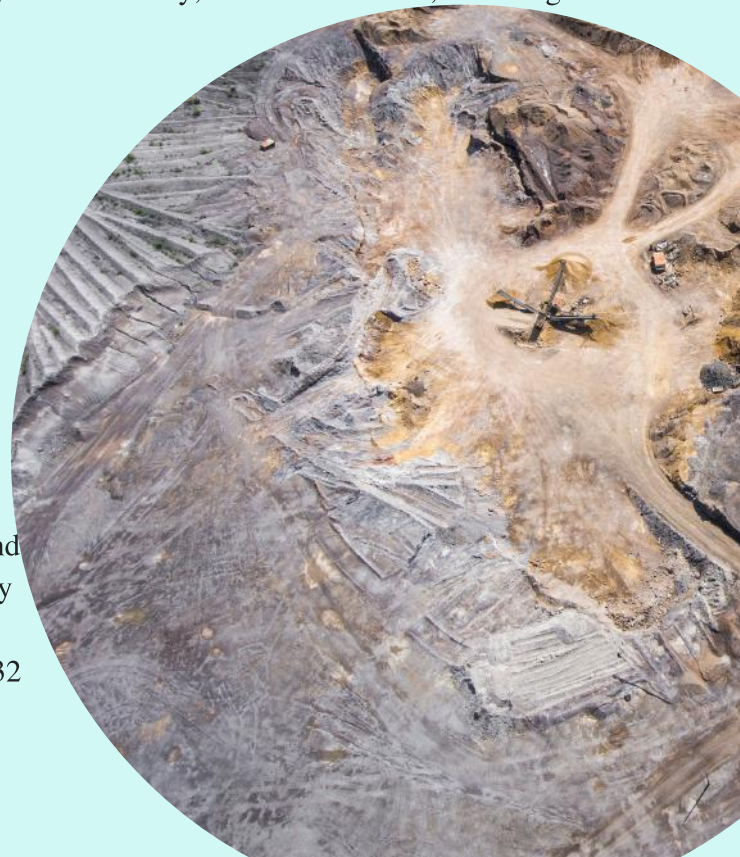
The pockmarks of fracking pads are spreading around the world – from red rock canyons to rainforests, from farmsteads to suburbs. The effects are becoming clearer and more fully documented – poisoned water, bulldozed landscapes, sickened children, displaced families, lost livelihoods, greenhouse gas pollution, earthquakes. But as the scientific understanding of fracking's effects increases, the essential question that remains is a moral and legal one: **'To what extent does the harm caused by hydraulic fracturing constitute a breach of human rights?'**

To clarify the human-rights impacts of fracking and to affirm international standards of human rights obligations, we are assembling a session of the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) -- the *Tribunal on the Human Rights Impacts of Fracking and Climate Change*. It will be hosted virtually, and on the campus of Oregon State University, May 14-18, 2018.

The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal is a highly respected international forum that grew from the Russell-Sartre Tribunal, to investigate whether breaches of human rights norms occurred during the Vietnam War. Since then, it has conducted a series of high-profile hearings to determine whether human-rights standards were abridged in Bhopal, Chernobyl, and other sites around the world. The Tribunal on fracking will assemble a panel of jurists of international repute, to hear arguments from attorneys with expertise in human-rights law, who will call as witnesses, not only scientists and professors, but indigenous and settler people whose lands are being fracked.

The attorneys will be asking the PPT judges for an advisory opinion on these four basic questions:

- Under what circumstances do fracking and other unconventional oil and gas extraction techniques breach substantive and procedural human rights, protected by international law as a matter of treaty or custom?
- Under what circumstances do fracking and other unconventional oil and gas extraction techniques warrant the issuance of either provisional measures, a judgment enjoining further activity, remediation relief, or damages for causing environmental harm?
- What is the extent of responsibility and liability of States and non-state actors for violations of human rights and for environmental and climate harm caused by these oil and gas extraction techniques?
- What is the extent of responsibility and liability of States and non-state actors, both legal and moral, for violations of the rights of nature related to environmental and climate harm; that is caused by these unconventional oil and gas extraction techniques?



Testimony has already been submitted from Australia on the impacts on human health written by the author of "Air Pollution and human health hazards: a compilation of air toxins acknowledged by the gas industry in Queensland's Darling Downs" at

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00207233.2017.14132>



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## CONTINUED...

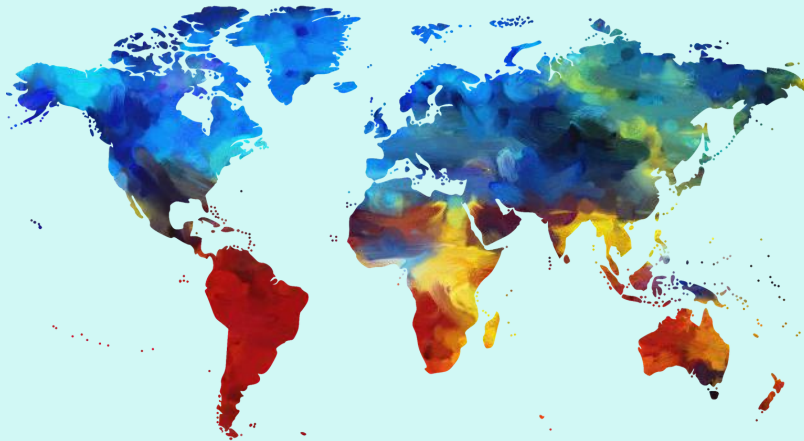
The result from the PPT will be a judicial opinion of far-reaching effect. Because the Tribunal is an international, independent, deliberative body with recognized competence in human rights law, the Tribunal's opinion can be used in other settings to clarify and affirm the human-rights obligations of States and non-state actors. It promises to be a significant step forward in the on-going struggle to protect the health and wellbeing of Earth and its inhabitants.

Other documents that explain the Tribunal can be seen on **this page** of the PPT website. Also on that page...is the **Guide to Rights Based Advocacy**.

### For more information:

Tom Kerns, Environment and Human Rights Advisory, tkerns@uw.edu

Carly Lettero, Director, Spring Creek Project, Environmental Arts and Humanities Initiative, Oregon State University, Carly.Lettero@oregonstate.edu



## THE ONGOING SDG CHALLENGE - From International to Local....

'The SDG CHALLENGE' was the title of an event showcased by Development Perspectives (DP) in Dublin on February 23rd. The aim of this event was to link the International to the grassroots and share what is being done to implement the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development in different countries. DP is a development education NGO, whose mission is to contribute to lessening poverty, inequality and climate change, through a programme of transformative education and active global citizenship.

Bobby McCormack, CEO of DP introduced the opening session by giving attendees a brief run down on the history of the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development including the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). He said while DP had been promoting the SDG Agenda since its foundation, awareness of this important UN initiative remains low in the general population. Bobby spoke about DP's advocate training programme for 2017, which has resulted in the implementation of some award winning projects throughout Ireland.

A panel event with a variety of experts followed. The first panellist to speak was Suzanne Keating, CEO of Dóchas, an umbrella organisation of all the Irish NGOs. Suzanne's main point was that the SDGs will fail if we do not put human rights at the centre of the SDG Agenda, a theme that ran through the rest of the programme. She then spoke about the universality of root causes that are evident everywhere i.e. underpinning poverty. Suzanne spoke of the need to listen to others and learn from them, especially people in developing countries, who have much to teach us. She then turned to global health services, asking participants if they needed to access the health service, which country would we choose from: Ireland, Mozambique or Rwanda. To the surprise of many, Suzanne shared that Rwanda has the best health service. This highlighted an unconscious prejudice so Suzanne challenged the group to listen carefully and not presume we 'know'. In terms of addressing challenges or problems, she highlighted the importance of operating out of a human rights framework.

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### CONTINUED...

The second speaker was Fr. Peter McVerry SJ, who runs a well known national programme for the homeless that includes drug treatment centres. In his opening remarks he picked up on the central theme Suzanne had spoken about. Fr. Peter focussed in on human rights and the dignity of the individual when looking at the plight of homeless people. He spoke about homelessness, emphasising that "no house means no food, no education, no job"! Currently the right to a home is denied to half a million people in Ireland, who are living in tents, cars, poor quality accommodation, or adults living with parents and relatives. Fundamentally Fr. Peter believes that the right to housing should be enshrined in the Constitution, as per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He shared that this is one of the biggest challenges he faces when dealing with Government officials, as they were not prepared to take on this responsibility. Until they do, the tragedy of homelessness will continue.

The final speaker on the panel was Maria Barry who is a teacher, educator and researcher in citizenship and history education. Maria began by saying that she was a little bit uncomfortable with the idea of integrating the SDGs into education! She went on to clarify this sharing that first, children should be taught about the society in which live. They also need to know why we live in a society which is unjust and unequal. This reality applies globally, but focussing on Ireland Maria highlighted areas of inequality in Ireland. In a provocative question she asked "why is Ireland a tax haven". In recent months western countries are challenging Ireland for the tax breaks the Government has given to large multi-nationals that encouraged them to set up business throughout Ireland. Maria said when this important question is addressed, only then can we move forward and look at education and the SDGs.

Following Maria's contribution there was an open discussion, where each of the panellists developed the points they had shared with the group. Suzanne told the group that if 'we, as in the global population was serious about lifting people out of poverty, it would cost \$45 billion dollars or 0.01% of global GDP". When we consider the amount spent on the purchase of the latest, most lethal arms, this is a relatively small amount of money, however to address this reality needs political will, which appears to be sadly lacking.

Fr Peter shared that what kept him going in his crusade for the homeless a lifelong commitment, was anger. This is fuelled daily by the inequalities he sees in our society! He also commented that he believes 99% of people were unfamiliar with the SDGs, so because of this he favoured the idea that we should focus on one goal only, and see how that could be applied locally. To be effective, this SDG should be introduced in a concrete manner, not in an abstract or theoretical way.

In the final session, participants met with the advocates from the 2017 training programme, who spoke to them about their projects. These included exciting projects in the area of SDG education, film making and creative art depicting the SDGs in a vibrant, dynamic manner. The art was the work of asylum seekers who had been living in direct provision for over nine years. It was enlightening to talk to them and listen to their stories that were not easy to hear. Sharing stories is at the centre of DP and the work they do. The advocates shared their stories in creative, illustrative ways, making them come alive. Maria did her project on femicide. She made white paper flowers to represent the 216 deaths that have occurred in the last twenty one years, one of them being her own twenty year old daughter. Maria made yellow flowers for the children of these women, and red flowers for their parents and families. Still heartbroken at her loss, she agreed one hundred percent with Fr. Peter McVerry when he said that anger kept him going. Maria said that anger gave her the energy to continue with her campaign and her life.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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### NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE UN

Easter Greetings to all. As we celebrate this Easter season of hope, we are mindful of what has filled our agenda much of this past month; the negotiations toward a global compact on migration and the importance of recognizing the wonderful contribution that migrants make to our world; the Commission on the Status of Women and the great strides that continue to be made in terms of the empowerment and recognition of women; and also the launch of the UN Decade on Water and the emerging recognition that Water is a Universal Human Right. All of these events remind us that hope is still indeed alive. Our Easter call is one of standing in solidarity with those who continue to be oppressed and marginalized and to work to change violent systems of oppression that render the earth and its people poor.

One of our colleagues from UNANIMA shared a beautiful poem from John O'Donohue "Easter Blessing" from *Walking on the Pastures of Wonder*; it captures this message of hope and rising in the face of adversity.



Photos: Public Domain

*"On this Easter morning, let us look again at the lives we have been so generously given and let us let fall away the useless baggage that we carry -- old pains, old habits, old ways of seeing and feeling -- and let us have the courage to begin again... We don't realize all the good we can do. A kind, encouraging word or helping hand can bring many a person through dark valleys in their lives... We were sent here to search for the light of Easter in our hearts, and when we find it we are meant to give it away generously. The dawn that is rising this Easter morning is a gift to our hearts and we are meant to celebrate it and to carry away from this holy, ancient place the gifts of healing and light and the courage of a new beginning."*

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *A Snapshot Inside the Commission on the Status of Women*

The Commission on the Status of Women Sixty-Two (CSW 62), the United Nation's largest attended Commission, launched on March 12th and continued until March 23rd. The priority theme for this year's Commission was "challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" with a review theme of "participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women".



H.E. Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, served as the Chair of the Bureau of the 62nd Commission; she will hold this position for two years as she works to facilitate and ensure a successful outcome for the annual sessions. The outcome from the 193 Member States of the United Nations, called the "Agreed Conclusions" was negotiated during the second week of the Commission and works to ensure the rights and development of rural women and girls. During negotiations, a **press release** from UN Women highlighted how "Member States expressed deep concern about the increasing challenges that are exacerbating the disadvantages and inequalities that rural women and girls face – from humanitarian emergencies and armed conflicts

to the adverse impacts of climate change. In its final agreement, the Commission emphasized that rural women and girls are essential to sustainable development, and their rights and empowerment needs to be prioritized." To review the broad range of concrete steps and recommendations within the "Agreed Conclusions" click **here**.

Complementing the Member State negotiations towards the CSW "Agreed Conclusions" was NGO CSW's Consultation Day, preceding the Commission on March 11th, as well as 500+ side-events and parallel events sponsored by both Member States, Civil Society and other stakeholders. The MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN delegation engaged in the numerous outlets and activities provided, while also co-sponsoring, endorsing, and presenting at a diverse range of events from themes of rural women and water, climate induced displacement, structural change, fracking, human trafficking and more.



Most notable was Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN's co-sponsored event with the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See, "Preventing Human Trafficking among Rural Women and Girls: Integrating Inherent Dignity into a Human Rights Model." With nearly 600 people in attendance, two sisters of Mercy, Sr. Lynda Dearlove and Sr. Angela Reed, presented alongside survivor advocate Mely Lenario from the Philippines who described how her experience of being trafficked has encouraged her to study social work and continue as an outreach worker to assist other women who are being trafficked. Angela Reed rsm shared her extensive research on preventative measures to combating human trafficking for sexual exploitation. She described

how "Formerly trafficked women challenge the view that being trafficked for sexual exploitation is a single isolated event in their lives. Instead they draw attention to human rights violations and systemic oppression that occur throughout their entire lives." Congratulations on such a successful and insightful event! Read a summary of the event from the Holy See Mission **here**.

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



### ● Highlighting Climate Induced Displacement at CSW 62



Among the many drivers of migration forcibly displacing millions of people each year are climate change and natural disasters. During the Commission on the Status of Women, the NGO Committee on Migration along with the government of Bangladesh, co-sponsored a panel discussion on climate induced displacement and how it specifically impacts women and girls entitled "Shouldering the Burden: Rural Women and Climate Induced Displacement". This event highlighted the challenges such as high water salinity leading to disease, inability to access medical resources, food scarcity, desertification, lack of access to technology, sea level rise and more. However, it also emphasized the resilience of women and girls in the face of adversity, using these as a catalyst for change. View this event [here!](#)

### ● Intergovernmental Negotiations Towards a Global Compact on Migration

Since our last newsletter in March, there have been two rounds of intergovernmental negotiations towards a Global Compact on Migration. Within the second round, the Co-Facilitators of the process, Ambassadors of Mexico and Switzerland, took a step back from proceeding through negotiations objective by objective to ensure that some main areas of contention between Member States were discussed. Speaking openly in this round of negotiations, key points debated considered Member States' opinions on the differentiation of regular and irregular migrants, differentiation between migrants and refugees, implementation and capacity building, and follow up and review. In depth discussion arose regarding the human rights of migrants, which should be upheld regardless of status. Click [here](#) to read the Zero Draft Plus which was negotiated during this round.



Photo: MIA MGA at the UN

The **Draft Revision of the Global Compact on Migration** which was released on March 26 and discussed within the third round of negotiations (April 3-6) included the differentiations as discussed within the second round; however, no changes were made to a capacity building mechanism. Negotiations proceeded objective by objective and encompassed both technical and content changes. Consensus on the changes made to the Compact was varied as some Member States do not want the Compact to be too prescriptive and others that urge to make the Global Compact as strong as it can be.

To continue following the negotiations and read statements submitted by Member States go to <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/intergovernmental-negotiations> . Here you can view the programme of work for each round, statements, side-events, and more! The next round of negotiations will be from May 14-18th. As we head into a stretch with no Global Compact Negotiations to attend, MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN, along with the NGO Committee on Migration, will be visiting with delegates of UN Member States to assist in optimizing the Global Compact on Migration.

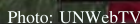
For further reading: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2018%20BRI%20Compacts%20Issue%20Brief%20FINAL.pdf>

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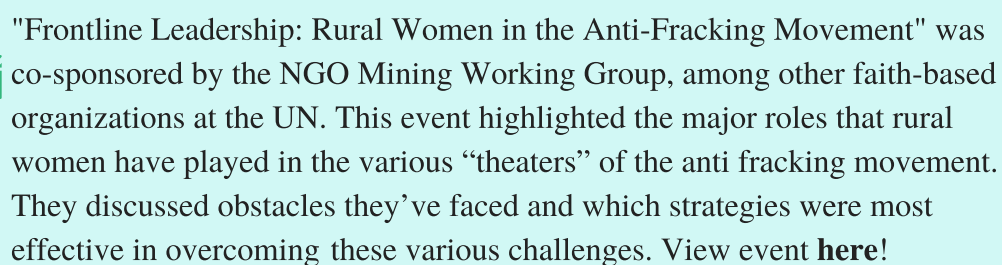
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- *MIA: MGA at the UN Attends Launch of International Decade on Action for Water*



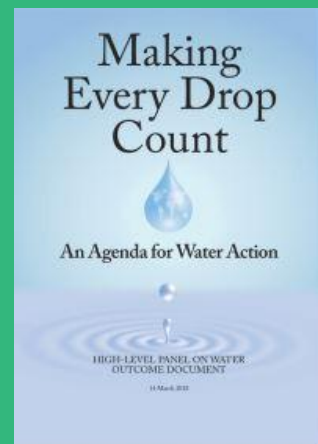
be overcome. With an esteemed panel and plenary dialogue, one voice resounded louder than the rest, that of 13-year old Autumn Peltier. Autumn Peltier, an Anishinaabe water advocate from Wikwemikong First Nation in Canada, spoke on behalf of water as a sacred and living thing. Autumn described how the fight for clean drinking water must encompass a human rights based approach but also address the privatization of water; “water should not be for sale, [and] no one should have to worry about [whether] its safe [or not] to drink”. In her address to the General Assembly, she later challenged Member States and stakeholders to “warrior up” and truly take a stand for protecting our planet. View Autumn’s encouraging testimony [here](#).

- ***MIA: Mercy Global Action Co-Sponsors Events on Fracking, Water, and Sanitation***



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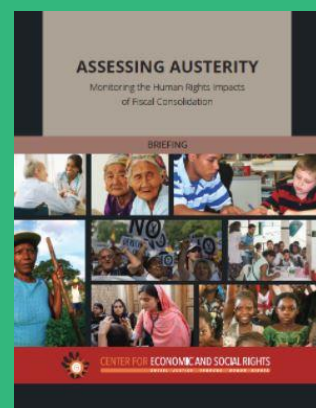
**UN DESA and the World Bank  
Release 'Making Every Drop Count'**



## UNICEF's Progress for Every Child in the SDG Era

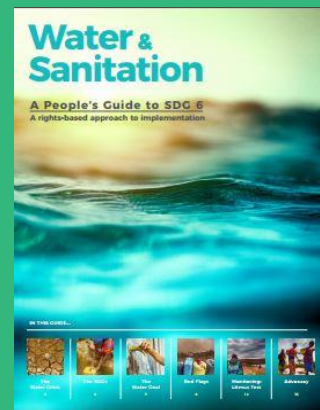


**Center for Economic and Social  
Rights "Assessing Austerity:  
Monitoring the Impacts of Fiscal  
Consolidation"**





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



- ***Taking a Closer Look at SDG 6 "Water and Sanitation for All"***

The section on monitoring includes a four step litmus test which is designed to help policy makers and advocates assess water related policy in light of international human rights obligations. This test is an adaptation of the NGO Mining Working Groups 'Rights Based Litmus Test'. Key questions in relation to monitoring include:

- Does the option undermine the conditions necessary to guarantee the human right to water or other rights?
- Does the policy effectively advance the enjoyment of the human rights to water and sanitation by all?
- Can affected communities and concerned civil society participate effectively in decision-making and access justice/remedies for harms?
- Does this option further or hinder the ability of future generations to enjoy their rights to water or any other human right?

You can view a comprehensive breakdown of these inquiry questions on pages 12-14 of the SDG 6 Guide.

Furthermore, there are several channels for advocacy at the UN outlined in this section of the guide. It includes a brief overview of Special Procedures along with providing key advocacy steps and actions. Reference is also made to the UN Treaty Bodies as well as the Universal Periodic Review, in which countries review each other's human rights situation with participation by civil society.



## USEFUL RESOURCES

**Cardinal Ribat of Papua New Guinea gave two presentations while traveling in New York City in March. Taking into account Pope Francis's call to make concrete commitments to find solutions to climate change, he spoke passionately about the damages to small island states from deep sea bed mining companies such as Nautilus Minerals. These concerns were also detailed within recent articles in the *Business and Human Rights Resource Centre* in which they have invited Nautilus Minerals to respond to concerns raised. Follow this story here!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be attending*

- **3rd April- 6th April- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact Migration**
- **9th-13th April Commission on Population Development**
- **15th April- 27th April -Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**
- **10th April- 23rd April Sr. Angela Field in Country Visit to Guyana**
- **22nd April - International Mother Earth Day**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

March flew by for the Global Action Team in the Mercy International Centre. Our focus was on developing resources for the mini campaign against plastic pollution. This complements the global campaign to highlight the danger of plastic pollution and the urgency of finding alternatives to plastic. We also prepared the next pamphlet in the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda series, SDG number 15. Both initiatives are part of the lead up to Earth Day 2018; see 'related articles'.

Significant justice issues relating to all victims of rape were highlighted this past month, in a high profile rape case as outlined in article: 'Justice for Victims of Rape or Sexual Assault'.

Wishing you Easter-tide greetings of hope and peace

Denise Boyle fmdm

Leader Global Action Team

## UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda series, SDG number 15

The aim of this SDG is to: "Protect and restore sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss." Central to this is preventing the loss of biodiversity, which refers to the variety of life on Earth in all its forms and interactions. Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry sum this up in a phrase from 'The Universe Story' – "To tell the story of a single particle we must tell the full story of the Universe". **Look for the SDG 15 Pamphlet on the Mercy World website in the coming days!**



## Justice for Victims of Rape or Sexual Assault

In the past month following a high profile rape trial in Belfast, Northern Ireland (they follow the British legal system) the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland is facing water shed moment, related to criminal trials for rape and sexual assault. The 'Belfast Trial' as it became known, was headline news nationally and internationally for the nine weeks the accused were on trial, which was in an open court with a packed public gallery.

In the republic of Ireland such trials are held 'in camera' i.e. no reporters or members of the public are permitted in the courtroom. Importantly the names of the victim and the accused would not be released until the judge or magistrate had passed sentence. The victim in the Belfast trial was guaranteed anonymity, but her name was leaked! Most likely because the public attending the trial heard it, as she was cross examined by the barristers representing the four, high profile sports men.

Following the verdict of 'not guilty' for the accused, there were spontaneous demonstrations throughout both jurisdictions. Demonstrators were calling for an overhaul of the British judicial system because of the justice issues raised throughout this high profile case. Central to this was the way the 'victim', the principle witness for the State, was subjected to interrogation by four barristers for eight consecutive days, with no barrister to represent her. Other issues extended into a review of societal values which is, as in many countries heavily influenced by a male dominated sporting culture.

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## CONTINUED...

Numerous interviews, chat shows and news reports post the verdict, have highlighted factors that partly explain the significant increase in rape and sexual assault across the Western world; yet on average only one in ten victims actually reports the crime. There are many factors as to why not – not least fear of the trial – that includes confusion around what consent means; lack of respect for oneself and others; alcohol consumption; plus the negative influence of pornography on young minds. This is compounded in many instances by the lessening influence of religion on moral values or norms.

Short term, until there is a radical change in the judicial system for sexual assault trials in most countries, victims will hesitate to come forward in their search for justice.

## Mini-Campaign Against Plastic Pollution leading to Earth Day, 22nd April

As a lead up to Earth Day 2018, the Future We Need (FWN) group, which Mercy Global Action is a member of, prepared a 4-part series: 'My Journey Away From Plastic'. The reflections one a week for the four weeks leading to Earth Day may be viewed here. Join us in participating in an 'action' highlighted for the 4th week. See all 4 reflections [here](#)  
[http://www.mercyworld.org/mercy\\_global\\_action/view-post.cfm?id=910](http://www.mercyworld.org/mercy_global_action/view-post.cfm?id=910)

**Earth Day** this year will focus on mobilizing the world to End Plastic Pollution, including creating support for a global effort to eliminate single-use plastics, along with global regulation for the disposal of plastics. See:  
<https://www.earthday.org/earthday/>

## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGNS ON REDUCING PLASTIC USE

Globally, campaigns are being rolled to eliminate or reduce the use of plastic in our lives. This is at a critical juncture, as time<sup>1</sup> is not on our side! Plastic is a substance the earth cannot digest, is the strapline of the Plastic Pollution Coalition campaign and sums up how urgent the plastic pollution problem is.

A million plastic bottles are bought around the world every minute and these bottles cannot biodegrade – they virtually last forever, some estimate more than 500 years. Millions of these bottles end up in our oceans and are wreaking havoc on marine life around the planet. Ellen McArthur campaigns to promote the circular economy in which plastic bottles are re-used, refilled and re-cycled rather than used once and thrown away. The circular economy is one that we can all embrace, so it is good to see that the United Kingdom is now set to join 38 countries in having a recycling scheme in which all containers, whether plastic, glass or metal, will to be covered by a deposit return (DRS) scheme in retail stores. In Germany a DRS was introduced in 2003 and 99 per cent of plastic bottles are now recycled. It is now time that all governments introduced such schemes to curb the millions of plastic bottles a day that go unrecycled.

1. <http://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org/>



Photo: Kristin McDermott



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## CONTINUED...

### CUT DOWN ON PLASTIC USE:

There are many resourceful campaigns being introduced at this crucial moment in time – a very practical and manageable one is #PlasticFreeFriday. Launched by Friends of the Earth, it gives tips on how to eliminate plastic for one day a week. Helpful hints include:



Photo: Public Domain

- Bring your lunch in with you and avoid using plastic cutlery, cling film etc.
- Use a reusable bottle and use water from the tap. If the taste of tap water does not appeal to you, apparently the addition of a stick of charcoal will purify the water.
- For this one day of the week, skip the supermarket when shopping for Friday evening dinner. It is more likely that food bought from the local bakery, greengrocer or butcher will be sold loose, so no wrapping involved.

### GET BUSINESSES INVOLVED:

This is another initiative which is receiving great attention. Get the business community involved and ask them to make small changes in their practices. This could have a huge impact on our “throw away culture”, especially in the hospitality sector.

- Straws - put them behind the counter. Let people ask for them or better still, change to paper straws which are widely available now.
- Condiment sachets – Ditch the condiment sachets and change back to bottles to cut down on waste.
- Offer a discount for reusing your coffee cup. Charge extra for the use of a disposable one. This could be extended to include ice cream tubs, salads, single use cutlery etc.
- Takeaway boxes. Switch to cardboard or other alternatives.

These small changes could have serious positive impacts on reducing or cutting out our reliance on plastic. As can be seen above, the DRS was introduced in Germany and recycling is now at 99 per cent. Now that's progress!

Betty Lacey  
MIA GA Research

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, and Denise Boyle fmdm

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE UN

### A MERCY IMMERSION IN GUYANA, A REFLECTION

#### - SR ANGELA REED RSM

At the invitation of Sr Karen Schneider MD, I had the privilege of travelling to Guyana and participating in Mercy Medical Mission. Witnessing numerous works of Mercy in Georgetown and then participating in the Medical Mission in the Interior of Guyana was a profound experience and one which I hold with great gratitude. Sisters of Mercy have a wonderful heritage of creating foundations where there is a need for education, health and other pastoral activities. Guyana is no exception. It is humbling to see the works of Mercy that have developed over many decades and that respond directly to a need.

Currently the Guyana Sisters of Mercy and partners are active in numerous ministries throughout the country including the Mercy hospital, Mercy Wings which is a vocational and day care school, Mercy Resident Care for the Aged, St John Bosco Orphanage a safe house for

women who have been trafficked and various other educational programs. It was evident throughout these ministries that there is a strong commitment to the dignity of each person and a desire for each one to flourish.

Ministering alongside a committed medical mission team made up of pediatric doctors, nurses and community workers, some of whom were Sisters of Mercy, was a great honor.



Photo: Angela Reed.

Pictured: The Mercy Medical Mission Team 2018

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Photo: Angela Reed rsm

For many children, their encounters with the medical mission team enabled them to have immediate treatment and care. Other children were referred to Georgetown Mercy Hospital for further tests. All in all, over 1500 Amerindian children were screened and treated for any medical concerns. As we travelled by boat along the Pomeroon River I observed the magnificent rainforest and beautiful surroundings in which many of the Guyanese Amerindians live. I became acutely aware of the need to preserve such an environment and was mindful of the risk that extractive industries pose to this remote, largely untouched location. I was also aware that back at UN headquarters the Indigenous Peoples Forum was being held. This forum brings Indigenous people throughout the world to the global table, where Indigenous concerns as well as visions for the future are shared with Member States and other stakeholders. Colleen Cloonan (MGA UN) was present at the forum and participated in many dialogues. Some of her reflections follow this report.

As our work at the UN aims to reflect the grassroots ministry of mercy, there is much to learn from this experience. I am mindful of the oft quoted ‘leave No-one behind’ from the UN 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. I am disturbed that many in our world do not have free, clean, potable water to drink. I am painfully aware that many indigenous people do not have access to affordable medical supplies and treatment. Most significantly, I am reminded of the great disparity between the rich and those rendered poor.

I am also moved by the compassion and care offered to so many in our Mercy ministries. This is a great sign of hope and provides the impetus to continue to advocate for a more inclusive and equal world. I would like to especially thank the Sisters of Mercy Guyana for their warm welcome and openness. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Sr Karen Schneider and her inspirational medical team from Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. Special thanks also to Mercy Sisters; Mary McGory, Nidia Quispe, and Barbara Ghiel.

Mercy Global Action continues to bring Mercy grassroots experience to the global agenda, seeking to address the root causes of poverty which are so often steeped in discriminatory economic and social systems that marginalize and render people poor.



Photo: Angela Reed rsm

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues*

The Seventeenth Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues commenced on April 16th and ended on April 27th. This year's Forum highlighted the priority theme of "indigenous peoples' collective rights to land, territories and resources".

At the opening session on April 16th, President of Bolivia, Evo Morales celebrated indigenous peoples within the United Nations and their ability "to debate; not just to provide indications of how we think, but as our ancestors have done- defend life, humanity and Mother Earth". His words were encouraging for participants of the Forum as he urged Member States, civil society and indigenous alike "to be organized...we have to shoulder our responsibility. This is a critical juncture in the United Nations...we have to guarantee the rights of Mother Earth...and if we aren't respectful of Mother Earth its impossible to think of there being future generations".



Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN followed the plenary sessions and were active in supporting both side and parallel events of the Forum, see below! To view the opening session and subsequent plenary sessions recorded by the UN, click to the left! In addition, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs were diligently updating their 'United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues' Facebook Page with live events, interviews, articles, and outcome documents for those who were unable to attend. To learn more see <https://www.facebook.com/unpfii/>

- ***NGO Mining Working Group Co-Sponsors Side-Event of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues***

On April 19th, the NGO Mining Working Group, along with the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations, the Panamazonian Ecclesial Network (REPAM) and the Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, came together to discuss the "Violation of Human Rights in the Amazon: Networks to Respond to and Redress Them". This event highlighted the threats and violations of mining companies at the expense of indigenous peoples and land.



Photo: MJA: MGA at the UN

Moderating this esteemed panel, Sr. Margaret Mayce, OP, the chair of the NGO Mining Working Group described the struggles of indigenous within the Amazon, where indigenous are not only at the risk of losing their lands and resources, but also their own lives for defending their human rights. Members of REPAM, such as Elvia de Jesús Arévalo Ordóñez from the Comunidad Amazonica de Accion Social Cordillera del Condor Mirador of Ecuador, described her personal experiences regarding the damage caused by extractive industries in her region. She stated "They have manipulated the prices of land, taken advantage of the economic needs of the people, and violently evicted landowners." Furthermore, explained the stark reality that "the rivers are totally contaminated and we cannot swim, drink their water, and fish. The food sustenance of its inhabitants is over, life in these rivers is over".

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous People, detailed how in our own advocacy it is important to recognize extractive industries as "key perpetrators in exploiting indigenous communities and their land". We must continue to work towards an international legally binding treaty which holds these corporations accountable for their human rights abuses (as explained further in 'Degradation of the Earth' p. 5), lift up indigenous representatives of affected communities to be a voice for their people and land, and to seek remedy for these abuses.

Further information on this event can be found at: <https://holyseemission.org/contents/events/5ade0126d8fd5.php>

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As there has been a stretch of several weeks with no intergovernmental negotiations toward a Global Compact on Migration, it has been a key priority for MIA:Mercy Global Action at the UN, as a member of the Committee on Migration, to meet with UN Member States' delegates to discuss the potential and progress of the Compact. Both Sr Angela Reed rsm and Colleen Cloonan have committed to partake in Mission Visits to the Permanent Mission of the Philippines, Kiribati, New Zealand, Costa Rica and Colombia to the United Nations. These visits are both strategic and vital for civil society to highlight important issues that need to be strengthened within the Compact.



In addition to Mission Visits, several of our NGO colleagues have strategically facilitated discussions to present civil society perspectives on the conversations that have been unfolding among government delegations during negotiations. One of the many noteworthy events was organized by Caritas Internationalis and the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations on May 3rd entitled "Faith Leaders Call the World to Share the Journey of Migrants and Refugees". This panel discussion was led by religious leaders from diverse faith traditions. Each brought perspectives and insights from their religion on the topic of migration and how each have respectively come to the aid of millions of refugees and migrants on the move.

In his opening remarks, Archbishop Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See Mission to the United Nations, highlighted how "Faith-based organizations are unique in their reach and presence at all points of the migratory journey, often filling gaps in services to migrants that governments, and other civil society actors, are incapable or unwilling to fill on their own...start[ing], not from political or economic perspectives, but from the affirmation of the human dignity of all people before all else." While some Member States have questioned the relevance of faith-based organizations during the negotiations towards a Global Compact on Migration, it is imperative that their work is celebrated and recognized by the international community as they play a pivotal role in the movement of peoples. Bringing attention to the strength of inter-faith partnership and collaboration, Revered Rachel Carnegie emphasized that while migration "can often times be divisive among different parties, the question of migration is often a unifying issue for religious groups." To watch this event in its entirety, click **[here](#)**.

Moving forward, the fourth round of intergovernmental negotiations will take place from May 14th-18th. Delegations will continue their discussions where they left off in April and finish the reading of the **Draft Rev 1**, and continue on through the implementation and follow-up and review sections. Furthermore, the Co-Facilitators of the process have presented a concept note on a **capacity building mechanism** for the Global Compact. This capacity building mechanism proposes a "Migration Solutions Mechanism" featuring a proposed "connection hub", "start-up fund", "global Knowledge network" and "proposed institutional support". To read more, **[click here!](#)**



# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- ***MIA: MGA at the UN Attends an Interactive Dialogue on Harmony with Nature during the commemoration of International Mother Earth Day***

In a meeting of the General Assembly on April 23rd, UN Member States and Civil Society met to discuss "Earth Jurisprudence in the Implementation of Sustainable Production and Consumption Patterns in Harmony with Nature". Falling in the midst of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, this event truly encapsulated the life and spirit of Mother Earth whom we have failed with issues of climate change, consumption, pollution and loss of biodiversity. President of the General Assembly, Mirosław Lajczak, urged those present to redouble our efforts for Mother Earth. We have recognized the importance of protecting our planet, but we have no plan B or planet B, it is time to act and do. In addition, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the UN, H.E. Diego Morejon Pazmino highlighted the need for humans to stop viewing nature as something that can be owned, but as a collective; with this, change our patterns of



production and consumption. To view this interactive dialogue and learn more about best practice models from specific nation states, **[click here!](#)**

- ***Business and Human Rights: Moving Towards a Treaty***

On April 25th, our colleagues in New York, including Franciscans International, Global Policy Forum, the Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty and more, co-sponsored a panel discussion with the Permanent Mission of Ecuador entitled "Remedies for Cross-Border Human Rights Violations: A Status Report on the Binding Treaty on TNCs and other Business Enterprises". This interactive panel highlighted the process and progress of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group as they proceed towards an international legally binding instrument to regulate, within the scope of international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations.

This timely panel discussion was held at the end of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, who so often have their own rights violated at the hands of these large corporations, as was emphasized in our 'ECOSOC' section. The integrity of this treaty, rests upon the political will of UN Member States to commit to recognizing human rights over trade and hold corporations accountable to people, not the other way around.



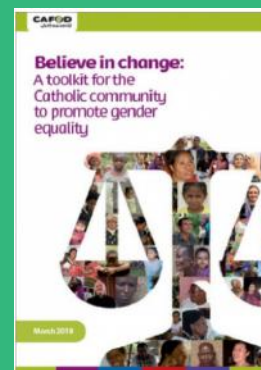
Photo: MIA MGA at the UN

The Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group will meet this October for a fourth time at the UN in Geneva; however, this time, they will have a draft of the historic treaty which is expected to be released this June. MIA:MGA at the UN are following this process closely. For more information, **[click here!](#)**

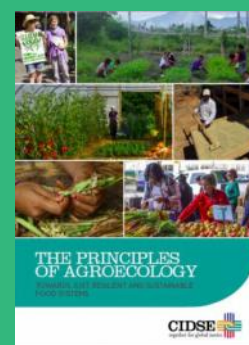
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## USEFUL RESOURCES

**CAFOD's Believe in Change: A Toolkit for the Catholic Community to Promote Gender Equality**



**CIDSE's The Principles of Agroecology: Towards Just, Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems**



**UN Climate Change Annual Report 2017**



**Child Rights in the Global Compacts**



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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- ***Preparing for the High Level Political Forum's Review of the Sustainable Development Goals***

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the United Nations will be held from Monday, July 9th until Wednesday, July 18th 2018. The HLPF is the main United Nations platform for sustainable development and has acted as a mechanism to review the progress and challenges of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Annually, since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the HLPF has chosen a theme and/or specific SDGs to review. In addition, as part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, UN Member States are encouraged to conduct Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). These Voluntary National Reviews aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, best practices, challenges, policies and institutions of governments, as well as mobilize multi-stakeholder partnerships and support. To view which countries are up for review click [here!](#)

This year the theme of the Forum is "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" and the goals to be reviewed are **"Goal 6:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all; **Goal 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all; **Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable; **Goal 12:** ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns; **Goal 15:** protect, resource and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable manage forests, combat".

Some of our colleagues from the NGO Mining Working Group have put together a survey to measure VNR countries' implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in light of the HLPF. If you would like to participate see <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MXKFZYK>



## USEFUL RESOURCES

*The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) launched a series of videos to amplify the voices of migrants and refugees as part of a global campaign to "Stand Up for Human Rights". Videos reflect personal accounts, ways to change the dialogue from fear and exclusion to shared humanity, as well as sharing the positive contributions migrants and refugees make to our communities. To learn more about this initiative see <http://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/migration/pages/videostories.aspx>*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be attending*

- **14th May- 18th May- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact Migration**
- **4th June-9th June- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact Migration**
- **22nd May -The Santa Marta Group: Police and Religious Leaders United to Eradicate Human Trafficking**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

The first real hint of summer coincided with the arrival of the Leaders Pilgrimage group from the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG). It's always a valuable, mutual learning experience, to work with the Leaders of the great range of Mercy ministries across Australia. Coincidentally, we are supporting a dedicated group of activists in Queensland, Australia; preparing for the upcoming session of the Permanent Peoples Tribunal on 'Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change', May 14-18th, see notice for further information.

An excellent workshop conducted by Fr. Diarmuid O'Murchu msc titled: What Would Empowering Justice Look Like? – proved to be thought provoking and most informative, as reflected in the article below. The remainder of the month was taken up with research, conference calls, regular communications and networking with a number of different international NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) we work closely with. This included participation in several initiatives prepared for 'Earth Day 2018', on 22nd April. MGA is committed to continue working to prevent plastic pollution, by supporting a ban on one-use plastic i.e. straws, food wrapping and throwaway coffee cups.

United in our collective work for justice  
Denise Boyle fmdm  
Team Leader Mercy Global Action

## The Permanent Peoples Tribunal (PPT) May 14-18th



Activists across Australia have worked tirelessly to prepare the session of the PPT on 'Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change'. It is to be co-hosted through the Spring Creek Project at Oregon State University, where for the first time in its 40 year history, the proceedings will be hosted online. The session will have an international focus and in addition to focussing on the rights of people, this PPT hearing will include arguments for the rights of nature.

The opinion handed down by the Tribunal will be available to use in other settings, to clarify and to affirm the human-rights obligations of States and all stake holders in Civil Society. Importantly, the hope is that the result of this PPT session will prove to be a significant step forward, in the on-going struggle to protect the health and wellbeing of the Earth's inhabitants... For further information see: **Permanent Peoples' Tribunal Session on Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change**

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## WHAT WOULD EMPOWERING JUSTICE LOOK LIKE?

### Workshop Conducted by Fr. Diarmuid O'Murchu msc, April 28th

Fr. Diarmuid O'Murchu msc is a member of the Missionary Priests of the Sacred Heart. He is a social psychologist, a couple's counsellor, author and international speaker of renown, who has been working for justice through social ministry in many places, most recently with the homeless and refugees in London. During this interactive workshop, Fr. Diarmuid focussed on the concept of empowerment and justice. He strongly believes the term justice must include eco-justice, hence he is advocating for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, to include the 'Rights of Nature', if justice means providing the conditions for ALL life to flourish.

Fr. Diarmuid began the day by exploring important concepts related to justice:

**Empowerment** - co-creates the conditions for life to flourish, which it achieves in the context of mutuality. He cited John 15:15 where Jesus says to his disciples 'I call you friends' i.e. we are equals. There is no room for patronizing strategies here!

**Charity versus Justice:** The former is often a social service in response to an immediate need. In biblical terms the parable of the 'Good Samaritan' is a clear example of charity. The Exodus story in the Old Testament however, demonstrates the concept of justice as an example of a public collective action, responding to a long term need to change the situation.

#### Questions Fr. Diarmuid posed for reflection and response:

- When does charity become disempowering?
- How do we transcend the co-dependency often arising from charity?
- How do we restructure organisations so that Justice-making takes priority to Charity?
- What is / are the root cause(s) of injustice that need to be addressed?

**Need to Change from King-ship to Kinship.** Kingship is rational, logical, takes priority and is linear, supporting the top down, patriarchal model of leadership. In contrast kinship is relational, reflects working together and suggests companionship. Circles reflect this model best, whereas an isosceles triangle clearly indicates the authoritarian king-ship model.

**Restorative Justice:** is inextricably linked with right relationships. Fr. Diarmuid shared an example from Canada, modelled on the traditional practice of the First Peoples. It related to a young woman who had been sexually abused by her father. Her mother colluded by not doing anything to prevent or to protect her daughter from her father's abuse. Aged in her early 20's now, the young woman brought the issue to the police, who suggested resolving the case through restorative justice that involves the support of the local community. This entailed groups of three citizens who had minimum counselling and legal skills, committing to walk with the three key figures throughout the process.

One group journeyed with the father as he faced up to his guilt, realised the harm he had done to his daughter, coped with the betrayal of her trust and indicated his willingness to accept the consequences of his actions. The group accompanied him for a three year period, during which he agreed to intensive counselling; paid a substantial sum for his daughter to get the psychological treatment she required and carried out two hundred hours of community service. For the mother the group izens accompanyied her through the process of accepting that she was an enabler of the abuse, failed to protect her daughter, betrayed her trust and contributed to the complete breakdown of relationships within the family.

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## CONTINUED...

Those who accompanied the daughter ensured she had the emotional and psychological support that she required to begin the healing process. After 18 months the daughter felt strong enough to meet with each of her parents singly, to share the negative consequences of the abuse on her life. After a further 12 months she met with both parents together with a facilitator. Whilst participants had a number of questions relating to the above example, most agreed that it was more effective than the father going to prison with the possibility of no programme to process and to address the root cause of his abuse. The fact that the community continues to walk with and engage with the family has proved to be a tremendous support in the ongoing, healing process.

Ways to Reclaim the Priority of Justice in Society Today. This is urgent according to Fr. Diarmuid and focuses on education, with the emphasis not so much on Rights as on Duties. He stressed the importance of being proactive rather than reactive, including engaging with Government bureaucracy to effect change, challenging as this may be!

Networking Fr. Diarmuid believes, is a key element in reclaiming the priority of justice within society. He suggested the following as a check to ensure networking is an empowering process:

- a. Clear raison d'être for the creation or existence of the group
- b. Check how this group fits in with other like groups or movements.
- c. How does the group hope to achieve empowering outcomes?
- d. Within the group what are the skills and strategies for empowering communication?
- e. How open is the group to supplementing existing giftedness?
- f. What structures for regular evaluation are in place?
- g. Can the group recognise when its work is done?
- h. In this group who cares for the carers?



Following one of the group sessions a participant spoke of how her group had looked at language in line with the adage: 'Language Shapes Thought'. They came up with the following suggestions as empowering language:

- Working with those in poverty, rather than I'm working with the poor....
- I'm supporting instead of saying I'm supervising
- Use the term 'recovery' rather than 'addiction'.
- Say 'review' rather than 'evaluation'...

The workshop was an excellent means of thinking through important concepts related to empowering justice. To achieve it, necessitates changing attitudes, to collaborate out of the kin-ship model to provide the conditions for ALL life to flourish.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, and Denise Boyle fmdm

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE UN

### MERCY VOLUNTEER CORPS VISITS MIA: MGA AT THE UN OFFICE

On May 21st, members of the Mercy Volunteer Corps in New York visited the Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action office at the UN. The Mercy Volunteers have been working in ministries with Catholic Migration Services, Mercy Center Bronx, MercyFirst, and Cristo Rey Brooklyn High School offering assistance ranging in after school and foster programs to immigration office services.

Connecting with the call to respond to both social and environmental justice concerns, MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN described their role in addressing and advocating for Mercy Global Justice Priorities grounded in Mercy tradition, values, and critical thinking around the root causes of such concerns. In doing so, it is our aim to promote a just, sustainable and equitable world for peoples and the planet.

Mercy Volunteers had the opportunity to learn more about key justice areas such as the issue of displacement of persons and environmental degradation, as well as the drive towards sustainable development. This was followed by a tour of the United Nations to further connect MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN's international advocacy.

As the Mercy Volunteers finish at their ministry sites in July, MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN led discussions on their plan for after their volunteer year, which many plan to continue working in social justice areas and/or furthering their studies. We are confident that they too, in the spirit of Mercy will change the world and we wish them the best of luck!



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN  
Pictured: The Mercy Volunteer NY Team and MIA: MGA at the UN Team

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *UN Forum on the Question of Palestine*

In accordance with UN General Assembly resolutions 72/11 and 72/13 of November 30th, 2017, the UN Forum on the Question of Palestine brought home the untenable circumstances in which today, 5.3 million Palestinian people have been rendered refugees. Palestinian, Israeli and other International experts presented on the issue in order to mark the anniversary of the 1948 war in which Palestinians were displaced. This is referred to as Al-Nakba (the Catastrophe) by the Palestinian people.



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

Beginning with an address from the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Ms Amina Mohammed in which she unequivocally stated that ‘the cycle of violence in Gaza must end,’ the forum provided an historical, political and legal context for the situation in Gaza. Throughout the forum excerpts from the documentary “Voices Across the Divide” were shown. This had a sobering effect on those present who witnessed the oral history of oppression and violence expressed by Palestinian Refugees.

The program was made up of a series of panels entitled; ‘What happened in 1948? Why does it Matter?’, ‘Displacement as a Continuum: The Ongoing Nakba’, ‘Refugees and the Resolution of the Question of Palestine’ and ‘Ways Forward to Achieve a Sustainable Peace’. To learn more about this issue, a recommended reading is “The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine” by Ilan Pappé, a panelist at the event which can be viewed at the section entitled ‘Useful Resources’ on page 4. Links to this event and subsequent panels can be accessed below.



To watch the first meeting of the UN Forum on the Question of Palestine click **here!** Subsequent sessions and panels can be found in the side bar on the right.



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

Pictured: Sisters Theresia Tina rsm and Sally Bradley rsm of ISMAPNG who were present at the Forum

Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

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# THEMATIC AREAS

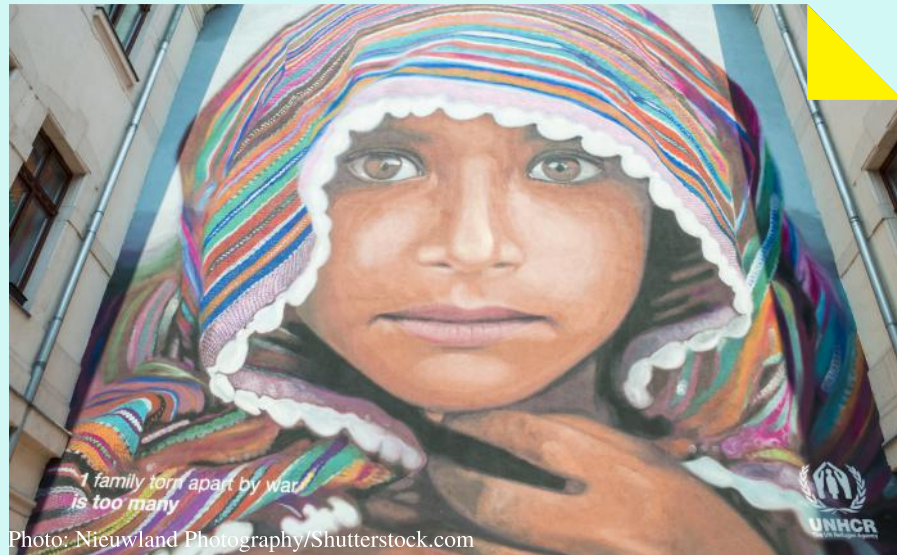
## DISPLACED PERSONS



- ***MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN--Updates on the Intergovernmental Negotiations Towards a Global Compact on Migration***

Since the last newsletter was released in early May, there have been two rounds of intergovernmental negotiations towards a Global Compact on Migration. The fourth round in May began with completing a read through of the **Draft Rev 1** followed by an opportunity to have a practical discussion surrounding some migration policy areas that had still been left unsettled such as "international cooperation and capacity building", "pathways for regular migration/regularization", "natural disasters, climate change and migration", and "fundamental human rights and spectrum of services" to name a few. With these areas debated, the Co-facilitators were able to prepare a revised version of the text to be negotiated during the fifth round of negotiations which took place last week.

The **Draft Rev 2** was presented and sent to UN Member States for a read through discussion; Co-Facilitators were confident that this is the best version of the text so far. This draft outlined better commitments and a clear delineation with categories. The text presents language to appease all Member States; there is a 23rd objective on international cooperation, distinction between refugees and migrants, clarity with documents that can be used for legal identity, describes human rights in the spectrum of basic services and provisions, and looks at migration with all of its dimensions, especially with voluntary return and reintegration.



As of now, there is one remaining round of negotiations towards a Global Compact on Migration with which afterwards is succeeded with the final draft of the text. The Global Compact on Migration will be adopted this December in Morocco. To read more about this process **click here!**

- **RECOMMENDED UN EVENTS RELATING TO MIGRATION**



***Watch NGO Committee on Migration and International Organization on Migration's event "Countering Xenophobia and Discrimination: Voices from the Regions"***

This event featured a series of short films highlighting good practices in social inclusion from around the world. The featured projects were all collected by our Subcommittee on Xenophobia and Social Inclusion in a survey last summer and autumn. Click **here** to access the short films!



- ***Watch Holy See event entitled "Indispensable Role of Faith Based Organizations In Protecting Migrants and Refugees"***

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# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- ***Steps towards a binding treaty on transnational corporations, business and human rights***

Before the fourth meeting of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group this October in Geneva, there have been proceedings of informal consultations as nation states work towards a 'Zero Draft' of the treaty (read more about this process [here](#)). This "Zero Draft" is scheduled to be released in the next few weeks; however, has encountered some setback as some UN Member States have threatened to pull out of the process.

Civil Society Organizations have sent out a Sign-On Letter calling on “all UN Member States to engage without delay in this stage of the process in active and constructive negotiations of the substance of the treaty to improve the human rights of communities and people affected by the operations of TNCs and OBEs and their access to effective remedy, and to put an end to corporate impunity for human rights abuses.” **Attached**, you can access the Sign-On letter to stand in solidarity with other Civil Society Organizations.

### • INTERNATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS

#### ***World Environment Day- June 5th***

World Environment Day was hosted in New Delhi, India this year with a theme entitled "Beat Plastic Pollution". To mark the day, Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General, encouraged everyone to stop using single use plastic as micro-plastic particles in the ocean "now outnumber stars in our galaxy". This is just a simple way to help "chart a path to a cleaner, greener world". Read his full message [here](#).

#### ***World Oceans Day- June 8th***

While last year, the United Nations celebrated its first Oceans Conference, this year's commemoration began with a briefing from UN Special Envoy on Oceans, Peter Thomson. His remarks were grave as he described how it is evident the world is in "a battle for the survival of the ocean, and we are losing the battle on every front". Despite the battle, he declared that there is a plan with Sustainable Development Goal 14 and if implemented and tackled from every front we will get to where we need to be. To read more about UN Special Envoy Peter Thomson's purposeful steps for ocean action, click [here](#).

This year's World Oceans Day theme was "Preventing plastic pollution and encouraging solutions for a healthy ocean". Follow this [link](#) for further information on how the world celebrated!

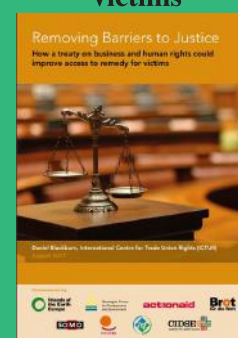
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## USEFUL RESOURCES

### UNICEF Children Uprooted: What Local Governments Can Do



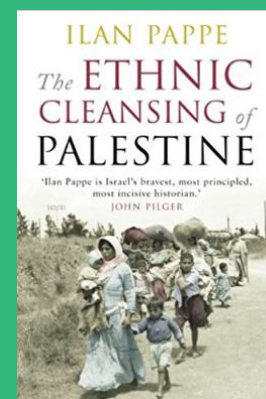
### Removing Barriers to Justice: How a treaty on business and human rights could improve access to remedy for victims



### Surfrider's Rise Above Plastics Activist Toolkit



### *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* by Ilan Pappé



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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## • *UN Secretary-General Releases Advance Version of 2018 SDG Progress Report*

On May 10th, Secretary General Antonio Guterres issued an advance version of the 2018 SDG Progress Report entitled **"Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals"**. This report is produced on a yearly basis to inform the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) which will take place from July 9th-18th.

Detailed within the report is the progress for each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in a format which includes an overview paragraph and bullet points describing statistical trends for the targets under each Goal. With closer review of the report you will notice that some of the SDG's 169 targets are not reflected as a result of inadequate data.

With further review of the document, you will note, for example, that under Goal 2 "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" Antonio Guterres reports that "world hunger appears to be on the rise again. Conflict, drought and disasters linked to climate change are among the key factors causing the reversal in the long-term progress in fighting global hunger, making the prospect of ending hunger and malnutrition by 2030 more difficult". This document is key for advocacy and demonstrates the need for more focus and international cooperation. Members of MIA: MGA at the UN will take this document into consideration during HLPF next month and the Voluntary National Reviews of Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, and 17.

For further information see <http://sdg.iisd.org/news/un-secretary-general-releases-advance-version-of-2018-sdg-progress-report/>



## USEFUL RESOURCES

*The Ocean Project, a collaborative organization in partnership with hundreds of organizations, has compiled educational resources for outreach to all sectors to increase action and awareness of caring for our shared oceans! In addition to finding local ocean action events on their website, they have created a lesson plan to designed with both youth and adults in mind in hope that these resources will be used to teach peers and community members about plastic pollution, inspire them with solutions, and empower them by doing an activity. To access these lesson plans sign up here!*

*For more resources including videos, advocacy info sheets, activities and more, click this link!*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be attending*

- **8th June- World Oceans Day**
- **4th June- 8th June- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact on Migration**
- **20th June- Visit with MercyFirst Ministry in Syosset**
- **9th July- 18th July -High Level Political Forum**
- **9th July- 13th July- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact on Migration**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

Greetings from Dublin! News is light this month, in terms of activities as we prioritised reading and research, in preparation for several short articles we are writing. That said, we participated in a number of important meetings as shared below. And we were very pleased to receive news about the successful outcome of the Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) on 'Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change' that we highlighted last month.

Peace,  
Denise Boyle fmdm  
Team Leader Mercy Global Action

### 1. Meeting with Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin May 17th

John Weaklim CEO and Ciara Feehely, Communications and Fundraising both of VITA accompanied by Srs. Kathleen Glennon and Margaret Tiernan rsm from the Western Province of the Congregation and Denise Boyle had a most productive meeting with the Archbishop of Dublin. We met to share with him the excellent development work VITA is doing in Africa, influenced by 'Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home'. VITA has initiated a development project at grassroots level, which empowers those engaged in it and facilitates peer learning. This is a creative and effective response to the 'Cry of the Poor and Cry of Earth.'

For VITA as an NGO or not for profit organisation, networking is vital. Archbishop Diarmuid has many links in Africa so our hope was that he could facilitate the expansion of the VITA programme into other African countries. On learning about VITA's work Archbishop Diarmuid said that he would take the opportunity to speak about their development initiatives with some of the people he meets at different gatherings, social events and church events. As we finished the Archbishop asked to be kept informed about future developments within VITA.

### 2. Meeting with Lorna Gold on Laudato Si and the World Meeting of Families

Members of the 'Future We Need' (FWN) group met with Lorna Gold, the Project Coordinator- Laudato Si, of Trocaire and a board member of Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM). Trocaire is the Irish development organisation with a global programme. The purpose of our meeting was to explore together how FWN could approach our advocacy campaigns through the lens of Laudato Si. Good creative ideas emerged during the wide ranging discussion that we hope to incorporate into our campaigning.

Lorna was accompanied by her colleague Jane Mellet. She is coordinating the activities and learning opportunities of the 'Education Pod on Laudato Si' during the World Meeting of Families. Pope Francis is coming to Ireland to participate in this meeting in late August, making it a very special event! In response to a request from Lorna and Jane, some members of FWN are volunteering to spend time in the Education Pod.



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# NEWS FROM THE

## MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

### 3. Brisbane Mercy - Leadership Pilgrimage Program 2018

Denise ran interactive sessions with the 33 participants, on the two key justice issues of 'Degradation of Earth' and 'Displacement of Peoples'. The group were most responsive, engaging fully with the topics and acknowledging the 'darkness' associated with the reality of human trafficking. Hearing how this group of Leaders are involved with different justice issues in Australia, facilitated valuable, mutual learning.

### 4. Conference Call to Discuss 'Displacement of Peoples' Justice Issue

The group named 'Opposing Human Trafficking' is exploring ways to broaden and encompass other justice issues under the umbrella 'Displacement of Peoples'. This concept emerged from the Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP) conducted in 2016 throughout the Mercy World. On Wednesday 30th May, members living in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, Ireland, Newfoundland through to the mid west of the USA 'met' via a conference call. They discussed how to incorporate the six justice strands under the heading of Displacement of Peoples' e.g. refugees/asylum seekers, those living in poverty and the homeless.



Photo: Alexandros Michailidis/Shutterstock.com

Looking at common elements underpinning these issues, one participant noted that the concept of 'home' in the broadest sense of the word is central to all the topics. We then discussed the reasons or root causes that give rise to these specific injustices, which we agreed needs more study within each country represented. To focus their research each member use the same three or four questions, to facilitate a valid comparison between countries. The findings will then be discussed during our next conference call.

### 5. Permanent People's Tribunal (PPT) on 'Human Rights, Fracking and Climate Change' May 14-18th

The day after the PPT ended, Shay Dougall who coordinated the component from Australia, shared the following information. The link to the closing ceremony, with comments of Gianni Tognoni MD, Secretary General of 'The Permanent Peoples' Tribunal are available: [https://youtu.be/4t0g1\\_otN9k](https://youtu.be/4t0g1_otN9k)

Shay also wrote that Mr. Tognoni's powerful comments summing up this session of the PPT: '... is validation and acknowledgement of the wrongs and traumas that people expected to host the industry are exposed to, wherever there is unconventional mining. This is a validation that has been absent from our government and the industry. I believe the outcome from the Judges of the PPT will be a true turning point in this battle and will have a long term and profound effect on the tools at our disposal to fight this injustice.'

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Denise Boyle fndm, and Betty Lacey

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE UN

### IRELAND'S UN CAMPAIGN

Last week I attended the launch of Ireland's Candidature to gain a non- permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2021-2022 term.

The launch was held on the North Lawn of the United Nations headquarters in New York. It was an impressive event, with Irish flags strewn liberally across white marquis and a great spread of traditional Irish fare, along with Irish music and dancing, not to mention the Guinness.

Present on stage for the official launch was the Prime Minister of Ireland, Leo Varadkar, Irish Foreign Minister, Simon Coveney, former Irish President, Mary Robinson and Irish rock singer, Bono. Moderating the event was Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nasan, the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations.

The Irish campaign focuses on three key themes: Empathy, Partnership and Independence. The speeches were passionate and convincing, it didn't feel like a 'power pitch' there was something inherently earthy in the delivery of each ones speech. What struck me most powerfully, was the strong message of solidarity with other smaller nation States. There was a strong reminder from the podium not to forget the stories of Ireland, that is, the story of a small island nation off the coast of Europe that was colonized, experienced famine, as well as mass outward migration and poverty.



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

*\*The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

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# IRELAND'S UN CAMPAIGN...CONTINUED

In speaking of the contribution of Ireland to the United Nations, Prime Minister, Leo Varadkar stated “Like the United Nations, we were born out of war and violence. It has shaped how we view the world and our responsibilities as global citizens. Our membership of the United Nations helped us to take our place among the nations of the world. We support a rules-based order in international affairs. We have acted as a voice for the disadvantaged and defenceless, promoting freedom and defending human rights.”



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN



Following his words, Mary Robinson reflected on what a seat on the Security Council involves. “It is a hard, hard labour of love if you really love what the UN stands for and I think Ireland really does,” she said. Bono followed with further inspirational words about the UN in general, claiming, ‘ “It’s about its future and indeed whether it has one, whether its values still matter - and they better; whether peace is still possible and who will speak for those normal ideas when the heat is on,” he said. He urged the UN to “all become storytellers of a future we want to share” and that the story needed to be told “with imagination and passion and conviction.” “We are storytellers but this is the best story ever,” he said of the UN.

I couldn’t help but think of the work of the Sisters of Mercy and our Irish heritage, a ministry first sown by an Irish woman who responded to the needs of her time and whose charism now spreads across the globe, calling all of us to respond to our world with compassion and love.

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## World Refugee Day

June 20th marked World Refugee Day. First observed in 2001, this day commemorates the strength, resilience, courage and perseverance of the millions of refugees on the move.

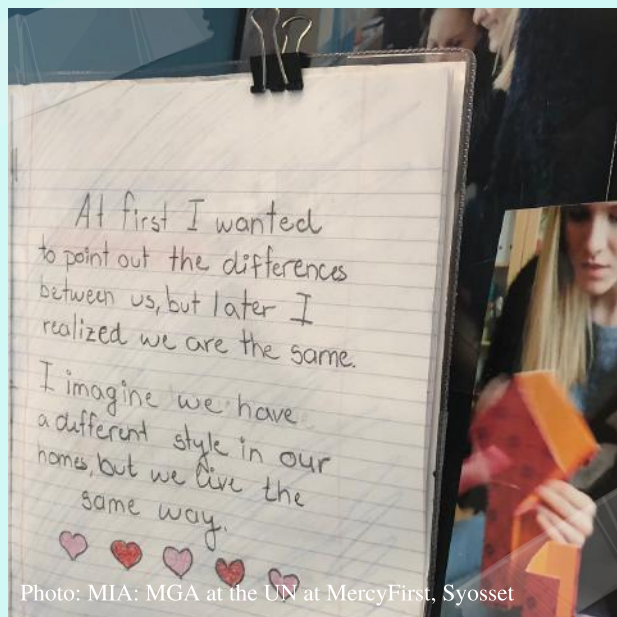
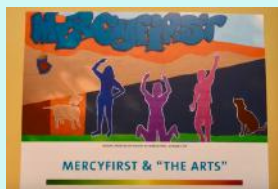


Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN at MercyFirst, Syosset

In a statement regarding the international day, Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres highlighted how "Today, more than 68 million people around the world are refugees or internally displaced as a result of conflict or persecution...we must all think about what more we can do to help. The answer begins with unity and solidarity." Offering a way forward, the Global Compact on Refugees will be presented to the General Assembly later this year. The Global Compact recognizes the contributions and benefits that refugees make to our societies and in return, it is integral to ensure that those seeking refuge receive the assistance and protection they need. To listen to Antonio Guterres' full video message, click [here](#).

## WAYS TO STAND WITH REFUGEES



MercyFirst in Syosset, New York is home to unaccompanied minors ages 6-12 from Central American

countries, including Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. Last year, some of the children took part in an art therapy project entitled "Hope Holds No Borders" in which they sent positive messages to refugee children living in Turkey. This art exchange was on display at the United Nations. This World Refugee Day, MIA: Mercy Global Action at the UN visited MercyFirst to learn more about their work. Read a recent article about them [here](#).

NewsDeeply

**REFUGEES DEEPLY**

A micro site of *News Deeply*, *Refugees Deeply*, is

dedicated to reporting in dept coverage of the global refugee crisis. Follow this link for articles, events, background information and more!



Inspired by Pope Francis' call to encounter refugees and migrants, 'Share the

Journey' seeks to "change people's hearts and minds about migrants, mobilize the time and talent of Catholics...[and] inspire people to advocate for better policies". To learn more about this project of Caritas Internationalis, click [here](#)!



To defend human rights, it is important to stand up against racism and intolerance in our communities. The United Nations

has been encouraging us all to #FightRacism and advocate for the rights of racial or other minorities. For more information to promote and defend human rights go to <http://www.un.org/en/letsfightracism/>

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



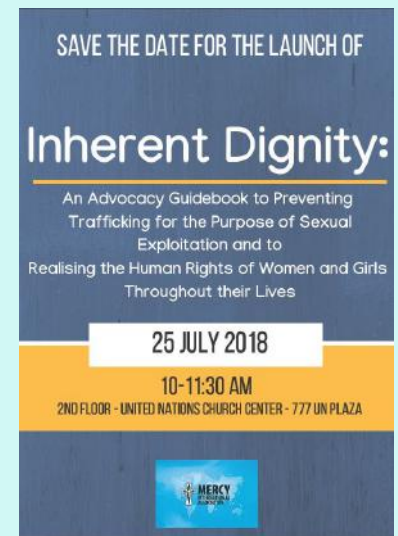
- ***Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN invites you to the launch of 'Inherent Dignity: An Advocacy Guidebook to Preventing Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation and to Realising the Human Rights of Women and Girls Throughout their Lives***

Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN has the pleasure in inviting you to the launch of our recent publication entitled *Inherent Dignity* on 25 July from 10-11:30am on the 2nd floor of the Church Center of the United Nations. This publication serves as an advocacy guidebook to preventing trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and to realising the human rights of women and girls throughout their lives.

Our guide was born from extensive research which exposed how most survivors of human trafficking experience cumulative disadvantage and marginalization over their lifetime caused by multiple breaches in international human rights law. Parallel to this, there are many existing international human rights mechanisms available to address areas of vulnerability and assert rights. This guide aims to challenge the current discourse on human trafficking which more than often describes trafficking as a single isolated event. Violations of human rights often occur prior to the experience of trafficking and render women and girls more vulnerable to exploitation; therefore, it is imperative that states take responsibility for ensuring the realization of human rights over the life course. The guide focuses on how the existing international human rights framework can be applied to prevention of human trafficking and how key to any preventative response is listening to the experiences of formerly trafficked women.

Together, we are calling on our members worldwide to engage this issue at the local level while at the international level we continue to highlight the interconnectedness between prevention of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation over the life course through human rights mechanisms in UN spaces.

This guide will be available in both hard copy, for those in attendance at the event, and online.



## NOTABLE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION RELATING TO MIGRATION

- ***New Drafts of the Global Compact on Migration and Global Compact on Refugees released!***

The final round of negotiations towards a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration will take place from July 9th- 13th. Ahead of the last round, the Co-Facilitators published a new draft of the Compact, Rev. 3. Read the Global Compact on Migration Revision 3 [here](#)!

Negotiations towards a Global Compact on Refugees took place July 3-4th in Geneva. The final draft was released June 26th. Read the final draft [here](#)!

- ***International Organization for Migration Elects New Director General***

On June 29th, the International Organisation for Migration elected Portuguese nominee, António Manuel de Carvalho Ferreira Vitorino, as its next Director General. Mr. Vitorino will assume the Directorship in October 2018. Click [here](#) for more information regarding his background and role.

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# DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH

[illegible]

# DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH

- ## BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- 

*To learn more about the process towards a binding treaty, read Harris Gleckman's publication "Options for a UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights".*

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## NGO Committee on Migration "I am a Child!"

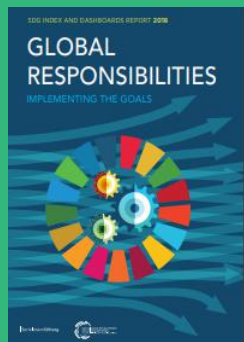




# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- ***The United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is underway in New York***

On July 9th, the United Nations High Level Political Forum began in New York and will finish on July 18th. The High Level Political Forum is the United Nations follow-up and review platform on Sustainable Development, reviewing the implementation and commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This year, the theme is "transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" and will review Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, and 17. To tune in and watch the events at the High Level Political Forum go to <http://webtv.un.org/>.



With the HLPF underway, the Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) released their annual SDG Report "Global Responsibilities-Implementing the Goals". This publication introduces an assessment of government efforts to achieve the SDGs, demonstrating which countries have taken the most significant steps and which need to increase their efforts to achieving the goals by 2030. Read more about this publication [here](#).

The United Nations has also released their own "Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018" with an overview of each of the goals, interlinkages, and delves into the goals that are under review for the HLPF. This Report is available online in all six United Nations languages, click [here](#) to read!



## USEFUL RESOURCES

***On June 19th, UN Women, in partnership with Justice Rapid Response, launched an interactive website to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. This website highlights ways in which UN Women is working towards ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence as they are pervasive human rights violations. In addition to the strides that UN Women has been taking, the website includes facts, figures and case studies about war crimes, along with voices from survivors and investigators. To access this website click [here](#)!***

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in*

- **9th July- 18th July -High Level Political Forum**
- **9th July- 13th July- Intergovernmental Negotiations for the Global Compact on Migration**
- **18th July- MIA: MGA at the UN Valuing Water Side Event**
- **25th July -MIA: MGA at the UN Launch of Human Rights and Human Trafficking Guide**
- **31st July-3rd August- Young Mercy Leaders Conference**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

As I write we are basking in beautiful summer weather that has lasted for two weeks, an unusual reality in Ireland! If it continues too much longer, there is genuine concern for the farmers as water shortage is a possibility.

I was delighted to be invited to participate in the International Conference on 'Laudato Si' in the Vatican, to mark three years since the publication of Pope Francis' ground breaking ecological encyclical. There were 400 participants from across the globe, including a significant number of young people, thus ensuring that it was a lively event as we discussed with enthusiasm and hope, working towards the full implementation of the central message of Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home! The audience with Pope Francis was the highpoint of the conference, see a short extract from his address to us below. To our delight, Francis said that he would like to greet everyone and he did, shaking hands with all 400! Prior to doing this Francis told Cardinal Turkson, who hosted the Conference that greeting each person is a sacramental moment, as he knows how far people have travelled and what it means for him and them to greet each other.... In late August Pope Francis is coming to Ireland to close the World Meeting of Families that is being held in Dublin. See Betty Lacey's article on this important visit. Denise was present at the launch of the Jesuit Refugee Services Report: 'Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives' see her article on this, highlighting the urgency of all Governments to address the critical issue of refugees.

Peace,  
Denise Boyle fmdm  
Team Leader Mercy Global Action



## SHARING RESPONSIBILITY, SAVING LIVES – JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE

On 22nd June, the Jesuit Refugee Service launched their report 'Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives' critically analysing the EU and Ireland's response to the Refugee Crisis, between September 2015 and December 2017.

Among the key findings is the fact that the EU failed miserably to deliver on its relatively modest commitments during this period. Collectively the EU promised to relocate 160,000 refugees, but in reality only one in five of these promised places were delivered by the end of 2017!

In launching the report Fr. Leonard Moloney SJ, the Jesuit Provincial in Ireland shared the UNHCR statistic that globally there are a record 68.5 million migrants, who have been forcibly displaced. Of these 25 million were forced out of their own countries, reflecting that leaving their homes or countries was one of desperation, because of conflict, religious persecution or de-humanising poverty.

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# NEWS FROM THE

## MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

### Humanising the Refugee Crisis

Speakers throughout the launch emphasised the reality that behind each asylum seeker, refugee, or forced economic migrant, is the human face of a real person. Where communities or individuals welcomed refugees and got to know them, friendship, integration and mutual enrichment followed. In contrast is the attitude of fear towards migrants that is being generated among sections of the general public, who believe that there will be an 'invasion of migrants'. Speakers believe this myth is being promulgated by certain elements in the popular media.

### Myth versus Fact in Relation to Refugees

Fintan O'Toole, a renowned political analyst recently wrote about the enormous disjunction between perception and fact re refugee issues (Irish Times 7th July, 2018). This was confirmed by a question posed to citizens in several European countries and the USA: 'What percentage of your country's population will be Muslim by 2020?' The following responses under 'guess' versus the 'reality' reflect according to O'Toole 'wildly distorted perceptions':

|          | GUESS | REALITY |
|----------|-------|---------|
| France:  | 40%   | 8.5%    |
| Italy:   | 31%   | 4.9%    |
| Germany: | 31%   | 6.9%    |
| Belgium: | 32%   | 7.5%    |
| Hungary: | 14%   | 0.1%    |
| USA:     | 23%   | 1.1%    |

O'Toole believes that this hyperinflation of facts is the result of 'bad politics'. This is reflected in decisions to close borders, construct walls and renege on previous promises to accept refugees, leaving thousands of desperate and vulnerable refugees literally with nowhere to go! Conscious of the dramatic change in attitude versus Germany opening its borders to all migrants in 2015, there was a massive 44% decline in the number of asylum seekers entering the EU in 2017 compared to 2016. This is in stark contrast to countries like Lebanon, Jordan (25% of its population) Pakistan, Germany, Iran, Ethiopia and Uganda who 'welcome the stranger'. Mt.25:35

Fr. Chad Gonzaga SJ from the Philippines, through some very moving slides, shared the statistic that in the three year period 2015-17 one and half million people seeking refuge in Europe arrived by sea. Tragically 11,986 women, men and children seeking refuge in Europe, lost their lives at sea making these perilous journeys.

In a particularly thought provoking slide, Fr Chad showed a photo of Alan Kurdi, the three year old toddler found dead on a beach close to a tourist resort in Turkey, in September 2015. The slide shows Alan's little body looking as if he is asleep, superimposed on a small bed in a child's bedroom. Fr. Chad simply said Alan's parents set out for Europe in the hope that they would find security for their family...

### Refugee Issue – Addressing Root Causes.

During the wide ranging discussion following the launch of the report, reference was made to the importance of the UN, EU and individual countries addressing the root causes underlying the global mass movement of migrants. It was agreed that conflict and endemic or systemic poverty are complex issues and not easy to address. The UN Global Compacts endeavouring to share responsibility fairly and equally for migrants globally are a sign of hope, however the fact that countries opted to make these non-binding agreements, is very disappointing.



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

In countries facing a significant housing crisis it was agreed that Governments must approach the reality not with an either/or mentality, rather seek to find a solution whereby citizens and refugees can be catered for together. One obvious way is to permit refugees to work within six months of arrival i.e. once their papers reflect that there is a strong possibility they will be granted asylum status in the country.

## Conclusion

The launch of this excellent and thought provoking report: 'Sharing Responsibility, Saving Lives', served to highlight the critical situation that migrants are facing today. Whilst Governments play a key role in facilitating a positive response to the plight of those seeking asylum in their countries, citizens have an important role in ensuring this is the reality. Projects whereby a community in many of the small towns in Ireland for example, welcome a number of families into their midst, providing essential services underpinned by a genuine welcome and respect, is proving very effective.

This welcoming hospitality reflects Pope Francis' words:

*'Faced with the tragedy of tens of thousands of refugees who are fleeing death by war and by hunger, and who are on a path toward a hope for life, the Gospel calls us to be neighbours to the smallest and most abandoned to give them concrete hope...'* Pope Francis, September 2015.

See: <https://jrs.ie/index.php/jesuit-refugee-news/488-sharing-responsibility-saving-lives>

## UPDATE ON THE WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES 2018 in Dublin, Ireland

In 1994 the United Nations declared that year the "International Year of the Family". The Pope at the time, John Paul II wanted the Church to celebrate this event so the first World Meeting of Families (WMOF) was held in Rome in 1994.

This was followed three years later by Rio de Janeiro (1997), Rome again (2000), Manila (2003), Valencia (2006), Mexico City (2009), Milan (2012), and Philadelphia (2015). This year, 2018 sees the event moving to Dublin beginning on August 21st, culminating with the Papal Mass in the Phoenix Park on Sunday August 26th.



Although the visit of Pope Francis is short 25-26th, prior to this a three-day Pastoral Congress will take place at the RDS (Royal Dublin Society) from August 21st to 24th. During this time there will be a daily programme of workshops and discussions as well as fun and prayerful activities for individuals, families and children. The highlight of each day will be the celebration of the Eucharist in the main arena.

The World Meeting of Families will focus on key issues related to family drawn from Pope Francis' teachings in 'The Joy of Love' (Amoris Laetitia). Some of these include:

1. The role of education in raising families out of poverty
2. The impact of conflict on families and children
3. The role of technology i.e. mobile phones and computers on Family life.
4. Building a more sustainable approach to the environment, faith, family and the economy.
5. Women's leadership roles, globally and locally



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## The WMOF in 2018 is going green with the 'Our Common Home' project.



In response to this call from Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*, the WMOF2018 is going green and is inviting everyone into a conversation about how we can all care for 'Our Common Home'. This is in response to Pope Francis' call to each one of us to listen to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Pope Francis reminds us that it is the poor who suffer the most from environmental destruction. He urges each of us to think deeply about our relationship with nature, and to examine our lifestyles and current way of living. Is it

sustainable and does it lead to environmental degradation or is it time to develop a new sustainable path?

Guest speakers from around the world will be in attendance to discuss what we can do as communities and individuals to help the environment. The Archbishop of Yangon, Myanmar is moderator for a discussion on "Care for our Common Home – Why The Family Matters To The Future Of The Planet". Panelists on this discussion include Dr. Lorna Gold and Mr. Eamon Meehan both from Trocaire, Ireland.

Senator George Mitchell who was the facilitator for the negotiations that led to the Good Friday Agreement, is a panellist on a very topical theme namely "The Family as an Agent of Peace in a Turbulent World". The keynote speaker for this session will be Cardinal Mario Zenari, Apostolic Nuncio to Syria." Others include Dr Monica Mc Williams, Academic and Former Politician, Ireland (North) and Sr Annie Demerjian, Aid to the Church in Need, Syria.

Other issues directly related to MIA include a discussion on "The reality of Human Trafficking – a Tragedy for Families and Society". Mr. Kevin Hyland, the former head of the Metropolitan Police Service's Human Trafficking Unit and also the first Anti-Slavery Commissioner in the UK is the keynote speaker. The panel discussion following this will be chaired by Sr. Mary Ryan rsm and the panellists include Ann Mara and J.P. O'Sullivan, both from the Irish MECPATH campaign. A representative from Ruhama (a Dublin-based NGO that works with women affected by prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation) will also participate.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila, Philippines will deliver a keynote speech on a topic that Pope Francis addresses in *Laudato Si'*, namely the 'throwaway culture'. Titled "Choose life: Pope Francis on the Throw-away Culture", this talk will address the very important driver of over production and the disposal of everyday goods.

All the issues addressed at the Papal Congress are a matter of urgency. The world must react immediately to the crucial issues of climate change and the disposal of waste, which pose as undeniable risks to our common home.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis issued the challenge to move away from the 'dominant technocratic paradigm associated with the 'superdevelopment' of a wasteful and consumerist kind' LS 109 - to care for Earth and all creation. The time has come therefore, to inspire a massive movement to protect and nurture our imperilled common, planetary home. Every step, big or small, plays a significant role in helping us prevent the destruction of our fragile earth. This is one of the most important messages that WMOF 2018 wants to deliver.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE

### YOUNG MERCY LEADERS CONFERENCE IN DUBLIN



The Mercy Global Action Team at the UN played an active role in the Young Mercy Leaders Conference held last week at Mercy International Centre in Dublin.

Colleen Cloonan, currently in the role of Leadership and Advocacy Associate, was a key guide for the young leaders who travelled to Ireland for the pilgrimage. Having been a pilgrim herself, just four years earlier, Colleen was able to provide words of inspiration and encouragement to young participants seeking to play a greater role in Mercy works. Colleen led participants through reflective activities which helped them to deepen their understanding of leadership and mercy.

Angela Reed rsm, currently coordinating the Mercy Global Action Office at the UN, delivered a keynote address to the young leaders, focusing on six key questions to ask when undertaking Justice and advocacy work.

- What is the experience for Earth and People?
- Who am I and where do I place myself in this ever evolving world?
- What tools do I have for Advocacy?
- Whom do I advocate for/with?
- Who is with me on this justice journey?
- What action does this justice journey lead me to?

In the 'Other resources' section of this newsletter are four key resources that Angela used in her keynote. These include; a trailer to the documentary 'Flow: For the Love of Water', a trailer to the documentary 'Human Flow', an online reflection by Argentinian Mercy Sister, Ana Sufie on Eco-Spirituality and an article by American activist Mary Cunningham, entitled 'Striving for Holiness in Our Advocacy'. (See side panel page 3).

For a full overview of the weeks activities in Dublin visit the Mercy World website!

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



- ***Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN launches "Inherent Dignity: An Advocacy Guidebook to Preventing Trafficking for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation and to Realising the Human Rights of Women and Girls Throughout their Lives"***



To highlight the International Day Against Trafficking in Persons (July 30th), Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN launched its new publication 'Inherent Dignity' in an event co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations, the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd and Trocaire. This event was **live-streamed** on Facebook for members to tune in across the world.

Moderating the event was Chris Cervenak, International Lawyer and Human Rights Activist, with opening remarks by Ambassador Teodoro L. Locsin Jr. of the Permanent Mission of the Philippines; followed by panelists including Ms. Jane Connors, Assistant Secretary General, Victims' Rights Advocate for the United Nations; Angela Reed rsm, Coordinator at Mercy International Association: Mercy Global Action at the UN; and Winifred Doherty rsgs, NGO Representative to the UN Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. Each discussed the varying facets of their own work against trafficking in persons and highlighted how human rights must always be placed at the center of the dialogue on human trafficking.

In her Foreword to the publication, Anne T. Gallagher, president of the International Catholic Migration Commission, said the new guidebook "is ultimately about prevention. It is about creating rights-based and respectful families, communities and societies where trafficking through sexual exploitation is no longer possible. That goal is an ambitious one, but those we serve deserve nothing less." Read the publication **here!**



## NOTABLE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION RELATING TO MIGRATION

- ***Final Draft of the Global Compact on Migration released!***

After many months of preparation, discussion and advocacy, the negotiations towards the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration came to a close on July 13th. Adoption of the Global Compacts for Refugees and Migrants will take place in Marrakesh, Morocco this December. Click **here** to read the final draft!



# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- ***Sister of Mercy, Mary Ellen Howard rsm Stands up for Water Rights at the United Nations***



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

During the High Level Political Forum at the United Nations, MIA: MGA at the UN Co-Sponsored an event entitled "Defining the Value of Water from a Rights-Based Perspective". Speakers included, Mary Ellen Howard rsm, Meera Karunanathan of Blue Planet Project, Maureen Taylor with the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, and Sandra Vermuyten with Public Services International. This event highlighted and explored the ways in which water is valued in communities, cultures and faiths around the world. As well as the ways in which market-based strategies have distorted these long-held values and further marginalized segments of the population including rural women, indigenous peoples, small farmers and impoverished communities. This event was live-streamed on Facebook and can be seen [here!](#)

- ***Recognizing the Contributions of Women Human Rights Defenders***  
On July 26th, in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, MIA: MGA at the UN attended event entitled 'States' responsibility towards the protection of women human rights defenders: 20 years after the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders'. This event showcased the obstacles, experiences and strategies of collective protection from eleven women from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. It is imperative to reaffirm the works of women human rights defenders and strive towards measures to protect and support those who have been threatened. The Sisters of Mercy will continue to advocate for the rights of these women.

## BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

- ***Draft of Binding Treaty has been released!***  
On July 16th, the Open Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights, released the draft document of the legally binding instrument to regulate, international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises. This draft document will be negotiated in Geneva this October 15th-17th. Read the draft binding treaty [here](#).

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## “USEFUL RESOURCES

**FLOW: For the Love of Water**



**Movie: 'Human Flow'**



**Striving for Holiness in Our Advocacy**



**Meditation on Laudato Si' prepared by Sister of Mercy, Anna Siufi of Argentina**





# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

*Elevating the Voices of Girls at the High Level Political Forum*



Photo: Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

An inspiring side event during the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) was ‘Raising the Needs of the Girl Child’. This was an interactive side event moderated by Deisha, a girl advocate from the Working Group on Girls. Focusing on the girl child and the intersection of gender, age and the Sustainable Development Goals, panelists shared an array of insights and challenges.

Some passionate quotes from the panelists;

## **Winifred Doherty RGS**

Main Representative to the United Nations, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

*‘We need to provide a counter narrative to current practices of exclusion and division’*

## **Rimah Salah**

Former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. Faculty at the Child Study Center at Yale University.

*"Girls need to be supported from a situation of vulnerability to strength"*

## **Mavic Cabrera-Balleza**

Chief Executive Officer, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders

*‘Economic empowerment is not just about spending money...it’s about power, agency and personal security’*

## **Davica (Girl Advocate)**

*‘Girls need to have a seat at the table, because they are capable of speaking for themselves’*

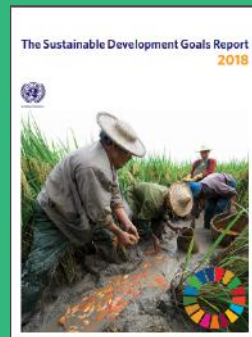
Read more about Davica's advocacy at <https://www.browngirlmagazine.com/2018/02/devika-saloni-mahi-project-menstrual-education/>

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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



- *Outcomes from the United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF)*

The United Nations' High Level Political Forum (HLPF) concluded on July 18th with the adoption (164 in favor, 2 against) of a **Ministerial Declaration** pledging and reaffirming thirty-one commitments and actions towards sustainable development. Commitments within the declaration included continued work towards eradicating poverty, embracing diversity in cities, peace and security, achieving gender equality, and more.

"Addressing the Forum, Secretary-General António Guterres said that while much progress has been made, the world has also backtracked in areas that are fundamental to the shared pledge to leave no one behind. For the first time in a decade, the number of people who are undernourished has increased, gender inequality continues to deprive women of basic rights, and investment in sustainable infrastructure remains "entirely inadequate" — all amid runaway climate change, eroding human rights and persistent pockets of poverty." Read more [here](#).



## USEFUL RESOURCES

Misean Cara, an international and Irish faith-based missionary movement, works to fund projects of varying congregations and member organizations in some of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities in developing communities. Learn more about their projects [here](#).

During the High Level Political Forum CEO, Heydi Foster, and other representatives from Misean Cara met with faith based organizations with ECOSOC status at the United Nations, including the Sisters of Mercy. Click [here](#) to watch a short video reflecting the outcomes of this visit.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in*

- 22nd and 23rd August- UN DPI Conference
- 4th September- Mercy International Association Web Presentation 'Care for Creation'
- 5th September- Religious at the UN Meeting
- 11th September- Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons Meeting
- 12th September- NGO Mining Working Group Meeting
- 25th September - Business and Civic Freedoms: Defending Human Rights in Southeast Asia



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

It's been a busy and productive month as the following reflects.

## YOUNG MERCY LEADERS PILGRIMAGE (YMLP)

It was a delight to work with the 48 young college students during the YMLP week. Following Angela's excellent keynote address Denise and JP O'Sullivan from MECPATHS (Mercy Efforts for Child Prostitution Against Trafficking with the Hospitality Sector) ran two workshops on human trafficking. The key points included:

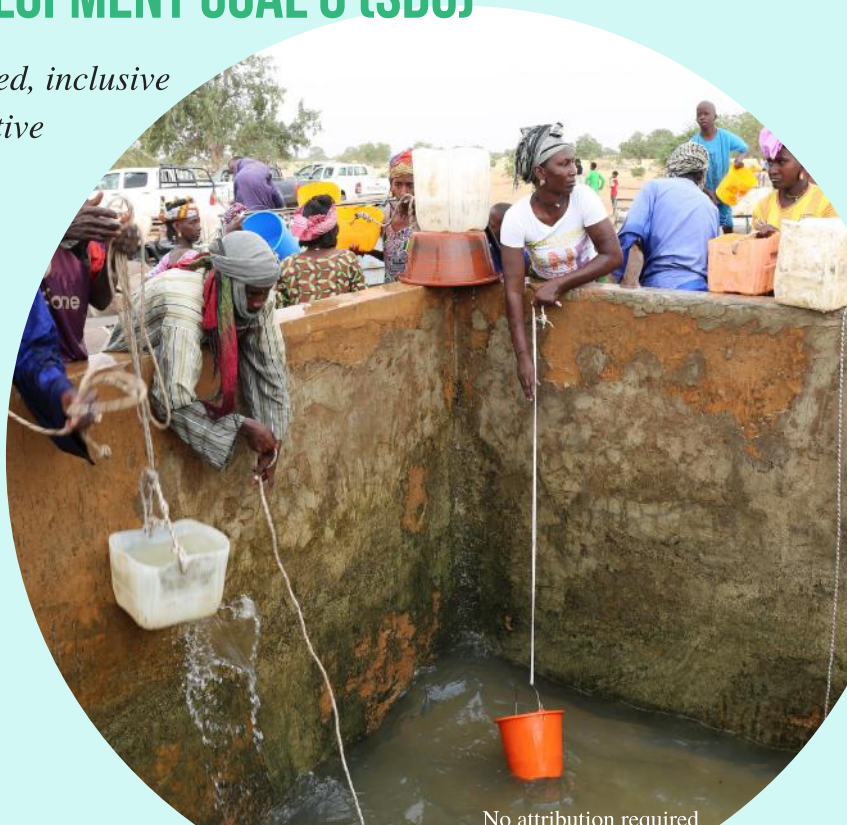
- a) Terminology, forms of trafficking, exploring the 'why';
- b) Petra's story – film clip of survivor sharing her story see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TE0phtoqB2o>;
- c) Response of Mercy Global Family to human trafficking – projects / advocacy.
- d) Identifying 'root causes' that render people vulnerable to being trafficked
- e) Networking locally and nationally to address human trafficking
- f) Discussion around possible action and commitment to raise awareness about human trafficking / modern slavery.

Having Angela and Colleen here in Dublin, provided a good opportunity to catch up and to discuss the Global Action programme together.

## PAMPHLET ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 8 (SDG)

The focus of this pamphlet is to: *“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”*.

Betty Lacey our researcher completed SDG 8 as part of the series of pamphlets MGA are producing. To date we have published eight of the 17 SDGs that form the central plank of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The pamphlets serve as an introduction to the various aspects of sustainable development chosen to ensure that collectively the 2030 Agenda will achieve its aims of addressing successfully: inequality, poverty, sustainable development, protection of ecosystems and climate change. See pamphlet on the Mercy World Website!



No attribution required

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## VITA REJOICE AT THE PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA



Thousands line the streets of Asmara, Eritrea's capital, to greet Ethiopian PM Abiya Ahmed

As a development agency working in Eritrea and Ethiopia, VITA was delighted to hear news that a peace agreement was signed by both countries in July, 2018, thereby officially ending the state of war between the two countries. The agreement declared by the leaders of Eritrea and Ethiopia has been followed swiftly by meaningful reengagement between the countries. These positive developments give tremendous hope for peace, stability and economic opportunity. This is especially true for Eritrea, as it had been isolated regionally and

internationally since the war with neighbouring Ethiopia. Members of the Congregation partner with VITA in the implementation of their excellent initiatives that promote sustainability and economic empowerment for people in the rural areas of both countries.

## POPE FRANCIS TO VISIT IRELAND FOR WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES (WMOF)

Ireland is poised to extend a warm 'céad mile failte' to Pope Francis on Saturday 25th of August when he arrives to close the WMOF. In his brief two day visit Francis will visit the shrine of our Lady in Knock, Co. Mayo; spend time at a project looking after the homeless and vulnerable in Dublin; meet members of the Government; have a private meeting with victims/survivors of clerical abuse and enjoy a special Irish concert in Croke Park just before closing the WMOF event. On Sunday 26th Francis will preside at an open air mass with 600,000 people expected to attend.

Betty and Denise are volunteers with the Laudato Si Working Group, who with the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) have set up a wonderful theme garden and a special prayer space. Throughout the three days of the WMOF there will be on going workshops, talks and activities highlighting the major themes 'On Care of Our Common Home' from Pope Francis's encyclical on the environment.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Marian Gardner, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

### MEET MARIAN GARDNER, NEW INTERN WITH MIA: MGA AT THE UN



Photo: MIA: MGA at the UN

"I am about a week into my internship position with MIA Mercy Global Action at the UN and I am absolutely loving it. Thank you to the efforts of Colleen and Sr. Angela my transition has been going very well. I recently graduated from Brandeis University with a double major in International Global

Studies and Health: Science, Society, and Policy and a minor in Legal Studies. I was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and at the age of nine I was adopted by a large diverse family, who lived in the state of Maine. My experiences of social injustice while living in Ethiopia created my strong passion for advocating for marginalized communities and advancing human rights.

As a result, advocacy work was a huge part of my college years. My activities as an activist and advocate included: the creation of a platform for various narratives of undocumented immigrants, lobbying for the passage of an education bill, and promoting civic engagement among my undergraduate peers.

Through my internship at the Massachusetts State House, I learned about advocacy through legislation. I had the opportunity to engage with international human rights work when I served as an intern at American Jewish World Service (AJWS), an international nonprofit organization. Additionally, during my study abroad in Argentina, I conducted an independent research to examine the exploitation of undocumented Bolivian immigrants in the textile industry. These valuable experiences affirmed my passion for activism and global justice issues, which is why I wanted to be a part of MIA: MGA at the UN. I am passionate about MIA's commitment to bringing the grassroots experience to international human rights advocacy. I hope to utilize my experiences to provide a unique perspective to the MGA at the UN team. I look forward to meeting and collaborating with Sisters of Mercy network and contributing to the larger goal of achieving a more just world."

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *New Appointments of the President of the General Assembly and High Commissioner of Human Rights*

The 73rd Session of the General Assembly opened on September 18th, 2018. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, the President-Elect of the 73rd Session, announced that the theme of the General Debate would be 'Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies.'



María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés is Ecuadorean and also one of four women who have held the position of the President of the General Assembly in 73 years. During her year as President of the General Assembly, Espinosa has outlined seven priority themes, to: promote gender equality; promote and implement new global compacts on migration and refugees; highlight innovative thinking around the future of work; effort to protect the environment,

particularly plastics pollution; raise awareness on persons with disabilities; implement the reform of the UN system; and promote peace. Read more about Espinosa's transition and goals for the 73rd Session [here](#).

In addition to Espinosa's appointment, the United Nations also welcomes Michelle Bachelet Jeria of Chile into the position of High Commissioner of Human Rights. The High Commissioner of Human Rights is the "principle official who speaks out for human rights across the whole UN system, strengthening human rights mechanisms; enhancing equality; fighting discrimination in all its forms; strengthening accountability and the rule of law; widening the democratic space and protecting the most vulnerable from all forms of human rights abuse".

In her opening statement to the 39th session of the Human Rights Council, Her Excellency detailed that she 'bring[s] to this mandate [her] experience in public service and [her] lifelong dedication to reversing hatred and ensuring equality and respect for all...[she has] been a political detainee and the daughter of political detainees. [She has] been a refugee and a physician – including for children who experienced torture, and the enforced disappearance of their parents. [She has] headed a United Nations body, and [has] been honoured to lead my country, twice, as its President."



Her Excellency believes "Good governance is based on identifying and amending gaps in access to justice, dignity and equality – so that all can live in more respectful and harmonious societies, and enjoy development that is more dynamic and sustainable. Good doctoring is based on building resilience: strengthening healing processes and intervening to interrupt symptoms of pathology. And human rights are a powerful medicine, which heals wounds and develops resilience." Read her full statement [here](#).

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*Continued*

- *Towards a Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights*

We re-affirm Pope Francis' call in *Laudato Si'* stating “Enforceable international agreements are urgently needed, since local authorities are not always capable of effective intervention.... Global regulatory norms are needed to impose obligations and prevent unacceptable actions, for example, when powerful companies or countries dump contaminated waste or offshore polluting industries in other countries. (173)”

- *Week of 'Living the Change' to take place from 7-14th October*

Religious and spiritual communities are launching the global “Time for Living the Change” (15 October to 02 December 2018) with a week of local sustainability events and celebrations around the world. This week aims to encourage faith leaders and community members internationally to make sustainable living commitments towards low-carbon lifestyles. This will be a joyous occasion to join in an international, interfaith movement that encourages positive changes towards sustainable living.

Get involved with talking points, further resources and media toolkits at <https://livingthechange.net/global-week>

- *Defending Human Rights in Southeast Asia*

The Business and Human Rights Resource Centre celebrated its 9th annual event in the Mary Robinson Speaker Series on September 25th. Esteemed panelists explored the role of corporations in attacks on civic freedoms in South East Asia, and examined cases where the private sector has acted with impunity as well as played a critical role in pushing back on repressive government action. This event was recorded and is available at <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/watch-the-livestream-mary-robinson-speaker-series-defending-human-rights-in-southeast-asia>

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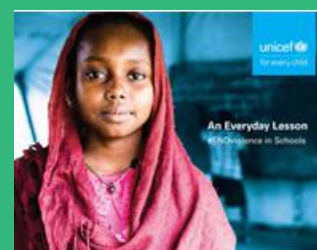


# Business and Human Rights'

## "Shared Space Under Pressure: Business Support for Civic Freedoms and Human Rights Defenders"



## UNICEF's "An Everyday Lesson: #ENDviolence in Schools"



## UNDP's "Human Development Indices and Indicators"



## CIDSE's "The Climate Urgency: Setting Sail for a New Paradigm"





# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- The SDGs Celebrate Their 3rd Anniversary!***



Image: United Nations

September 25th, 2018 marked the 3rd Anniversary since the adoption of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development. This day was highlighted around the world through a campaign "Global Day to #Act4SDGs" (See page 8 to see how MIA: MGA took part in its commemoration in Ireland) .

The UN SDG Action Campaign commits to: "Engage stakeholders and individuals to support member states and UN Country Teams in the SDGs implementation through direct people's engagement; encourage public ownership of the SDGs in every country through creative and innovative communications, campaigning and policy advocacy; and sponsor people-driven processes to strengthen accountability mechanism and monitor SDG progress through generation/collection of data, evidence, and sentiment about the impact of the SDGs". Click **here** to see supplemental resources for the campaign!

Watch UN Launch Event for the Campaign here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PIO3UnH9Dn8&feature=youtu.be>



## USEFUL RESOURCES

To highlight the 20th Anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, we wanted to share an interesting resource entitled the 'Business, Civic Freedoms & Human Rights Defenders Portal'. Within this portal, you can find relevant articles, key findings, and a database of attacks on defenders working on businesses-related human rights abuses. You can search the database of incidents, and even share your own case. For more information go to <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/bizhrds>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in*

- **October 11th - International Day of the Girl**
- **October 15-19th - Meeting of Open Ended Working Group On Transnational Corporations and Human Rights (Geneva) and COP 8 UNTOC (Vienna)**
- **October 17th - International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**
- **October 24th-26th- Sr. Angela at Hemispheric meeting on Human Trafficking**
- **October 30th - Ending Homelessness: Floors and Roofs for All in the Sustainable Cities of the Future (link)**

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

September flew by, due to preparations for my 'field visit' to Tacloban, to spend time with the Sisters of Mercy of the Philippines, September 21st to October 1st. See short article below. Earlier in the month we were involved both as presenters and participants in the 'Mercy to Earth' week long programme.

There were a number of meetings on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in preparation for the event in Dublin to mark the third anniversary of the passing of the 'UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. The event was well attended and successful in raising awareness about the importance of holding Governments accountable. In this short news update there is information on meetings attended i.e. 'The Refugee and Migrant Coalition' and 'The SDG Coalition.'

A small clarification. In the recent announcement that the MIA-Global Action Office will be moving from Baggot St to New York, a date was not given when Betty Lacey and I will be finishing our contracts with MIA. Some people took this to be very soon, however Betty will be finishing up at the end of January and I finish at the end of February in 2019. We are most grateful to those who have written emails and sent cards, all of which are very much appreciated.

Peace,  
Denise

## FIELD VISIT TO MEET THE SISTERS OF MERCY OF THE PHILIPPINES (TACLOBAN)



I was delighted that Sr. Marian Ladrera, Congregational Leader invited me to arrive in time for the Mercy Day celebrations with the Sisters, their colleagues, friends and children. The latter group are all involved in the excellent project the sisters run for 63 former street children. Mercy Day proved to be a wonderful celebration in terms of uniting us with the global Mercy Family and a also for me was a rich, cultural experience. Those involved in the celebrations in the convent and in the 'Mother of Mercy Hospital' founded by the Sisters just 8 years ago, reflected the joy of being part of the extended Mercy Family. It is obvious that the presence of the Sisters is deeply appreciated on many levels. This is not just now but I heard from a number of people their appreciation for what the Sisters did in the aftermath of super typhoon Hyundai, the shadow of which lingers on in the psyche and the environment.

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

My schedule ensured that I met with a wide variety of groups that included the Sisters, Faculty Members, Students, the Street Children and Staff Members. In interactive sessions I gained valuable insights on the rich diversity of life in the Philippines and also realised that many of the concerns we struggle with in this part of the world, are similar to those that trouble the Filipino people. An example from sessions with young people is cyber-bullying. Homelessness, family break-ups, access to health and environmental concerns - at least 20 typhoons pass over the Philippines each year - were other urgent justice issues that we discussed throughout my visit. Reflecting on it now, I'm so grateful for the opportunity of spending time with the Sisters in the unique, diverse and rich context of Tacloban.

## A MEETING OF THE IRISH REFUGEE MIGRANT COALITION

A meeting of the Irish Refugee Migrant Coalition, of which MIA Global Action is an active member focusing on international issues met in Dublin on September 13th, 2018. MIA Global Action was represented on the day by Betty Lacey.

The meeting began with a recap of the coalition's aim which is to play a responsible role to advocate for migration and asylum policies that are underpinned by human rights. This aim is becoming hugely challenging with the global growth of right-wing populism. The rise of anti-migration sentiment in some EU member states is a worrying development. Additionally the prioritisation of border management and security issues has taken precedence to desperate humanitarian needs. Uncertainty over the future of Brexit further exacerbates this challenge.

The two Global Compacts on Refugees and Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration were discussed.

Several other important ambitions and targets were explained such as the progress of the Community Sponsorship scheme, the need to raise funds to employ a consultant and a very urgent need to seek funding for training purposes.



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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## COALITION 2030 IS AN ALLIANCE OF OVER 100 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS



A meeting of 'Coalition 2030' - an alliance of over 100 civil society organisations based in Ireland, of which MIA Global Action is a member, met in Dublin, September 25th, 2018. The Coalition consists of International and National NGOs, faith based organisations, youth and environmental groups, academics and trade unions. This partnership works together with an agenda to ensure that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are fully implemented. MIA Global Action was represented on the day by Betty Lacey.

The meeting began with the planning of activities for the remainder of 2018 and briefings on forthcoming events, both national and international, scheduled by various coalition members. This was followed by a report from the steering group delegation who attended the High Level Political Forum at the UN in July of this year. The delegation reported that they felt the 2030 Agenda was still not on track due to lack of commitment and progress. Governments need to “leave their comfort zones” and urgently address these issues.



Photo: SDG-Watch Europe

The Coalition 2030 Report has been produced by the group and at the meeting it was decided that this valuable resource should be officially launched and a copy of the Report given to each government minister and senator. It was felt that even at this stage, three years after the adoption of the goals, that the message was not yet getting across. The practicalities of the launch were discussed, including guest speakers, venue and the production of a two-page document outlining the basics of the Report. It is hoped to invite a well known journalist to moderate the event which will take place in November.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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### NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

#### REMEMBERING KOFI ANAN

Last week, former Secretary General, Kofi Annan passed away. At the United Nations, the flag was flown at half mast to acknowledge the contribution that this fine man made to world diplomacy. As a native of Ghana, Kofi Annan was a strong advocate for eliminating world hunger and for creating a world of peace. A Noble prize Laureate, more recently Annan was chairman of the reputable group referred to as 'The Elders'. The Elders are independent global leaders, brought together by Nelson Mandela, who offer their collective influence and experience to support peace building, help address major causes of human suffering and promote the shared interests of humanity. In this time of global vulnerability, I am grateful for the role these global leaders play in our world. We need wisdom figures in our lives and in this world. The passing of Kofi Annan is a deep reminder of how a life of public service can have such a powerful and positive impact on both people and planet. RIP Mr Kofi Annan.

### MARKING THE SEASON OF CREATION

In her short presentation on Water, Angela declared herself as a laywoman on the issue of water but expressed her commitment to taking water justice seriously as both a Sister of Mercy and the Mercy Global Action representative at the UN. This she explained, means doing her best to become educated about the issue and continuing to develop as a water justice advocate so as to campaigning at the global table. Angela began with providing some insights into how we might think about our relationship with the earth. She provided some provocative and challenging eco-justice concepts such as the term 'eco-apartheid' coined by the Indian justice advocate, Dr Vandana Shiva. This was followed by presenting a short video trailer entitled 'Flow' which is a documentary promoted by the Blue Planet Project, a renowned NGO which has earned its credentials as a reliable and credible water informant and lobbyist. Angela then provided some foundational concepts for the water justice platform and set the landscape for an understanding of the way in which Mercy Global Action undertakes water justice advocacy at the United Nations. Illustrations of water justice advocacy were then shared with a conclusion leaving participants with questions to ponder on their own journey to being water justice advocates.

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## UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON MIGRATION

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# A GLANCE AT THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION (GCM)

## THE GCM IS:

  - An **inter-governmentally negotiated agreement** prepared under the auspices of the **United Nations** and organized under **23 Objectives**.
  - Aimed at **improving cooperation** on international migration.
  - **Not legally binding**, but consistent with human rights treaties and fully respectful of States' sovereignty.
  - Covers **all dimensions of international migration** in a holistic and comprehensive way.
  - **Rooted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and aimed at maximising the potential of migration to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
  - Negotiated between 2016 and 2018 to be **formally adopted** by the Intergovernmental Conference in **December 2018**.

## IMPLEMENTATION

  - To be implemented by **Governments in cooperation and partnership** with migrants and all relevant stakeholders.

## FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

  - An **International Migration Review Forum** shall take place **every four years** beginning in 2022 with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.
  - The Forum will discuss and share progress on implementation at all levels and will approve an **inter-governmentally agreed Progress Declaration**.

## MEMBER STATES' COMMITMENTS

### PROTECT THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL MIGRANTS BY:

  - **Objective 6:** Reviewing employment recruitment mechanisms to guarantee that they are fair and ethical
  - **Objective 13:** Using immigration detention only as a measure of last resort, and working towards alternatives
  - **Objective 15:** Providing access to basic services for migrants regardless of their migration status
  - **Objective 16:** Empowering migrants to become active members of society and promoting mutual respect and understanding between migrants and receiving communities
  - **Objective 17:** Eliminating all forms of discrimination and related intolerance against all migrants
  - **Objective 18:** Investing in the identification and development of migrants' skills and qualifications.

### REDUCE FORCED MIGRATION BY:

  - **Objective 2:** Minimizing factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
  - **Objective 5:** Enhancing pathways for regular migration
  - **Objective 19:** Creating conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development
  - **Objective 20:** Improving the remittance transfer process and migrants' access to financial institutions.
  - **Objective 22:** Making social security entitlements and earned benefits portable
  - **Objective 23:** Strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration.

### IMPROVE MIGRATION MANAGEMENT BY:

  - **Objective 1:** Collecting and utilizing accurate and disaggregated data
  - **Objective 3:** Providing accurate and timely information at all stages of migration
  - **Objective 4:** Ensuring that all migrants, including stateless people, have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation
  - **Objective 7:** Reducing vulnerabilities of migrants in countries of origin, transit and destination
  - **Objective 12:** Increasing legal certainty and predictability of migration procedures
  - **Objective 14:** Strengthening consular protection and assistance

### ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF MIGRATION BY:

  - **Objective 8:** Saving lives and preventing migrants' deaths and injuries
  - **Objective 9:** Strengthening joint efforts to prevent and counter smuggling of migrants
  - **Objective 10:** Acting to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons
  - **Objective 11:** Promoting bilateral and regional cooperation to manage national borders in a coordinated manner
  - **Objective 21:** Facilitating safe and dignified return and readmission, as well as sustainable reintegration

[Click here to download GCM Final Draft](#)

NGO Committee on Migration; [www.ngo-migration.org](http://www.ngo-migration.org)

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# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



- ***Progress towards a Global Compact for the Environment***

As proposed by the Government of France last September at the UN General Assembly Summit, the United Nations has begun talks of a Global Compact on the Environment as a "new step" of the Paris Agreement. "On May 10, 2018, the UN General Assembly adopted by a very large majority [145 votes in favor] the resolution paving the way for the negotiation of a Global Pact for the Environment". While negotiations have yet to start, this Compact has the potential to create essential "environmental standards [that] will apply to everyone, regardless of the country...and facilitate international business processes and respect for their social and environmental responsibilities." Find updates from the French Government [here!](#)

- ***UN Environment's Faith for Earth Initiative***

In November 2017, UN Environment (UNEP) launched its Faith for Earth Initiative recognizing the influence of faith-based organizations around the world. During the Season of Creation, it is evident that "almost all religions address the issue of the creation of the universe, or universes, in different forms and with varying degrees of clarity or detail. However, all religions agree that the creation is an act of God and should be treated as such."

UNEP is dedicated to highlighting the power of faith and environmental action with its spotlight on "Faith for Earth-an ethical approach to global challenges". Read more about this initiative [here!](#)

- ***World Water Week - August 26th-31th***

World Water Week took place in Stockholm, Sweden with a theme of "Water, ecosystems and human development". During the week, UN Water hosted many events which were on Facebook live. View them [here!](#)

UN Water also released reports tracking the progress of SDG 6 indicators which can be found at this [link!](#)

## FREE ONLINE COURSE ON LOCAL WATER SOLUTIONS FOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES

UNITAR, University of Strathclyde, and Gaia Education, are hosting a **free, online course** on Local Water Solutions for Global Challenges. This course will run for 5 weeks starting on 24th of September 2018. Click [here](#) for more information. When taking the course, be mindful of the human right to water and 'red flags' as detailed in our SDG 6 Water and Sanitation Guide (pg. 5).

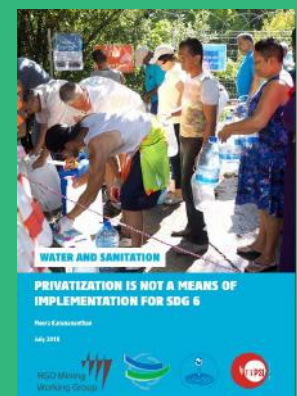
*\*The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

## “USEFUL RESOURCES

SDG Academy Presents  
Series on Laudato Si



**Water and Sanitation:  
Privatization is not a means of  
implementation for SDG 6**



**'Creation Care Toolkit' by the  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of  
America**



**Integrating the Sustainable  
Development Goals into  
Corporate Reporting: A  
Practical Guide**





# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *67th UN DPI/NGO Conference*

While Mercy International Association, Sisters of Mercy, has enjoyed Special Consultative Status within the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1998, Mercy International Association has also enjoyed accreditation through the Department of Public Information (DPI) at the United Nations since 1988.



Together Finding  
Global Solutions for  
Global Problems

UN HEADQUARTERS,  
NEW YORK  
22-23 AUGUST 2018



— THE 67<sup>TH</sup> —  
**UN DPI / NGO  
CONFERENCE**

On the 22nd and 23rd of August, the UN DPI office hosted its 67th UN DPI/NGO Conference themed "We the Peoples...Together Finding Global Solutions for Global Problems". This conference is the premier event in the NGO calendar at the United Nations as

it attracts more than 2,000 representatives from over 300 non-governmental organizations representing more than 80 countries around the world; additionally, this international forum also brings together senior UN System officials, prominent international NGOs, academicians, public opinion makers and international media to discuss varying issues of global concern.

At the closing plenary session of the 67th UN DPI/NGO Conference those present agreed upon an outcome document committed to "people-centered multilateralism to address global challenges". An outcome document that upholds civil society partnerships and one in which "state power [is] more diffuse and where non-state actors play a substantial role". Key components of the outcome document include:

- "To embrace gender equity as an integral component of social justice,
- To operationalize the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees by prioritizing the rights and dignity of forced migrants and people in fragile and conflict-affected states,
- To affirm the importance of international law and principles of cooperation...
- To act in solidarity with civil society representatives whose safety and rights are threatened...
- To build on economic and cultural innovations that strengthen social, economic, and environmental foundations of development, and
- To serve as independent sources of analysis, advocacy, and action to hold states, corporations, and other stakeholders accountable to the standards and values adopted in the 2030 Agenda."

Read full outcome document with commitments and calls for Member States, Multi-national corporations and the United Nations **here**.



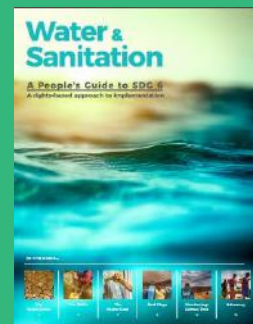
Watch the closing plenary session among other panel discussions from the 67th UN DPI/NGO Conference at [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org)

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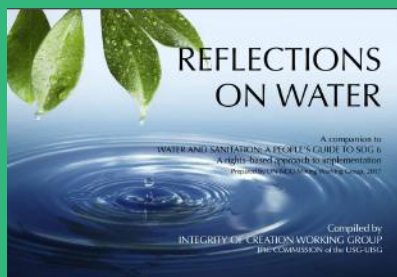


# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



- ***A Companion Document to the SDG 6 Water and Sanitation Guide- 'Reflections on Water'***

The Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) USG/UISG Secretariat in Rome has released a new booklet as a companion document to the SDG 6 Water and Sanitation Guide. "Each year, the JPIC Commission focuses its activities on a particular theme. This year, [their] work centers on "Living in



Right Relationship with All of Creation." This means being able to create a sense of well-being with our family, our neighbor, the community, people of other countries, other living creatures, the environment around us and the entire universe, etc. Respecting and listening to the other, being in dialogue with the other, caring for God's creatures, protecting the environment, upholding peace at all times and to practice active nonviolence at every opportunity." Read **more...**

You can find 'Reflections on Water' **here** on the NGO Mining Working Group website or at [jpicroma.org](http://jpicroma.org)!



## USEFUL RESOURCES

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), an initiative of the Danish Refugee Council, launched its new website which includes:

- five regional pages featuring all region-specific monthly summaries, reports and other publications;
- repository of all MMC's previous and new reports since 2011 that is searchable by keyword or region; and
- short articles on timely topics and trends in migratory flows.

Follow <http://www.mixedmigration.org/> to start exploring.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in*

- **25th September - Business and Civic Freedoms: Defending Human Rights in Southeast Asia**
- **UN General Assembly**
- **Pax Christi Interfaith prayer at the Gazebo to mark IN International Day for the elimination of Nuclear Weapons**
- **Angela Reed Presentation at Bayview Academy in Rhode Island**
- **Angela Reed Presentation to Mercy Ethos Group**
- **Mercy Global Action at the UN's new intern Marian Gardner begins!**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

The past month was dominated by our involvement with the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) and the visit of Pope Francis to Ireland, to officially close this event. During his brief two day visit, Francis fitted in many other engagements that brought great joy to the nearly quarter of a million people who participated in them. It was necessary for Francis to listen to the pain and anger of those who've suffered different forms of abuse by church personnel during the past decades. What lies ahead we hope will bring deep healing to a chastened, more humble, egalitarian church structure, where every person is valued...

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

**'Our Common Home Project'** Betty and Denise were eco-volunteers during the WMOF, centred on a specially constructed garden and prayer space. This was designed to reflect the key themes from 'Laudato Si' like the mystery of the universe, integral ecology, bio-diversity and climate change.

**Season of Creation, September 1st – October 4th:** This year in addition to personal action we committed to network on two activities. One is to send a letter to CEOs of nine large retail businesses encouraging them to eliminate one-use plastic and support research into bio-degradable packaging (see short comment on this initiative). The other is preparing and distributing a 'reflection pamphlet' inviting people to take a walk in their nearest park or to sit outside, to enjoy God's gift of creation. (Pamphlet will be available through Mercy eNews shortly).

### **Conference call with Cosmology / Eco-Justice group 21st August:**

In a wide-ranging discussion, members from New Zealand to Washington DC shared their programme of activity, related to specific environmental concerns.

Reports from some members are available on the MIA website under Global Action.

### **Presentations on Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si'**

Denise ran two workshops on Laudato Si. The first was for a group of 31 Sisters in Ballinasloe on the 31st August. The other was with the participants of the 'Mercy to Earth' workshop, Monday 3rd September.



No attribution required

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLES

We participated in a workshop on ‘The Family as an Agent of Peace in a Turbulent World’ Speakers spoke from the perspective of being a refugee, an orphan, humble origins, living in a violent society and growing up in a war-torn country. Senator George Mitchell recounted that although his parents died penniless; they provided loving security and gave each of their children what they were denied – a college education!

### **MECPATHS: (Mercy Efforts for Child Protection Against Trafficking with the Hospitality Sector)**

We joined the MECPATHS Team for their excellent seminar during the WMOF titled: ‘Human Trafficking: An open wound on the body of contemporary society’ (Pope Francis). Kevin Hyland OBE provided a most thought provoking and informative address. The survivor of child trafficking evoked a strong visceral response as she shared how the experience moulded her adult life, yet against all the odds she is realising her dreams.

## COMING UP...

- September 7th MECPATHS: Launch of their research paper on Human Trafficking in Ireland.
- September 13th: Meeting with the ‘Refugees and Migrant Coalition’ on Global Compacts.
- September 21st – October 1st, Denise will be working with the Sisters in Tacloban, Philippines
- Early October: Meeting of the 2030-SDG Coalition.

### **Season of Creation: Time To Ditch The Plastic In Our Supermarket Trolleys...**

**By Betty Lacey**

How many times have you arrived home and realised that your shopping contains almost more plastic packaging than goods? The reality is that plastic is a substance the earth cannot digest. This packaging which includes bottles, coffee cups, and vegetable trays practically lasts forever, with almost all of it ending up in our oceans and seas. In the UK alone, supermarkets produce 800,000 tonnes of plastic per year, so consumers are being encouraged to take action to prevent this massive generation of waste.

As part of our involvement in the ‘Season of Creation’ we are focusing on the elimination of one-use plastic and the over-production of plastic in general. Betty Lacey and Denise Boyle on behalf of The Future We Need wrote letters to the CEOs of nine main supermarkets in the Republic of Ireland and the UK. Conscious of the fact, that some supermarkets have already made significant efforts to cut down on plastic use i.e. plastic free aisles, they were congratulated on their efforts so far. At the same time we strongly encouraged them to eliminate non-biodegradable plastics from all their outlets. We also urged them to support research and innovation in non-plastic packing and to promote the use of sustainable packaging into the future.

Some feedback has been received. One retailer has pledged that by 2025, one hundred per cent of all the plastics in their stores will be recyclable, re-usable or compostable. Let us hope that this deadline is not too late!

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Marian Gardner, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

### INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was commemorated on October 17th at the United Nations. In his opening remarks, UN Secretary General António Guterres emphasized that “Ending poverty is not a matter of charity but a question of justice.” His statement acknowledges that human rights violations are both the root causes of poverty and the principle reason for its perpetuation. Similarly, other distinguished speakers including, Permanent Representatives of France to the UN and Permanent Representatives of Burkina Faso to the UN, highlighted the multidimensionality of poverty and its interrelatedness to other human rights, and advocated for an integrative approach to eradicating poverty, including the implementation of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In line with this year’s theme, “Coming together with those furthest behind to build an inclusive world of

universal respect for human rights and dignity” H.E. Inga Rhonda King, President of the Economic and Social Council, urged for greater inclusion of those living in extreme poverty in the designs and implementation of policies and programmes affecting them and that they be given the tools to empower themselves. Throughout the program activists and individuals from Boston, New York, Nairobi, and Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania), shared their advocacy efforts and personal experiences of living in poverty.

During the second part of the public ceremony, which took place at Commemorative Stone, where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948 in Honor of the Victims of Extreme Poverty, moderators led the audience in an interactive activity that highlighted the significance and interconnectedness of all Human Rights. After the public ceremony, a special meeting took place to facilitate a dialogue between activists with direct experience of poverty, Ambassadors and UN officials.

Mercy Global Action at the UN affirms that including these individuals in the development and implementation of policies is the only way to effectively address the multidimensionality of poverty and create a world where the human rights of all people are realised.

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

## *UN Empowering Girls to be Agents of Change*



Photo: MIA:MGA at the UN

This month the United Nations held two important events focused on the empowerment of girls. On October 11th, Girls Speak Out at the United Nations, co-hosted by the Permanent Missions of Canada, Peru and Turkey, took place in celebration of the 7th Annual International Day of the Girl. The program, moderated by girl advocates from the Working Group on Girls, highlighted the needs and challenges girls around the world face, including exclusion from educational and employment opportunities, the burden of unpaid care work, harassment in the workplace, and many more. Girl activists were given the

platform to speak about their work, like Selina, who launched GirlsFirst Jr program to increase awareness of STEM to middle school girls, and Shreya, a 14 year old Nepalese girl who organized a program titled Give a Girl an Education Not a Dowry, advocating for girls' education in her community.

The second event, Who Rules the World? #Girlsrule, celebrated the contributions of women and girls, spotlighting the stories of six women leaders in business, education, politics and technology. Each of these women were underestimated in their respective fields, where women are often underrepresented, but their perseverance and success is inspiring the next generation of girls. For instance, Laila Zemrani, entered the predominantly male startup world and co-founded

a HealthTech company that empowers people to learn more about their wellness. Elana Leopold co-founded Seneca Strategies, a political firm dedicated to equipping women with the skills to run political office. Mariama Camara who, after immigrating from the Republic of Guinea, became one of the most influential African women in philanthropy, fashion and entrepreneurship. Lastly, Shabana Basi-K-Rasikh co-founded a non profit boarding school for Afghanistan girls, becoming a leading advocate for girl' education.



These are some examples of the fearless women leaders who were present at the event. All of these women are a testament to the power of women and girls to transform the world, demonstrating what is possible when we choose to invest in women and girls. Mercy Global Action at the UN is encouraged by these events and remains committed to empowering women and girls through bringing the grassroots work of our Mercy networks to the United Nations platform. We firmly believe that girls are the future.

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*Continued*

- *Towards a Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights*

The oral statement stressed the potential of the Draft Treaty "to achieve a breakthrough in relation to human rights violations committed by corporations [and] welcomes international cooperation that insists that human rights are at the forefront of any corporate activity." Furthermore, the statement called on the power of Member States to:

- "Implement effective and transparent review mechanisms that hold corporations accountable.
- Undertake inclusive community consultations prior to corporate activity in order to listen and address the concerns of the community.
- Establish regulations with corporations that mandate...assessments that are ongoing and regular.
- Integrate preventative mechanisms.
- Establish forums where people, in particular women, can testify, safely and privately, in regards to injustices; and at all costs, reject forums in which foreign investors have access to private dispute tribunals.
- Ensure the ratification of a strong legally binding treaty that places the rights of people and the earth before profit of corporations."

To read the full statement, click **here**; and to watch the delivery of the oral statement by Mirjam Beike gs in Geneva, click on the "film" icon to the right.

To learn more about the 4th Session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights, as well as outcomes from the October meeting, click **here**.

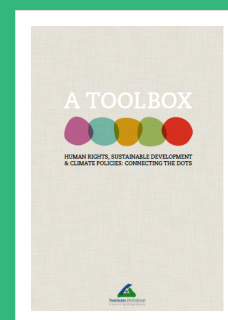
- *Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and COP 24*

On October 23rd, Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change, met with world leaders to discuss the programme of work for the upcoming meeting of COP 24. COP 24 will be "the most important COP since the signing of the Paris Agreement" as delegations will finalize documents for the implementation of the Agreement. Espinosa mentioned the expectations of COP 24 and encouraged leaders to act after the *Special Report* by the IPCC. Read more **here**.

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# Franciscans International Human Rights, Sustainable Development and Climate Policies: Connecting the Dots



# Polaris: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking



## Theological Reflection on Land



# Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements





*Update on the*

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Image: United Nations

## • *SDG Resources and Knowledge Hub*

The UN System SDGs Action Database is the UN's repository of actions, initiatives and plans on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Once on the web-page, individuals may search the activities of UN entities in relation to the SDGs. It is updated regularly and serves as a useful reference tool for learning about what UN system entities have been doing in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals (SDGs). To learn more about UN entities in your own country, click **here**.

In addition to the UN System SDGs Action Database, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) has developed the '**SDG Knowledge Hub**' which includes updates on featured SDGs, guest articles, policy briefs, and upcoming events across the world. When reviewing these resources, it is important to look out for 'red flags' such as "outcomes measured without reference to human -rights dimensions, data that isn't disaggregated by different sectors of the population, attempts to create justifications for privatization", and more. Are there ways in which you can take action in your community?



## USEFUL RESOURCES

**Regions Refocused** launched a new video series on YouTube that links trade activists across regions and movements to outline concrete tactics and analysis in an engaging and accessible way. The first three videos break down: the “inside-outside” advocacy strategy, the EU’s neo-colonial trade agenda, and why cross-regional solidarity matters. We hope you can use these videos for your own analysis and advocacy-- watch them at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJB7dfMPIco&list=PLs7-xYJGUnLL23r6-B6FoAgWywK\\_7JK86](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJB7dfMPIco&list=PLs7-xYJGUnLL23r6-B6FoAgWywK_7JK86)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in*

- **November 16th- MIA MGA at the UN to send reports to the Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking**
- **November 19th-25th- Angela Reed rsm attending the Mercy Asia Pacific Forum in Samoa**
- **November 25th- International Day for the Elimination of Gendered Based Violence**



# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

## NEWS UPDATE

October passed very quickly as we were engaged in the normal activities linked with our work with the Global Action (GA) Team. This included conference call meetings with members of the Global Mercy Family, regular network meetings and exchange of information and news. Additionally Denise Boyle was a speaker at the annual Miseen Cara seminar – see below- and continues to give presentations on Laudato Si to groups as requested. Sr. Catherine Gibbons rsm has rejoined the team on a part time basis after extended sick leave. It's great to have Catherine back with us.

Peace,  
Denise

## MISEAN CARA EVENT....

Denise Boyle was one of the speakers at a public seminar organised by Miseen Cara, the International, Irish missionary movement, working with marginalised and vulnerable communities in developing countries.

The seminar held on October 25th focussed on: 'Tackling Forced

Displacement on People, Poverty and Human Rights'. Denise

highlighted the importance of the UN New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (September 2016). The Declaration expresses the political will of world leaders in response to the global movement of refugees and migrants to:

- Save lives
- Protect rights
- Share responsibility on a global scale.

In the context of the 66 million global migrants, of which 26 million are refugees, the UN has developed two Global Compacts to address these critical issues. Denise focussed on the Global Compact for Refugees that will soon be finalised. It aims to share the responsibility for the mass movement of refugees across countries by:

- Easing the pressure on host countries
- Encouraging refugee self-reliance
- Expanding access to third-country solutions
- Facilitating the return to country of origin for refugees, by ensuring their
- safety and dignity

Following her presentation there was a valuable discussion noting the strengths of the Global Compact and the challenges re its implementation.





# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)



Betty Lacey participated in sub-committee meetings of the 2030 Coalition, which is preparing for the official launch of their Coalition 2030 Report, titled “Failed Promises or Real Progress: Ireland’s Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals”. This will take place on November 21st 2018, when a copy of the Report will be given to each government minister and senator. Coalition members believe that sharing their report with ministers is an important step in holding the Government to account and ensuring the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be fully implemented.

The impression across the country is that three years after the adoption of the SDG Agenda in September 2015, the message has not yet been adequately shared with the general public. This is despite the fact that Ireland played a leading role in all the negotiations leading to the adoption of this historic Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Coalition believes the Government now has a duty to act vigorously and decisively at both the domestic and international level, to ensure that the promise of Agenda 2030 is fulfilled. Invitations to the launch of the Report will be extended to significant public figures including a well known journalist who will moderate the event.

The newly re-elected President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, highlighted the global importance of the SDGs in his Introduction to the Report stating: The “authenticity of the word, respect for diversity, gender equality, equality in all its forms, are the gifts our world needs” (2018).

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG) LEAFLET ON GOAL 4 - EDUCATION

SDG 4 is designed: To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’

This pamphlet, the tenth in the series of 17 SDGs that we have produced is now available to view on the Mercy World Website.

## 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN NOVEMBER 25TH –DECEMBER 10TH.

Betty and Denise updated and did a final edit on the pamphlets to mark each day of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign.

The first day of the Campaign is November 25th and it concludes on December 10th, International Human Rights Day. See Mercy eNews for the 16 pamphlets.

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA MGA UN

Contributors to this issue: Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Cloonan, Marian Gardner, Denise Boyle fmdm, and Betty Lacey

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## NEWS FROM THE MIA MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE AT THE UN

### BEGINNING ADVENT IN ASIA PACIFIC ANGELA REED

This year, the season of Advent began while I was in Asia Pacific. For me, Advent has always been a time of great anticipation and hope. My time in Asia Pacific immersed me in the stories and experiences of so many in need of Advent hope. In November, I participated in two significant gatherings on behalf of Mercy Global Action at the UN. The first gathering was a Mercy Asia Pacific gathering in Samoa. This event which brought together Mercy Sisters and associates from Australia, Guam, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa and Tonga, focused predominantly on the issue of degradation of earth, including the impacts from Climate Change. I was very moved to hear sisters share their country struggles alongside their hopes and to reflect on the implications for Mercy Global Action as we continue to grapple with the health of our planet into the

future. A report on this event was featured in Mercy ENews and can be accessed at this [link](#). The Mercy Global Action Office at the UN is currently preparing a summary of issues presented at this conference and is undertaking some analysis in relation to further actions. This will be made available to the Mercy World in the coming months.

The second gathering I participated in was a Workshop in Cambodia, hosted by Sr Denise Coughlan rsm (Director, JRS CAMBODIA) at Metta Karuna, Siem Reap. The workshop was entitled, 'Refugees, Migrants and Stateless: A New Era. How Can Civil Society Respond Creatively?' This gathering comprised of religious and associates from across South East Asia who were there to reflect on and create a unified response to the needs of those 'on the move' and to look more deeply at the Global Compacts on Migrants and Refugees. Once again, I was stirred by the many and varied presentations from academics, service providers and policy makers on this important global issue. It was a great privilege to be able to participate in the opening ceremony of the conference and witness the dance troupe, founded by refugees, reenact their recent tumultuous history through five very moving dance segments. See this brief [report](#).

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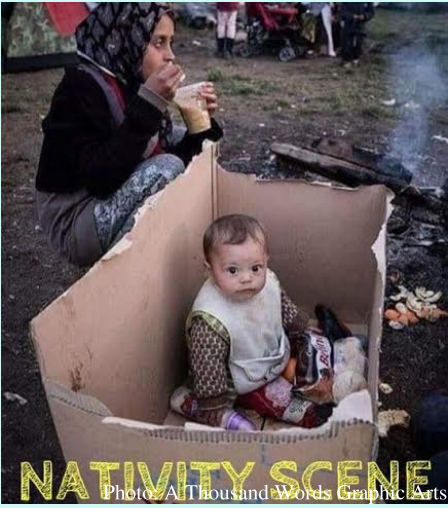
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BEGINNING ADVENT IN ASIA PACIFIC CONTINUED  
ANGELA REED

Both of these gatherings preceded two momentous United Nations events. First, COP 24 in Poland, whereby nation states will negotiate a rule book for the Paris Agreement and second, the signing of the Global Compact on Migration, held in Morocco. These two events are in response to two of the most significant issues facing us this Century and beyond, i.e. Climate Change and Migration. Never before have these two issues been so prominent on the UN agenda. Colleen Cloonan is currently representing Mercy Global Action at the UN at COP 24 and her advocacy focus areas can be accessed [here](#). In addition to the groundwork Colleen will undertake, MGA have also signed on to **The People's Demands for Climate Justice**.



In terms of the historical signing of the Global Compact on Migration, Mercy Global Action was present and active in all of the Intergovernmental negotiations toward a Global Compact on Migration and in addition to contributing to the compact process has signed onto the **Joint Civil Society Message in Morocco**.

In this time of Advent Hope, I am grieved by the image above which appeared recently on my Social Media. As we continue to grapple with such painful realities in our world, the need to respond with Mercy and Justice is a constant call. My prayer this advent is that people throughout the world will be ‘awakened’ to the cries of those rendered poor and ever mindful of our sacred earth.

MIA DUBLIN VISITS MERCY GLOBAL ACTION AT THE UN, NEW YORK



Last Monday Mercy Global Action at the UN hosted Srs Mary Reynolds and Anna Nicholls from Mercy International Centre, Dublin. In the morning, Mary and Anna were treated to a comfortable cup of tea at the MGA office and a tour of the Church Centre Building after which they collected passes for entry into the United Nations Headquarters. In the afternoon space was provided for some informal discussions as well as future planning and opportunities to integrate the work of Mercy Global Action and Mercy Heritage and Spirituality.

ANNOUNCING MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP (MELF)

Mercy Global Action is seeking expressions of interest in its inaugural emerging leaders fellowship. This fully funded fellowship program seeks to provide a transformational experience for women who are passionate about advancing Mercy and Justice. Fellows will have an opportunity to establish strong links and networking across the Mercy World through international encounter, webinars and modules, mentorship and more. The application deadline is January 31st, 2019. For more information click [here](#)



70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

December 10th marked the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This day is an opportunity to reaffirm the values and principles enshrined within the Declaration that mobilize and empower people around the world-not only today-but everyday. This years’ Human Rights Day launched a year long campaign entitled #StandUp4HumanRights to promote, engage, and reflect on human rights for all. To learn more about the campaign click [here](#).

*\*The Sisters of Mercy have held special consultative status within the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1998*

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# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC<sup>\*</sup> EYES...

## *International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women*



Photo: UN Women

The official commemoration event for International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women took place at the UN headquarters in New York on November 19th. In his opening remarks, UN secretary-General António Guterres affirmed his commitment to ending violence against women and girls stating, “Not until the half of our population represented by women and girls can live free from fear, violence and everyday insecurity, can we truly say we live in a fair and equal world.”

According to UN Women, this year’s theme, Orange the World: #HearMeToo, aimed to amplify the voices of “women and girls around the world who are coming together in a global movement of solidarity against the historic power imbalances in which sexual harassment and other forms of violence are so deeply rooted” as well as “end the culture of silencing and impunity.” To achieve these objectives, the event brought together activists and survivor advocates from Argentina, India, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the United States of America to be in conversation with UN Secretary-General António Guterres, President of the General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. This discussion focused on innovative good practices that offer solutions for ending violence against women and girls, and Benjamin Tucker, First Deputy Commissioner of the New York Police Department, on behalf of the NYPD Women’s Institute, provided insights on the role of law enforcement.

All participants were encouraged to wear a touch of orange, the official colour of the UN Secretary-General’s campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women, which symbolizes hope and a violence-free world. This event also kicked off the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which will come to a close on December 10, Human Rights Day.



Watch the event **here**



Read more about the event **here**.

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



- ***Mercy Global Action Celebrated The Adoption of the Global Compact on Migration (GCM)!***  
Representatives from 164 countries adopted The Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration on December 10th at the intergovernmental conference in Marrakech, Morocco after two years of thematic sessions and negotiations. Live coverage of the Adoption Conference can be found at <http://www.un.org/en/conf/migration/news.shtml>

The adoption of the Global Compact on Migration was preceded by the **Global Forum on Migration and Development** which gave both civil society and government representatives the opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities that are presented with the implementation of the Global Compact on Migration. At the closing of the common space meeting of the GFMD, the International Organization on Migration Chief, Antonio Vitorino, described ways to move forward with the implementation. Despite the GCM not being endorsed by all, our focus should be on showing that multilateralism can deliver with those that have, while not demonizing those who are against migration but address their concerns and work with them. This will be a fruitful way to move forward into the implementation phase, without losing hope. We must continue to promote rights and dignity while rejecting hatred and discrimination.

- ***December 18th--International Day of Migrants--Ways to Engage***
  - Follow updates of the NGO Committee on Migration at <https://ngo-migration.org/> and the International Catholic Migration Commission at <https://www.icmc.net/>
  - Change the narrative!
  - Exchange best practices see: [https://ngomigration.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/ngo-com-policies-and-practices-for-gcm-implementation\\_rev-3-dec-2018.pdf](https://ngomigration.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/ngo-com-policies-and-practices-for-gcm-implementation_rev-3-dec-2018.pdf)
- ***Holy See hosts Conference 'Practical Solutions to Eradicate Human Trafficking' ahead of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence***

A conference entitled “Practical Solutions to Eradicate Human Trafficking” took place on November 9 at the United Nations. The conference aimed to form an “anti-human trafficking worldwide group” and held an interactive dialogue to explore multi-disciplinary approaches to addressing all forms of human trafficking.

In his opening remark, Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See, highlighted the increasing prevalence of enslavement for sexual exploitation, forced labor and organ harvesting and stated that “ We must become far more practical, even ruthless, in addressing not just the evil fruit but also the roots of the problem.” He promoted the objectives of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, often called the four Ps: Prevent, Protect, Prosecute, and Promote, as a “helpful schema to examine, practically, where we need to do better.” Click [\*\*here\*\*](#) to read his full statement.

Other distinguished speakers including, Geraldine Byrne Nason, Permanent Representative of the Mission of Ireland to the UN, Ariel Rodelas Penaranda, Minister and Charge d’Affaires for the Permanent Representative of the Mission of Philippines to the UN, and Ms. Donna Hubbard, a human trafficking survivor and Airline Ambassador, called for a gendered response to trafficking, which includes ensuring the participation of women trafficking survivors in the development and implementations of policies and programs to prevent and address trafficking. Additionally, speakers advocated for ‘a whole of society’ approach that requires stronger government partnerships with non state actors, who are on the frontline working to prevent and address trafficking.

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



### • *COP 24 Climate Talks in Katowice, Poland*

The United Nations 24th Session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change began on December 2nd and will go until December 14th.

Colleen Cloonan of Mercy Global Action at the UN will be attending the second week of the conference to promote climate justice whilst advocating for the protection of peoples and the planet. See **Mercy E News** for more information including advocacy and lobbying points.

### • *Ways to Engage Virtually in COP 24...*

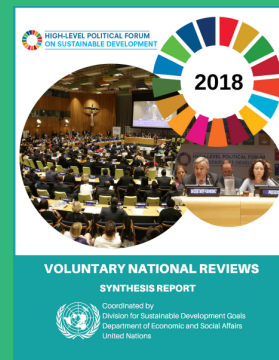
- UNFCCC website has Social Media hashtags to follow as well as live webcast see: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/conferences/katowice-climate-change-conference-december-2018/virtual-participation-cop-24>
- Join the Global Catholic Climate Movement Initiatives: <https://catholicclimatemovement.global/cop24/>
- Follow CIDSE's reports at: <https://www.cidse.org/articles/climate-justice/cidse-at-cop24-in-katowice-poland.html>
- Find Daily updates through the International Institute for Sustainable Development at <http://enb.iisd.org/climate/cop24/>

### • *International Women Human Rights Defenders Day—November 29*

To commemorate International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, United Nations human rights experts issued a joint statement calling on States to commit to protecting women human rights defenders as they frequently come under attack and are left unprotected. Experts referred to “additional barriers of economic and other structural discrimination, and ‘unique challenges driven by deep rooted discrimination against women and stereotypes entrenched in patriarchal societies related to gender and sexuality’”. Women human rights defenders promote international law, mobilize and educate society on human rights and violations thereof, and create gender focused solutions. Read more at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/11/1026861>

## “ USEFUL RESOURCES

### HLPF Voluntary National Reviews Synthesis Report



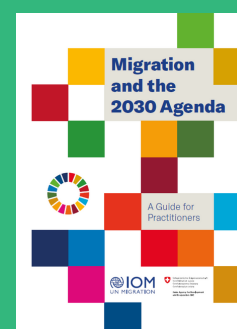
### UN Women: Towards an End to Sexual Harrassment



### Global Outlook on Financing for Sustainable Development 2019



### Migration and the 2030 Agenda: A Guide for Practitioners



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# Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Image: United Nations

## • A Closer Look at Youth 2030: United Nations Youth Strategy

The Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy, which was officially presented by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres on September 24th, 2018, aims to facilitate action to address the diverse needs of young people and ensure their engagement and leadership in the implementation of global agendas through building their agency and advancing their rights. To this end, the Strategy outlines five key priority areas it seeks to implement.

- Priority #1: “To amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world.”
- Priority #2: “To support young people’s greater access to universal, quality and inclusive education and greater access to youth-responsive health services.”
- Priority #3: “To economically empower young people through supporting greater access to decent work and productive employment.”
- Priority #4: “To protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement.”
- Priority #5: “Support young people as catalysts for Peace and security and humanitarian Action”

The implementation of the five priority areas will be a critical step for creating a world where young people can thrive and their innovative approaches to pressing justice issues in their communities and in the world are valued. Read the full Youth 2030 Strategy [here](#).

## USEFUL RESOURCES

- CIVICUS, the global civil society alliance, has released "People Power Under Attack 2018, a new report showing that nearly six in ten countries are seriously restricting people's fundamental freedoms of association, peaceful assembly and expression." Read the report [here](#).
- Members of the Inter-religious Working Group on Extractive Industries have produced a prayer companion for Season of Advent entitled "Journey of Hope Praying with the Amazon in Advent." View and download the guide [here](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Some events MIA at the UN will be participating in

- December 5- January 31st- Accepting applications for the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship (click [here](#) for more information)
- December 10- International Human Rights Day
- December 3-11- Global Forum on Migration and Adoption of the UN Global Compacts on Refugees and Migrants.
- December 10-14 Colleen attending UNFCCC COP 24 in Katowice, Poland
- December 18- International Migrants Day

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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE) NEWS UPDATE

It's hard to believe that Advent has already started and Christmas is just round the corner! We are into the final days of the '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence' Campaign (see [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org) under Global Action). During the month members of the Global Action Team participated in a number of events. We have highlighted just two here, the Conference on 'Lifestyle and Consumerism', plus the Launch of the Annual Report of the Rape Crisis Centre.

It only remains to wish each of you every joy and blessing of Christmas and a joy-filled and enriching 2019, as together we continue our collective work for justice...

Denise Boyle fmdm

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH

### • *Conference on Lifestyle and Consumerism with Dr Cathriona Russell, Trinity College Dublin*

Denise Boyle participated in the conference on 'Lifestyle and Consumerism' with the renowned speaker, Dr. Cathriona Russell, on November 17th. The event was hosted by the Salesian Cosmology Group in Milford, Limerick. In a concise, clear manner Cathriona focussed on our consumer driven lifestyle, in the context of the fragility of Earth today. Using graphs and statistics to amplify the global reality, she demonstrated how modern living trends are unsustainable. COP 24 (currently being held in Poland) is timely, in terms of citing the devastating consequences if countries do not meet the targets agreed to in the Paris Climate Agreement of December, 2015.

Cathriona commented that despite the critical urgency of climate change, we must remain hopeful. At this crucial time in our history what is needed are people committed to living by the principles of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, who continue to question the 'status quo'. She cited the market economy as an example. This is always promoted under the banner of economic growth, whilst the market is necessary, the principles underpinning it must be challenged, to ensure there is justice for all peoples, not just the rich!

Cathriona spoke of the 'Great Green Wall of Africa' as a tremendous sign of hope. It is an African led solution to the many urgent threats i.e. climate change, drought, famine, conflict and migration, facing not just Africa but the whole global community. The aim of the Green Wall is to grow trees and plants across the entire width of Africa, 8,000kms long that will transform the lives of millions of people. Additionally it is anticipated that the Great Green Wall will make a vital contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Once complete, the Great Green Wall will be the largest living structure on the planet. [www.greatgreenwall.org](http://www.greatgreenwall.org)

### • *Advent 2018*

To mark this special season, with our colleagues in the 'Future We Need' inter-congregational group, we prepared four short reflections related to Earth.

**Week 1:** 'Do No Harm to Earth or People'

**Week 2:** The Threat of Rising Consumerism'

**Week 3:** Biodiversity – Our Life Support System

**Week 4:** Fossil Fuels, Divestment and Climate Change ([www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org))



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# NEWS FROM THE MIA GLOBAL ACTION (INTERNATIONAL CENTRE)

- ***COP 24 (Conference of the Parties)***

COP 24 is being held in Katowice, 3-14 December. Sir David Attenborough, the People's Representative spoke for all of us from the People's Seat at the negotiations. What he said was powerful, urgent and a challenge to ALL thinking people! Watch him at <https://www.facebook.com/unitednations/videos/live-from-the-peoples-seat-at-cop24/296173354345932/>

- ***SDG Number 11: 'Make Cities Inclusive, Safe, Resilient and Sustainable'***

SDG Number 11 Pamphlet is now available as a pamphlet on the Mercy World website. This is the 11th pamphlet prepared by the MGA Team.

## DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLES

- ***Launch of Annual report of the Rape Crisis Centre.***

On November 26th, the Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) launched its 2017 annual report. Mercy Global Action was represented on the day by Denise Boyle and Betty Lacey. The report titled "Preventing and Healing the Trauma of Rape and Sexual Abuse" provided the theme for the launch.

Rape survivor Lavinia Kerwick spoke at the launch, sharing that victims of sexual violence are crying out for changes in the judicial system. She waived her anonymity twenty-five years ago after her rapist was handed a suspended sentence following a court case that "nearly killed" her. Lavinia made legal history by helping to bring in changes that allow rape victims to speak at sentencing hearings, through their 'victim impact statement'. Legislative changes introduced since then, now allow the Director of Public Prosecutions to appeal against lenient sentences.

Newly appointed Police Commissioner Drew Harris launched the DRCC Report. Lavinia had directed a plea to him, "to be brave" in proposing changes through the justice system for victims of rape and sexual abuse. Commissioner Harris responded positively to Lavinia saying he had a "deep and abiding professional and personal commitment" to investigate and prevent intimate sexual crime. He said that he and the entire Irish Police force was "up for the challenge" and urged all victims of sexual abuse to come forward. "We will listen, we will support you and we will investigate," the Commissioner said. Everyone present sincerely hopes that they will!

Resources:

UN Compact on Migration – A valuable resource related to the Advantages of Migration

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQdOVcQAons>

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

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