

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 5



GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

*Learning, Experiencing, Growing: Reflections
of an Outgoing Intern by Siobhán Golden*

"Applying for the intern position at MGA was one of the best decisions I've made! It has been a year of learning, experiencing, and growing, and my heart is filled with gratitude as it comes to an end.

Here are my top five things that I've learned during my internship with MGA:

Having a supportive team around you is so important

From the very start of my internship, I was welcomed with open arms and smiles by Angela, Colleen and Cecilie. The MGA team cultivates a compassionate, joyful, and supportive culture that fosters the voices, ideas and participation of all team members. The world of international justice work and the United Nations was completely new to me, which meant that the MGA team's wisdom, guidance and support was critical to my understanding and development. I was encouraged to work both autonomously and as part of a team on a range of projects related to mercy and justice, and knowing that I had the MGA team behind me boosted my confidence and self-esteem greatly..."

Read the entire reflection at: www.mercyworld.org



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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE
KERN, SIOBHAN GOLDEN AND
COLLEEN SWAIN



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS



- *Mercy Global Network Called to Recognise Nakba Day*

May 14th marks Nakba (Catastrophe) day for the Palestinian people.

At a recent gathering of the Mercy Global Action Network, Sr Kathleen Rushton called on the Mercy World to acknowledge the Palestinian people and to make an effort to learn about the significance of Nakba and its implications. We are invited to listen to Indigenous Palestinians in a significant document, 'A Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action. We cannot serve God and the oppression of the Palestinians'. Published less than a year ago by Kairos Palestine and Global Kairos for Justice, it calls on all people of faith for decisive action in relation to the people of Palestine over their continuing loss of land since 1947. The document invites "fellow Christians ... to respond to our common witness" through several actions including: "Initiate processes at local, denominational and ecumenical level ... for decisive action ... on the misuse of the Bible..." "Engage in study and discernment with respect to theologies and understandings of the Bible that have been used to justify the oppression of Palestinian people. Offer theologies that prophetically call for an inclusive vision of the land for Israelis and Palestinians, affirming that the creator God is a God of love, mercy and justice; not of discrimination and oppression... Oppose anti-Semitism by working for justice against anti-Judaism, racism and xenophobia, oppose the equating of criticism of Israel's unjust actions with anti-Semitism."

For more information, click [here](#).

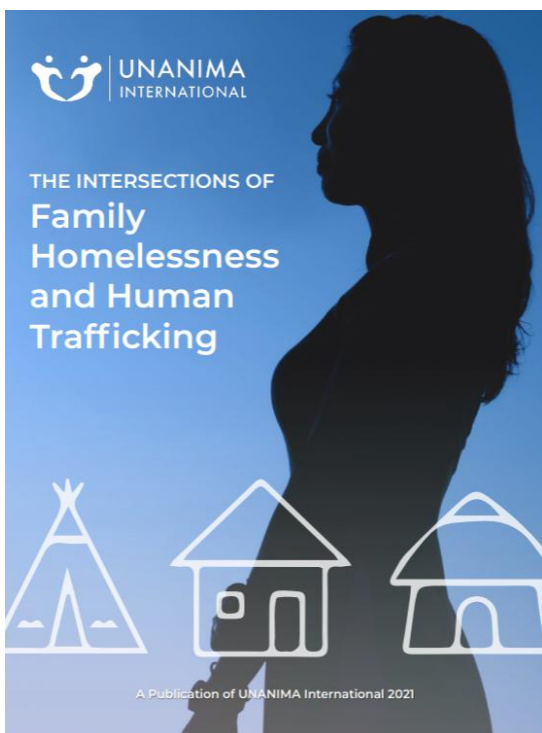
- *MGA Contributed to UNANIMA International's recent publication on 'The Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking'*

UNANIMA International's recent publication *The Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking* discusses the signs of risks for trafficking and homelessness in our communities, and highlights the urgent need to address and prevent these drivers and protect all people.

The publication spotlights Dr Angela Reed RSM's Doctoral research on human trafficking and sexual exploitation in the Philippines. Her research reveals that trafficked women find the following elements of greatest value: "Safe accommodation; emotional support; income generation projects; education; family reunion; community engagement; and peer support.

Cecilie Kern, MGA's Global Policy and Research Advocate also contributed to the report. Cecilie called attention to the exposure and vulnerability of migrants and refugees to experiences of homelessness and trafficking.

To learn more, click [here](#).





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH

• *MGA Participated in Laudato Si' Week 2021*

Mercy Global Action participated in Laudato Si' week 2021, held virtually from May 16th- 25th. Hosted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) with the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and endorsed by over 150 organisations, including MIA, the week provided opportunities for reflection, prayer and action for our common home.

Significantly on May 17, GCCM broadcasted an event entitled Laudato Si Dialogue. This event highlighted the



political opportunities in 2021 to 'create change, the essential relevance and inspiration of the Encyclical letter Laudato Si' and a Catholic voice on preparation for UN's COP15 summit on biodiversity as well as the COP26 climate summit. Last year MGA published 'Hope in a Time of Pandemic' which addresses many of these issues, spotlighting systemic inequalities in social, economic, political and environmental areas.

• *MGA Hosted an Advocacy Workshop on the topic of Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*

On Tuesday May 25th, Mercy Global Action offered the first of three Virtual Advocacy Workshops. The workshop aimed to equip members of the Mercy World with tools and strategies to engage in advocacy for systemic change at local, national and international levels. The focus of our first workshop was the topic of Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The interactive workshop introduced participants to the Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach, which is rooted in the experience of Earth and people, theological reflection, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Global Compact on Migration.

MGA will host more advocacy workshops on Tuesday, 3 August on the topic of Climate Justice & Water, ahead of UN COP26, and on Tuesday, 23 November on the topic of Domestic and Family Violence.

Click [here](#) to [RSVP](#).



AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



- *MGA Amplifying the Plight of Haitians at the United Nations*

For the last few months, Catholic Sisters, Brothers, priests and their partners in mission in Haiti have been sending deeply concerning reports of the rapidly escalating unrest in Haiti to their representatives at the United Nations. Since sitting Haitian President Jovenel Moïse rebuffed significant pressure from political opposition to leave office in early February, a country that was already in the grips of poverty and health crises, has been unraveling into a state of utter chaos. The Haitian people have been living with the constant threat of random acts of violence – daily kidnappings for ransom, killings, rapes, and other forms of intimidation. They are avoiding traversing the streets – even to attend to daily needs– for fear that they will not return home alive.

With rampant policy corruption, the dissolution of more than two thirds of the parliament, the closure of the judiciary and tribunals, and dictatorial rule by decree, no one is working for the safety and well-being of the Haitian people. The Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince has described the country’s recent trajectory as “a descent into hell.” The notion of holding fair, free, democratic elections in such an environment is unimaginable to those attempting to live and work in the center of the socio-political and economic storm.

With many political agendas at play on the international stage, Haiti’s existential crisis seems an important moment for international actors in government and civil society, to make an earnest effort to hear and learn from the insights and perspectives of those most impacted by the unrest. Over the past weeks, Mercy Global Action has been working with our colleagues representing other communities of Catholic religious at the United Nations to meet with various contacts in Haiti and Latin America at large in order to listen to testimony and get a better grasp of the current situation on the ground and the priorities of the Haitian people at this time. Based on these conversations, as well as various news articles and statements coming out of Haiti these past weeks, we have composed a letter to the Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations as well as nearly identical versions to the Missions of Canada, France, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Ireland. We targeted these countries for a variety of reasons, including their geopolitical influence on Haiti, and/or their positions on the UN Security Council.

The letter calls upon the UN Security Council to convene a hearing that allows testimony of Haitians’ experiences to be heard directly by representatives of UN Member States. The letter also emphasizes that the restoration of public safety is paramount, and a necessary prerequisite to holding any referendum or elections. Civil society and religious leaders have been advocating for Haiti to have a national dialogue on constitutional reform. To achieve sustainable political progress, such a dialogue must bring all sectors to the table and secure a concrete commitment to principles and practices of good governance. As one of our partners voiced, “Haitians are victimized people who want to be actors.” Their capacity for leadership is strong, and their participation is essential.

In response to the letter, Mercy Global Action, our partners at the UN, and two doctors from Haiti have already met with the government of Canada, and we hope to meet with the other recipients of the letter. We hope to collaborate with Mercy Focus on Haiti and the Justice Team of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas to continue our advocacy, especially targeted towards the government of the United States, which has significant geopolitical influence on Haiti. We are also planning on convening our own online hearing to amplify Haitian voices and shine a light on their experience of the present chaos.

This event will aim to increase awareness of the situation in Haiti among Religious, media and other members of civil society, and to give Haitian contacts/colleagues a sign of our solidarity and support for them during this crisis. We will publicize this event on our Twitter account (@MIAGlobalAction) as soon as more information becomes available.

HELP US TO TAKE ACTION by sharing the concerns and recommendations raised by our Haitian colleagues with your government:

1. Condition political/financial support on:
 - a. an end to violence and kidnappings so that freedom of movement and free participation in elections will be within the realm of possibility;
 - b. arrangements for/facilitation of a nationwide hearing to guide reform of constitution/governance practices
 - c. the establishment of a Permanent Electoral Council and arrangements for elections be overseen by independent monitors and meet specific standards for legitimacy
 - d. the creation of pathways for the campaigning/emergence of leaders from beyond the existing oligarchs
2. Place sanctions on individuals, not society as a whole
3. Route all development aid going into Haiti via UN agencies and trusted NGO partners rather than through government
4. Jointly mediate a national dialogue on constitutional reform and good governance practices in which people from many walks of life are consulted
5. Revoke foreign visas/citizenship of national leaders to incentivize longer-term, more sustainability-driven vision and approach among leadership who had planned to leave Haiti following their term of service
6. Revisit international trade agreements/contracts/regulations (or lack thereof) that allow few families in Haiti to hold monopoly over imports and distribution of food and other basic goods upon which all Haitians depend
7. For the government of the United States only:
 - a. Adjust/regulate remittance fee structure for personal wire transfers to Haiti
 - b. Renew TPS for Haitians to prevent deportations during this time of unrest and instability and extending the Employment Authorization Documents of Haitians eligible for TPS beyond October 2021 to ensure they are able to support themselves while residing in the US (may already be in progress; affirm if already happening)
 - c. Appoint a US Ambassador who is well-versed/experienced in Haiti's culture, history, languages and well equipped to listen to/work with/support the Haitian people in bringing about their nation's full potential.



“USEFUL RESOURCES

Laudato Si' Goals



GRFDT Webinar: Climate Change and Migration



Environmental Mobility and Solidarity Programme CIDSE



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 1 June - Global Day of Parents
- 4 June - International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
- 5 June - World Environment Day
- 8 June - World Oceans Day
- 12 June - World Day Against Child Labour
- 13 June - International Albinism Awareness Day
- 14 June - World Blood Donor Day
- 15 June - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- 16 June - International Day of World Family Remittances
- 17 June - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 19 June - International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
- 20 June - World Refugee Day
- 21 June - International Day of Yoga
- 23 June - Public Service Day
- 23 June - International Widows' Day
- 25 June - Day of the Seafarer
- 26 June - International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
- 26 June - International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
- 30 June - International Asteroid Day

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

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