



NGO NEWS

BY TERESA KOTTURAN SCN

MARCH 2017

New Secretary-General António Guterres

The new Secretary General took office on January 2, 2017. Given below are excerpts from his speech made after taking oath of office on December 12, 2016. It is his road map for the future and he has already focused on some of the issues. He has appointed five women to senior posts at the UN. In his regular meeting with the Security Council, he has been stressing the need for peace building and conflict prevention.

“Fear is driving the decisions of many people around the world. We must understand their anxieties and meet their needs, without losing sight of our universal values. It is time to reconstruct relations between people and leaders — national and international; time for leaders to listen and show that they care, about their own people and about the global stability and solidarity on which we all depend. And it is time for the United Nations to do the same: to recognize its shortcomings and to reform the way it works. This Organization is the cornerstone of multilateralism, and has contributed to decades of relative peace.

Our most serious shortcoming — and here I refer to the entire international community — is our inability to prevent crises. The United Nations was born from war. Today, we must be here for peace.

The United Nations system has not yet done enough to prevent and respond to the appalling crimes of sexual violence and exploitation committed under the UN flag against those we are supposed to protect. I will work closely with Member States on structural, legal and operational measures to make the zero-tolerance policy a reality...ensure transparency and accountability and offer protection and effective remedies to the victims.

The second key element of the reform agenda concerns the United Nations support to Member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Paris Agreement, an expression of global solidarity, with their promise to leave no one behind. To do this, we will reposition development at the center of our work, and



engage in a comprehensive reform of the United Nations development system, at Headquarters and country levels.

The third key area is management reform. We will build on existing efforts and implement the recent initiatives that were approved. But, looking at United Nations staff and budgetary rules and regulations, one might think that some of them were designed to prevent, rather than enable, the effective delivery of our mandates.

By the end of my mandate, we should reach full gender parity at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels, including special representatives and special envoys. We need a clear road map with benchmarks and time frames to achieve parity across the system, well before the target year of 2030. And the same concern applies to regional diversity.

Today’s paradox is that, despite greater connectivity, societies are becoming more fragmented. More and more people live within their own bubbles, unable to appreciate their links with the whole human family. In the end, it comes down to values, as was said many times today. We want the world our children inherit to be defined by the values enshrined in the United Nations Charter: peace, justice, respect, human rights, tolerance and solidarity. All major religions embrace these principles, and we strive to reflect them in our daily lives.”



Federation Participation at the 55th Commission for Social Development



Strategies for eradicating poverty

Achieving sustainable development for all

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, requires greater efforts at the national and international levels to leverage the accomplishments and lessons learned in implementing the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The following are the recommendations:

(a) Prioritize formulating and implementing comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approaches to achieve sustainable poverty eradication. This entails addressing the structural causes of poverty, including high and rising inequalities, insufficient redistributive policies, biases against people living in poverty in public spending, taxation and trade and social exclusion;

(b) Prioritize and commit sufficient resources to enhance human capacity by investing in education, health care, safe drinking water and sanitation. Countries are encouraged to progressively realize universal social protection, including floors, while at the same time extending the coverage of social transfer measures to provide minimum guarantees to the most vulnerable;

(c) Prioritize and commit sufficient resources to develop the human and physical assets of people living in poverty and ensure that credit, land, and labor markets work better for them. Greater attention should be given to strengthening access to land and the land rights of women and indigenous groups;

(d) Promote structural economic transformation in order to provide productive economic opportunities and raise standards of living and incomes, generate decent employment and increase the tax base to allow public revenues to meet the recurrent costs for social expenditures and infrastructure development, including through supporting income-generating activities such as microenterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises;

(e) Increase public spending on agriculture and rural infrastructure, improve access to credit and markets as well as promote rural economic transformation through development of the rural non-farm economy;

(f) Continue to work with development partners to create an enabling environment for inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Interns from the College of Mount St Vincent



Giovanna Ortega Pinto who is following Women's economic empowerment



Anita Mernacaj Graduate student following up on Financing for Development

The Vincentian Family Side Event at the 55th Commission on Social Development

The Vincentian Family at the UN organized a Side Event in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations on February 1, 2017. The Commission theme was “eradicating poverty achieve sustainable development for all and the side event focused on how “the triad of grassroots engagement, systemic change and advocacy in the eradication of poverty.” No one of the three components will eradicate poverty if it is not deeply connected with the other two. This event will illustrated the relationships and partnerships involved in the three-pronged strategy. It was an opportunity to showcase the grassroots involvements of the Vincentian Family.

The panel consisted of Tim Mawe, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN; Guillermo Campuzano, NGO Representative of the Congregation of Mission at the UN; Dr. Linda Sama, Associate Dean for Global Initiatives and Professor of Management at St. John's University, who founded the GLOBE (Global Loan Opportunities for Budding Entrepreneurs), a microloan academic program; Dylan Corbett, founding Director of Hope Border Institute (HBI) a grassroots organization, working in the El Paso-Ciudad Juarez-Las Cruces region to deepen solidarity across borders; and Joseph Cornelius Donnelly, the Permanent Delegate of Caritas Internationalis to the UN. The panel was moderated by Teresa Kotturan SCN, NGO Representative of SC Federation at the UN. The event was well attended and received by the civil society some member states.



Participants and Panelists at Vincentian side event



Internship

The short time we spent at the UN gave us ample opportunity to widen our horizons and worldview. Getting exposed to such this global organization that deals with a variety of issues crises that affect humanity everywhere was a great experience; the UN is not just an institution or a mere structure but it deals with people, nations, human rights, peace and security, cultures, civilizations, human relations and above all the urgent humanitarian needs of people affected by conflicts and disasters. It was eye opener to attend the Preparatory Conference on Oceans for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 – “to conserve and sustainably use the oceans...” and to know that over three billion people depend on our oceans for their livelihood. Other conferences were on safe and orderly migration, education for global



citizenship. We were also privileged to attend a few NGO Committee meetings – Mining Working Group, Stop trafficking in persons, and RUN – Religious at the UN meeting, which showed how networking and collaboration can take place at the global and local levels.

Participants of UN orientation sessions



Seven students of Vincentian Academy, Pittsburgh were accompanied by the Vice Principal Dr. Brad Swiger and Anne McDonough, Social Studies and ELL educator for a day of UN Orientation on October 21, 2016. The group was truly an international one – three from China, two from S. Korea and two from the United States. They brought a global perspective to the orientation, especially to the discussions on Sustainable Development Goals. In the afternoon they participated in a guided tour of the UN.



On September 30, members in partnership with the Sisters of Charity of New York came together for a UN Orientation and discussed the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The participants of the meeting were Nikki Bogan and Cristina Drey (PJIC Graduate Interns), Tyrone Hodges (College of Mount Saint Vincent Graduate Student), Bruce Segall (Coordinator for Immigrant Matters, volunteer with SCNY PJIC Office), Georgia James and Mario Pimentel (LEFSA team members) and Melissa Gibilaro (Coordinator for Justice, Peace and Care of Our Common Home for Sisters of Charity of Halifax NGO Liaison.)

Reflections on the Civil Society Forum Jan 30-31

Written by Ashley Lushinsky, College of Mount Saint Vincent



The civil society has to be involved in order for policy makers (at the local, national and global levels) to have the information they need to make educated decisions. Without civil society articulating their needs it's hard for the policy makers. A lot of times those who make decisions are far removed from the grassroots and it is easy to lose touch with everyday people and their needs.

I think it is important for NGOs to come together as coalitions. Instead of having six NGOs competing to achieve the same outcome, why not band those who work on the same issues together, to share ideas, resources, tactics, etc., to form a strong network. Many times there are a lot of facets to deal with one issue, so if there is a coalition of NGOs each one could specialize in one part instead of having one NGO trying to do everything, and maybe not being very effective in some aspects. An example: there are many issues around the refugee crisis (legal assistance, housing, health care, education, social integration, skills training, etc.) So, instead of one NGO trying to provide all these services,

and maybe not being successful, a coalition of NGOs can make a difference. Each one could specialize on one aspect to provide the best service to those who need them. Of course I realize it's much more complicated than this, but it would be a start.

It is equally important to know what the people you are serving need, not what you think they need. Not only there has to be buy-in from those being served, but their engagement in the process is a must to make any program successful.



Want to visit the United Nations? Contact Sr. Teresa Kotturan to set up an orientation.

- UPCOMING - EVENTS & NEWS

61st Commission on the Status of Women: March 13 – 25, 2017

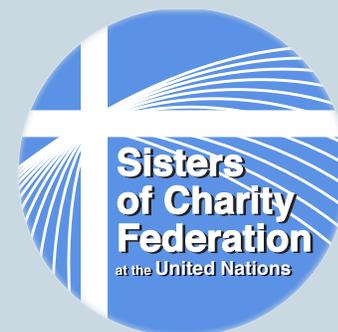
16th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: April 24 – May 5, 2017

ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development: May 22 -25, 2017

The Ocean Conference: June 5 – 9, 2017

High Level Political Forum: July 10 – 19, 2017

DPI/NGO Conference (New York): August 28 – 30, 2017



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