

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

(MGA UN)



Source: MGA UN

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## OFFICE NEWS



Source MGA UN

L to R: Claudia Brock, Olivia Hamilton, Anna Johnson (Jesuit Volunteer), Luz Guerra, Sr. Mary Galeone and Yuritzza Arroyo Sanchez

Once again, we have welcomed numerous visitors to the Mercy Global Action Office at the UN. On May 8th, we warmly welcomed Dr Robyn Miller who had just completed the Mercy Ethos Program at Mercy International Centre in Dublin. Robyn is the CEO of McKillop Family Services in Melbourne, Australia. She will be collaborating with the office on our human trafficking work.

On Friday, May 19th, volunteers of Mercy Volunteer Corps U.S, accompanied by Sr Mary Galeone RSM visited the office in order to learn more about the work of Mercy Global Action at the United Nations. These dedicated women spent the day immersed in the key concerns of our MGA office and learning about the different ways we advocate within the UN system. Although a small office, we managed to create a cozy gathering space! We wish these women all the very best in the future as they complete their roles as Mercy Volunteers at the end of June 2017.

# THROUGH OUR ECOSOC\* EYES...

*Reporting on the Second Thematic Session for a Global Compact on Migration  
May 22-23rd*

On the 22nd and 23rd of May, the Second Thematic Session towards a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This session focused on addressing the drivers of international migration, including adverse effects of climate change, natural disasters and human-made crises, through protection and assistance, sustainable development, poverty eradication, conflict prevention and resolution. Prior to the Second Session in New York, an issue brief was released, discussing what member states perceive the drivers of migration to be (economic, environmental, and human made crises), as well as challenges, best practices, and ways to move forward by utilizing the commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals. Some commitments outlined by Member States and other stakeholders were developed into a four-pronged approach focusing on 1) sustainable development and poverty eradication, 2) conflict prevention, 3) protection and assistance in crisis situations, and 4) the improvement of data collection and analysis as a means towards effective and informed policies. (To read Issue Brief #2, click [here](#)).

The NGO Committee on Migration responded to Issue Brief #2 detailing some of the important focal points that were lacking or in need of strengthening. Their response also called upon the collective actions and obligations of Member States in order to mitigate and reduce the adverse factors driving individuals into unsafe and disorderly patterns of migration. Government policies and choices "affect whether migration takes place through 'regular', authorized channels or through 'irregular,' unauthorized channels, and these choices influence the vulnerabilities associated with migration". Member States need to act with urgency and care whilst working towards reducing the drivers of migration. With particular attention to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, addressing women, conflict, poverty and discrimination, in addition Targets 10.7 and 8.8 to affirm safety and protection of individuals throughout the process, it can be assured that no one is left behind. To read the NGO Committee on Migration's response in entirety, see the link below!

Mexico and Switzerland, co-facilitators for the preparatory process leading to a global compact on migration, believe that the best way to engage and move forward to address the drivers of migration is to understand the experiences from those on the ground. If you are interested in following the outcomes of the session, please find the video below. The conclusions and summary of the Second Thematic Session can be viewed at this [\(link\)](#). Colleen Cloonan, Mercy Global Action at the UN Intern, will be attending the Third Thematic Session on international cooperation and governance of migration in all its dimensions, including at borders, on transit, entry, return, readmission, integration and reintegration in Geneva from June 19-20th.



Watch Concluding Session



Read NGO Committee on Migration's Response to Issue Brief #2

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

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



- **UN Event "Amplifying Women's Voices from the Global Displacement Crisis"**

At the United Nations in New York, representatives from the Mercy Global Action office recently attended an event entitled, 'Amplifying Women's Voices from the Global Displacement Crisis'. Co-sponsored by the Diplomatic missions of the USA and Philippines and also by the UN International Organization for Migration (IOM), this event provided member states, UN agencies, academia and civil society with the opportunity to:

- Consider the ways and challenges that the global displacement crisis particularly affects women and girls
- Highlight the importance of women's participation to affect change in international policy and programming
- Discuss the international policy opportunities that seek to tackle global displacement, including the Global Compacts on Refugees and Safe Orderly and Regular Migration and the entry points for including women's voice

Significantly, at this event, a number of formerly displaced women gave testimony to their experiences of displacement. Purita Cuzme, a displaced community representative who was affected by the earthquake that struck Ecuador in April 2016, shared the following:

'My house collapsed in the earthquake. I came to a camp. We were living under corrugated iron. Life in the camp was very difficult indeed. We did not know many people. We were together but we didn't know each other. We did what we could to forge ahead. It's very difficult in temporary structures to forge ahead with life. You have to share bathrooms, there is no opportunity for employment... We needed to recognize the value of women. We needed to see that we could contribute. We women, began to organize ourselves, we undertook many activities together... these activities gave us a flame of hope... People asked ME for help!... I was able to give them advice and they were asking favors of me... Being in a camp and being a woman did not mean that I had to keep my mouth closed. Now the army has its ranks, but I have a voice and I have a great many things to say with that voice... I learnt that I deserve respect (Purita Cuzme).

In summary, this event raised many issues and called for member states and humanitarian organizations to; increase the levels of financial support to women's groups during humanitarian crisis and recognize that refugee women are resilient and when they are empowered to advocate for themselves it can be transformative.



  
Watch this  
UN Event

- **NGO Committee on Migration**

Mercy Global Action at the UN recently joined the NGO Committee on Migration. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, the NGO Committee on Migration seeks to protect and promote the human rights of migrants.

The NGO Committee on Migration is comprised of NGO member organizations that focus on sub-themes in relation to migration such as: Follow-Up on the New York Declaration, Climate-Induced Displacement, Refugee Children, and Campaign Against Xenophobia and for Social Integration. These committees have been active in the thematic sessions and negotiations while the United Nations works towards a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; for example, UN Mission visits to Member States, oral and written statements and interventions during sessions, advocacy letters to Ambassadors, responding to issue briefs, and hosting events at the UN.

 To read more about the activities of the NGO Committee on Migration. Visit this link!

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# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*

## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH



• **Oceans Conference- June 5th - 9th**

The first Ocean Conference at the United Nations is currently convening to discuss imperative themes in order to reverse the decline of our world's oceans. The final draft "Call for Action" was published on May 26th and outlines state obligations and commitments for implementing SDG 14 on Oceans.



Read "Call for Action"



Watch the Oceans Conference

• **Mining Working Group Thematic Areas**

Mercy Global Action at the UN has been actively involved in the workings of the NGO Mining Working Group for the past five years. The NGO Mining Working Group acts as a coalition of NGO's working in collaboration with affected local communities. With advocacy at and through the United Nations, members address unjust and unsustainable practices of environmental and human rights as it pertains to extractive industries and other environmental degradation. In addition, they promote the usage of transparent international policies, national laws that heed international standards and obligations, as well as intervention as a means of addressing such injustices and violations.

This past month, the NGO Mining Working Group enhanced its strategic plan and will continue to focus on key issues such as the human right to water and sanitation, SDG implementation and monitoring, fracking, corporate accountability, and the gendered impact of environmental issues.

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## USEFUL RESOURCES

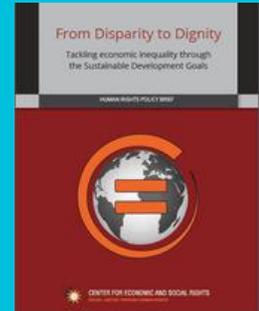
MGA at the UN Water and Ocean Reflection Series



**UNICEF's Report "A Child is a Child: Protecting children on the move from violence, abuse and exploitation"**



**Center for Economic and Social Rights "From Disparity to Dignity"**



**MIA Global Action's SDG 13 Pamphlet on Climate Action produced for World Environment Day**

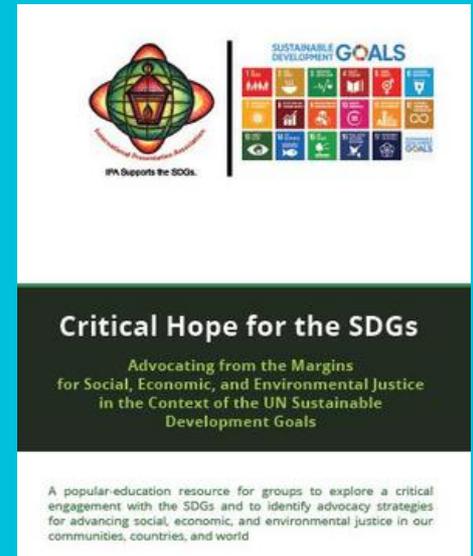


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# Update on the SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- *This new justice publication is a must read! It explores the SDGs and strategies for effective economic, social, and environmental advocacy.*

-The International Presentation Association, in partnership with other NGO's at the UN, recently released "Critical Hope for the SDGs: Advocating from the Margins for Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice in the Context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals". This guide "is an instrument of justice...[and will] enable critical engagement with root cause analysis and rights-based advocacy at the local and national level" (pg. 4). Within this guide, readers will be endowed and enabled with the tools for empowerment and agency whilst working towards informed action and analysis of systemic development issues.



## USEFUL RESOURCES

- **The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), in collaboration with CARITAS International, produced a short informative video detailing ways civil society and other faith based organizations can incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into their daily agenda, how to put them into action, and how to monitor their progress on a local, national, and global scale. To watch, just hover your cursor!**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*MGA at the UN will be attending*

- **5 - 9 June: Ocean Conference. United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**
- **June 19-20: Third Thematic Session For the Global Compact on Migration**
- **July 10-19: High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

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# OFFICE NEWS

We also had a surprise visit from three Mercy Sisters from the Western province of Ireland.

Sisters Attracta Canny, Dolores Dugan and Attracta Tighe were in New York for another event and were curious to see our work here.

This chance meeting was an opportunity to share Mercy passion and we all enjoyed a comfortable cup of tea! (See image on the right)



L to R: Attracta Canny rsm, Bridget Crisp rsm, Attracta Tighe, Angela Reed rsm, Dolores Duggan rsm



Sr Rita Valade rsm spent May 22nd immersed in the work of Mercy Global Action at the UN. Although

Rita was aware of the presence of the Sisters of Mercy at the UN she had never had the opportunity to visit the Mercy Global Action Office. Rita will continue to collaborate with the office into the future.

(Pictured on left).



L to R: Fr Joe Caddy and Fr Brendan Reed

On May 23rd, Fr Joe Caddy and Fr Brendan Reed, Diocesan priests from Melbourne, Australia, visited the MGA office in New York in order to gain a greater understanding of the advocacy work we undertake here on behalf of the Sisters of Mercy worldwide. Fr Joe is Episcopal Vicar for Social Services in the Melbourne Archdiocese. Fr Brendan is Parish Priest of Deepdene/Balwyn and Camberwell Parishes in Melbourne (Pictured on right).

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