

# MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION AT THE UN



## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION

Source: MIA at the UN

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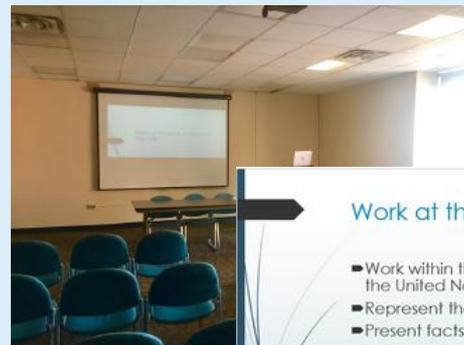
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## OFFICE NEWS

### VISITORS FROM CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

Once again, the Mercy International Association (MIA), Global Action at the UN has had a busy month filled with preparing for and attending meetings, but also welcoming international visitors. Colleen Cloonan, Fellow at the MGA UN office, presented to students, teachers, and parents that arrived from Villa Maria College, a Mercy school in Christchurch, New Zealand. Colleen shared a background of Catherine McAuley's commitment to social justice and how this vision, intrinsically tied with the work being done at the grassroots level, guides the advocacy at the UN office every day. The group later had an opportunity to tour the United Nations building to learn more about the history of the international organization. We wish them the best as they continue their travels and studies and look forward to future collaborations! Look out for a reflection from one of the students in our upcoming issue!



#### Work at the UN is a ministry

- Work within the structures and processes of the United Nations System.
- Represent those rendered vulnerable
- Present facts, figures, experiences
- Build up relationships with Diplomatic Missions
- Influence Public Policy- UN Charter & UDHR.
- Gospel Vision

Source MIA at the UN

### MIA AT THE UN COORDINATOR, ANGELA REED RSM DELIVERS KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO YOUNG MERCY LEADERS PROGRAM IN DUBLIN



Source: MIA



Click to read  
Keynote 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\* EYES...

## *The High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development*

The High-Level Political Forum is the primary platform for Member State Delegations and members of Civil Society to review their commitments and progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each year, the HLPF will act as a follow-up mechanism for specific Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed in depth in order to provide guidance and leadership, as well as discuss challenges and recommendations associated with achieving the goals. In addition, as per Paragraph 84 of the 2030 Agenda, Member States agreed to conduct Voluntary National Reviews each year; this year, 43 countries presented their outcomes (click here for more information). It is in the hope that through extensive reviews of the goals, both broad and on a national level, in addition to creating an inclusive setting for stakeholders to contribute their input, countries will be able to better facilitate the integration of social, environmental, and economic factors into their own agendas.

The theme the forum was "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world". Delegates and relevant stakeholders convened from July 10th-19th at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to review:

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

In addition to the Voluntary National Reviews and reviews of the SDG's, there were many side events conducted by Member State Delegations and members of Civil Society that honed in on the work being done at the grassroots level in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Many shared best practices, areas of collaboration, community participation and challenges they've faced. Others described whether or not NGOs across the world were aware of the SDG's or if their own countries were seeking to actualize the goals. As some of the responses to those questions were scattered, where do we stand two years after the implementation of Agenda 2030? It is evident that some progress has been made and countries continue to pledge their commitments, "internalizing SDG's into their strategies and planning processes, coordinating internally and among ministries...At the same time, there was broad recognition that challenges and risks ahead are daunting [environmental stressors, lack of social inclusion, inequality, as well as a lack of sufficient resources and funding], giving added weight to the need for strengthened solidarity, collaboration and coordinated action to ensure that no one is left behind" (President's Summary). With continued collaboration between UN Member States and Civil Society Organizations we can empower those to advocate for their human rights, demonstrate where there is need, what has been working, and what can be done.



2017 Spotlight on the SDG's



Watch Sessions from HLPF 2017



Read President's of the General Assembly's Summary of HLPF

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# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACED PERSONS



- ***MIA at the UN, Global Action, Attends Fourth Thematic Session on Migration***

The Fourth Thematic Session aimed at establishing a Global Compact for safe, orderly, and regular migration was held from July 24-25th at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The theme for this session was the "Contributions of migrants and Diasporas to all dimensions of sustainable development, including remittances and portability of earned benefits". Each panel at the session introduced imperative aspects of migration including topics such as contributions of migrants to sustainable development and remittances.



Source UN Web TV

It is imperative that UN Member States commit to the actions stated in Issue Brief #4 (click here), maximizing the benefits and impact of migration especially with contributions to sustainable development and capacity building by means of social and cultural wealth, in addition to economic. Furthermore, remittances for migrants, as assumed, was subject of contention among Member States. Remittances should be cost effective and not considered as social

protection for migrants. Members of migration and diasporas, regardless of gender, should be included in financial inclusion and development within the host country.

- ***First Multi-Stakeholder Meeting towards a Global Compact on Migration***

The first informal interactive multi-stakeholder meeting on migration brought new insights to the floor that were a benefit to the preparatory process for the Global Compact on Migration. This meeting gave civil society and other relevant stakeholders time to address issues and add insights and best practices that needed emphasis or weren't already mentioned during the previous thematic sessions.



Source UN Web TV

Opening the meeting, Louise Arbour, the Secretary General of the intergovernmental conference on international migration, expressed the imperative role that Civil Society has on decision making but "most importantly, we need political support for the commitments made in the compact if we don't want to fail people on the move and the millions of others who depend on them. As we have learned from past experiences, ambitious frameworks, and even legally binding instruments, do not have any effect at targeting those in need if they are poorly ratified or lack implementation". While progress has been made, it is crucial that Civil Society calls upon Member States' commitments and bring forth the experiences of others as key determinants for policy.

- ***Mercy International Association at the UN, Global Action, signs onto letter commending the Secretary General on Efforts to Stop Sexual Exploitation caused by UN Peacekeepers***

Over the past ten years, controversy has arisen regarding allegations against UN Peacekeepers and other personnel committing crimes of sexual exploitation and abuse - which have been known to be forms of human trafficking. Secretary General Antonio Guterres has remained committed to the UN's zero tolerance policy and has made intensive efforts to combat sexual exploitation, especially in these divisions. To commend his efforts, the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons wrote to the Secretary General and also offered some recommendations and ways to improve existing legislation on the subject. Click to the left to read this letter.



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# THEMATIC AREAS

*Continued*



## DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH

### Member States Reaffirm Commitments to Water at Third Special Thematic Session

July 20th marked the Third Special Thematic Session on Water and Disasters entitled "Adaptation to Climate Change, Boosting Financing and Investment, and Advancing Science and Technology". This session was convened under resolution A/RES/71/222 of the General Assembly marking an International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 and recalls and reaffirms commitments of UN Member States to take steps to achieve internationally agreed goals in relation to water including the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, as well as relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

Solving water related issues is critical for sustainable development, as "lack of access to safe drinking water sources, basic sanitation and sound hygiene, water-related disasters, water scarcity and water pollution will be further exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought and other extreme weather events and climate change" (A/RES/71/222). Within the opening session of the meeting, Mr Wu Hongbo, the Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs stated "I am convinced that these initiatives, combined with other ongoing actions by the UN system, the business and civil society, will help induce and multiply innovative solutions to the water and disaster challenge. Water is life. Water is livelihood. Water is the bloodline of the ecosystem and water is future. Let us value and treasure it, as we value and treasure our children." It is imperative that we take these statements to heart, not lose hope, and use them as tools for advocacy to hold governments accountable.



Source UN Web TV



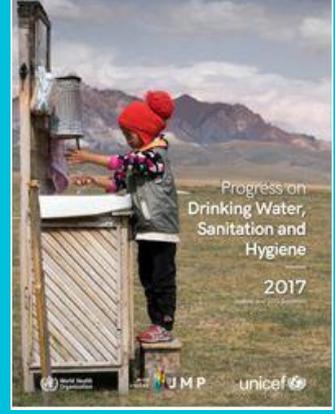
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## USEFUL RESOURCES

UN Women's Recommendations for addressing women's human rights in the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration



### Progress on Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene 2017 update, and SDG baseline



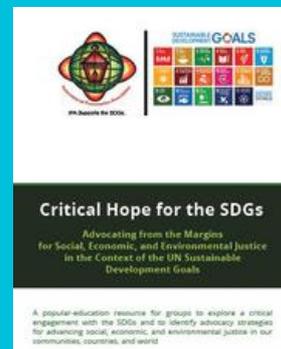
### APT's Position paper on the global compact on migration: preventing torture of migrants



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Update on the

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



## • "Critical Hope for the SDG's": Unraveling Step 2: See

If you recall from the last newsletter, we analyzed the first step within "Critical Hope for the SDG's" --Imagine--as a tool for justice and advocacy. This issue will focus on the second step--See. To see and address the situation at the margins is critical before conducting advocacy work. Seeing helps "ground our analysis, priorities and action in lived experiences, gather information and assessments within a human-rights framework, identify the most marginalized or excluded, and empower those suffering injustices to identify as rights-holders and agents of change" (pg. 22). While we could always assume what we think is happening in an area, it is not always wise. Gather specific information and questions from those experiencing the situation at hand but also ensure that you have a basic understanding of certain public policy solutions already in place, in addition to the government's legal obligations, this can help guide your advocacy. Through seeing, individuals have the ability to register the current situation of human rights, the "level of disparities between groups, and whether things are getting better or worse" (pg. 23) within a particular community or country as a means to directly address them through international advocacy. We will continue on to "Step 3. Judge" in our next issue! Stay tuned!



## USEFUL RESOURCES-'HEALING EARTH'

Our office highly recommends this very informative and challenging online resource that a colleague working within the NGO sector at the UN has brought our attention. Produced by the International Jesuit Ecology Project, Loyola University, Chicago, Healing Earth explores key concerns for our time through four critical lenses; Science, Ethics, Spirituality and Action. Divided into various chapters, this resource explores biodiversity, natural resources, energy, water, food and climate change through facts and reflection from a human rights, spiritual and ethical lens. This resource would be useful in secondary schools, tertiary institutions, community advocacy groups and for individuals seeking to understand more about the challenges facing our earth community. The Co-directors of the project state, ' The overall goal of Healing Earth is to help all of us grow into integral ecologists, people from every walk of life and region of the world who dare to imagine a healed Earth and are willing to put their hands, hearts and minds to the task'. (Click here!)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*MGA at the UN will be attending*

- 4th-5th September - Fifth Informal Thematic Session for Global Compact on Migration
- 12th-25th September - 72 Session of the UN General Assembly
- 18th-24th September - Climate Week
- 27th-28th September - UNGA High Level Meeting on Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons

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## ANGELA REED RSM DELIVERS KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON TRAFFICKING PREVENTION

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and The Centre for Civil and Human Rights, Notre Dame University co-convoked a workshop on July 11, 2017. The one day workshop held at CRS headquarters in Baltimore, was aimed at formulating a comprehensive action-framework to prevent human trafficking.

The workshop entitled 'Taking a Step Back: Working Together to Prevent Human Trafficking' was webcast through Facebook Live enabling a wide and more diverse audience to participate. The keynote address by Sr Angela spoke to five areas:

- The importance of listening to Survivor Advocates,
- Challenging the dominant discourse on human trafficking,
- Exploring vulnerabilities to Human Trafficking over the Life Course,
- Exploring the Optimal Life Course Conditions
- An overview on why we must focus on prevention.

Following this address there were three initial respondents, who reflected on what they had heard and how it is relevant to their particular work and approach to human trafficking.

CRS/Protection, Lucy Y Steinitz

U.S Department of State, Office of Trafficking in Persons , Julie Short Echalar,

CRS/ From the field, Sanjana Das from India via Skype

The keynote and respondents can be viewed here:



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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