



Partnership for Global Justice

September 2015

Partnership For Global Justice Monthly Newsletter

Welcome to the Partnership for Global Justice Monthly – a newsletter about PGJ programs, news from the United Nations and its briefings, and information about the activities of our participating membership. With this Monthly, we invite our members to provide updates of their social justice initiatives and share their related experiences. Please respond to this posting with a comment on our blog or send your thoughts to partnershipforglobaljustice@gmail.com.

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LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOANN MARK, ASC



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Report on PGJ Annual Meeting September 12, 2015

The Annual Meeting on September 12 at River's Edge in Cleveland was a packed day. At that meeting, the membership selected the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) to which the Executive Director is to give priority. They are:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere,

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Other issues discussed and having considerable support were:

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries,

Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, and the issue of migration.

This last issue is not specifically mentioned as a Sustainable Development Goals, only as one Target under Goal 10, but the need to migrate will be greatly reduced if the SDGs are achieved.

Also, at the meeting, both the membership and the board approved the **Strategic Plan** for 2015-2018. A part of the plan calls for Regional Representatives who will engage members, teachers and youth in the country or region in which they live. The responsibilities of a Regional Representative will be developed as the positions become realities.

At this time I am delighted to report that Donna Luetters has agreed to be the **first Regional Representative**. She lives in Wichita, Kansas, and has been volunteering with the Partnership. If, when you read this, you are interested in being a Regional Representative, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Our **next Annual Meeting** will be in New York City in conjunction with the fall 2016 NGO/DPI conference. As soon as I have the date, I will publish it. Meanwhile, there will be an "Exploring the UN" program for college students on October 9. Another is being planned for early February. If you have a group interested in learning more about the UN, please contact the office and I will see what PGJ can do to meet the needs of your group.

By the time you receive this, I will have had the privilege of praying vespers with the Pope and, hopefully, the UN will be moving to implement the SDGs.



“THE ‘NEW’ BIOLOGY: THE SCIENCE OF CREATING HEAVEN ON EARTH” WITH BRUCE H. LIPTON KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT PGJ ANNUAL MEETING 2015

Response by Donna Luetters, PGJ Regional Representative, Kansas:

I was most intrigued by the speaker’s discussion of the ‘evolution’ of spirituality through a series of civilizations (animatism, polytheism, monotheism and secular materialism). His point was that, as civilizations progressed, they removed the spiritual presence from existing in all of creation to one God residing apart from earth in a distant heaven. This only affirmed my desire to include contemplative prayer in my daily life in order to welcome God back into my everyday activities and into every part of creation around me.

Response by Rosemary Russell, CPPS:

I was most impressed with Dr. Lipton’s donation of his presentation as gratis in honor of Catholic Sisters for their bravery and belief in themselves and what they do as good in face of the Vatican investigations.

I was also impressed by his testimony that his own study and research changed him and his faith. Especially interesting for me was how he broke down the theory of determinism, “I am a victim of my heredity/my genes,” by breaking apart four of the myths of our perception and assumptions over the centuries that were built on those myths. Instead he illustrated how we, humans, are body, mind and spirit. The past assumptions and pharmaceuticals would have us believe we are only body. That is what brings in the money for pharmaceuticals. Our perception of things and our environment are at work in our lives as well as our genes. We may not be able to change our genes, but we can change both our perceptions and our environment. Very hopeful thoughts for me.



MEET OUR SECOND YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE: JENNIFER MASCARO



Hello! My name is Jennifer Mascaro, and I am proud to present myself as one of the new youth representatives to the UN through The Partnership for Global Justice.

I have just begun my second year of nursing school at Molloy College. This summer I had the privilege of attending the Salzburg Global Seminar with Molloy's Honors Program. We specifically discussed the issues surrounding global citizenship, and I look forward to not only sharing my experiences from the conference with other representatives, but to expanding my proficiency in the subject as well.

Although I am technically a science major, which to most people that means a left-brain individual, if I had to sum myself up in one word it would probably be a "humanitarian." Nurses are a unique member of the healthcare team because they provide a warm, human quality to patient care. Being open-minded, kind, and driven are all qualities that not only make an excellent nurse, but an excellent global citizen. Therefore, I hope that I am able to take away valuable experiences and knowledge from working with the PGJ that I can translate into the hospital. It brings me so much joy knowing that, even through something as simple as discussions with other youth representatives, I can make a difference in the lives of others. My hope is that someday I can merge these two aspects of my life and have a large-scale impact on the world.

I would love to extend a huge thank you to The Partnership for presenting me with this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am looking forward to working with representatives from around the globe in the coming months.



AT THE UN IN SEPTEMBER

The major events of September – the Opening of the General Assembly, addresses by Heads of State, vote to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals, and of course, most anticipated, the address of Pope Francis to the general Assembly and the world, occurred as we were publishing this issue, so those reports will be in the October newsletter.

The Annual **High-Level Forum of the General Assembly on Culture of Peace** was held on September 9. Secretary-General **Ban Ki-Moon** called for an end to funding violence, especially in Syria. He deplored the “war crimes being committed now” – violence in the name of race, culture, or religion – instead of recognizing “our globalized humanity.” He said especially of those who create violence in the name of religion, “They claim glory but create only shame.”

Mr. Ban also recommended that, because of young people’s yearning for peace, they should have a seat at negotiating tables for peace. The Sustainable Development Goals, he stated, offer a “holistic approach to systematic human development – and peace.” In this 70th anniversary of the UN, in a “world shattered,” the UN has been working for those values, saving people, working on the “front lines of human misery” to “prevent conflict and promote negotiation.”

The keynote speaker was Mr. **Arun Gandhi**, The Peace Farmer and grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, who said he was just passing on some of the wisdom he learned from his grandfather.

A few of his themes:

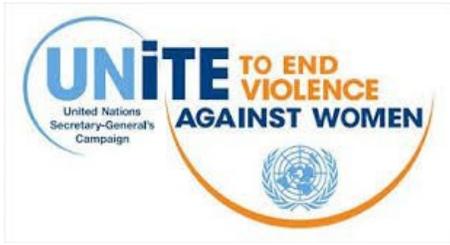
- “We have to have a global vision. No country can have peace and security when the whole rest of the world going down the tubes.”
- “We don’t know the meaning of peace. Not fighting is not enough. Non-violence not understood; it is not enough to be not violent. . . Nonviolence is not a weapon of convenience, but of personal transformation.”
- “Governments can’t create the peace, but all of us individually as part of society have to live nonviolently for us to have peace. We must become the change we wish to see in the world.”

Mr. Gandhi also spoke about the violence of waste – “a violence against nature” – by which “we are depriving others of the world’s resources – violence vs humanity.” He cited a recent *New York Times* article saying that people in the United States throw away \$20 billion worth of food each year. He remarked that a “lifestyle of materialism and morality are in inverse proportion: as one grows the other decreases.”

After a Musical Interlude, representatives of twenty-six nations (including the United States) spoke of the violence they are suffering and/or efforts to live more peacefully. We will have a peaceful world in a few weeks if they all live up to their words!



UN WOMEN UNITE TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN CAMPAIGN



As mentioned in the June Newsletter, when Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon launched the UNITE to End Violence Against Women Campaign in 2008, he proclaimed the 25th of EVERY month as "Orange

Day" – a day to take action to raise awareness and prevent violence against women and girls, by wearing orange, and by stimulating conversation, or planning a video or other activity about ending this violence.

The Board and Members of the Partnership present at the Annual Meeting chose Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls – as one of three major focuses. Participating in the Orange Day campaign would be a great way to promote this SDG.

We again invite all to join Partnership Member congregation The Sisters of the Most Precious Blood in O'Fallon, Missouri, in observing Orange Day with a [special prayer](#) for women and girls around the world on this day.

October Orange Campaign Theme

Ensuring access to services for survivors of violence against women and girls

November Orange Campaign Theme

Orange your world

November 25 will also begin "16 Days of Activism" (until December 10), to draw attention to women's and girls' increased need for protection against violence. UN Women has prepared a

free [toolkit](#) with suggestions for the 16 Days.

One suggestion: Sr. Rosemary Russell, CPPS, contacted a local TV station to ask them to participate in the 16 Days. If you schedule an event, your local station might cover it.



UPDATE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



**FINANCING FOR
DEVELOPMENT**
13-16 JULY 2015 · ADDIS ABABA · ETHIOPIA
TIME FOR GLOBAL ACTION



The Global Sisters Report section of the *National Catholic Reporter* for September 11-24, 2015, contains an [excellent article](#) critiquing the Conference, featuring four of our colleagues at the UN, Sr. Jean Stoner, of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur; Fr. Daniel LeBlanc, of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate-United States Province; Sr. Teresa Kotturan, of the Sisters of Charity Federation; and Sr. Celine Paramundayil, of the Medical Mission Sisters.

SUGGESTED READING ON LAUDATO SI' AND CLIMATE CHANGE

[“The Pope and The Planet”](#) is one of the most intelligent and perceptive article about the encyclical that I have come across. The author, Bill McKibben, is one of the foremost advocates for environmental responsibility.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE BY JOANN MARK, ASC

The final activities of the International Day of Peace at the Church Center for the United Nations began at 5:00 pm on Monday, September 21. United Methodist Minister to the UN spoke about A Tale of Two 70s: The 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the United Nations and the Hiroshima/Nagasaki Atomic Bombing. He quoted from The Tale of Two Cities: “It was the best of times; it was the worst of times” indicating the contrast between the founding of the UN and the dropping of the atomic bomb. The order described in the UN Charter is an order enforced by reason, the order of the bomb is an order enforced by force. He stated that “war is the opposite of life” not “the opposite of peace” and that “war is a failure of imagination.” In summary, I could say his presentation was a call to use our imaginations to protect the dignity of all and to forge partnerships for peace.

This presentation was followed by a powerful concert by the Cantico Nuevo Ecu-
menical Choir. The music was not only uplifting, it also invited those present to
join the singing, the clapping and the sharing of insights from the day’s activities.
I think it is safe to say that everyone left energized and blessed.



UN EVENTS OF INTEREST: 2015

October 1	International Day of Older Persons
October 11	International Day of the Girl Child
October 16	World Food Day
October 17	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2015
October 19	Second World Summit on the Information Society
October 24	United Nations Day
November 19	International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
November 23	Observance of International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (November 29)
December 10	Human Rights Day

COMING IN 2016

February 1 – 2	Economic and Security Council Youth Forum
March 14 - 24	Commission on the Status of Women
May 9 - 20	Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
June 14 - 16	Conference on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
July 11-22	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development