



Partnership for Global Justice

September 2016

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

Dear PGJ Member,

Summer has ended and autumn is upon us. This means the UN General Assembly has a new president, heads of state have participated in the United Nations General Assembly, and colleges and universities are in full operation. By the time you receive this we will once again be able to enter the United Nations with only our ground passes. Does that mean we are back to “business as usual?” I don’t think so and I certainly hope not. Here are a few reasons for my hope.

The General Assembly approved the [New York Declaration](#) on Migrants and Refugees. While this does not completely eliminate the detention of unaccompanied minors, it at least sets some limits. The [complete document](#) is available.

The selection of the next Secretary General is more open and transparent than at any time in the past. Many nations speaking at the General Assembly condemned the recent bombing of aid workers. The United Nations continues to affirm achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ratification of the COP21 Climate statement.

I also have hope for the future of Partnership for Global Justice (PGJ). The Vice President for Academic Affairs at Molloy College, Dr. Branchini, is supportive of PGJ’s work with students and faculty, and provided an introduction to the Dean of the Molloy School of Nursing. A meeting with the Dean and two faculty members has led to active engagement at the UN. Relations with the Ed. D. program faculty continue to develop and grow stronger as we plan a time for the students to visit the UN.

Interns from both Newman University and Molloy College are actively engaged in worthwhile projects and are planning to increase awareness of key issues. Khoi Nguyen, Newman University intern, will present at off-campus sites on the value of pulses (legumes) in enriching the soil, providing a healthy food source, and in supporting the SDGs. Arthur Zeltser, Molloy College intern, will develop and host a trafficking awareness day on the Molloy campus.

There is an orientation, Exploring the UN, scheduled for November 11. If any of you have interns, students or faculty who would like to participate in this event, please contact me immediately at partnershipforglobaljustice@gmail.com or 212-682-6481.

We are also fast approaching our **Annual Meeting** on October 15. I am very pleased with the number of attendees who are staying for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and the UN tour on Monday, October. 17. PGJ is honored to present the Annual Peace and Justice Award to Sister Antoinette Temporiti (Toni), CPPS for, among other accomplishments, founding MicroFinancing for Africa. On Sunday, Oct.16, the PGJ Board will spend a day with Mary Sue Kennedy, OP planning the future direction and activities of PGJ. Please keep the Board in your prayers.

I wish you a colorful and fruitful autumn with abundant justice and spiritual harvest.



JoAnn Mark, ASC
Executive Director



AT THE UN IN SEPTEMBER

September 1 High level Forum on the Culture of Peace

by M. Doretta Cornell, RDC

On September 1, 2016, **Mr. Mogens Lykketoft**, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly, convened a one-day High Level Forum to assess the world's progress, on the anniversary of the adoption of the [Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace](#)

The *Eight Actions Areas* in the Declaration are:

1. Fostering a culture of peace through education
2. Promoting sustainable economic and social development
3. Promoting respect for all human rights
4. Ensuring equality between women and men
5. Fostering democratic participation
6. Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity
7. Supporting participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge
8. Promoting international security

At the Opening of the Forum, **Mr. Lykketoft** remarked that much remains to be done to end the violence that is presently escalating, especially that between religious and ethnic groups. *The UN*, he said, “*is a rejection of the world as it is, for what it could be.*”

Keynote speaker, **Ms Ouided Bouchamaoui**, Founder of The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (as part of the Quartet) 2015, described Tunisia's intensive program to maintain democracy after the 2011 Revolution and parliamentary elections. Knowing that elections alone would not establish a peaceful and stable nation, Ms. Bouchamaoui, along with Tunisia's General Labour Union, Human Rights League, and Order of Lawyers (the Quartet), initiated dialogues to lay the basis for meeting basic needs met, protecting human rights and establishing democratic processes.

This difficult collaborative work continues, she told us, enabling Tunisia to make significant social reforms to, for instance, promote gender equality, ensure women an essential role in development, provide free schooling, and promote the family.

As a result, 67% of Tunisian graduates are women; Tunisia has maintained peace and security even when facing terrorism in Tunisia because of instability in Libya and other surrounding nations. She pointed out that terrorism seeks to instill fear, and to succeed against it, we must resist being afraid. She called on all at the UN to work against terrorism and to stop conflating Islam with terrorism, which is merely using the religion as cover.

As youth are especially vulnerable, they must be included in the work to create a culture of peace, so that they see themselves having a part in creating their own futures.



AT THE UN IN SEPTEMBER CONTINUED...

Then followed **Statements by Member States** (43 Presidents, Prime Ministers and other senior officials signed up to speak!) laying out their current efforts and/or struggles to create a Culture of Peace. Here are just a few of the insights into the struggle for a peaceful world:

Qatar has committed national agencies to promote information and established an Alliance for Human Civilization and an Interreligious Dialogue Center, making efforts to involve youth, to educate and protect them from extremist violence. Sport is also a major focus; Qatar will host the next World Cup to promote peace and international understanding.

Albania quoted native daughter, Mother Teresa: *“If we have no peace, we forgot we belong to each other.”* The recent 20th Forum for the end of conflicts in the area concluded, *“We say no to the violence of the world.”* All participants signed on to the resolution.

Many nations mentioned poverty and economic, social and gender inequality as the obstacles to peace that need to be addressed. Education, job opportunities, and invitations to participate in development and governance are essential to direction the energy of youth to peace. Many nations mentioned that the Sustainable Development Goals capture the elements necessary for a Culture of Peace.

Tajikistan, like many of the nations with a history of being torn by violence, mentioned the difficulty of recovering and of repatriation of those dispossessed by the violence. Like most of the small nations, Tajikistan asked for international support and cooperation, including financial support, to promote and sustain peace.

Iran, like several others, called for universal recognition that *“There is no military solution to the world’s problems”* and called for international resolve to more dialogue to promote understanding, justice and peace. *The priority for this generation, he said, is Peace.* Several nations recommended reexamining military budgets to redirect scarce funds toward peace, not violence.

Panama, among others, called on all nations to increase their contributions to the United Nations so that we can work together to overcome extremism and establish peace. In too many countries, human rights lose out to military budgets.

A clever innovation from **Cambodia** is using Facebook for their youth to communicate directly with the Prime Minister. **Andorra** has created an Art Camp, with UNESCO, drawing artists from all over the world. The minister noted that Andorra exists only because of treaties, and stressed the need for respect for the Rule of Law.

Nation after nation called for the universal **adoption of education for peace** at all levels, in schools and beyond.

Colombia cited its new cease-fire and peace agreement with FARC as a model for negotiation and peace efforts. The agreement was created through dialogue with people from all sectors, rural, Indigenous, those of African heritage, etc. Central points are the re-integration of the combatants into society and the attention to child soldiers who were illegally dragooned into violence.



AT THE UN IN SEPTEMBER CONTINUED...

In the **Afternoon Sessions**, many of the same themes arose, with more emphasis on the role of the Sustainable Development Goals in transforming the way things are not to a world-wide Culture of Peace.

Several nations elaborated on the difficulties they face. **Pakistan**, for instance, besides contending with ongoing violence and needing assistance to end the extreme poverty, has to plan and operate among *over 100 ethnic groups and in over 1,000 languages!* Others, like **Honduras**, spoke not only of their own needs, but of coping with large groups of refugees from surrounding countries who are seeking shelter from violence and more poverty.

The Panel Discussion. *I don't usually stay for sessions lasting until 6 pm, but on this day, the speakers were so compelling I could not leave! I will give highlights from only four.*

The first speaker was **Ahmed Alhendawl**, UN Secretary-General's first ever **Envoy on Youth**.

Mr. Alhendawl called on us to recognize the importance of recognizing young people as part of the solution. With over **600 million young people** suffering from violence, as refugees and/or unemployed, they are too often seen as the problem. **"Looking at youth as the problem will make them the problem,"** he said. We must see their suffering and work for them.

A major challenge facing youth is being kept from school by poverty and violence. Many have no hope for peace. These young people need opportunity. In Honduras and the Congo, when young people were asked to help with construction, they dropped their guns. **Half the world is under 25 years of age!** We must work to offer them opportunities to change their communities.

He urged us not to fail this generation. We must offer answers and learn to understand and counter the "social cancer" of extremism. There is no one answer; we need more research and commitments to fund it.

Another very strong speakers, **Ingeborg Breines** of Norway, Co-President of the International Peace Bureau (IPB), Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1910, and present Director of The Women and a Culture of Peace Programme at UNESCO, made a strong case for rethinking the way the world's money is used. **"The world is using our resources unwisely,"** she stated bluntly. This must change. **Military budgets now consume \$1.7 trillion a year.** Refocusing this on the planet's needs would have an enormous impact. Besides excessive military spending proving ineffective for security, one year's military funding could strengthen those in poverty for 650 years, if added to the UN budget. She suggested that if every nation culled its military spending at the same rate, the balance of power would not change, but millions would be freed for feeding people.

Barbara Marx Hubbard, founder and leader of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution, reminded us that the SDGs signal an "emergent society and give us a vision of what kind of world we *can* have. In the widest view of evolutionary consciousness, Nature moves from disorder to order. When a system becomes highly disordered, eventually the system cooperates by connecting what is essential. Crises, such as we are experiencing, are opportunities for innovation.

The **First Step** to enhance synergy to advance the SDGs and Culture of Peace, says Ms. Hubbard, is **to identify what is working** -- not what is *not* working -- to see what is breaking through. (This will also build hope that we can change things.)

The **Second Step** is to create a new way of convening people as a whole system, collect all things that are working in one website, for instance, so all can refer to this instead of having to re-create good methods. This also will foster a feeling of hope. She recommended that the UN should be the gathering place for all this. **(This recommendation stands out to me: it sounds exactly like the process used to create the SDGs, and the current efforts to monitor progress and share practices.)** Ms. Hubbard mentioned that on November 3, there will be a gathering to share ideas on this topic.



September 8: Climate Neutral Now: Sports and Individual Contributions to Climate Action

by M. Doretta Cornell, RDC

[Editor's Note: This was much more interesting and generally informative than I expected when I learned this morning that it was about sports. I had no idea sports groups were focusing on climate change and happy to learn about these interesting actions and initiatives.]

Tracy Raczek, Climate Policy Advisor, UN Secretary General's Climate Team and Moderator of this program explained that [Climate Neutral Now](#) monitors what is being done on climate change and progress toward meeting the Paris Agreement.

Mr. **David Nabarro**, UN Special Adviser on Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, representing the Secretary-General of the United Nations, outlined **what the United Nations itself is doing** to meet Paris Agreement goals. The UN is working to become climate neutral by 2020. Twenty-three UN organizations are already climate neutral. The recently renovated UN buildings in New York use 50% less energy and 40% less water than old ones, put less than 5% of the organization's waste in landfills, and produce 45% less greenhouse gas. The UN will soon switch to wind energy for the Secretariat Building. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has offset his travel for last five years.

Halldor Thorgeirsson, Senior Director of Strategy from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)), reported that **many non-state parties are acting** to achieve Paris Agreement standards. There is a ground swell of support for the governments' commitments from civil society, businesses (big ones and significant number of oil and gas companies, especially in Europe), investors (who are seeing the risk of climate change), moral leaders (Pope Francis is extremely significant, but others are also saying this is a moral issue), governments at local level (mayors and governors are reporting what they are doing and why).

The costs of solutions has collapsed, with renewable energy now in many places at parity with traditional carbon energy sources. **The good News:** the renewable energy transformation is happening not at the expense of other objectives: "It is about the economy, stupid."

The Paris Agreement was a courageous step, taking the full challenge head-on and opting for a transformative, disruptive course out of the danger zone the Earth is in. The risk is great, for some countries more than others.

The How. There are four aspects to climate neutrality:

Footprint awareness, understanding your impact; [measure your footprint here](#).

1. Give people alternatives and make them aware of them
2. Recognize action and contributions as this meeting is doing here. Non-State actors for climate action are creating a platform on which to speak out on what groups are doing.

Disclosure of footprints. Exposing the carbon use of corporations, for instance, along with financial risk.



CLIMATE NEUTRAL NOW....CONTINUED

Ms. **Fatma Samba Diouf Samoura**, the new Secretary General of the Federale Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the first female and first non-European in that position, introduced the initiatives of FIFA. Being from Madagascar, which is heavily affected by climate change, Ms. Samoura understands the urgency.

FIFA is working to limit impact of sports events on the environment and also to give good example to their audiences. FIFA is the first sports organization to join the Paris Agreement, handing in their pledge that day to be carbon neutral in 2020's, and aiming for a carbon-neutral World Cup 2018.

Federico Addiechi, also of FIFA, informed us that FIFA in 2006 began its interest in becoming climate neutral by wanting to support the SDGs, to see how football could influence change. They started by investing in analysis the footprint of their events and offsetting them. They offset their travel footprint, and recent World Cups in South Africa and in Brazil, and are planning for next one in Russia.

Looking at **FIFA's own operations and staff**, they saw that 75% of their footprint was from travel so offset 100% of these emissions and took steps to reduce these, for instance by having media conferences instead of traveling to meet, when possible.

The 2011 **Women's World Cup** applied the same standards, and from then on it became the comprehensive practice, looking at social, economic, and climate considerations of FIFA's transportation, as well as consumption, waste management, etc. FIFA is continuing to improve and hopes to share their practices with other sports organizations.

Individual Contributions

Jouni Keronen, Executive Director of Climate Leadership Finland and Storm Warning, has rallied artists to activate individuals. They analyzed the percentage of Finland's carbon emission attributable to individuals and are aiming for aim one-third carbon reductions by introducing geothermal and wind pumps, promoting efficient care and educating about kinds of food that produce fewer carbon emissions.

Storm Warning has created a **Citizen's Pledge** to cut footprints by half, urging pledgers to reduce what they can and offset the rest. So far, more than 2,000 people have joined, even though they have launched no major campaign yet. The Pledge has the backing of the president, prime minister, church leaders, artists, and many other leaders. This Citizen's Pledge is now going international. See [Climate Neutral Now](#) and join as an individual and invite organizations to join.



HONORING MOTHER TERESA

September 9: Honoring Mother Teresa

by JoAnn Mark, ASC



On September 9 an event entitled “*Leaving No One Behind: Mother Teresa’s Enduring Message for the International Community Today*” sponsored by the Holy See Mission, together with the Permanent Missions of Albania, India, Italy, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and ADF International was held at the UN.

Presentations by Alan Sears, Father Leo Maasburg, Kathryn Spink, and Father Daniel Jones were interspersed with videos from Mother Teresa’s talk at the UN in 1985. **Bernadito Cardinal Cleopas Auza**, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, moderated the panel.

Alan Sears of ADF International spoke about Mother Teresa as an international figure who embodied the founding vision of the United Nations. While the UN fosters a secular hope for peace, Mother Teresa sought to provide individuals with a greater peace by showing them someone really cares.

Father Leo Maasburg, priest from Austria who accompanied Mother Teresa on many journeys and served as her spiritual advisor, translator and confessor, told stories from his experience. These are little known stories which he has sought to preserve in his book *Mother Teresa of Calcutta: A Personal Portrait*. In his presentation he mentioned Mother Teresa’s emphasis on doing small things with great love and her amazing presence to each person – one by one.

Kathryn Spink, author of *Mother Teresa: An Authorized Biography*, spoke about Mother Teresa’s many accomplishments and how these exemplify “Leaving No One ,” which is a mantra for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Father Daniel Jones, current spiritual advisor to the Missionaries of Charity in New York, talked about Mother Teresa’s “business card,” which we had received as we entered. It contains the words “*The fruit of silence is prayer; the fruit of prayer is faith; the fruit of faith is love; the fruit of love is service; the fruit of service is peace.*”



UN SECURITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

September 15 : UN Security Council Conference on the Middle East

A Review by Arthur Zeltser, PGJ Intern and Molloy College Student

On September 15, 2016, the **UN Security Council** hosted a conference that accentuated on the turbulent scenarios in the Middle East, particularly in the Palestinian Territories and Syria. The conference was administered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand Murray McCully. I was unable to attend this meeting as it was considered to be exclusive but instead I managed to watch a live broadcast through UN Web Television.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commenced the discussion by wishing the Jewish colleagues a happy *Shanah Tovah* and Muslim colleagues a happy *Eid al-Adha*. He emphasized that September 15 marks the *23rd anniversary of the Oslo Accords*, ratified between the State of Israel and Palestine Liberation Organization. The agreement sought to resolve the territorial disputes between the Israeli and Palestinian governments, pursuant to which a Palestinian self-governing entity was established on the Gaza soil – the Palestinian National Authority, and the Israeli Defense Forces were requested to withdraw. Unfortunately miniscule advancements were executed to mitigate the strained relationship between Israel and the Palestine, even twenty-three years following the agreement.

Mr. Ban mentioned that the preceding day that the Palestinian military launched a rocket into the Israeli territory, and that rockets are an incessant issue. The Palestinian state has launched attacks against the citizens of the Israeli state since the Olympic Games hosted in Munich in 1972. Ki-moon also emphasized on the status of democracy in the Palestinian state after he mentioned that the preceding week the Palestinian government suspended elections. This measure could hamper democratic ideals in the territory. As for Israel's measures, the military launched an operation to occupy buildings in the Gaza Strip that do not yield permits, whereupon many citizens in this area have been dispersed throughout the country, especially the farmers. Thus far, according to Mr. McCully, 463 buildings in the Gaza Strip have been occupied by the Israeli army. One of the few measures to mitigate the strained Israel-Palestinian relationship occurred in 2014 when both states managed to cooperate on reconstructing houses and schools in the Gaza Strip. Israel and the Palestine continue to cooperate in the field of transport of construction material (not for military use).

The **Egyptian Representative** emphasized that the Palestine is a pseudo state; it claims to be independent when it is *de facto* governed by another. He requested that Israel comply with the *Arab-Peace Initiative of 2002*, which also sought to mitigate the strains between Israel and the Palestine in exchange for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and resettlement of the Palestinian refugees. He, as one of leaders of the Arab states, believes that if Israel withdraws from the region, many Middle Eastern nations can normalize diplomatic relations with the Israeli State. He accentuated that Egypt, as Israel's formal rival, managed to normalize diplomatic relations with Jerusalem following the enactment of a Peace Treaty in Washington D.C. in 1979, just a year following the enactment of the Camp David Accords.

The **French Representative** summoned the two-state solution, which calls for an independent Palestine in the vicinity of the Israeli state, both of which should maintain legal and internationally recognized borders. The state leaders accentuated this solution at the Paris conference that was hosted last June. I recall monitoring this conference back in June and, alas, neither the heads of the Israeli nor Palestinian delegation attended the discussion. This I deem as deplorable conduct by both delegations as animosity is a factor that hampers the normalization of ties between the two states.

The **Representative of the Russian Federation** stated that he believed that the **Middle Eastern Quartet** [The European Union, United Nations, Russia, and the United States] can provide the two states with principles that can lead to a solution and that partnership with this Quartet is vital. He emphasized that the Israeli and Palestinian heads are scheduled meeting in Moscow to discuss mitigation. According to the British online news database *The Independent*, this would be the premier face-to-face conversation between the two heads in two decades.



The **Representative of Senegal** emphasized that the humanitarian situation in the Palestine is deplorable. In addition to the dispersed community, the water supply is erratic and only 5% of the water in the Gaza Strip is deemed sanitary. This is attributed to the destruction of the humanitarian structures and water systems that were originally constructed by UNICEF. The Senegalese Representative elucidated that if the Palestine decides to resume the elections, then there can be mitigation between the Israeli and Palestinian representatives on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The **Representative of the United States** commenced by stating how much she reveres the current Israeli President Reuven Rivlin for his ambitious agenda to achieve peace with the Palestinians. Recently he has been hospitalized, and she wished him a quick recovery.

Like the other representatives, the Representative of the United States expressed concern over the turbulence in the Gaza Strip. In addition to this topic, she also expressed her concern over the situation in Syria. She stated that the governments of the United States and the Russian Federation agreed on reciprocal terms to mitigate the chaos on Syrian soil. She emphasized that she looks to Russia to utilize leverage to "halt the paw of the Assad Regime" (especially with the illicit use of chemical warfare). She even stated that Russia can halt Assad's forces that are bombing civilian areas. Both sides should continue to strive to provide the civilians with humanitarian aid, even if Assad's forces are hampering such assistance. Despite the turbulent situation in Syria, measures have been achieved. According to the Representative, one individual from Aleppo informed her that children are now enjoying themselves on the playground, an image that he has not seen in a while.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains a torrid issue in Middle Eastern politics and both the Israeli and Palestinian representatives have failed to execute pragmatic measures to resolve this dispute. Outright animosity continues to hamper progress in mitigating the hostilities between the two sides.

As a neutral individual, I summon both sides to schedule a date for their conference in Moscow as soon as possible. Concerning the rocket launches into the Israeli territory and the exclusion of the Palestinian minority from their homes, I am pleased that the representatives emphasized these issues at the conference and would like to say that I condemn all of these atrocities, as they hamper all the benevolent measures that seek to achieve harmony.

However, there is something the representatives and even contemporary reporters and journalists do not accentuate as much, as I can witness: the maltreatment of the Israeli soldiers deployed in the Gaza Strip. If one monitors the events in the Middle East, one can obtain information on the youths in the armed forces of Israel who are deployed in Palestinian communities and are forbidden to brawl or quarrel with the local minority. The Palestinians, believing that they can subdue the troops whom they deem as a "foreign enemy," often stone and brawl with the soldiers, who are forbidden to retaliate. I recall a few years ago watching an Israeli drama (despite research, I was unable to retrieve the name of the film) that accentuated the tribulations of the Israeli soldiers in the Gaza Strip. In the narrative, a soldier's friend is murdered by a Palestinian youth who launched a refrigerator on him from the rooftop, instantly killing the young soldier. The Israeli army then decided to retaliate and eventually murdered the felon at the end of the film, despite orders from the army not to retaliate. I found this film to be very cogent and compelling and deem the issue of the maltreatment of the Israeli soldiers to be a potent topic

I believe that the national governments should regard this issue as a vital one and execute pragmatic measures to protect the troops if they are going to be stationed in this territory. Overall, I call on both sides to engage in more bilateral agreements and conferences that can help rekindle the relationship between two ethnic groups that, I believe, can live in harmony together if they strive for it. In my opinion, the only race on this globe is the human race, and these groups must adhere to the golden principle that they can live side by side for as many years as the Lord has granted them to roam this planet.



September 19 - Opening of the 71st Session of the General Assembly

by JoAnn Mark, ASC

On September 19, the day of [the Summit on Migrants and Refugees](#), the 71st session of the General Assembly opened with a [statement by the President](#), H. E. **Peter Thomson**. His presentation included his hopes that it will be possible over coming months to take steps to advance other pressing agendas for the organization (the UN):

- *To strengthen the UN's peace and security pillar by enhancing the UN's ability to prevent and respond to conflicts and threats;*

To advance the 'sustaining peace' agenda as fundamental to the UN's engagement across

peace and security, development, and human rights - there can be, after all, no sustainable development without sustainable peace;

To combat discrimination, and to further the realization of human rights, so that all

people are able to live free and equal in dignity and rights;

To strengthen the UN's counterterrorism architecture, and to protect the lives of the

vulnerable and those most at risk of mass violations;

- *To strive for greater consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation; and*

To work towards transforming the UN itself, by addressing the need for gender equality

and parity, and better geographical balance; encouraging UN work practices that are flexible, innovative, and coherent; and making the UN more effective, efficient, accountable, and fit for its purpose.

Following the president's presentation, **Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon** gave **his final address to the General Assembly**. He spoke of many accomplishments during his decade as Secretary-General, but he also named the many issues still facing the United Nations. He asked that the migrants be seen not as a burden but as a great potential, welcomed the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a formal part of the United Nations, and asked nations to come together to support his initiative to counter xenophobia.

The General Assembly then approved the NY Declaration on Migrants and Refugees (A/71/L1.) This was followed by eleven speakers including the President of the World Bank, the UN High Commissioner for Migration, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Director General of IOM, the Deputy Secretary General, GSMA for the private sector, a representative of civil society and a refugee. The High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that this summit should not cause comfort; it was called because we have failed. It seems there is an epidemic of amnesia at the heart of issues. We have forgotten the two World Wars and how half-truths and stroking fear lead to conflicts. His words were very strong and he indicated that people who engage in such tactics will continue to be called out publicly in the General Assembly Hall.

The member of the migrant community who was a youth said he was speaking for every young refugee. The refugees who are stateless and stuck have only one message for the member states We are living on the edge of hell. We have waited too long for the world to hear us. A member of the migrant community is finally speaking for itself. Inaction seems the only thing countries are able to agree on. Young refugees are forming an organization. He asked that refugees be empowered to lead their own people and that young people have access to higher education.

Final message: Refugees are taking action; we (young refugees) want countries to do the same.



September 19: High Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants

Resources: Website of the [summit, September 19](#);

[President. Obama's Leaders' Summit](#) on Refugees and Migrants September 20

His Excellency **Peter Thomson**, President of the 71st session of the General Assembly introduced the [New York Declaration](#) on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants, saying he is horrified by the xenophobia and other negative reactions toward refugees. He called on all Member States to immediately live up to the terms of the Declaration, "*to live up to our highest ideals.*"

H.E. **Mogens Lykketoft**, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly, spoke of the unprecedented surge of refugees and migrants. Some countries are bearing the burden disproportionately. This meeting aims to close the gap between need and resources.

H.E. **Ban Ki-Moon**, Secretary-General of the United Nations, stressed the point that refugees and migrants are not burdens but sources of opportunity. The New York Declaration will provide education for children and increase opportunities for employment and protect the human rights of these people, instead of leaving them to "the mercy of criminal smugglers;" increase support for countries with large numbers of refugees, and increase support for resettling them.

Mr. Ban announced that the [International Organization for Migrants](#) (IOM) will be folded into the UN system. He explained that we must change our thinking about refugees and migrants, and so has initiated a campaign called **Together Respect Safety and Dignity for All**. Mr. Ban called on all to honor their commitments in the New York Declaration.

The General Assembly then voted to **accept the New York Declaration**.

H.E. **Jim Yong Kim**, President of the World Bank Group, said the Group needs much better data about refugees, who moves and where, how they are integrated, how many return and when. Half of today's refugees have been displaced for less than four years; the other half have been displaced for more than four years. The World Bank Group is assisting programs like these: a special economic zone to provide more employment for Jordanians and refugees, and a Lebanon project to allow 200,000 Syrian children to attend school in Lebanon.

H..E. **Filippo Grandi**, High Commissioner for Refugees, said we must address both refugees and migrants separately, but the urgency facing refugees demands a global humanitarian response. The Declaration will begin a process to meet such great need and also prepare for predictable crises. Early engagement before a crisis occurs would make a "fundamental game change."

The **Signing Ceremony of UN-IOM Agreement** took place, with Secretary-General Ban and the Director General Swing of the IOM signing the agreement. .

H.E. **William Lacy Swing**, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, called the current migration situation "*a mega-trend of this century - one in every seven of us, one billion people, are now migrant.*" If migrants were a country, he said, it would be slightly larger in population than Indonesia and slightly smaller than Brazil. Climate change threatens another 75 million living just one meter above sea level.

Mr. Swing called it a "cruel irony" that those fleeing violence and terrorism are accused of terrorism and criminality. He iterated that we have to change the toxic public narrative of migration and embrace the reality and the enrichment these people can represent. He concluded by saying, "***Migration is not so much an issue to be solved; it is a human reality that together we all have to manage. . . to be responsible and humane.***"



HIGH LEVEL PLENARY MEETING ON ADDRESSING LARGE MOVEMENTS...

H.E. **Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein**, High Commissioner for Human Rights, pointed out that this summit was called because ***“we have been failing the refugees and migrants,”*** that the victims of crimes and violence have been further violated by the conditions they are forced into, especially when they are detained for long periods of time.

“An epidemic of amnesia is at the heart of this moral collapse in some quarters,” he said, as many seem to have forgotten the two World Wars and the fear, anger, half truths and lies that led to them. He stated that those who promote the hatred and xenophobia will be called out for their stance. This was greeted by much applause.

Deputy Secretary-General **Jan Eliasson** presented a statement of H.E. **Peter Sutherland**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, who is ill and could not travel to New York. The New York Declaration addresses the bravest and most vulnerable people; ***helping them is a barometer of the health of the UN.*** He reminded the Member States that proximity to the crisis does not determine responsibility for these migrating peoples; we are all responsible. The New York Declaration will make it possible to manage the crisis and to prepare for the orderly, safe, manageable movement of peoples in the future.

Her Excellency **Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**, Executive Director of UN-Women on behalf of the Global Migration Group, pledged her group's assistance in carrying out the Declaration. Among other contributions, the [Global Migration Group](#) has developed a handbook of guidelines for integrating migrants and identifying the effects of this movement on women and girls especially. She called on the Member States to “recognize the contributions of women and girls as well as the indignities they suffer.”

H.E. **Yury Fedotov**, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, spoke for the need for respect for the human rights of the migrants and for the Rule of Law. He called on nations to observe their own laws and work together for the protection of migrants from crime and end human suffering.

A member of the private sector, Mr. **Mats Granryd**, Director General of GSMA, a mobile technology company, explained that such technology is vital for many displaced persons to connect with their families and resources such as money and health services. To serve these people, all sectors must work together to offer their services

A member of a migrant community, [Eni Lestari](#), (she begins to speak at about 4:45 minutes into the video), Chairperson of the [International Migrants Alliance](#), spoke of the suffering she faced in Indonesia, the same suffering many face every day, including being seen as “less than human with dignity and equality.” **Migrants' clear message: “Listen to us; Look at us; Don't talk about us without us.”** Too often migrants are just exploited for their labor and seen as a commodity. She invited all to work together to end the suffering, to bring the Declaration from paper to action.

A representative of civil society and a refugee himself, Mr. **Mohamed Badran**, a Board Member of [Syrian Volunteers in the Netherlands](#), said he was talking as a representative of every young refugee. He read a message from a Syrian in Syria: ***“We are living on the edge of hell and there is no place to return to. We have been waiting for so long for the day that the world would hear our voice. I hope it is today.”***

Mr. Badran has seen how even Europe is struggling with the refugees; he said he has felt the dismissal, the anger and fear, the underestimation by the people in Netherlands. He stated very emphatically, ***“If world leaders are able to find a solution to the migrants and the war in Syrian, this conference will be no different from all the others.”***

Mr. Badran said he is "working for my home new (the refugee community), my new country, and the one I left behind." The SVN which he created, has grown in less than two years to over 600 volunteers ready to give back and grow. **The refugees ask: “End the violence now in Syria; protect civilians; guarantee safe routes for all refugees; stop putting our lives on hold, empower refugees to lead projects for refugees, to provide access to higher education for all young refugees to empower them so they can rebuild their homes when they go home.”** He concluded by saying, ***“We refugees are already taking action; we want world leaders to do the same.”***

Another member of the refugee community, [Nadia Murad Basee Taha](#), UN Office of Drugs and Crime, and UN Good Will Ambassador, is a survivor of the Yazidi genocide in Libya. She was captured and trafficked by the Islamic State, who killed her mother, eighteen older women from her village, and six of her brothers, and then enslaved her and six thousand others, mainly women and children. After fleeing, she moved to Germany as a migrant, in a camp, with no way to get food for children or provide education. One refugee said to her, ***“There is no life here.***

we are living a third world war, without naming it.”

Ms. Murad challenged the Member States' leaders: ***“You decide to give hope or suffering, You are the ones who will decide whether another girl will be able to live a simple life or live in suffering.”*** She called on them to put an end to all war and to bring to justice the perpetrators, “eliminate the monsters.”

Ms. Murad concluded her very touching talk by declaring, ***“The world has only one border; it is called humanity. I beg you all to put humanity first.”*** She reminded the world leaders, ***“You and your families are not the only ones to deserve life, we also deserve life.”***

September 19 : Fourth High Level Plenary Session of Summit on Refugees and Migrants

by M. Doretta Cornell, RDC

At this session, Member States reported on their experiences with refugees and migrants. Some of the numbers are staggering!

President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya remarked on the "incongruity between realities:" Since so many countries and cities, like New York City, were built by immigrants and refugees, why is there so much xenophobia?

Kenya is home to the world's largest refugee community: 400 people living in a single complex. Kenyans are sharing the resources of Kenya with hundreds of thousands of refugees. In spite of their fragile resources, they continue to share what they have with refugees. Kenya now has **170,000 refugees. Every child goes to school**, due to the law that all children must attend.

Kenya has also contributed to the stabilization of Somalia so Somali refugees can go home, and contributing also to make their return safe. Mr. Kenyatta (son of the first Kenyan president) reminded the leaders, "The world community has a debt to the people of Somalia for safe return" and urged all to support the Somali government.

Fayez Mustafa al-Sarraj, Chairman of the Presidential Council of **Libya** and Prime Minister of the Government of National Accord, spoke of Libya's struggle with "large flows of illegal immigration and criminal activity against them," including trafficking and death. This illegal migration is causing security difficulties, as Libya is still trying to develop its own stability. Mr. Al-Sarraj urged all to work toward the 2030 goals, to relieve the suffering and the causes of such migrations.

President Rosen Plevneliev of Bulgaria, spoke of their giving support to both transit countries and countries of origin, besides providing humanitarian assistance to refugees and migrants. He urged countries without a resettlement program to create one as soon as possible and voiced support for the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees now being negotiated.

Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, spoke of his country as one of "transit, origin and return" and lauded the "great enrichment" that comes with "people moving around the world, sharing talents and cultures, and aiding dissemination of ideas."

He urged all to "Do away with statements of hatred" toward migrants and refugees, and offered to host a conference on migration to find ways to ensure "safe and orderly migration, strengthen states' capacity for dealing with migrants and address climate change as a cause of migration."

One of the most heart-wrenching presentations came from **Tammam Salam, Acting President of the Lebanese Republic**. He spoke of problems of safety, stability and economic security that Lebanon's *1.5 million refugees are causing in this country of 4 million*. He urged the leaders to begin planning in the next three months for the return of Syrians to their homes when it becomes possible. The Palestinian refugee camps also need assistance.

Over 100,000 Syrian children have been born in Lebanon, most in the past six months. More Syrian children than Lebanese are filling the schools. Because of its small size and limited resources, Lebanon cannot continue to bear this burden alone; they need international support and planning for the refugees' future.

Several heads of state spoke of the inability of any one nation to face the present challenges alone; **all must collaborate and contribute to the support of refugees, work for stability of the nations of origins, and plan for refugees' orderly, safe return home.** Nations of origin must be willing to accept returning refugees, as well.

Luxembourg's Prime minister, Xavier Bettel, mentioned the startling fact that *eight out of ten refugees come from developing countries and are hosted by other developing countries,* which have the least resources to cope with them. European countries must counter the xenophobic rhetoric and develop alternative solutions. We must not just talk but act.

A **Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait** spoke of the need for international cooperation to provide food and medicine to the *244 million refugees in 2015.* He urged the UN to create mechanisms to respond effectively to countries like his that have been affected deeply. Special attention is imperative because of the armed conflicts killing women and the elderly at a great rate. He called for an end to these, through political resolutions.

Nasser Judeh, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister of Jordan, explained that Jordan, in spite of its "little geographical area" has the world's second largest refugee population. The long-standing Palestinian refugee community awaits their right of return; Jordan needs international assistance, particularly financial, to provide for their human rights. An end to the Israeli -Palestinian situation is the greatest cause of instability in the region, he said.

In the past six years, Jordan has hosted 1 million, 300 thousand Syrians, providing housing, and education; this is 20% of Jordan's population. The Prime Minister stated very firmly that Jordan needs assistance to provide for these refugees.

In closing, Mr. Judeh stated that "***this unprecedented migration represents a shame to the world.***" He said we "must address this crisis with solidarity, share the costs of hosting the refugees, and expedite their return." The root causes must be addressed. We must end the occupations, enforce international legitimacy, and respect the human rights of all.

This session and the Fifth Plenary Session continued for about three more hours, with fact after fact of the enormity of the refugee situation. ***All called for international cooperation and financial support, more countries to accept refugees, and most important to create political mechanisms for resolving the causes of the flight; ensuring safe, orderly return once hostilities have ended; and for identifying and preventing future such situations.*** All expressed hope that the New York Declaration would lead to action to accomplish all this.



Two Side Events in Summit on Refugees and Migrants

Side Event 1, September 19: Responsibility and Solution Sharing: The Role of Religious Leaders and Faith-Based Organizations Responding to Large Migrant and Refugee Movements.

by JoAnn Mark, ASC

The keynote was delivered by His Eminence **Pietro Cardinal Parolin**, Secretary of State to His Holiness Pope Francis, "Leaving no one behind: translating words into compassionate and prophetic actions." There were two UN respondents and then a panel that included **Sr. Donna Markham, O.P.**, PhD, President and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, and **Fr. Flor María Rigoni, C.S.**, Albergue Belen in Tapachula, Mexico. While the role of Catholic aid relief was stressed, other religions were also recognized.

In the interest of space, I will only state what I consider a couple of worthwhile quotes:

"We should be building bridges, not building walls." (Cardinal Parolin)

"Words and stories matter; policies and national plans also matter. . . religious organizations are often the first and most generous to arrive. . . they are the last to leave if they are not the first to arrive." (Karen Abuzayd, UN Special Adviser on the Summit)

Sr. Donna Markham quoted a study by Notre Dame University that showed Catholic Charities served 1/3 of the migrants last year, that refugees contribute more than they receive in aid, and that refugee children who entered the US at age 12 or younger graduate at a rate greater than or equal to that of other US children. Those who enter at a later age contribute more than they receive in aid.

The side event ended with a video and the song "Imagine," showing the power of music and culture.



September 22: Side Event 2: Pathways to Zero Hunger

by JoAnn Mark, ASC

In 2012 at [Rio +20](#), United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched [Zero Hunger](#). At this side event he said, *“As I end my term in office, I am asking [FAO](#), [WFP](#) and [IFAD](#) to take my Challenge forward. I am confident they will not rest until Zero Hunger is a reality.”*

On that very day there was a news release that stated, "The heads of the Rome-based food and agriculture agencies today thanked United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment and leadership in challenging the world to reach Zero Hunger." They promised to maintain momentum to reach the ambitious target by 2030.

Speakers stressed the importance of seeing food security, nutrition, rural livelihoods, and sustainable agriculture as integrated and the responsibility of international institutions, governments, the private sector, family farmers and civil society. **Peter Thomson**, President of the General Assembly, noted we need 1) awareness – include SDGs in every curriculum, 2) ingenuity – smart committed minds and 3) leadership – words are not enough, we need action.

John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana, shared a number of initiatives in place in Ghana. They have a fully funded Ghana school program that provides every student with one meal a day, and they have an affordable health scheme. They have increased food production by starting agricultural fisheries and by placing more land under irrigation. They are working to lessen food loss post-harvest, to use technology to help provide new seeds that will produce better than old ones, and through Agricultural Programs to incentivize youth to become farmers. The dumping of poultry from other countries is one of the activities that makes it difficult for poultry farmers in Ghana to compete. The farmers in Ghana need more integrated markets.

José Graziano da Silva, Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, spoke for the need to have food systems that are sustainable and resilient: *“Climate change is affecting efforts; it has pushed efforts back 10 years.”* He spoke about **Madagascar** where El Nino and locusts have completely destroyed local food production. FAO seeks to help farmers know what will happen and how to cope with coming crises including the washing away of the soil. Farmers sold everything to survive the crisis, so now they need seeds and tools. This effort to *“not just save lives, but to change lives”* was also emphasized by the Executive Director of the World Food Program.

The last speaker was one of the [17 Young Leaders for SDGs](#). She stressed the need to not only increase production but also to end waste. She has started a company to respond to these challenges.



Spotlight on Our Members

IBVM/Loretto: Ministry in a Changing World

by Evanne Hunter, IBVM

How is God inviting us, within our Institute reality, to live prophetic discipleship in the 21st century? Reality in our Province is continuous diminishment of capacity to engage in active ministry. Mission is “the heart of who we are” (Const 2.1), so we know that our way forward must be in collaboration with others as “companions in mission” (Constitution 2.6).

In *Becoming Neighbours, a Joint Apostolic Ministry*, IBVM collaborates with 19 Archdiocesan Congregations in ministering to immigrants and refugees. Each contributes financially, according to means, to support Staff who carry out the mission. The Provincial is on the Board of Directors and Sisters on the Advisory Committee. Able members are mentors accompanying individuals and families as they navigate the complex health and educational systems, gain access to social services, and follow the process to attain citizenship. Others are valued prayer partners.

JAM enables IBVM to remain engaged in our traditional ministry to refugees. Otherwise, we could not continue “seeing their faces and listening to their stories” as Pope Frances calls us to do.

PGJ Activities

Congregational Orientation for Sisters of St. John the Baptist

by JoAnn Mark, ASC

Earlier this year the **Sisters of St. John the Baptist** joined the Partnership for Global Justice as a Partner. On Sunday, September 11, Sister JoAnn, PGJ Executive Director, drove to their Province House in the Bronx to orient the sisters to the Partnership. After sharing lunch with them Sister JoAnn narrated a Power Point presentation that gave the history, mission and current priorities of the Partnership. As part of their membership fee, Sister Elsa Jeronimo has been attending the Working Group for Girls and keeping Sister JoAnn informed.

Please remember the congregation in prayer, as 27 of their sisters will be flying to Rome for the canonization of their Founder Alfonso Maria Fusco on October 16, 2016.

Let's Keep Connected:

Please link the Partnership for Global Justice Website to your community's website.

<http://www.partnershipforglobaljustice.com/>

Watch UN Events Live

As always, you can watch live coverage (and often stored videos) of major UN events at the UN [WebTV channel](#). Click the language button to hear them in English). A list of daily events is listed in the UN Journal at 11 pm the day before. Webcasts are indicated by a small red icon of a camera.

For the Erie Benedictines, the online, worldwide monastery is a natural extension of who they are. With a public corporate commitment to be a healing presence and prophetic witness for peace by working for sustainability and justice, especially for women and children, their physical presence is felt in the city of Erie in liturgy and hospitality at the actual monastery and in ministries such as the Inner-city **Neighborhood Art House**, **St. Benedict Education Center**, **Emmaus Soup Kitchen** and **Benedictines for Peace**. Find out more about the Benedictine Sisters of Erie at eriebenedictines.org.

