



Update February 2016

UNANIMA STARS AGAIN!

Thanks to our board member, Dianna Ortiz **OSU**, UNANIMA is featured for the second time in the *Signs of the Times Social Justice Calendar* published by the Center for Concern. Last year we were the featured organization for January, but the calendar was not sent out until after that--so we get a second try—in March this time. The people and organizations featured in this calendar are “leaders who, through their examples, have inspired us to join in the work of advancing global social justice.” Pictured here (left to right) Celia Martin **NDS**, Stacy Hanrahan **CND**, Executive Assistant Tori Larson, and Michele Morek **OSU**.



UN YEAR REVIEWED:

The United Nations *2015 Year in Review* will show what can be achieved, when we all work together. Please find below the link to look back some of the year's major United Nations moments. (In several languages). <http://www.un.org/en/year-in-review/>

HAPPY BIRTHDAY UN:

Seventy years ago on 10 January 1945, the UN General Assembly convened for the very first time. The 51 nations met in London, at that time “a grim capital, bleak and seared” from the war. Beneath their meeting room, hundreds of people had taken shelter during air raids. On 24 January of that year, the Assembly adopted its very first resolution, creating a commission to promote the peaceful uses of atomic energy and to eliminate all major weapons of mass destruction. And yet, 70 years after that..., there are people in all of our nations who do not believe that the UN has lived up to its purpose. They see it as a broken institution, defined more by what divides Member States than what binds them together; an institution of inaction in the face of too much pain around the world. It is not hard to understand why people feel this way. There are many UN aspirations that do remain unfulfilled; look at its apparent helplessness in the face of the Syrian Crisis! Hundreds of thousands of people are being deliberately

besieged, deliberately starved. There are 62 million girls who are still not in school. Look at the devastating impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable. It feels sometimes as though rights are being trampled and dignity is being denied all over the world.



But we have seen how the UN can play a truly pivotal role in tackling some of the greatest challenges of our time, confronting deadly epidemics like HIV/AIDS or Ebola; protecting civilians from atrocities in some of the most violent conflicts in the world; applying collective pressure of the kind that led Iran to agree to a deal to stop producing nuclear weapons; or mobilizing global action to combat climate change and to eliminate extreme poverty. This is, again, why this

institution exists; a forum for mobilizing collective action.

(adapted from comments by Samantha Power, US Representative to the UN).

REPORT ON MIGRATION ACTIVITIES:

In light of the Syrian refugee crisis, you might want to know about some of UNANIMA's activities in the area of migration. As an organization, our focus is on advocacy, networking, and education. We are active members on the NGO Migration Committee, on which we visit / try to influence member states, write papers to submit to the UN and the Geneva Human Rights Council, and collaborate on side events and other educational activities. Right now the committee is preparing for the World Humanitarian Summit in May, trying to bring migration and refugees to the forefront of the agenda; collaborating with the International Office on Migration and the UN Human Rights Council for upcoming meetings in Geneva in preparation for the summit and other commissions; and planning for the 2016 Global Forum on Migration and Development. In all these activities we as civil society try to keep the needs of people at the top of the agenda. Thanks to those of you who follow our "Tweets" on this and other issues!

A NEW IDEA IS BORN IN ROMANIA:

In keeping with our wish to develop regional interactions among NGO groups, the NGO Committee on Social Development (NGO CSocD) hosted a *2016 Civil Society Regional Meeting* at Hyperion University in Bucharest, Romania. This was in preparation for the 2016 Civil Society Forum (1-2 February) right before the Commission on Social Development. Over 100 people attended, and one could also follow the proceedings in Bucharest by Twitter and online. Here was the agenda: [AGENDA – Romania Regional Consultation](#) if this was a success we will be working with governments to host more of these programs, and will keep you informed if one is coming to your area. For more information about the Commission on Social Development (3-12 February) see the January issue of the UNANIMA *Update*, or go to the NGOCsocD website here: <http://ngosocdev.org/>.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

Before the Paris Climate Change talks, many nations agreed to submit a public outline of what post-2020 climate action they intended to take, called the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). Organizers hoped that at least 100 countries would submit plans; by the second week of the talks, 185 countries had done so! Unfortunately, all the pledges add up to more carbon emissions than the increase agreed to in Paris, so countries have more work to do. If you would like to check on your country, here are a couple of sites:

(UPDATED)

<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc/Submission%20Pages/submissions.aspx>

This page is a little more interesting, and has some analysis:

<http://www.carbonbrief.org/paris-2015-tracking-country-climate-pledges>

GLOBAL CATHOLIC CLIMATE MOVEMENT:

In less than 11 months of existence this movement made a gigantic contribution to the climate debate and the COP21 Paris Summit, collecting almost 1 million petition signatures (delivered personally to the French president and the UN climate chief) and mobilizing over 40,000 Catholics for the Global Climate March. One of the organizers attended the Paris talks and was approached by many organizations who had heard about the Catholic mobilization (and also praised Pope Francis and *Laudato Si'*). Cardinal Hummes commented "*Formed only ten months ago, the GCCM has become a steadfast, faithful, and growing voice ... for climate justice.*" Here is a short video about their COP21 mobilization and the need to continue working in 2016: youtu.be/5S-ZBqNelkM



UN DPI/NGO CONFERENCE:

It's official. The 66th UN Department of Public Information / NGO Conference will take place in the Republic of Korea from 30 May to 1 June 2016. There is a call for potential speakers on the conference theme of "**Education**." **Could you suggest potential speakers with relevant expertise and experience on that theme** to participate in plenary and round-table sessions? Though the Department of Public Information (DPI) can't sponsor speakers who may have to travel to the Republic of Korea to participate in the conference, there might be limited opportunities to provide sponsorship.

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nlhFxf_h0Ck5sJJTJzNUnAZVvcU](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nlhFxf_h0Ck5sJJTJzNUnAZVvcUG0JqBjFQZadOWiGk/viewform)

[G0JqBjFQZadOWiGk/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1nlhFxf_h0Ck5sJJTJzNUnAZVvcUG0JqBjFQZadOWiGk/viewform). UNANIMA might be able to help find places to stay with local communities, for sisters wanting to represent us.

FLASH POINTS:

- ✓ **The Sisters of Saint Anne (SSA)** were very involved before and during the negotiations leading up to the Paris climate accord. Many signed petitions for the Paris conference to culminate in a universal, ambitious and legally binding agreement. During the negotiations from 30 November to 12 December, many read the daily reports; others took part in the World Climate March on 29 November, especially in Victoria and Ottawa. In the photo, a tree with the names of more than 125 SSAs and associates was borne through the streets of Ottawa.



On December 10, they prayed together that the Paris discussions would advance in a positive direction. Their Advent 2015 booklet included a number of quotations from the encyclical *Laudatosi'*. Finally, their Social Justice Office distributed the terms of the Paris Agreement in order to give a better idea of it and the stages involved in its implementation over the next few years.

- ✓ **Nine Religious Sisters of Charity** from seven countries met in Dublin for the Sisters of Charity Anti Human Trafficking Meeting. Also participating were 3 members of other congregations who work with them; Winston Moyo from Zambia; and Kanthi, a survivor of trafficking who shared her play, "*Letters from my mother*," which was read by a group of actors one evening during their week together. The group also visited various anti-trafficking organizations, both government and private. Perhaps the saddest news of the day was that the number of children being trafficked in Ireland for abuse and pornography has greatly increased.



At the meeting they developed a Statement with recommendations for a Monthly Prayer Day for victims, survivors and perpetrators (2nd Friday of the month), and that each area should send someone to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March. They share with you Winston Moyo's song which he wrote for RSCs: "*Let us rise as one*" https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=MHpmzHiial8#!

- ✓ **Brigidine** Sister Anne Phibbs is active in a newly-formed branch of ANZRATH (Aotearoa-New Zealand Religious Against the Trafficking of Humans) in Wellington, New Zealand. They have had guest speakers – a Catholic cardinal and a social justice advocate for the Salvation Army— among others. Labor exploitation is a significant concern for New Zealand,



and the TIP report notes that they are a source country for children subjected to sex trafficking within the country. They learned that while New Zealand has not yet taken sufficient steps to prevent forced labor, Parliament has passed a law requiring all foreign charter vessels fishing in New Zealand waters to operate as New Zealand vessels and abide by New Zealand's health and labor laws. They are hoping to increase efforts to proactively identify victims through screening of vulnerable populations, including women and children in prostitution, foreign workers and illegal migrants (and) significantly increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offences.

- ✓ The sisters in IRELAND warn us not to get too excited about progress against fracking! In spite of what government sources may say, they have not ruled it out. If you want accurate information they suggest these sites:

<http://richardboydbarrett.ie/2015/12/17/people-before-profit-join-environmental-groups-to-propose-dail-bill-ban-fracking/>

<http://www.antaisce.org/articles/an-taisce-welcomes-proposed-prohibition-of-fracking-bill>

<https://uplift.ie/fracking/> & https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/Ban_Fracking_Ireland/?fAgUJjb&pv=37.

- ✓ Someone sent us a site with good interfaith curricula and resources. Many of them are free, but unfortunately mostly in English. (From the Scarborough Foreign Mission Society)

https://www.scarboromissions.ca/Interfaith_dialogue/student_resources.php

Happy St. Valentine's Day to all!