



# Update

## December

### 2016



#### **CONTACT INFORMATION FOR JEAN QUINN DW**

Sister Jean Quinn DW will take over as Coalition Coordinator of UNANIMA International as of January 2, 2017, though she will actually arrive at the office on January 5, 2017. You may contact her at [jquinn@sophia.ie](mailto:jquinn@sophia.ie) or call the UNANIMA International office at **1 929 259 2105**.

#### **WE HAVE A NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER!**

As a cost-saving measure we tried a Google phone connection service, but it was unsatisfactory. We will still answer that number if you still have it (e.g. on a brochure) but the office phone number is now **1 929 259 2105**. This one has a more dependable Voice Mail system.

#### **COMPLIMENTS FOR NGOs**

In October, US Ambassador Samantha Power told the UN at an enthusiastic, high-energy Security Council meeting on *Women, Peace, and Security* that “This agenda would not be before the Security Council if not for the work of nongovernmental organizations, civil society, and women’s groups. This is something, I think, the Member States at the UN need to bear in mind, especially those who are increasingly trying to keep NGOs, civil society groups, and others from participating in UN meetings.”

#### **UNANIMA DOES WRITTEN INTERVENTION FOR CSocD:**

Three present and former UNANIMA interns participated in the submission of a written intervention for the Commission for Social Development, which takes place 1-10 February 2017. The entire UNANIMA staff helped write the statement, which addresses the theme of the Commission, “Strategies for the eradication of poverty to achieve sustainable development for all.” Using the life experiences and knowledge of the interns and staff, the statement focuses on how “land is life” for indigenous peoples, and how one of the best strategies for dealing with poverty among populations of indigenous peoples is to keep them from becoming poor in the first place, i.e. by preserving their land, culture, and traditional practices. Deya Garcia **SDS**, Noeli Massoni **CCV**, and

former intern Nonata Bezerra **SND** contributed to the statement. If accepted, it will be put in the UN document system and posted on the UNANIMA website.

### **THIS IS WHAT WE ARE ALL ABOUT AT THE UN:**

At a celebration on October 17 for the *International Day for the Eradication of Poverty* (designed and implemented by NGOs), Swedish diplomat Jan Eliasson, UN Deputy Secretary-General, took the floor spontaneously at the end of the commemoration:

"I want to say that during my many years in the UN this is one of the most unusual, one of the most inspiring meetings I've attended...I want to thank all of you for bringing life into this room! I often think when I'm spending time in Headquarters how important it is to connect to the realities. I spent a lot of time mounting the areas of conflicts; I've been to (many countries). But here we are in this room, inside the United Nations, in New York, and you bring the realities into this room. I think it's so important that we bring, connect those who are doing policy and writing resolutions, and that is translated to the life of people. You know the first three words in this (UN) Charter that I always carry in my pocket. The first three words in this Charter are: "*We the Peoples.*" We are here to serve the people. We are here to fight for peace, fight for ending poverty, and fight for human rights and human dignity. This is our job. And this is what we need to be reminding all governments, all leaders, all over the world. And I think you reminded us of that very important process of bringing together those who are privileged, those who have reached the position of influence, and those who are affected, those who really need to be brought in and actually take part, in the processes that can change the world. So I thank you very much for being here today." (Pictured: Jan Eliasson)



**PARIS AGREEMENT ENTRY INTO FORCE:** The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016, 30 days after the dual entry into force requirement of ratification by at least 55 countries representing at least 55% of global Green House Gas emissions was met. To date, 100 countries have ratified the agreement. (With the election of Mr. Trump as future US President, many NGOs fear that he will back out of the US climate change commitments, but some at the UN are saying they can be successful in either case...)

### **UNANIMA AT SION COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY**

Michele Morek **OSU** Coalition Coordinator of UNANIMA, facilitated an opening session of a gathering of the **Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion** in Saskatoon, Canada in mid-November. Her presentation described how UNANIMA and UN activities intersect with

*Laudato Si'* and with Sion activities / documents, and suggested ways that the congregation can get involved with the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **ANTI-TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES AT UN:**

At a recent meeting on *Human Trafficking and Agenda 2030* (the “Sustainable Development Goals” document), six ambassadors addressed different aspects of the topic. They described the sophisticated technology that drug and human trafficking gangs use to commit crime. Civil society organizations use modern technology to prevent and combat human trafficking, but governments usually do not! The ambassadors also complained about impunity, corruption and the lack of implementation of human rights policies. There is an urgent need to create an effective program to support victims, and to use education as a form of prevention. Many countries have not yet signed the *Palermo Protocol* (the UN document “to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children,” which supplements the *United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*) and of those who signed, few have implemented this agreement at the local level. They urged civil society to animate their governments to sign.

--Deyanira Garcia **SDS** and Noeli Massoni **CCV**

### **REFLECTIONS ON INTERNSHIP:**

--Noeli Massoni **CCV** The internship time with Unanima is ending. It is time to collect what I will take from this experience to my life on mission for years to come. For me this time was a great and good lesson on the right to a life with dignity, justice, and peace for all people everywhere. It was a lesson that helped me open my eyes to widen my vision and look further, to open my mind and heart to think and act collectively, and to feel in my own skin the dream of humanity.

A three-month class—a time so short, but long enough to arouse new curiosities and concerns, new interests and commitments. A theoretical / practical class approach to UNANIMA, its connections with other NGOs and its space at the UN. A lesson taught by UNANIMA's office staff and many other women and men, youth and adults we met, and with whom we shared dreams, anguish, restlessness and hope. Thanks to all. We will follow together even though we are walking different paths.

--Deyanira Garcia **SDS** This experience has encouraged me in my life and mission. Meeting people at the UN and in NGOs from many countries, races, colors, and languages, and learning about their work all over the world has been wonderful. I have learned about universal human rights, human trafficking, discrimination (for color, race, religion, poverty, disabilities...), climate change, social development, poverty, water, justice and peace, indigenous peoples, migrants, and refugees. I have heard reports from ambassadors, committee members, panelists with NGOs, and people from many nations. Before coming to the UN, I thought I understood it through the news, but that is superficial knowledge. Now I understand more clearly what the UN means, what it is doing, and how it plans to act on the 17 “Sustainable Development Goals” and to transform our world with the implementation of *Agenda 2030*. Now I have seen how

many people try to be the voice of millions of voiceless people worldwide. I also understand more that there can be no solutions without the cooperation and responsibility from each government / country. This opportunity gave me a new holistic vision of the world. Together we can build a new world.

The Salvatorian sisters' charism commands us to "Go over the world, to all people, all races, all nations and help for all kind of needs, which GOD'S LOVE inspires you." I know I can't go everywhere but in my specific mission I can help people to be aware of all kinds of needs.

### **ARE YOU COMING TO THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN?**

An NGO Women's Forum will take place in New York simultaneously with the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission for the Status of Women (CSW61) from 13 to 24 MARCH 2017. The Priority theme for CSW61 is: "Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work." For more information on the NGO Forum check the NGO CSW NY website <https://www.ngocsw.org/> regularly, and for information regarding the Commission itself see <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw61-2017>

### **FLASHPOINTS**

- ✓ Two **Sisters of Saint Anne** went to Haiti to see how the sisters there were affected by Hurricane Matthew. The sisters were not hurt, but have horrifying memories of those hours from 11 p.m. to sunrise, and reported that 90% of everything west of Les Cayes was destroyed or badly damaged. Pastel-colored homes, small businesses, churches, schools, and hospitals lost roofs and were damaged by wind and rain. The beautiful silhouettes of palm trees against the Caribbean sky have been replaced by miles and miles of dead branches on tilted tree trunks waiting to fall. Coastal fishing villages literally washed away into the sea. UNANIMA staff and members continue their prayers for Haiti!
- ✓ The **Notre Dame de Sion** community of Birmingham, England support and volunteer at St Chad's Sanctuary in the heart of Birmingham City Centre, where there is a place of welcome and hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees, especially those who are destitute and have no public funds. Through the initiative of a Sister of the Infant Jesus, this project has been run by volunteers for five years, and supported by the Cathedral, the Salvation Army, parishes and other donors. The Sion Sisters' parish has 'adopted' this Centre, regularly giving time, food and clothing. The volunteers welcome many people daily, listen to their stories, meet some of their needs, and offer English classes.
- ✓ UNANIMA Board member for the **Holy Union Sisters** Mary Jean Audette **SUSC** (pictured) was one of a three-member team who prepared a display of 50 unique photographs accompanied by quotations and reflections on Pope Francis'

encyclical *Laudato Si'*. Mary Jean wrote the original reflections and assembled appropriate quotes from Scripture and from *Laudato Si'* to accompany each of the photos. The display, originally scheduled for two weeks, has now become a permanent exhibit in the Welcome Center at the National Shrine of Our Lady of LaSalette in Attleboro, Massachusetts USA.



- ✓ *Water With Blessings* continues to be a focus for several UNANIMA congregation activities: **Bon Secours** Sister Fran Gorsuch **CBS** and 2 associates went to Peru in August to spend 10 days distributing water filters and doing education on the Zika virus among Peruvian CBS communities. (WWB was founded by **Ursuline** sister Lorraine Lauter **OSU**)

**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL OF US AT UNANIMA!**

**Teresa, Michele, Jean, Stacy, Deya, Ces, Noeli**

