

## Making History

While history was being made at the United Nations with the signing of the Paris Agreement on climate in recent weeks, our NGO at the United Nations also made history. The IBVM General Leadership met in New York for discussions regarding our NGO and its collaboration with the United Nations. Both events coincided. While the United Nations prepared for the arrival of Heads of State and other dignitaries for the official signing, we found ourselves participants in the security measures, restrictions and blockades involved in such events. It was a unique experience of the United Nations for the members of our General Leadership who were visiting for the first time.

## General Leadership at NGO Office, New York

Members of our General Leadership, Noelle, Igora, Judy, Macarena and Brenda were joined by Evanne Hunter, chairperson of the NGO Advisory Committee. Firsthand experience of the IBVM NGO in New York enables a greater understanding of the meaning and practicalities of our presence and collaboration here. Information sharing and discussion on the many aspects of this ministry included areas such as: collaboration with the United Nations in the light of our GC 14 Commitments, The Advisory Committee, UN Province Representatives, networking, participation of members of our network in UN conferences, Commissions events and processes, immersion and internship experiences, and communication. At the end of the meetings short videos were made of their impressions of the experience. You can watch [Noelle](#), [Igora](#), [Judy](#), [Macarena](#), [Brenda](#), [Evanne](#) by clicking on their names.



## Signing of the Paris Agreement at the United Nations



One hundred and seventy five world leaders signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016. At a press conference following the signing, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon told reporters that “this is by far the largest number of countries ever to sign an international agreement on a single day”. Signing is the first of a two step process for countries to formally join the Agreement. The next step is ratification. Once 55 countries, representing at least 55 % of global greenhouse gasses, complete the process, the Agreement will come into effect and become legally binding. Here is an up to date list of [Countries that have signed the Agreement](#) along with those

which have already ratified it. The procedures for formal ratification vary according to national legislative requirements. Read more about it here. In the photo, John Kerry signs for United States holding his granddaughter.

## Our IBVM Network active in encouraging Governments to sign

Thousands of letters and emails were sent from our network to heads of State, Government and Ministers urging them to sign the agreement. Feedback from Australia, Canada, India, Ireland, Peru, Mauritius, South Africa and Zambia included engagement of ibvm members, associates, schools, wider network, CJs, other religious congregations, Conference of Major Superiors, Bishops, Sisters Conference and justice oriented magazine. Actions included posting, emailing and going directly to the parliament with the letters. It was an excellent response. In a number of provinces the letters were given culturally sensitive adaptations. A very important aspect when we are working at the global level! Thanks to everybody who wrote or signed letters or emails and a special thanks to our UN Province Representatives for their efforts to organized it within the Province networks.



**Yes, we will be there!**

## The 2016 UN DPI/NGO Conference

**2016 United Nations DPI/NGO Conference**

**Yes, we are!** Education for Global Citizenship

**GYEONGJU SOUTH KOREA**

**Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together**

27 May - 3 June 2016

CJ and IBVM Sisters and Colleagues #UNNGO2016

The Conference will be held in the City of Gyeongju, located on the South-Eastern part of the Korean peninsula. It will take place in the first year of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in September 2015 to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure human rights and prosperous and fulfilling lives for all, as part of a new sustainable development agenda to be achieved by 2030.

**Purpose:** Global citizenship is no longer an ideal, but rather a requirement for creating a peaceful, just, and environmentally sustainable world of interconnected societies. By focusing on education for global citizenship, the 66th UN DPI/NGO Conference aims to build on the centrality of education and global citizenship as the bedrock of sustainable development and climate action.

Three pillars of i) formal education, ii) informal education and training, and iii) advocacy and public information will be examined as means to correct gender, ability, social, economic and other inequalities that create or perpetuate marginalization and disenfranchisement, and thus, hinder achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

**Conference Outcome:** Attendees at the Conference will finalize an action agenda to mobilize civil society – its local and international NGOs, networks and activists, as well as academics, educators, policy makers, businesses and youth, reflecting the aspirations and ambitions of all global citizens, in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

The 2016 UN DPI/NGO Conference will be held in **Gyeongju, South Korea**, May 30 – June 1st, 2016. It is the 66<sup>th</sup> Conference and the fifth to be held outside New York. IBVM members and colleagues attended DPI Conference in Paris, Melbourne, Australia and Bonn, Germany. Fifteen members and colleagues from the IBVM/CJ network will attend the 2016 Conference – four from Korea, four from India, three from Mauritius and one from Vietnam.

This conference is the first to be held since the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the Agreement and signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate and the Conference on Financing for Development. The theme of the conference is **“Educating for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together”**. Three pillars of: i) formal education, ii) informal education and training, and iii) advocacy and public information will be examined as means to correct gender, ability, social, economic and other inequalities that create or perpetuate marginalization and disenfranchisement, and thus, hinder the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Prior to the conference our participants will have a two –day preparatory session and some follow- up after it. There will be an opportunity to meet with the CJ Sisters from Korea. The support from and collaboration with the Korean Province and CJ Generalate have been very helpful during these months of preparation.

## Learning Every Day

All may not be able to attend the conference but it does offer an opportunity to think about and talk about the important issues of our time which will be addressed at the conference. The theme, “Educating for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together”, is relevant for us both as individuals in a life-long learning process and for our ministries. Watch the introductory video, read the draft action document and join in the e-discussion [here](#)

Do discuss these questions with as many people as possible:

**What does Global Education for Global Citizenship mean to you?**

**Education for Global citizenship can help the world fulfill the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda by\_\_\_\_\_**

**Which of the 17 SDGs do you think will be most impacted by Education for Global citizenship and why?**



## UNCTAD 14

UNCTAD (The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), will hold its 14<sup>th</sup> Conference in Nairobi, Kenya in July 2016. UNCTAD is the UN body responsible for dealing with development, especially international trade, considered the main driver of economic development. At this Conference, held every four years, the 194 member States assess current trade and development issues and formulate global responses. Five IBVM Members from Kenya will join the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as civil society representatives. In his Encyclical *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis addresses the issues that lie at the center of the work of

**From Decisions to Action  
in  
Nairobi!**



UNCTAD. By itself, he writes, “the market cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion. At the same time, we have “a sort of ‘super development’ of a wasteful and consumerist kind which forms an unacceptable contrast with the ongoing situations of dehumanizing deprivation”. “We are all too slow,” he continues, “in developing economic institutions and social initiatives which can give the poor regular access to basic resources. We fail to see the deepest roots of our present failures, which have to do with the direction, goals, meaning and social implications of technological and economic growth”. (109) The voice of civil society is critical in every effort to highlight the situation of all marginalized people and our fragile planet.

### Learn more here:

UNCTAD has begun to integrate the 2030 Development Agenda into its work. As the participants in this conference prepare to participate with civil society, it can be used as a learning experience by all. [See how UNCTAD delivers on the Sustainable Development Goals.](#) It is a good example of the interconnections between the SDGs.

## The 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The 15th. Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is taking place at the UNHQ, New York from 9-29 May 2016. This forum, established in July 2000, is held for two weeks each year. Voices from our some of our Province networks express concern about issues related to the Indigenous peoples in their countries.

- Peru expresses concern about the impact of mining and extractive industries on Indigenous peoples. A mining working group is doing impressive advocacy on this issue in New York and Geneva. However, it will be a long process and involving civil society in the issue at national level is a key strategy to achieving results.
- Canada recently made headway to addressing the trafficking of Indigenous women for sexual exploitation.
- Discussions at RUN (Religious at the UN) underline the need to address the question of the Doctrine of Discovery. This Doctrine "originated with the papal bulls issued during the so-called Age of Discovery in Europe." In recent years studies on the impact of this doctrine have shown how the Christian presumption of superiority embodied in the Doctrine of Discovery fuelled colonial land seizures and the genocide of Native Peoples. Religious congregations have supported Indigenous communities in their efforts to address this on-going question.

### From Our Network



Students and Teachers from Toronto, Canada met with the new Ambassador during their recent educational visit to the United Nations. This is an annual event which is highly formative for the young people. It is organized by Ann McGowan, Director of Mary Ward Center Toronto .



During the first year of implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, province members are using creative ways of integrating them into our lives. We have examples of places where each person has worked out that integration with personal ministry. A very good idea!

**Learn+assess+pray+act+advocate**

**Cecilia O'Dwyer ibvm**

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