

WELCOME

Many events have filled the past few months here at the UN, and many remarkable people have shared their lives with us and with each other. The situation of women around the world, in particular, has been explored and analyzed. There has been reason for celebration, but also a sense of urgency and pain because so much remains to be done.

We hope that you will enjoy the contributions of two young people to the newsletter, writing from different ends of the earth about their special UN-related activities.

Our own UN experience resonates with what we know in the Society: that we draw strength from shared commitments as each one tries to live them out daily in her own situation.



Society of the Sacred Heart

at the UN

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Attending CSW 2010: “Beijing + 15”

by Judith Garson rscj



Colleagues at the UN.

Thousands of participants, the majority women, converged on UN Headquarters in New York, from March 1-12, 2010, for “Beijing + 15,” the 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Women’s voices were heard in official sessions, in side events, in parallel events. Experiences were shared, as well as successful strategies to overcome obstacles.

A clear message emerged: much progress has been made since the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, but, in the forceful words of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, “injustice and discrimination against women persist everywhere.” For his remarks, click [here](#).

Every day presented a rich menu of

choices, from panels of experts to grassroots organizers, with young people well represented. Of particular interest was the connection drawn to the impact of global climate change on women.

After attending many of these meetings I came away with some ideas that I offer as suggestions.

1. About statistics and data. Statistics may be useful or confusing or even contradictory. I learned the importance of “disaggregating” data, which simply means pulling the data apart. For example, if your country reports that 80% of girls finish high school, are there different results for girls of certain races or ethnic groups, for rural and urban? If so, why?

2. If so, why? We need to persist in asking this

rscjinternational
women of compassion, communion, and reconciliation

Have you looked at our webpage lately? We have posted the following articles since February:

- Newsletter No 1 in French and Spanish
- Prayer for World Day of Social Justice
- Prayer for International Women’s Day
- Clean Water for a Healthy World
- Promoting Children’s Rights
- International Mother Earth Day
- Civil Society Declaration at CSocD 2010
- The Urgency of Preserving Biodiversity
- Internal Displacement: A Global Humanitarian Crisis

most uncomfortable question.

3. Look for women everywhere: in your government, in your classrooms, in business. What positions are open to them? How are they paid?

4. Look for the women who are leaving your country, or who are coming to your country. What causes them to leave home? How are they received?

5. Look for the women whose work we take for granted. They often seem invisible, and their voices are not heard: domestic workers, those who pick our crops or clean our office buildings at night. Have they any rights? If not, why not?

Use of the United Nations logo

All non-governmental organizations — NGOs — affiliated with the UN have been formally reminded that the use by NGOs of the official UN logo is strictly prohibited. This is the familiar logo showing the view of the world from the North Pole, surrounded by two olive branches. Under no circumstances may we use this logo on our publications, websites, stationery or other materials. There are very serious consequences for NGOs that violate this rule, including loss of our affiliation with the UN. If you have questions, please contact Cecile Meijer, rscj.



An Internship in New York

by Kasia Rymar

My week at the Society of the Sacred Heart NGO Office was truly a one-of-a-kind experience. The people I encountered, the outpouring of fascinating information, all contributed to my experience and made it unforgettable. I first touched base on the meaning of the eight MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) and the work that various NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations) do to help achieve them. I was impressed at seeing how the NGOs are on top of their work and ready to present their knowledge and experience. I also saw how it is possible to run meetings smoothly and efficiently. I met people who truly want to make a difference in the world, and who do an incredible amount of work. The powerful, positive message that the UN communicates internationally is grounded in the hope that one day every person on this earth will be treated with the dignity they deserve.

Kasia Rymar is a student from Michigan



United Nations complex with temporary conference building at the forefront.

Renovation of United Nations buildings

by Fiona Hogan

There is much commotion at the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) in New York City with the UN renovation project, known as the Capital Master Plan, in full swing. The original UN buildings were constructed in 1952, and although frequent maintenance has been performed, the six-building complex of today lacks many standards of a modern and safe building. At the

completion of the renovation in 2013, all UN buildings will be modernized: safer, greener and more energy efficient. As UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon so elegantly said in his 2009 Report to the General Assembly, "Our common ambition is to make this outward renovation the symbol of our inward renewal." For more information about the UN renovation, please click [here](#).

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*Kit Collins, rscj
1937 - 2010*

Thank you Kit, for your and the CEDC's leadership in social justice and your unwavering support of the NGO Office.

Youth Association Summit in Australia

by Jordan Tselepy

On the weekend of the 12th to the 14th of March, seven Stuartholme girls attended the annual Youth Association Summit. At the Summit we were all given a country to represent, and a council to debate in. The delegates listened to some very inspiring and informative speeches in order to start us thinking for the weekend. Mock United Nations debates began early Saturday morning where we split off into Security, Human Rights, and Economic and Social Councils. The early evening was spent working in small groups forming a Youth

Declaration about important issues in society, such as climate change and gender equality, to send to the United Nations. Sunday was the general assembly where all delegates came together in order to discuss two issues and try to come to a resolution. This year's group of delegates successfully came to two resolutions on the issues of United Nations reform and climate change. After finalising the Youth Declarations in our small groups, we packed up and got on the buses to head home thoroughly exhausted and with many new friends.

Jordan Tselepy is a student in Australia.

Book Tip

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson is a powerful description of peacemaking through education. Click [here](#) to see in what languages the book has been translated and how to order it.

