

## The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

It is almost a year since our governments committed themselves to a new Sustainable Development Agenda to be achieved in the next 15 years. During the month of July, considerable time was spent discussing the steps taken since January when the 2030 Agenda came into force. 22 countries presented a voluntary review. Initiatives to create awareness, among the general public, of the existence of the 17 SDGs which impinge on the lives of every one of us were included in the reviews of some countries. The ways in which the SDGs are integrated into existing social, economic and environmental development plans and strategies also formed important segments of other Reports.

The 22 Reviews presented followed an important meeting called "High Level Political Forum" which consisted of a number of dialogues on the theme "Leave No One Behind". This meeting conducted by ECOSOC involved member states, UN and other intergovernmental organizations and civil society. Key messages of the meeting included the implementation of the SDGs in their entirety and the importance of reaching out to the most vulnerable people.

### HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SDGS?

Here is a short quiz that takes you on a tour of the Sustainable Development Goals. It will test your knowledge ... or, if you have not read the Goals closely, the Quiz will teach you things about the SDGs that you really ought to know. Try it [here!](#)

### THE SDGs – A Girl's View.

'If you don't know where to start with the SDGs, start with women and girls everything else will fall into place,' says UN Women head Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. Recently, the Guardian Newspaper published "[A girl's view of the Sustainable Development Goals](#)". These photographs of women and girls from all over the world illustrate each of the [17 SDGs](#).

### LEARNING EVERY DAY: AGE DOES NOT MATTER!

Yes, some of us are learning about the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and our place in it as students, others learn in small groups for adults and elderly people.

Students from 13 schools in Kolkata gathered for an interschool Fest on 11 – 12 August. The SDGs were integrated into the program and each school was given a poster of the 17 Goals at the end of the Fest.

Loreto schools and Communities in Mauritius were given input on the Sustainable Development Agenda by Martine Cotte, Cathy de Cazanove and Therese Yaw ibvm, all participants at the Gyeongju Conference.



Students with SDG Posters - Kolkata



Mauritius

## Meet Emma O'Kane

Meet Emma O'Kane from Northern Ireland who has been our Youth Representative for the past three months. Emma is a past pupil of Loreto Coleraine and completed a B.A. in Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Click [here](#) to listen to Emma as she shares some of her expectations about the internship at the beginning of her time at our office.

As well as attending the 2016 Youth Assemble Emma followed various issues of concern addressed at the United Nations. An urgent issue in many parts of our world today is that of **Migrants and Refugees**.

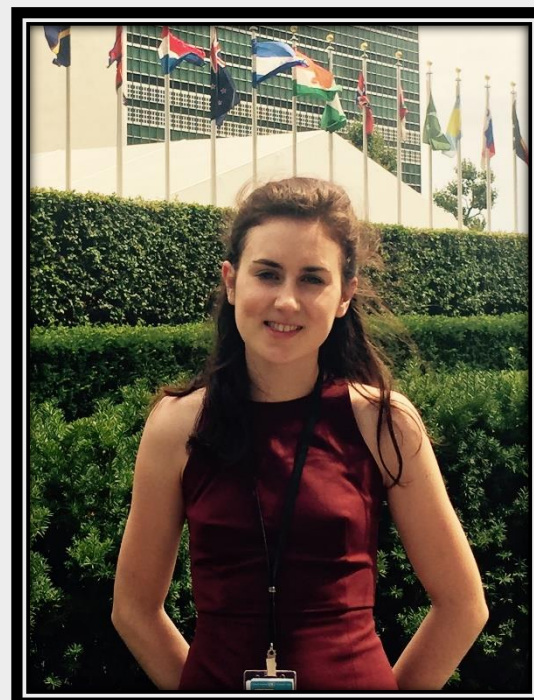
Emma writes: *'Each of us is responsible for his or her neighbour: we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live'* Pope Francis, Migrant Day 2016. Given the gravity of the refugee

situations in Europe, South Sudan, across the Middle East and in fact in every continent, the UN seeks to facilitate the protection of refugees at every possible level. Launched in New York on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016, the [Migrants in Countries in Crisis \(MICIC\) Initiative](#)

comes at a time with higher numbers of refugees and migrants than ever before. This organisation works to improve the protection of migrants from countries affected by conflict or natural disaster and follows the 2030 Sustainable Development

agenda theme of ['Leave No One Behind'](#). Speaking at the launch, Peter Sutherland - Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for International Migration - complimented the MICIC guidelines for their deep grounding in common sense, their clear links to values of multilateralism and their bracing words, 'first, we must save lives'.

In terms of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the challenge to UN Member States is how they are to work collaboratively with other groups to cope with the vast migration of peoples across borders and how such movement is to be prevented in the first place. International solidarity is necessary to develop an effective capacity building initiative which addresses the initial reasons behind refugees fleeing their countries due to war, persecution, climate change etc. On 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the UN General Assembly will convene a special meeting addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.



## IBVM Network Efforts to Help Refugees.

**Australia. At the advocacy level**, Australia has participated in letter writing campaigns involving communities, schools and networks: regarding the detention of children - particularly on Nauru, regarding the treatment of all asylum seekers - particularly Nauru and Manus Island. Collaboration with other organisations advocating for asylum seekers, participation in protests re treatment of asylum seekers. Articles on the issue for School newsletters and the website. One IBVM is a member of a Congregational Leaders' group lobbying on the issue and meeting with politicians. **Practical support is given through:** Membership of Boards of organisations which provide settlement services for asylum seekers and refugees, Home tutoring of new arrivals, After-school homework program for Sudanese refugees, Home tutoring and support and home visiting for new arrivals. The Province has provided a house and support for an asylum seeker family and the local school is also giving help to this family. Mary Ward International Australia (MWIA) funds a program helping new arrivals prepare for work etc.

### IBVM Schools in Spain: solidarity with the refugees.

Europe is living the biggest refugee crisis in our history since the Second World War. Nearly one million people coming from countries like Syria, Afghanistan or Eritrea have arrived at EU borders and are now living in tents, places with no water or sanitations services, without health care, with children under 18 wandering alone

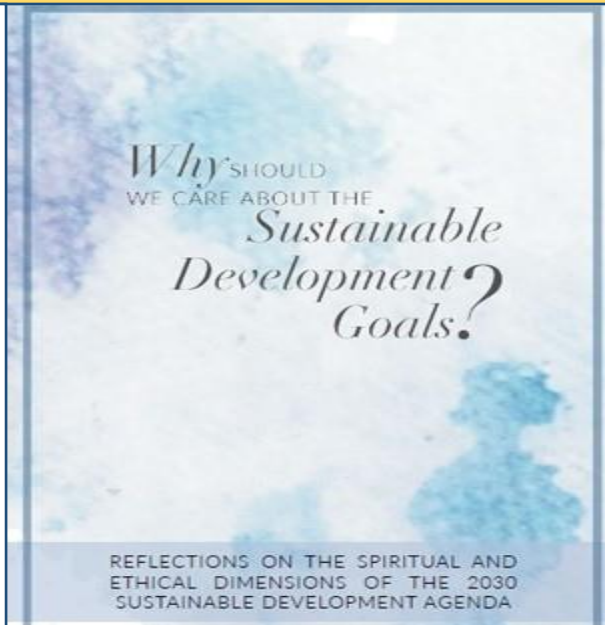


across Europe, being badly treated by border polices. We cannot bear this. That's why the IBVM province supports the campaign by the Jesuits: "I am a welcoming Land", in order to encourage governments to offer asylum and refuge to migrants and refugees.

In the same way, our schools, with the participation of Fundación Mary Ward, have put together a campaign to collect much needed products for babies and children in the refugee camps: nappies, powdered milk, baby food... Once again, the IBVM schools in Spain have shown their solidarity and engagement. The campaign was carried out by volunteers, teachers and pupils from El Soto, Loreto and Bami. We received thousands of kilos, thanks to the involvement of the families and local companies. They were sent to Katsikas, a refugee camp in Greece, where the NGO Olvidados (Forgotten) is currently working.

### *Why should we care about the Sustainable Development Goals?*

The emergence of a new ethical and spiritual consciousness supporting the transition to a just, sustainable and peaceful world is one of the most promising developments of the last half a century. This is a recognized fact. But for people whose whole life has been based on a profound spiritual and ethical underpinning, it goes without saying that the 2030 sustainable Development Agenda deserves reflection as a spiritually and socially transformative paradigm. Within and behind the language and principles we find a myriad of attempts to invite us, humans, to transcend our personal interests and look at the common good. Christine Burke IBVM offers us a first approach to this program in the light of our spiritual heritage. It is the first of what will hopefully be a series of reflections in this respect. Read it [here](#).



### **Next Secretary General of the United Nations**

The first internationally televised debate between UN Secretary General candidates was held on 12 July 2016. The Secretary General of the United Nations manages a staff of 44,000, not including 104,000 peacekeepers and is responsible, in theory, for issues from refugees, pandemics, to climate change. He or she is a voice for human rights as well as the fundraiser in chief for the U.N. Recognized by some as the world's most impossible job, it is also called the best possible job on earth. At the time of the Town Hall debate, organized by Al Jazeera Television Network, ten of the twelve candidates shared their vision for the UN and answered questions on issues such as leadership style, the International Criminal Court, climate change, the civil war in Syria and UN peacekeepers struggling to protect civilians. Our present office members were lucky to be at the debate. **We made a short video of our impressions which you can see [here](#).** In recent weeks the Security Council has cast "straw votes" as part of their consensus reaching process. Their final candidate will be proposed to the General Assembly for adoption.

## UNCTAD 14

The 14th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in Nairobi, Kenya from 17 – 22 July 2016 closed with the adoption of two crucial documents. The two documents – Nairobi Maafikio and Nairobi Azimio – are aimed at ensuring fair trade between developing countries and developed nations as well as ensuring action is taken on previous agreements. The ‘Nairobi Azimio’ document is a political declaration representing a broad expression of the social and economic state of the world. The “Nairobi Maafikiano” focuses on the role of UNCTAD. Five IBVM members, [Teresia Wamuyu](#), [Eunice Njeri Ndabih](#), [Selina Cheron Byomdo](#), [Veronica Mwanganga](#) and [Roselyne Ayienda](#) took part in the Conference, Civil Society Forum and Youth Forum thanks to collaboration with the Sisters of Notre Dame (SND). Click on their names to read or hear their comments.



## “Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together”

A group of 15 members of the IBVM/CJ Network met in Gyeongju, South Korea from 27 May – 6 June 2016 for the UN Dpi NGO conference entitled “Education for Global Citizenship: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals Together”. We gathered to prepare for the conference, participate in it and make a follow up Action Plan for our countries and the globe. We are very thankful to the CJ Korean Province for the heartfelt welcome they gave the group and the Korean Sisters who were part of the group for their attention and help with our every need. You already received feedback from the group that attended. Since June, there have been several events to put some of the learnings into action. Some very impressive awareness raising events have taken place in schools, Development Centers and Communities. Advocacy work has begun. Youth engagement in the processes has been given a strong impetus. More detailed information on the activities will be communicated in a special UPDATE.



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