

It's your World

Advent, Christmas and 2015

Advent and Christmas are moments when our waiting and hoping capture the deep longing of all human beings for a peace filled world in which all have the possibility of living a meaningful life with dignity. Our Christian tradition echoes that common desire. It is beautiful to recognize those who, in many ways, are working to make this come true. For the last two years, the United Nations has worked tirelessly to create spaces and processes where everyone can contribute their thoughts and concerns so that together we can develop guidelines for the next 15 years. All the UN Updates have mentioned different aspects of the process. Many have contributed opinions to the MY World Survey.

The Road to Dignity by 2030

On 4 December 2014 Mr. Ban Ki-moon presented an unedited Report to the General Assembly and to civil society present or watching live throughout the world. The Report, "The Road to Dignity by 2030: "Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives, Protecting the Planet", provides a synthesis of the many processes in place to bring the widest participation possible in forming the world we want. The Report, which captures the aspirations of the human family, is worthwhile reading. The Report is not so much about what the United Nations is saying to us but rather what we are saying to ourselves through the processes put in place by the United Nations staff. This inspirational document will be accompanied by the 17 Goals and 139 Strategies already accepted as a basic document for negotiations by the General Assembly in the final stage of the Post 2015 Agenda. The edited Report will be available in all six UN languages by 31 December 2014.



Read [The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming all lives and Protecting the Planet](#), along with the documents and remarks made by Pope Francis who has captured the imagination of so many people throughout the world.

Trafficking in Persons

In recent weeks two important Reports on Human Trafficking have been published. These reports involved considerable work -gathering data, analyzing it, naming where we are, noting the advances made, indicating what needs to be initiated or strengthened, and suggesting ways forward.

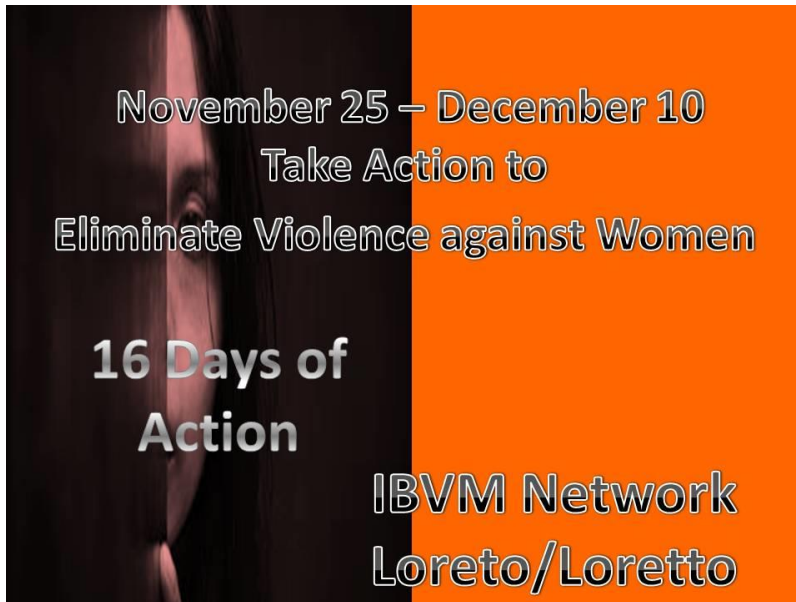
[The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014](#) produced by the United Nations Department of Crime and Drugs (UNDOC) was presented by the Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon on 24 November 2014. The United States Government document, [The 2014 Trafficking in Persons Report \(TRIP\)](#), published in June 2014, was presented to NGOs at the United States Mission to the United Nations in early December. These Reports, which you will find in the links, are helpful resources when considering trafficking in general and the situation in particular countries.

NGO to STOP TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Human Rights Dimension in Trafficking in Persons, an informative event to commemorate International Human Rights Day, (10 December) was organized by The NGO Committee to STOP TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS. Diplomats from Permanent Missions to the United Nations, along with UN Staff and representatives of the NGO community, shared their insights on the many dimensions of trafficking in persons. Appalling data in regard to this multi-billion dollar business was distributed and the evidence was there that trafficking is happening all around us – in our own back yard. The need to be informed and to work to inform others is an essential requirement if we are to end this scourge in our world. The NGO committee to STOP TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS published this online [STATEMENT](#) on Trafficking for the International Day of Violence against Women and the 16 Days of Activism.



Working to Eliminate all Forms of Violence against Women



As of 2014 143 out of 195 countries guarantee equality between women and men in their constitutions. Yet, according to United Nations' UN Women, violence against women is considered to be of pandemic proportions. Twenty years ago, the Beijing platform for Action held governments accountable for girls' rights and called for the ending of all forms of discrimination against girls. Girls are still among the most vulnerable to and deeply affected by violence. Empowering girls and young people, both boys and girls, to confront and prevent violence is becoming a priority of the United Nations. Members of our network are aware of the ongoing challenge in this respect and constantly seek out creative ways of continuing our- work in this respect.

FINANCING Post 2015 DEVELOPMENT

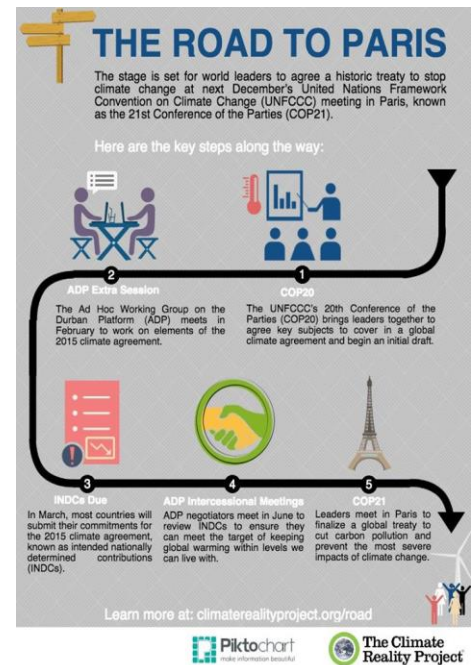
The resources needed to finance the Post 2015 sustainable Development Agenda are huge and the challenges in meeting them are enormous – but surmountable. During the months leading up to the conference to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2015, States and Civil Society organizations and the Business Sector are debating ways to arrive at sustainable financial solutions. The **NGO Committee on Financing for Development** recently issued a Statement on this topic. Read- [Putting People and Planet first: Financing Sustainable Development requires Political Courage.](#)

Climate Change Conference, Lima Peru. (COP20)

What is COP20? The Conference of Parties (COP) is the governing body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)¹. This Convention, which aims at reducing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, came into force in 1994². To date more than 190 countries meet once a year to evaluate the application of the convention and develop the negotiation process between the parties to address new commitments.

COP 20 is taking place in Lima Peru from 1 – 12 December 2014. Representatives from more than 190 countries and stakeholders from international organizations, civil society, private sector and media who have received accreditation for the Conference are participants, advisors or advocates at the COP20 negotiations, side events and displays. The Peoples' Forum offered an alternative setting to the official section.

COP20 is part of a process built up over the course of two decades and seeks to achieve consensus among member states. The Conference hopes to build on mandates achieved at the previous nineteen COPs. Representatives will negotiate realistic and coherent goals which will, hopefully, find consensus at the Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris in December 2015.



The balance between economic growth and restricting our devastation of the planet is fraught with difficulties and interest.



Meanwhile in Lima up to 15,000 people took part in the March in Defense of Mother Earth. It was the largest march in Peru in decades and the biggest environmental demonstration in South America. The march was organized by social organizations to put pressure on government authorities meeting at COP 20, the official UN Climate Change Conference. An Inter Faith Prayer Service was held in Lima on 9 December to accompany the COP20 process. Members of our IBVM Network in Peru have been active participants of civil society at COP20.

¹ The **United Nations Framework Convention** on Climate Change (UNFCCC or **FCCC**) is an international environmental treaty that was produced at the **United Nations Conference** on Environment and Development (UNCED) (informally known as the **Earth Summit**) in Rio de Janeiro, June, 1992.

² [Background on the UNFCCC: The international response to climate change](#)

A Message to the World from the World.

This global collaboration through the Arts, spearheaded by IBVM Canada, takes the **My World 2015 Survey** as starting point for a global discussion on social and political development and hope. Artists and students from formal and non- formal education centers throughout the global IBVM Network have been invited to take part in the initiative. The final product will be an enormous virtual mural and it is hoped the experience for those taking part in the initiative and those who will be able to see the final result online will be gratifying. Thanks to the organizers and participants who have put a lot of effort into the initiative.



Loreto Normanhurst, Australia. From 17 to 21 November Year 10 students participated in YCON, a week-long program that seeks to engage students with a range of global issues. YCON includes elements of the Model UN experience and students are placed in specific countries for the week.



The week started with a Keynote address by Phil Glendenning, Director of the Edmund Rice Centre who challenged students to take action to address the inequalities and injustices in the world around them. Throughout the week a number of guest speakers were invited to talk about the work of NGOs and the strategies used to address issues such as access to water, the treatment of asylum seekers and the availability of universal primary education.

ibvm spoke about the work of Mary Ward International and Loreto as an NGO. They had a lively Skype exchange with me at our office associated with United Nations DPI in New York. When asked about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) there was a resounding *Yes, We have been working on them here.*

UPCOMING UNITED NATIONS EVENTS

Commission on Social Development 4 – 13 February 2015 on the theme of Rethinking and Strengthening Social Development in the Contemporary World.

Commission on the Status of Women 9 – 20 March 2015 (Beijing + 20). It will focus on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action including current challenges that affect its implementation and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

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