

## IBVM Corporate Stance on Human Trafficking

At the General Congregation held in September 2014 at Loyola, Spain, the following statement was adopted:

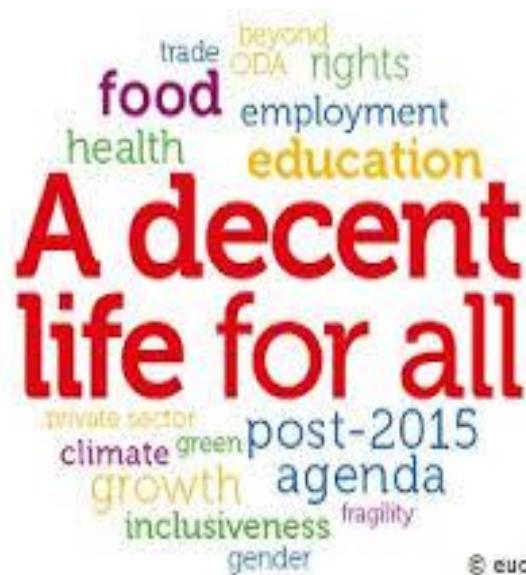
*"As members of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an international and multicultural congregation of women religious, we pledge to work for the eradication of all forms of human trafficking and its causes, particularly among women and children, wherever we live and minister".*

Human trafficking is a global issue. The IBVM sisters and their colleagues work with others to raise awareness of trafficking, in all its forms, and, through education, advocacy, hands on assistance, prayer and other means, to prevent it. Through our Corporate Stance we hope to intensify our intent and action throughout the world by adding our voice and actions to those of many other religious congregations and civil society NGOs.

Our provincial Assemblies will provide space to move forward on our Institute commitment. **Meanwhile we can take a "long, loving look" at the world of Human Trafficking.**

## Current United Nations processes to achieve a life of dignity for all.

**Post 2015 Development Agenda.** After almost two years of information gathering from around the world, the Post 2015 process is moving towards the stage in which member states negotiate the final content of the Goals. Recently, Mr. David Donoghue, Permanent Representative of Ireland, and Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, were appointed co-facilitators to move the process forward. At the same time, this year's President of the General Assembly will organize a series of events on "Delivering on and implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda." It is an important time for civil society to encourage governments to come to the realization that people must come before economic gains and that we live on a planet with limited resources.



© eudevdays.eu

**Financing for Post 2015 Development Agenda.** Implementation of the Post 2015 Development Agenda will require adequate financing. Recently a special UN Expert Committee, which has been studying this aspect of the huge process, issued a report drawing up a "menu of options". One of the concerns expressed at events organized to study this report was the need for National Finance Ministries to integrate the Development Agenda into their budgets. Wealthy countries are of particular concern. The results of the International Conference on Financing for Development, July 2015 to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 13-16 July 2015

will be a crucial to the future of the Development Goals. NGOs have been part of the process and will work to keep the interests of powerless peoples and nations to the fore.t.

**Climate Change:** On 30 September 2014, a **Summit** was held at the United Nations to address the serious challenge of **climate change**. Hundreds of thousands gathered in cities around the world, in the previous weekend, to express their concerns for the future of the planet. About 40 thousand people came to New York. In the [short video](#) you can see what they were asking their leaders. Closing the Summit, the Secretary-General said, "I asked for bold announcements from Governments, business, finance and civil society in five key areas. The Summit delivered."



Alina Saba a civil society representative from Nepal, recently ranked as the fourth most climate "vulnerable" country, remarked that few wealthy countries attended the panel, chaired by Evo Morales, Bolivia, of which she was part. "We wanted to tell countries", she said, "that climate change is, essentially, a social justice issue. Those who have caused the least harm to this planet, indeed those who have nurtured and cared for our environment are the very same people being punished for the excessive consumption and pollution of the obscenely rich."

### **Who are our governments listening to?**

**Monitoring and Accountability.** Implementation of the Post 2015 Development Agenda and Action to combat climate change will require monitoring and accountability mechanisms if they are to be taken seriously by member states. This may sound logical, but the resistance to both monitoring and accountability is notable, imposed mainly by the financial sector and corporations. A recent remark by Christine Lagarde, President of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) highlighted the problem. She spoke of the fierce lobbying of the financial sector as an enormous obstacle.

## **Our Network around the World.**

Some forty students and adults from Toronto participated in a United Nations Program from 8 – 10 October 2014. This program aims to advance the awareness of our call to Global Citizenship. Students are introduced to the sectors involved at the United Nations. The students visited the UN Headquarters, and then the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations for a briefing from one of the 193 member states, each of which has its Mission or offices throughout New York City. They had education sessions from members of the NGO (Non-Governmental Organizations) associated with the United Nations.

The program offered opportunities to learn how, as citizens, we can advance the work of Human rights, oppose Modern Day slavery – Human Trafficking, and achieve a sustainable lifestyle.



**50 years later.** Joan Salvatore remembers:



"This week of October 7 – 12 I find myself on a UN trip organized by Mary Ward Center for Social Justice. Fifty years ago I was a student at Loretto Toronto and went on a UN trip to New York. My goal – *to save the world*. At the Abbey, my grade 10 religion teacher had a lasting influence on me. She had done extensive work in Africa and she inspired her students to get out there and make a difference. Tragically, Ms Sommerville died in a car accident in Africa a few years later. But her influence and inspiration lived on. These 35 young people here at the UN this week will not save the world, but they will make a difference. That the Mary Ward Center supports and nurtures the values and beliefs that these students have

already developed is very encouraging for the fostering of a realistic HOPE for a better future. May one of them return with the UN group 50 years from now." *Joan Salvatore*

### **International Day of the Girl 2014.**

"Congratulations, it's a beautiful little girl". Images and expectations come to mind when we hear these words at the birth of a baby girl. Mary Ward Loreto Foundation, Albania sent an account of what this means in rural areas. Read or download the document on [Albania](#). Thanks to Ana Stakaj for sharing the information on behalf of our Network in Albania. Yalina from Peru shared the fun and entertainment with girls in Lima. Loreto Darjeeling celebrated the day by taking part in a marathon to raise awareness on Human Trafficking. The girls were actively involved in action on behalf of other girls and women who find themselves caught in this form of modern day slavery. Thanks to Ms Geetanjali Lama who used her Facebook page to keep us updated on their efforts. Loreto Rumbek, South Sudan recognized the results of their effort to empower girls through education. Their girls advance to Higher Education thanks to the help of friends concerned with the advancement of girls through education. At UN Headquarters, students joined in the celebrations organized by UNICEF.



## **Special United Nations Peace Week.**

Loreto College, Kolkata, India linked UN International Day of Peace and the International day of Non- Violence to form Peace Week which they celebrated from 8 – 15 September 2014. Keynote Peace Address was given by Dr. Santanu Chakraborty, Calcutta University, in which he engaged students in conversation on peace as holistic way of being rather than mere absence of conflict. Activities throughout the week were based on the importance of peace in our world today along with others based on the “Joy of Giving” in the wake of the Kashmir flooding disaster.



## **Ongoing Awareness Raising – Be part of it.**

### **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, November 25**

The **16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence** is an international campaign, from **November 25**, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, to **December 10**, **International Human Rights Day**, symbolically linking violence against women and human rights and emphasizing that such violence is a violation of human rights.

Information is available at:

Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/>  
ACRATH <http://acrath.org.au/> (information will be uploaded in November)

## **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.

Cecilia O'Dwyer ibvm

Facebook: Loreto IBVM UN Twitter: ibvmun Web: [www.ibvmunngo.org](http://www.ibvmunngo.org)  
email: [ibvmunngo@gmail.com](mailto:ibvmunngo@gmail.com)