

Marianists International: The Marianist Family NGO at the United Nations Annual Report 2010

In addition to the specific activities during the months listed below I, and my intern for most of the year Vilma Ilic from Columbia University, participated in monthly meetings of the following NGO Committees: 1) Social Development (and its Poverty Eradication sub-committee)¹, 2) Financing for Development, 3) Family, 4) Education, 5) UNICEF Working Group on Girls, 6) Committee on the Status of Women, 5) Migration, 6) RUN (Catholic Religious congregations at the UN). The majority of the work as a NGO representative is generated in these committees and their ad hoc task forces. Most will focus their attention on the major event at the UN specific to its issue, i.e., the ECOSOC functional commissions each winter and spring.

I also continued my involvement with the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility on behalf of the Marianist Province of the US. I was actually on the ICCR Board from June 2009 – June 2010 completing a term for another member who had to leave the Board. The work with ICCR probably accounted for 20% of my total time.

January

- Brothers Remi Sandah and Charles-Henri Moulin of the Marianist General Administration represented Marianists International at a two-day follow-up meeting of Catholic NGOs with the Forum for Catholic-inspired NGOs that originally met in Rome in December 2007. The meeting produced a summary document with goals and specific targets in the areas of Human Rights, Family, Health, Education, Environment & Development, and Migration.

- In New York, as part of the ICCR investors, I met with representatives of Wal-Mart to discuss issues related to workers in their global supply chain.



February

- ICCR (Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility) Meetings, New York
- 48th Session of the Commission on Social Development



This was the “policy phase” of a two-year cycle for the Commission on Social Development. The theme for this year and last year’s “review phase” remains “Social Integration.” There is a lot of work that goes into preparation for this two-week commission. The NGO Committee on Social Development spends the majority of its year preparing written and oral statements for the commission, planning side-events, lobbying government delegates. The committee also puts together a one-day forum for all NGOs attending the commission and a luncheon for the delegates of the commission Bureau. Bro. Maximin Magnan from Togo, who does the French translation of Marianists International’s newsletters, was able to join me for the Civil Society Forum. The resolutions produced by the Commission cover the themes: Social Integration (the priority theme), mainstreaming disability in the development agenda, implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action on Aging, proposed methods of work for the Commission, and the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

March

- The General Assembly, by its decision 64/551 of 23 February 2010, decided to convene its fourth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development on 23 and 24 March 2010 at

¹ I am Treasurer of this Committee and a member of the Core Leadership Team for the Sub-Con



United Nations Headquarters. Pursuant to resolution 64/194 of 21 December 2009, the Dialogue's overall theme was "The Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: status of implementation and tasks ahead". The first day of the Dialogue consisted of plenary meetings chaired by the President of the General Assembly, at which ministers and high-level officials were able to make formal statements. The second day was devoted to three interactive multi-stakeholder round tables followed by an informal interactive dialogue with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Marianists International, as a member of the NGO Committee on Financing for Development, was able to be a speaker in Roundtable 2, "the impact of the current financial and economic crisis on foreign direct investment and other private flows, external debt and international trade," and contributed points on external debt in developing countries. <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/hld/HLD2010/CivilSociety.pdf>

- Marianists International, as part of the NGO Committee on Social Development, was part of a "steering committee" that coordinated a research project funded by UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs (DESA) and examined the impact of the financial and economic crisis on NGOs and civil society. During the High-Level Dialogue on FFD, Bro. Steve O'Neil moderated a panel discussion on the results of that study with the project's main researcher, Ms. Eva-Maria Hanfstaengl. <http://ngosocdev.wordpress.com/2010/01/28/174/>

- As part of ICCR, I attended the "Ethical Sourcing Forum" in New York; a three-day conference looking at "best practices" in corporate global sourcing of products and services.

April



- Marianists International and St. John's Home hosted six students and their teacher from the Marianist St. Louis High School in Honolulu, Hawaii, in New York for Boys for an "alternate" Spring break. In addition to sampling some for the great cultural opportunities the city offers, they got a "hands-on" experience of the two pillars of social justice, direct service and systemic change. For the former the students worked in a soup kitchen and with the homeless in a recycling project. Then at the UN they learned how NGOs

and governments partner to formulate international policies that try to address why there are more people poor and marginalized.

- Marianists International was appointed to a "vision committee" for the International Catholic Organizations Center (ICO) to explore ways to revitalize the organization and help make it a viable entity for the future. I agreed to work on the Mission Statement and By-Laws task Force.

May

- At the end of May Marianists International hosted two students from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, David Duarte and Keily Rivero, who attended a week long seminar at the UN sponsored by the Path to Peace Foundation in conjunction with the Permanent Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations. The topic of the seminar was, "Freedom, Truth and Charity: Promoting Human Development as a Vocation." In addition, they participated in one of the weekly NGO briefings and talked with other Catholic NGO representatives on how they help keep the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching at the center of international policy development.
- Marianists International contributed to an online consultation of NGOs in preparation for the MDG summit to occur at the start of the next session of the UN General Assembly in September. <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=cnmdg10#>



June

- Attended the ICCR annual meetings in Detroit, Michigan with Myles McCabe.
- Attended the Assembly of the Marianist Province of the US in Louisville, Kentucky.



- In order to provide input to the preparatory process for the ‘MDG summit’ (High-level Plenary Meeting) on 20-22 September 2010, the UN General Assembly President of its 64th session convened ‘Informal Interactive Hearings of the General Assembly with Non-governmental organizations, Civil Society organizations and the Private sector’. The Hearings took place from 14-15 June 2010 at UN Headquarters in New York. In addition to 46 official speakers in the meeting, 519 individuals representing 335 non-governmental, civil society and private sector organizations observed the Hearings. Of these, well over half were women.

July

- Some time off to visit family and make my annual retreat.

August

- Worked with other NGOs and civil society organizations through “Global Coalition Against Poverty” (GCAP) to present recommendations to member states negotiating on the text of the outcome document for the September High-Level meeting on the MDGs.
- Julie Aherne and Angela Talbot represented Marianists International at the 2010 NGO Conference organized by the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) from 30 August – 1 September. This year’s theme was, “Advance Global Health: Achieve the MDGs.” There was a final statement from those participating in the conference. To read this statement go to:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/65/%20525



September

- ICCR Meetings, New York. Myles McCabe of the US Office of Peace & Justice also attended.
- From 20-22 September, close to 140 Heads of State and Government gathered at UN Headquarters for the three-day High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), also known as the “MDG Summit.” Ten years ago, all UN Member States – 189 at that time – adopted the Millennium Declaration, which provided the basis for elaborating the eight MDG Goals, most of them with time-bound targets, ranging from halving hunger and poverty by 2015 to dealing comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries. The summit sought to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015 and to undertake a comprehensive review of successes, best practices and lessons learnt, obstacles and gaps, challenges and opportunities that could lead to concrete strategies for action. In advance of the summit, the UN Secretary- General released his report “Keeping the Promise” http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/665, which calls for a new pact to accelerate progress in achieving the Goals in the coming years. The report provided a basis for negotiations in the run up to the summit. On the final day of the summit, Member States adopted an outcome document – “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals ” http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/65/L.1 in which Member States set out an action agenda in order to reach the Goals by 2015. Marianists International attended a forum for NGOs sponsored by GCAP with the goal of setting up a five-year action plan for civil society in helping to achieve the MDGs.

October

- The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP) was remembered at the United Nations on Monday, the 18th of October. The theme for this year was, “**From Poverty To Decent Work: Bridging the Gap.**” Marianists



International was involved in the planning of events as a member of the NGO Sub-Committee on Poverty Eradication. Bro. Steve was the moderator for the afternoon panel that focused on youth employment.

- Marianists International presented a film on “Child Labor and the Cocoa Industry” to members of the ICO and students from Felician College in New Jersey.

November

- As part of the Executive Committee for the NGO Committee on Social Development, Bro. Steve met with the Ambassador of Venezuela, who is the Chair of the member state Bureau for the upcoming Commission on Social development.
- Worked with three other ECOSOC accredited NGOs to draft a written intervention for the Social Development Commission on “Poverty and External Debt.”

December

- As part of ICCR, I will attend a meeting with the Philips Van Heusen company to discuss their recent corporate responsibility report, to which we made significant recommendations.
- Another meeting with Wal-Mart is scheduled in Bentonville, Arkansas this month to discuss their “Supplier Development Manual.”