

UFER



International Movement for Fraternal Union
among Races and Peoples

Grail Link to the United Nations Network Update on Grail and UFER activities

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Newsletter #8, July 2013

“Women working together to bring about a world of peace, justice, equity and renewal of the earth”



You have not missed a newsletter. It has been a year since we last sent one out! It's not that we haven't been involved at the UN. Maybe it's that we've been too involved and not much time left to write. You did see our CSW-56 Report and that took a long time to get together. And in a month or two the CSW-57 Report will be completed.



58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 - 21 March 2014 (tentative date).

Priority theme: Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls

Review theme: Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work (agreed conclusions from the fifty-fifth session). Those interested in attending in 2014 should contact Mary Kay at Grail-IPT@juno.com.

We also are looking for a **three-month intern:** age 21-30, speaks English, has computer, facilitation and communication skills, is a 'team player' but can also function on her own. For more information and an application, contact Mary Kay at Grail-IPT@juno.com.



ORANGE DAY The Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign proclaims every 25th of the month as Orange Day! Wear ORANGE every 25th!

Initiated and led by the UNiTE campaign Global Youth Network, worldwide activities implemented on this day by UN country offices and civil society organizations strive to highlight issues relevant to preventing and ending violence against women and girls, not only once a year, on 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women), but every month. Under the heading 'Safe spaces for women and girls', the UNiTE campaign is focusing its Orange Day activities on highlighting recommendations of the agreed conclusions of the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW57) which took place in March 2012. In April, UNiTE focused on 'Safe Work Place for Women and Girls' and in May it highlighted 'Safe Homes for Women and Girls'.

In June, the UNiTE's Orange Day coincided with the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture (June 26th) and the campaign therefore focused on 'State Custody and State Care as Safe Spaces for Women and Girls'.

"Break the silence. When you witness violence against women and girls, do not sit back. Act." Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General

"Break the silence. When you witness violence against women and girls, do not sit back. Act. Advocate. Unite to change the practices and attitudes that incite, perpetrate and condone this violence."

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon



IV International Forum on Migration and Peace held in New York City on June 20 and 21, 2013.

Theme: Human Security, Human Development and International Governance on Migration: The Commitment of Governments and Civil Society Organizations at Local, National and International Levels
Organizers: Scalabrini International Migration Network and SRE (Permanent Mission of Mexico at the UN).

In these brief but intense two days, debates continued that were begun at earlier Forums in Antigua (Guatemala), Bogotá (Colombia), and Mexico City (Mexico) exploring new perspectives allowing Migration to be seen as a phenomenon inherent to human history and requiring an ethical commitment from governments and civil society organizations, resulting in the definition and implementation of comprehensive policies and concrete programs to ensure the dignity and rights of migrants and their families. Sharon Joslyn and Mary Kay Louchart were fortunate to be able to attend.

Following are some key ideas from the Forum. Migration today for millions of persons is the result of the radical Global poverty experienced by so many with no possibility for improving their own life situations. Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank have fostered neoliberal policies with the goal to improve economic conditions while they have, in effect, benefitted all but the Global poor.

Migration is a Global reality which is greater than border disputes or local issues. Just as there are International Trade Regulations there is a need for International Migration Regulations to protect the migrant flow.

Two important commitments from the Forum were stated in their Declaration which can be seen in its' entirety on the web site: www.scalabrinimigration.org/iv-forum-on-migration-and-peace/, or, www.un.org/esa/population/meetings.

“We commit to.....

Promoting a shift in the perception of International migration from a threat to an opportunity.
Ensuring a substantive and meaningful result from the High Level Dialogue (HLD) on International migration that demonstrates the commitment of the UN Member-States to integrate the issue of International migration into the Post-2015 agenda.

These commitments will encompass the work of the NGO Committee on Migration for the coming year in bringing migration and migrants to the table.



MALALA DAY by Biuma Kalala

“One teacher, one student, one book, one pen can change the future. Education first.” –Malala Yousafzai

Friday, July 11, 2013, was a day of celebration and advocacy. Malala Yousafzai was at the United Nations in New York City to celebrate her 16th birthday and to let the world know that we, as youth, are serious about education.

Malala entered the room with grace and sat in her seat while over 500 people clapped for her. When she rose to speak, she received a standing ovation. She smiled at everyone and began to speak. Her speech was memorable. She said many things that wowed me. “Today is the day of every woman, every boy, and every girl.” “I’m here to speak up for the right of education for every child.” “Our words can change the world because we are together.”

I, along with other youth delegates, found Malala to be empowering. We forgot that she was just sixteen years old. Who knew that so much strength could come from a sixteen year old? The Taliban surely did not. “They tried to silence us”, she said, “but they failed...weakness, fear, and hopelessness died. Strength, power, and courage was born.” This was the message that the youth are sending. We will not be silenced and we will not stop until education is given to every child. This can definitely happen if we all work together as global citizens.

Many young people understand the difficulties of education. If we don’t fight for our brothers and sisters, who will? If we don’t let the world know what is going on, who will? If we don’t stand up for what is right, no one will. That’s why this is happening. We are making a change.

(pictured above left to right: Biuma Kalala, Caroline Christie(past Advocate who continues to work with us), Youth Envoy Ahmad Alhendawi, Christina Selby and Anita Benn, current WGG Advocates. The other photo is Malala.)



THE PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES, May 2013 by Joy Garland

I am part of the Indigenous Issues Committee that meets the Third Thursday of the month. In some of the meetings and activities I have been joined by Lillian Wall, Mpanda Kalala and Sharon Joslyn.. This year I spent a lot of time helping Patrick from Papua New Guinea whom I met at the last Forum so he could participate again in the 2013 Forum. We lent him money as his luggage was several days late in arriving and his financial stipend hadn't as yet arrived from a Swiss organization which was to cover all his living expenses at the Forum. After several days, we finally met up with the Swiss non-governmental representative who reimbursed us. Patrick founded the Papua New Guinea Mining Watch organization when he discovered that mining company's use of arsenic to seek gold was poisoning his village's water and people were falling ill. I introduced him to some Native Americans who served on our NGO committee and their lawyer who urged him to seek a lawyer versed in international law. We found a professor of law who was very helpful and encouraging.

My involvement with the Indigenous Forum prompted me in March to send a letter to the Editor of the New York Times. An excerpt follows about the Sequester (harmful automatic budget cuts — known as the sequester — threaten hundreds of thousands of jobs, and cut vital services for children, seniors, people with mental illness and our men and women in uniform.)

“While the sequester exempted cuts, and rightly so, from six Federal Programs, it wants to cut the already underfunded Indian Health Services by 5% despite the 1985 law that said annual cuts for the Indian Health Service could not exceed 2%. The American people must right this wrong by petitioning our legislators because we can't let our representative government do this in our name. It is morally wrong. The United States has a very sorry history of our treatment of Native peoples, the first inhabitants of this continent from the routing of them from their homelands, long and deadly marches to hardscrabble reservations, the forced removal of their children to abusive boarding schools, and the forced restrictions on their native languages and customs. We have forgotten too soon the importance in World War II of the Native people speaking in the Navajo language who were able to confound our enemies who could not break the code which safeguarded our troops in combat operations.” This letter did not appear in The Times, but others did.



Theresa Dardar, Grail member, was invited to New York to be part of a panel during the Indigenous Forum at the UN. Her presentation focused on the Doctrine of Discovery and the British Petroleum explosion in the Gulf of Mexico where she

lives in Louisiana. She was the American runner-up for the Ellen L. Lutz Indigenous Rights Award and attended the event at the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian in New York.



New York (10 July) UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced the appointment of Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka from South Africa as the new Executive Director of UN Women, the organization leading the UN's work on advancing gender equality and women's rights. She brings to this position, a wealth of experience in advocating for women's issues. She was the first woman to hold the position of Deputy President of South Africa from 2005 to 2008, became a member of parliament in 1994 holding various ministerial posts. She was Coordinator for the World Young Women's Christian Association in Geneva (1984-1986) and served as the first President of the Natal Organization of Women, an affiliate of the United Democratic Front. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka established Umlambo Foundation in 2008 to provide support to schools in impoverished areas in South Africa through mentorship and coaching for teachers and in Malawi through school improvements with local partners.

Zodwa Mabaso wrote to Mary Gindhart: “This was in the news all day yesterday. Phumzile is indeed one of us. We are delighted about her appointment.”

Sally Timmel wrote: “We know Phumzile very well - she was a student of Anne Hope's in 1990-91 doing Training for Transformation then. So she knows the Grail and actually was the keynote speaker for the Launch of Mthimkhulu. . She is very warm, inviting, and a very clear thinker. Enjoy working with her.”



News AROUND THE WORLD

- New law in Kyrgyzstan toughens penalties for bride kidnapping--In December 2012, the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan approved legislation toughening the penalty on bride-kidnapping. The new sentence for forcing women into marriage will now range up to 10 years.
- In support of the UNiTE campaign, UN Women's office in India launched 'Freedom from Violence' a photo competition. The competition has attracted hundreds of entries from budding photographers across the country.
- UNiTE t-shirt competition winner turns dedicated activist--24-year-old Mwasapi Kihongosi from Tanzania said: "I did not really know just how widespread violence against women and girls is in my country until one morning, approximately one year ago, the UN Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign changed my life." A friend told him of UNiTE's t-shirt competition and suggested that he use his graphic design skills to take part. As he researched the issue for his entry in the competition, he was shocked by the proportions of the problem.
- Latin American and Caribbean Artists release song in support of UNiTE Campaign --The UNiTE campaign's Latin America and Caribbean Artist Network are soon to launch the song 'Joy', through which they show their commitment to the United Nations Secretary-General Campaign UNiTE to end violence against women and to the eradication of gender violence. The song, 'Joy' was composed by Costa Rican singer-songwriter Miguel Solaris with lyrics from MasudSadiki (RIP), Paola Villacís, Maf y Tião Simpatia.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD Friday, October 11th, 2013

Discrimination and violence against girls and violations of their human rights still happen. The UN felt a need to raise awareness of the challenges that millions of girls face every day. In December 2011, the UN declared that it would annually observe the International Day of the Girl Child, starting from October 11, 2012. What do people do? The International Day of the Girl Child gives people and organizations the opportunity to raise public awareness of the different types of discrimination and abuse that many girls around the world suffer from. On this day, many community and political leaders talk to the public about the importance of girls' right to equal education and their fundamental freedoms. Various events are held to showcase the work that people are doing to empower girls through active support and engagement with parents, families, and the wider community.

WGG is looking for girls, 18 years old or younger, who have launched an inspiring activist project that has improved the lives of other girls in their community, and, they want the opportunity to speak to a global audience about the impact of their work. These girls are invited to apply to join the Day of the Girl Speak Out . We are looking for girls to present a 10 minute speech in which they:

- share the story of an activist project,
- describe the challenges and successes you faced while you implemented it,
- describe your support networks, and

Offer suggestions about the resources you need to continue

Girls Speak Out Application Requirements:

- Be a girl (or group of girls) 18 years of age or younger
- Have the resources to participate on October 11 by video or in person
- Be currently working on an activism project

Submit the application form by August 15, 2013 (for the application, contact WGGgirls@gmail.com, or, Mary Kay at Grail-IPT@juno.com)



Looking Ahead:

- UFER Board meeting will be held in September in The Netherlands. Grail members who will be present: Elly Koenig, Joy Garland and Monica Maher. One agenda item will be preparation for a Trafficking workshop in Nepal in 2014.