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**NEWSLETTER No. 72**  
**July - September 2017**

**Dear Readers,**  
**Welcome to the 72nd Edition**  
**of VIVAT Newsletter!**

This Edition begins with a story of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA-72) taking place in New York from 12 to 28 September 2017. Its thematic focus is People and a livable planet as it highlighted crucial global issues such as climate change, peace and security, poverty eradication, ocean, migration and refugees, trafficking, gender equality and human rights (p. 2).

Two oral statements by VIVAT International both in New York and Geneva on the rights Migrants and refugees are also included (p. 3) in this edition for your reading.

We have three stories come from Latin America. The first is shared by Fr. Odenilson, SVD, on his pastoral ministry with the marginalized in Amazon region (p. 4); the sharing based on participation in the VIII Panamazonic Social Forum in Taraputo, Peru by Bro. Jairo Guimaraes, SVD and Sr. Domingo (p. 5); and reflections by Helen Saldanha and Rose Therese Nolta SSps on the fifth PANAM Assembly of Mission and JPIC of the Missionary Sisters Servants of

the Holy Spirit that took place in San Lorenzo, Paraguay (June 30– July 4, 2017) (p. 6).

The ninth Jamboree/Convocation of Indonesian Migrant Catholics in the USA/Canada held in New York, June 30 – July 2, 2017 is also part of this edition (p. 7).

From India Sr. Reena Dsouza, SSps shares with us her story about prison ministry in Gulbarga (p. 8), while Fr. Roy Thomas, SVD about the International Youth Day Celebration at Janvikas (p. 9).

Promoting peace-building among the young at Life Leaning Center, Chicago is shared by Sr. Angelica Oyarzo, SSps and Arantxa Martinez (p. 10). Meanwhile, Sr. Margareta Ada, SSps reflects on her doing internship with VIVAT International in New in August 2017 (p.11).

This issue ends with the fifth part of “Introducing Sustainable Development Goals.” (P. 12).

Thanks to the contributors, translators and editors of this issue.

**IN THIS ISSUE:**

<b>72nd UN General Assembly.....</b> p. 2	<b>India: Reaching Out.....</b> p. 8
<b>Protect Their Rights.....</b> p. 3	<b>India: Reaching Out.....</b> p. 9
<b>Brazil: My Ministry with.....</b> p. 4	<b>USA: Peace in My Heart.....</b> p.10
<b>Brazil: The VIII Panamazonic ...</b> p. 5	<b>Now I am Aware of.....</b> p. 11
<b>Paraguay: Communion with.....</b> p. 6	<b>Introducing SDGs (5).....</b> p. 12
<b>New York: How to Survive.....</b> p. 7	

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## 72<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA72)

**The 72<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 72)** began at UN Headquarters on 12 September 2017 and will conclude on 28 September 2017. The General Debate that opened on 19 September 2017 focused on the theme, “Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet”. The President of UNGA-72, Miroslav Lajčák, highlighted the issues and challenges of poverty, growing inequalities, forced migration, conflicts, terrorist attacks, and effects of climate change; and called forth the States, sustain peace through prevention, through a stronger focus on people and planet stressing on the importance of human rights. In the course of General Debate one can clearly see the challenges to peace, that is detrimental to people and health of the planet. Climate change, terrorism, conflicts and war crimes, migration and refugee crisis, nuclear proliferation were the issues that were focused by several heads of the State citing their commitment to action. There were also accusatory remarks and exchanges made to certain countries that were against the spirit of UN. Most of the leaders highlighted their commitment to poverty eradication, climate change, peace and security. The Address by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher representing Holy See Mission provides a good framework for a commitment to peace and reconciliation as he said, “nothing is lost in peace; in war everything is lost”. He stressed on making our planet a livable one, through political dialogue and active negotiations based on human rights principles wherever conflicts exist while working towards stopping of manufacturing and proliferation of weapons of war, banning nuclear weapons, and implementing cease fire resolutions. Terrorism, genocide, ethnic cleansing result in mass exodus of people leading to forced migration, refugee crisis, displacement and trafficking



The President of UNGA-72, Miroslav Lajčák

which can be dealt with international solidarity for reaching out to the victims. Several member States called forth for ratification of Nuclear Ban Treaty, implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change and adoption of Global compacts for migration and refugees.

There were several side events that focus on peace, climate change, Oceans, gender equality, migration and anti-trafficking.

VIVAT focused on events addressing culture of peace. International Day of Peace: 21 September 2017. The Peace Bell Ceremony was held on 15 September 2017 on the theme “Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.” Honoring the spirit of Together that promotes respect, safety and dignity for everyone in search of a better life, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called forth for a commitment to resist cynical efforts that divide communities and to stand up for human rights by building bridges and transforming fear into hope. Miroslav Lajčák, President of UNGA-72, prioritized migrants and refugees and said that peace is measured in the number of people who feel safe and secure – who are free to exercise their human rights – and who have hope for the future.

Various events such as “Sustaining Peace through Strengthening of Human Rights in International Law”

organized by Sierra Leone as well as parallel events held by civil society groups stressed the importance of promoting peace and saying no to war.

VIVAT jointly organized a parallel event on the theme, “The UN Sustainable Development Goals & Global Human Rights” held at 221, East 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, NY that aimed at promoting



sustainability and peace and building solidarity towards achievement of 2030 Agenda through human rights approach. It was interactive session



where panelists and the participants shared their stories concluding with a road map for the coming year’s High level political forum.

*by Helen Saldanha, SSPS*

## PROTECT THEIR RIGHTS! ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS!

- ❖ VIVAT International’s Intervention at the UN Thematic Session and Multi-Stakeholder Hearing on the Preparatory Process for A Global Compact on Migration
- ❖ Statement at the 5th Thematic Consultation on the Global Compact Migration, Vienna

**P**articipating at the Thematic Session and Multi-Stakeholder Hearing on the Preparatory Process for A Global Compact on Migration in New York, 24 - 26 July, 2017, VIVAT International had an opportunity to deliver an oral statement on the rights of migrant workers. Emphasizing the significant contributions of migrant workers in all dimensions of human life to the increase of family income, education, access to health services, reduce child labor, increase access to information technology and



small businesses, food and other family needs, knowledge and information transfer from the countries of destination to the countries of origin and vice versa, it calls for the protection of migrant workers from being cheated and manipulated by recruiters (organizations, agencies or individuals), and from wage theft, unauthorized wage deductions, wage manipulation, wage depression and wage discrimination. It also calls for the protection of migrant workers from being trafficked as forced and cheap labors or sex workers.

This statement ends with some recommendations to Member States and relevant institutions to:

- **provide wider availability of reasonable money transfer operators and easy access to information to compare costs and services to send remittances;**

- **increase efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict labor recruitment agencies, brokers, and corrupt public officials involved in the violation of migrant workers’ rights;**
- **adopt and apply the ILO 2016 “Check Points on Eliminating and Preventing Forced Labour” to monitor whether recruiters (agents and companies) comply with the international and national regulations;**
- **ratify the Conventions and International Agreements that would help protect, promote and fulfill the rights of migrant workers;**
- **and develop a regional collaboration to monitor how migrant workers are treated in terms of work conditions, wages, and other related matters.**

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### STATEMENT AT THE FIFTH THEMATIC CONSULTATION ON THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON MIGRATION

**Representing** VIVAT International and Talitha Kum at the fifth United Nations Thematic Consultation on the Global Compact on Migration in Vienna, Austria, on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Sr. Carmen Elisa Bando, SSpS and Sr. Gabriella Bottani, CMS, made an oral statement on Trafficking in Persons. They state, “People on the move are today the most vulnerable and at the risk of being trafficked, especially women and children. We express concern for the children that continually disappear along the migratory road, and the violence that they suffer.”

The statement calls for “a multidisciplinary approach to tackle human trafficking” and ends with following recommendations:

- That proper clauses for the protection of trafficking victims among refugee and migrant populations are included in both



Compacts: the one on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;

-That States increase their capacities to identify victims particularly among people on the

move, through a multidisciplinary, age and gender-sensitive approach. Special attention should be paid to minor victims and presumed victims as well as to women.

- That strong national child protection and social protection systems be in place, in origin, transit and destination countries;

- Ensure that the victims of trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery are not punished for the criminal offenses committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked by the insertion of a non-punishment clause - similar to the one envisaged in the Palermo Protocol on Smuggling;

- Ensure that protection and assistance to victims of trafficking are not made conditional upon cooperation with the authorities against suspected criminals. Police investigations on trafficking cases be done with proactive techniques and Intelligence rather than relying on the testimony of the victim;

- Ensure protection of victims through long-term residence permits in transit and destination countries or voluntary return and reintegration in the origin countries, including re-settlement schemes in third countries when necessary to ensure the victim’s security from retaliation.

- Ensure access to justice on a voluntary basis as well as entitlements of victims to remedies, including compensation for damages;

- Consider developing a framework for States’ accountability, including monitoring of progresses in victims’ identification and assistance, based on clear indicators, including public budget allocations, as well as independent and transparent assessment processes.

## MY MINISTRY WITH THE MARGINALIZED

**I AM FR. ODENILSON G. GUIMARAES, SVD**, born in the Amazon region of Brazil. It is now 7 months since I came to this parish (Our Lady of Aparecida- Placas). Am only 4 months as a Parish Priest. The parish is located in the Placas Municipality which has a population of about 17.000 people. Placas is situated in between Uruará and Ruropolis municipalities on the Great Transamazonic Highway. The parish is within the Vicariate of Xingu, which has its headquarters in the town of Altamira. The distance between Placas and Altamira is 252 kms.

Placas Parish has a network of 34 communities. It is both urban and rural: 3 are in an urban setting and the rest are in the rural zone. The Transamazonic Highway on which the Placas Parish is situated, was a Brazilian Government Project that aimed at making the Amazon habitable. The families that live here were brought from many parts of the country: south, southeast, Central, and northern parts. As they settled here, they never received what they were promised by the government. They had to fend for themselves by cutting down some parts of the Amazon Forest for their survival. The deforested area along the Transamazonic Highway turned into grazing fields, and open entry roads for families into the Unknown. Many persevered and survived the harsh conditions thanks to their persistence and resistance that earned them a piece of land. For years, these families were a forgotten lot until today: without roads, health and education facilities. Many a time, these people have struggled and faced many challenges of muddy roads and the dusty Transamazonic Highway.



This is the naked reality these people find themselves in today, 50 years of survival and resistance. Perhaps it was this common fate that united them to form the Small Christian Communities to which they belong.

Currently, for our pastoral visits to these communities, we face muddy roads during the rainy season and dust during the dry spell. Mission here is quite challenging and as such, the situation demands adequate transportation facilities: strong and resistant vehicles.

These are the conditions in which we find ourselves as we do mission. But unfortunately, our parochial physical structures are in pathetic conditions. The few structures we have need urgent repair. We lack enough facilities for catechism classes and for parish meetings. We have a big parish hall that was constructed without good planning and needs urgent repairs. The Amazon is a hot place in terms of climate. We lack resources to install air conditioned equipments in order to provide adequate conditions for meetings and catechism. For this reason, most of the time, catechism classes are carried out under trees.

Despite the difficulties, we don't surrender. We believe we can continue our mission when joining enforces in the construction of a just and fraternal world.

*Fr. Odenilson G. Guimarães, SVD  
(translated into English by Br. Jairo  
Guimairaes, SVD), Brazil.*

## The VIII Panamazonic Social Forum

As representatives of JPIC - BRC, Sr. Domingos Groda and Jairo Godinho participated in the VIII Panamazonic Social Forum (FOSPA 2017) took place in the city of Tarapoto - Peru from 23 to 27 May 2017. The participants, mostly from various social movements were from 9 countries of the Amazon region (Brazil, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, French Guiana, Guyana and Suriname). In addition there were participants from other South American countries as well as from Europe.



One main theme the Forum examined was the impact caused by large enterprises, especially hydroelectric, oil, logging, agroindustry and mining projects, which threatened the existence of the traditional communities of the Pan American Amazon. The Assembly sought solutions to the traditional model of development not only for the region, but also for the continent as a whole. Today the predatory model seeks new nomenclatures, such as the green or sustainable development. However, in fact the large enterprises continue to disrespect the Culture and violate the rights of peoples and environment, jeopardizing the sustainability and autonomy of peoples, as well as provoking serious climate interventions.

The Forum serves as a moment of resistance to the predatory model and has created an inspiring model where only peoples' movement from the grassroots will have positive impacts and results as it is affected communities who can possibly articulate their needs and mobilize themselves for the common good.

Some general guidelines and relevant points were highlighted for an inclusive development in the Amazon region as follows:

- = Ensure that the States and Nations comply with international legislation to respect the rights of the Amazonian and Andean peoples;
- = Reject all types of corruption, related to infrastructure and exploration projects;
- = Demand the recognition of collective rights, as well as land titling for traditional communities;
- = Recognize and strengthen Amazonian and Andean identities;
- = Demand that governments seek long term and effective solutions to stop the abrupt climate change that causes changes in the lives of peoples and cultures;
- = Demand that all types of violence that criminalize local leaders speaking up for their rights should be stopped;
- = Address all types of gender discrimination.

The participants of the Forum are committed to working strategically to build a peaceful society that lives in harmonious relationship with the environment, valuing the diverse worldviews and diversities present in our region.

NOTE: An important quote by a Brazilian Amazon leadership: "In discussions on the environment, when it comes in context with the vulnerable people, we only have in mind the indigenous, quilombolas and riverine people, but we forget that the peripheries of the urban centers there is a very vulnerable population which is directly impacted by these major projects, and is not always remembered



at our discussion tables and thus we must bring this situation to the surface."

*Sr. Domingos Groda and Jairo Godinho,  
VIVAT Brazil*

## “Communion with the Marginalized and Excluded” The Fifth PAN AM Assembly of Mission and JPIC of the SSpS

**The Fifth PANAM** Assembly of Mission and JPIC took place from June 30 – July 4 at the Retreat House in San Lorenzo, Paraguay with 40 participants consisting of SSpS and their lay associates from the various countries of PAN AM. From the USA Province Sr. Monica Mabel Balbuena, Province Leader and Sr. Rose Therese Nolta, JPIC Coordinator, and Sr. Helen Saldanha from VIVAT participated. The motto of the Assembly was, **“Expanding Circles of Communion”** and the theme was: **“Communion with the Marginalized and Excluded”**.

The reflections on the theme were the central focus of this event, which was done through inputs, sharing field visit and group discussions. Fr. Nilu Zarate SDB presented the reality of the poor in today’s world, and led the assembly through a process of “See, Judge and Act” that deepened the understanding from one’s own country context linking it to the PAN AM reality. His sharing on the unjust structures and impoverishment challenged the group for a relevant response for restoring human dignity. Two presentations on VIVAT Argentina and VIVAT International helped us to be grounded more on VIVAT today. Brother Victor Hirsch from VIVAT International Argentina shared on the mission of VIVAT in Argentina, which highlighted the structure and work of the organization as well as the importance of linking the local initiatives to UN level through cooperation and advocacy for policy developments. Helen added on with the key issues VIVAT International is presently engaged in, namely migration in the context of global compact for migration, sustainable development in the context of environment and climate change, mining issues and women.



The field visit to Banadu Tacumbu, helped the participants understand the reality of constant flooding in this area by Fr. Pedro Velazco and his team. The impoverished community which mostly depended on collection of recycling garbage, constantly lived in fear of flooding and with the climate change the situation was getting worse year by year. However, the commitment of Fr. Pedro and team in providing support, shelter, education, and advocating with the local government bodies for their rehabili-



tation and housing rights is commendable.

The most important part of the assembly was the province/country level reports by the members. The sharing not only brought to awareness of the common issues and

struggles of the marginalized groups, but also enriched each one to learn of the response to better their situation. The work done was on education, health especially, alternative health, environmental protection, working on issues of violence against women, the elderly, terminally ill persons, youth and indigenous communities, and advocacy on human rights. The cultural night showcased Paraguayan, more specifically indigenous Guarani culture and was enjoyable.

The Assembly was filled with cultural prayers and our Eucharistic celebrations were dynamic with cultural meaning. To root ourselves in our past experiences, there were reflections on the last assembly as well as the JPIC Seminar in Steyl. On the last day, the participants at their province/country level group, planned for addressing JPIC issues for the next five years, which they



decided would be further sharpened as an action plan at local level.

*Srs. Rose Therese Nolta, SSpS  
and Sr. Helen Saldanha, SSpS*

## HOW TO SURVIVE BEING MIGRANT CATHOLICS

A Note from the 9<sup>th</sup> Jamboree of the Indonesian Migrant Catholics in the US/Canada

**F**rom June 30<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, Indonesian Migrant Catholics in the United States and Canada gathered at Eddy Farm Retreat House, Sparrow Bush, New York for a Jamboree/Convocation. This is a biennial event.

The Jamboree themed "That They All May Be One" (John 17:21) was attended by over 400 participants from various parts of the United States and Canada, aiming at bringing together and uniting Indonesian Catholics in both countries to experience four "fs": *fun*, *friendship*, a sense of *family*, and the increase in *faith*.

The first day began with an opening mass themed "From Various Places Called into a Family of God." The second day began with a morning Mass themed "Building a Sense of Brotherhood and Kinship" followed by a seminar under a theme: "How to survive being a Migrant Catholic in the US and Canada." The seminar was divided into three sessions, namely the sharing of experiences of five migrants (2 women and 3 men), input sessions by three speakers each with a certain dimension: religious dimension of migration by Fr. Galih (theologian), socio-cultural dimension by Fr. Effendi Sunur, SJ (philosopher), and economic dimension by Mr Benny Widnyono, PhD (Professor of economics). The third was question and answer session.

From the three-hour seminar, five interesting and important points were made as lessons learned and a source of new consciousness: first, wandering is not a new phenomenon. Since ancient times human beings have migrated from one place (continent, island, village, or city)



to another. It has also been found in the Scripture: Abraham, Moses, and the Holy Family of Nazareth were also migrants. Second, the United States of America and Canada have been built up by many immigrants from Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia since ancient times. Therefore, except for indigenous Indian tribes, no one can make a claim that the United States and Canada belong only to a particular group, ethnicity, race or color. Third, people generally come to the US and Canada to seek a better living. Both countries are abundant in milk and honey. Therefore, everyone has to struggle to survive. Fourth, while adopting American and Canadian ways, Indonesians must also remain aware of their own original identity. Living in a melting pot society means that everyone must contribute something to en-

rich the diversity in these two countries by bringing in his/her "indonesianity." Indonesians in both countries must be to contribute positively to both the host countries as well as their countries of origin. Fifth, Jamboree and Catholic communities (KKI) in big cities of the two countries must be a platform to strengthen and support one another.

Ending the seminar, the participants were invited to sing Indonesian national songs to raise awareness and sense of "Indonesianness."

The evening of the second day was marked by a gebyar filled with cultural performances, dances and songs from various regions of Indonesia. The event continued with a campfire where



people were singing and dancing.

The closing day, Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 was culminated in a Eucharistic Celebration with the theme "We Are Sent To Share Life". Being aware of the importance of meeting each other every other year, it was announced that the tenth Jamboree would be held in Los Angeles in July 2019.

*Robert Mirsel, SVD*

## Reaching Out to Another World

### MY PRISON MINISTRY IN GULBARGA, INDIA

#### Is there another world

where people live? Yes, there is another world. A world where there are men and women living having no job, no friends, no family, no free movements. They cannot meet the people whom they want and have no interpersonal relationships and leisure. Its name is 'Prison'. Unlike outside the inside world is of limited contacts, rules & regulations, restriction, hardship, loneliness and despair. In a way to say, life in the prison is unspeakably different from the life of an ordinary person outside.

In order to meet the neglected and deserted people inside this world we have Prison Ministry India (PMI). It is a national voluntary organization working for the release, reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners started in the year 1986 and registered as a national body in the year 1995 under Societies Act. Almost all the states in India bear active presence in the ministry. Prison ministry is an activity dedicated to making sure that inmates have people to give them hope and life while in prison. The volunteers show that they matter very much for us and have someone to count on in disappointed moments. The Prison ministry works around the 3 'R's: *Release*, *Renewal* and *Rehabilitation*. These are the three main ingredients that equip a prisoner to lead a normal life. Release is setting free physically and emotionally. It's an ongoing process of creating hope, forgiveness, will power and self-transformation. *Renewal* is to restore him/her to their original vigour in body, mind and soul. *Rehabilitation* is re-training the prisoners for normal life.



Prison ministry includes a variety of ways to make the prisoners happy. Recognizing their talents, bringing them into the common meetings, helping their family members and children get better education, visiting them often, helping them participate in prayer services, conducting programs, giving them training, counseling, conducting medical camps, and providing free legal aid are some of the ways through which volunteers reach out to the prisoners.

As a prison ministry volunteer, I am happy that I have got this opportunity to meet the women in the Central Prison in Gulbarga. They need nothing except your presence even if it is once a week. They lament, mourn or share their pain every time you meet; however

they have smiles on their face to greet you. We sit together, sing and pray and other times we talk personally. I recently had the opportunity of releasing a 65 year old HIV infected woman on bail. She was caught for selling liquor in the village illegally. No one took up her case nor did the family members come forward to get her bail. She was in the prison for 9 months having done nothing since the arrest. Finally, with the help of another lawyer I went to the court with the bail application. We arranged for a surety and she was released on 14th July. I brought her out of the jail and assisted her to reach her village on the same day.

There are women with small cases who are waiting for their turn to be out on bail. We find women with cases of child marriage, robbery, death of the daughter-in-law, attempt to suicide etc. Some of them are rejected by the family members due to which their cases do not progress in the court. The convicted women have no other way than to trust in the judiciary and in God's providence for a faster release from the prison.

So, there surely exists another world--a world between the walls and bars.

By Sr. Reena Dsouza SSps  
Deepalaya, VIVAT India

## International Youth Day 2017 Celebration at Janvikas, India



**I**nternational Youth Day was celebrated in Janvikas by the youth club members from the slums on 12th August 2017. The program was based on the United Nation's theme for the International Youth Day - "Youth Building Peace". The day was filled with colorful dances, songs and street play performed by youth. "Indore Youth Icon 2017" award, which is initiated by Janvikas this year was given to the budding International Badminton Championship winner Miss. Foziya Khan.

Fr. Dominic welcomed the guests. Colonel D.C. Vincent Shah (rtd) was the Chief Guest of the function. Miss Foziya Khan, winner of Gold Medal, Amateur Games and Sports Federation, International Badminton Championship at Pokhra, Nepal was the Guest of Honour. Fr. Varghese Alengaden from Universal Solidarity Movement was the special guest.

Fr. Roy Thomas, the Director of Janvikas shared about various activities that are conducted during the year for the youth.

Colonel Shah said "Focus your attention on studies and you will never be let down." He also briefed about the recruitment process in the Army and encouraged youth to join the Army to serve the country.

Foziya Khan in her speech told youth to keep discipline, believe in them

selves and never to lose hope. Fr. Varghese appreciated the interventions of Janvikas in organizing and guiding the slum youth and he encouraged youth to take up responsibility to bring about peace in the society. Fr. Nicholas Martis and Fr. Jomon graced the occasion with their presence. Youth exhibited their hidden talents in singing, dancing and acting. The winners of various competitions (painting, football and cricket matches) conducted at slum level were given prizes.

Janvikas organizes youth in different slums through meetings, career guidance, leadership training, motivational talks and providing platform to exhibit their talents.

*Fr. Roy Thomas, SVD  
Janvikas Society, VIVAT India*



## “PEACE IN MY HEART, PEACE IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD”

### Teaching Peace-building Skills to the Young in Chicago’s North side

**F**ormer Secretary - General of the United Nations Kofi Annan once said "young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace." During these current times, we, the inhabitants of this planet, are in need of peace - peace in our hearts, peace in our families, peace in our villages, in our cities, in our countries. Wherever we are, we all have the potential to start creating a wave of peace around the world, and it all starts at the local level, with the young people.

In the United States, and more specifically in the state of Illinois, the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) are running a Life Learning Center. The Holy Spirit Life Learning Center (HSLLC) is located in two different cities: one in Chicago (West Rogers Park neighborhood) and one in Wheeling. In the HSLLC, the Sisters work with individuals and other organizations in the area, to promote human dignity, peace, and justice. Through the programs offered at the HSLLC, the Sisters, staff, and volunteers are trying to address the prevalence of domestic abuse and street violence. With the intention to break the cycle of violence, the HSLLC has been conducting a Summer Peace Camp for children and youth in West Rogers Park for the past three years. Teaching peace-building skills to the young in Chicago’s north side.

The purpose of this peace-building initiative is to help children and youth develop skills for conflict resolution, teamwork, and non-violence.

This year, the Summer Peace Camp took place from July 10 to August 4, 2017, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The motto was “Peace in My Heart, Peace in My Neighborhood.” Fifty children, ages 5



to 16, participated in the program. The specific objectives of the Peace Camp are the following:

- To help participants develop healthy relationships with their peers, family members, and other members in the community.
- To provide, through day-to-day activities, peaceful alternatives to handle conflict between and among one another.
- To create communities of faith and hope.
- To foster peace as a fruit of faith.

The HSLLC was able to run the Peace Camp thanks to a very committed group of volunteers, which included SSpS Sisters, lay and other religious persons, who planned a variety of activities emphasizing the Gospel values of Diversity, Love, Solidarity, and Collaboration. Each day, the Camp started with prayer and a Bible story related to the topic. The children were encouraged to work in teams, enjoyed organized games, and worked together on arts and crafts projects. A field trip to the Chicago Botanic Garden gave them the possibility to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of creation.

The Peace Camp was a learning experience for all the people involved in the program. The children enjoyed playing/working together, and learning to manage conflict in a peaceful

manner. The volunteers also had the opportunity to improve their skills, deepen their faith, and develop new friendships. The parents expressed gratitude because their children practiced at home what they learned during the Camp.

On the evening of August 4, the Sisters, families, and friends came to enjoy performances by the Campers, a display of arts and crafts projects, and a potluck supper. The Campers delighted the audience with dances, songs, and skits related to the theme of the Camp. By teaching the children and youth peace-making skills, we believe that they will bring tremendous transformation in the world starting in their families, and expanding into their neighborhoods.

*Sr. Angelica Oyarzo Chavol, SSpS, HSLLC  
Executive Director  
Arantxa Martinez Martinez, MA, Case Manager and Development Coordinator, VIVAT International U.S.A.*

## NOW I AM AWARE OF BEING VIVAT MEMBER

### My Internship at VIVAT Office in New York

**I am grateful** to have this unique opportunity undergo my internship at the VIVAT International New York as part of my summer program. Not only because of the academic requirement from my campus DePaul University, Chicago, but more than that, I came to realize that I am one of the VIVAT members while I am here, in the United States.

I went through a long procedure before IT eventually brought me to VIVAT. It was my own desire to have a direct experience with VIVAT and wanted to know how VIVAT works with other NGOs and the United Nation. Perhaps in the future, my task would bring me to get in touch with this area, I thought. I submitted my official written request to the PLT of the USA province after some private discussion in-between with the VIVAT team. In January 2017, I got an approval letter from the CLT Rome allowing me to undergo my internship in VIVAT with a specific time-frame on it.

August 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 was my first day at VIVAT, a simple office with the VIVAT name in its door on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of 777 UN Plaza. I was welcomed wholeheartedly by Sr. Helen Saldanha, SSpS and Fr. Robert Mirsel, SVD as the VIVAT Executive Co-directors who were going to be my supervisors during the internship. I have been told that during summer there are not many events provided at UN level. Yet I believed that I would get that chance and it came to be true.

During the second week, I got the opportunity to attend three events at the UN through VIVAT. First, participating at the NGO Major Group meeting on August 8<sup>th</sup> helped me understand how VIVAT networks with other NGOs and what they are concerned about.



Second, taking part at the International Day of Indigenous Peoples to commemorate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UN Declaration on Indigenous Peoples' Rights on August 9<sup>th</sup> has inspired me to know what is being done for the local-ethnic people at the UN level. Third, joining the Youth International Day event on August 11<sup>th</sup> enriched my horizon with knowledge of how productive the youth group is in many areas throughout the globe.

Entering the UN building and sitting in at a luxurious conference room while wearing my Ground Pass, and counted as one of the UN staff was my most proud ID ever. I felt just like was acting on the international stage caring for the wide range of peoples' needs at the grass-roots level.

Through the guidance of the two supervisors and reading the VIVAT documents, I became aware how complex is the work of VIVAT team. They are

responsible for running the central office and facilitating the direct participation in activities at the United Nations.

I learned one significant lesson from VIVAT International was the need for concrete stories from the ground about their members' struggles for the human rights in partnership with other NGOs. I came to understand what they see as concerns and then put them into writing. They never talk about profit or financial measures. Also, through VIVAT International, I got the precious chance to enter and be part of the United Nations staff member from ECOSOC department where VIVAT belongs.

Despite my business background, I could still learn many things during my time being in VIVAT. Here is the difference! When it comes to the purpose of doing business which needs the skilled and motivated employees in order to improve the organization profit margin, things are going differently in VIVAT. As any other NGO, VIVAT International does not deal with employee and monetary issues. Instead, VIVAT considers them as partners and works in partnership relation. So, even though it's opposite from my business background, it actually has helped me as a VIVAT member in my future ministry which is for freedom and human rights. The last reason was that I needed to have a necessary balancing experience of running a business in the future, both profit and non-profit understanding and involvement.

*Sr. Margaretha Ada, SSpS,  
Chicago*

## INTRODUCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS PART 5



### SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

#### SDG 4 TARGETS

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.4 By 2030, increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable (persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations).

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults achieve literacy and numeracy

4.7 By 2030, ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity.

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships for developing countries for enrollment in higher education.

4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries.

#### PROGRESS OF GOAL 4 IN 2017

In January 2017, the secretary general of the UN, Antonio Guterres, launched a progress report on SDGs as follows:

- Despite considerable gains in education enrollment over the past 15 years, worldwide, the adjusted net enrollment rates were 91 per cent for primary education, 84 per cent for lower secondary education and 63 per cent for upper secondary education in 2014. About 263 million children and youth were out of school, including 61 million children of primary school age. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for over 70 per cent of the global out-of-school population in primary and secondary education.
- The lack of trained teachers and the poor condition of schools in many parts of the world are jeopardizing prospects for quality education for all. Sub-Saharan Africa has a relatively low percentage of trained teachers in pre-primary, primary and secondary education (44 per cent, 74 per cent and 55 per cent, respectively). Moreover, the majority of schools in the region do not have access to electricity or potable water.
- On the basis of data from 65 developing countries, the average percentage of schools with access to computers and the Internet for teaching purposes is above 60 per cent in both primary and secondary education. However, the share is less than 40 per cent in more than half of sub-Saharan countries with data.
- Official development assistance (ODA) for scholarships amounted to \$1 billion in 2015, a decrease from \$1.2 billion in 2014. Australia, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were the largest contributors.

Source: Report of the Secretary-General, "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals", E/2017/66

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2-4 October: Inter-session Forum on ECOSOC Rights, 9th Session. Venue: Geneva.
- 2 - 6 October: Committee on the Rights of Child, 78th Session. Venue: Geneva
- 9 - 13 October: Committee on ECOSOC Rights, 61st Session. Venue: Geneva
- 12 - 13 October: Informal Thematic Session on Facilitating Migration, 3rd Session. Venue: Geneva
- 9 - 20 October: Human Rights Council, Intergovernmental Working Group on Effective Implementation of their Durban Declaration..., 15th Session. Venue: Geneva
- 10 November 2017: Joint Meeting of ECOSOC and second Committee on "The Future of Everything - Sustainable Development..." Venue: New York
- 6 - 10 November: Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, 7th Session. Venue: Vienna.

#### UN Calendar of International Days:

##### October

- 1: International Day of Older Persons
- 2: World Habitat Day; International Day of Non-violence
- 5: World Teachers' Day
- 10: World Mental Health Day
- 11: International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction; International Day of the Girl Child
- 15: International Day of Rural Women
- 16: World Food Day
- 17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- 24: United Nations Day; World Development Information Day
- 27: World Day for Audiovisual Heritage
- 31: World Cities Day

##### November

- 2: International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists
- 6: International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
- 10: World Science Day for Peace and Development
- 16: International Day for Tolerance
- 19: World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims
- 20: Universal Children's Day
- 21: World Television Day
- 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

##### December

- 1: World AIDS Day
- 2: International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
- 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 5: International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development
- 7: International Civil Aviation Day
- 9: International Anti-Corruption Day; World Genocide Commemoration Day
- 10: Human Rights Day
- 18: International Migrants Day; 20: International Human Solidarity Day