



“International Mother Earth Day”

The United Nations General Assembly recently adopted a unanimous resolution designating April 22nd each year as International Mother Earth Day. The resolution was proposed by the government of Bolivia and co-sponsored by 50 other countries. President Evo Morales, the first indigenous president of Bolivia, spoke shortly after the resolution passed. “Sixty years after adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Mother Earth is now finally having her rights recognized,” said Morales. Urging the world community to accept a set of principles that would protect the planet’s resources and “right to life,” the Bolivian president said society cannot put its own narrow interests above those of the Earth. “Not just human beings have rights, but the planet has rights,” he said. “What’s happening with climate change is that the rights of Mother Earth are not being respected.”

In this context, Morales outlined certain principles to be considered. The first among them is the “right for no ecosystem to be eliminated.” The second “is the right for Mother Earth to live without contamination.” The third refers to “the right to harmony and balance.” In laying out the fourth principle, Morales said: “We are all interdependent. We now must begin to realize that the Earth does not belong to us,” he said. “It’s the other way around. We belong to the Earth.”

At the meeting, the General Assembly president, Father Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, said that “it is only right that we take care of Mother Earth as Mother Earth sustains our humanity.” He continued, “the world must listen to the indigenous peoples because, despite all odds, they have sustained their profound links with nature.”



Children of Mother Earth Group Reforesting

Pablo Solon, the current Bolivian ambassador to the UN, has held several meetings with religious NGOs to ask for our help in promoting the concept of the rights of the Earth. He hopes to hold a panel discussion with several ambassadors in the near future about

specific rights that must be accorded to the Earth. This is a new and bold initiative at the UN and certainly timely in view of the crises evolving as a result of climate change.

Source : Indigenous Forum Website

“Sixty years after adopting the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights], Mother Earth is now finally having the rights recognized” said Morales, Bolivia’s first indigenous president.

Mother Earth is a common expression for the planet earth in a number of regions, reflecting the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit.

Noting that Earth Day is observed each year in many countries, the assembly:

1. Decides to designate April 22nd, as International Mother Earth Day;
2. Invites all Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system, international, regional and sub regional organizations, civil society, Non-governmental organizations and relevant stakeholders to observe and raise awareness of International Mother Earth Day, as appropriate;
3. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States and organizations of the United Nations system.

17th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development

Sustainable development agreement signals new cooperation on finding solutions to global crises

Six VIVAT delegates participated actively at the 17th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, which focused on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

CSD 17 took place against the backdrop of the global crises – food prices, energy and financial, in addition to global attention to the challenge of climate change. The Delegates were expected to respond by identifying meaningful policy options to issues that reach to the heart of sustainable development. Around 1,000 people participated in the Commission, including ministers with diverse portfolios, representatives from farmer's organizations, academia, business and industry, women, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, youth, workers and trade unions, and local communities.

The text adopted by the delegates, described as being the best text that could be agreed in the current situation, included rising food prices, ongoing negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the Doha Development Round, and an international focus on the climate change negotiations under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In addition to negotiating policy options related to the thematic cluster of issues, CSD 17 delegates also engaged in dialogues with Major Groups and the policy research community, and a High-level Segment and Ministerial Roundtables focused on the food crisis, a sustainable green revolution in Africa, and integrated management of land and water resources for sustainable agriculture and rural development.

In an agreement that signals a significant convergence between developing and developed countries on key issues, countries agreed on a wide range of policy options and measures at the

United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development to address the food and climate crises in a manner that improves the wealth and well-being of people while protecting the environment. The Commission reached its agreement on Friday evening, as it concluded its seventeenth session.

“Sustainable development is the bridge between the North and the South,” says Tariq Banuri, Director of the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. “It is a means of building trust between the North and South. Building trust is particularly important today, when several crises call for common solutions. The Commission's success is an important expression of common commitment that can enhance such trust, and have positive effect on other actions and negotiations, such as the Copenhagen climate change conference.”

Ms. Verburg said many new and interesting proposals were discussed at the Commission which could make a difference, such as initiating a home-grown green revolution, especially in Africa; highlighting the crucial role agriculture must play in the climate change agenda; responding to the challenges, as well as opportunities, for sustainable production of biofuels; advancing the international water agenda in relation to agriculture; the need for a vigorous response to desertification based on a global drought index; and an ecosystem approach.

According to Mr. Banuri, one important message from the participants was that, although the world has enough knowledge of what works, this knowledge has not yet been translated into action. This has produced two concrete results. First, the Commission decision, as well as inputs from experts and major groups, stressed the need to “scale-up” pilot projects to national

and regional scales to work for the benefit of millions of people, rather than a few thousand.

Second, the meeting brought to the fore the need for a “knowledge partnership”, which would make such experiences and information easily accessible to policy makers and practitioners. This will also help in facilitating future agreements. “Information is distributed somewhat unequally today, and we need a mechanism that makes the latest knowledge more accessible so countries can act in concert on the common agenda.”

In addition to the 52-page negotiated outcome that details specific measures to address agriculture, rural development, land management, drought, desertification and sustainable development in Africa, and the “Shared Vision” prepared by the Chair, the Commission also strengthened links and communications between people and communities working on various aspects of sustainable development.

The Commission also showcased several innovative and interactive dialogues between ministers involving the heads of governing boards of international agencies on “how to practically build a bridge from policy to action”.

“By bringing together heads of UN agencies and the heads of their governing boards into a policy dialogue, the Commission created a platform for exploring synergies and commonalities among different policy agendas, such as food, climate, finance or trade,” said Mr. Banuri. “This is the essence of sustainable development. To get people out of their silos, to extricate policy processes from narrow partisan logics and create an integrated vision that can move us towards the common goal of sustainable development.”

Source: Department of Public Information, News and Media Division

VIVAT Participates in the Indigenous Forum at the UN

By Daniel LeBlanc and Joseph Gomes OMI

VIVAT International was present this year, from May 18 to 20, at the 8th annual session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Daniel LeBlanc OMI from the New York office accompanied some members and their accompanying delegation: Fathers Seamus Finn OMI (USA JPIC coordinator for the Oblates) and Joseph Gomes OMI from Bangladesh. The delegation from Bangladesh was a very interesting one as there were several representatives apart from Joseph. Leading the delegation was Sanjeeb Drong, and also here were participating Raja Devashish Roy, Gawtom Chakma, Flora Bably Talang, Babul Nokrek, Rabindranath Soren, and Mrinal Kanti Tripura. Through them were represented the following Peoples: Bengali, Chakma, Garo, Khasi, Santal and Tripura. And, to make everything more interesting, there was great coordination and collaboration even when amongst the representatives, not only were they

representing different people but also different faith traditions: Catholics, Hindus and Buddhists.

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues this year dealt with a number of issues such as: follow-up to recommendations made to the Economic



and Social Council (ECOSOC) and eventually to the General Assembly (GA) of the UN in previous years. The main issues reviewed were: economic and social development, especially questions relating to extractive industries,

Indigenous peoples rights and corporate responsibility; Indigenous women, especially urban Indigenous women and migration; the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples; Human Rights, including the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and fundamental freedoms; time for dialogue with several United Nations agencies and planning for next year's Forum. Much more information can be found at the following web address: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/en/session_eighth.html.

We at VIVAT International are very committed to working with Indigenous Peoples as many of the members of our Congregations dedicate themselves to those who work in the field. We would be very interested in hearing from you and even in inviting some of you and your people from different parts of the world to participate in the Forum next year in the month of May. Avenues of funding can be investigated if need be.

From left to right:
Fr. Joseph Gomes OMI (Bengali - OMI-JPIC Coordinator in Bangladesh), Babul Nokrek (Garo), Flora Bably Talang (Khasi), Mrinal Kanti Tripura (Tripura), Rabindranath Soren (Santal), Daniel LeBlanc OMI (OMI and VIVAT International UN representative)



World Environment Day: June 5th

The theme for the World Environment Day 2009 — is “Your planet needs you! Unite to combat climate change.”

The theme represents a strong call for environmental action in advance of the United Nations climate change talks in Copenhagen this December.

“The new global climate agreement that is due to be finalized at the Copenhagen climate conference in December is the world’s last chance to prevent the dangerous, perhaps even catastrophic, levels of climate change that are projected by scientists to occur as early as 2050 — well within the lifetimes of over a billion young people alive today,” said EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas.

Climate change is not only about scientific research; it’s not about facts,

Saint Francis used to call every single creature of God: brother and sister, mother and father. He didn’t know anything about climate change; he wasn’t doing it because of fear. He did it because he truly believed that every creature of God was worth his love.

That is what we are asking from you — to do an Act of Love.

We cannot distinguish anymore

People around the world are affected by the choices of others:

- ✦ Extreme environmental disasters
- ✦ Lack of food
- ✦ Desertification
- ✦ Loss of species

Take a moment for yourself. Sit down in a park, on a beach, on your porch. If you live in a city just look at the stars in the sky. Look at the perfect garden that God created for you; the heart he gave you to understand all this and to love.

...what can you do?

Some suggestions:

Composting is an excellent way to recycle kitchen waste.

When shopping buy reusable items such as cans and rechargeable batteries. These products create little waste, since they do not have to be thrown away after being used. Many hazardous products cannot be recycled. However if they are disposed of in a proper manner waste can be reduced.

Electronic products contain lead



Children of Mother Earth Group, Smokey Mountain (Philippines) performing “The Cry of Mother Nature”

numbers or data. Climate change is about people. It is about you and me. It’s about your neighbors, your teachers your parents. Climate change is the direct result of your choices.

Recycling, re-using, composting, saving — simple words that can make a difference. Don’t let these words remain on a poster; or to become part of a slogan. Act and change your life. Do it for yourself but also do it for the people you love.

between them and us. We have the responsibility to protect our brothers and sisters, to protect our Mother Earth.

which can be harmful if they are not disposed properly. These devices can be returned and recycled by manufacturers.

In light of our environmental concerns, we hope that in the near future we all can aim at printing documents with vegetable-based inks on paper produced from 100% sustainably managed forests. Nonetheless, VIVAT International is publishing more of its materials online rather than in print.

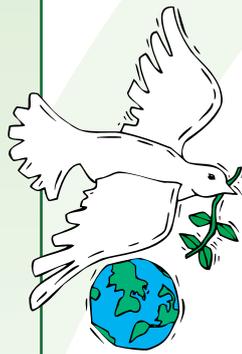
Please visit www.vivatinternational.org

Peace and Disarmament

Mexico City Conference

The World Environment

Day (WED) is annually celebrated on June 5th. The day was established in 1972 by the UN General Assembly to mark the commencement of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The day is not only intended to spread awareness about environmental issues, but also to provide individuals with the necessary tools to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development. In addition, WED attempts to promote international partnership and cooperation so that, all nations and peoples enjoy a safer and more prosperous future. The theme of this year's Environment Day is 'Your Planet Needs You- Unite to Combat Climate Change'. The theme is designed to highlight the necessity for all nations to take proactive measures at the climate convention meeting to be held December 2009 in Copenhagen.



The annual UN DPI/NGO Conference (DPI-Department of Information) to be held in Mexico City September 9-11 has as its theme For Peace and Development: Disarm Now. The Conference is intended to emphasize the appropriate mechanisms by which NGOs, CBOs and civil society, in collaboration with other actors, can contribute to the advancement of disarmament and peace, achieving the goal of promoting sustainable development. Up to five representatives may participate from each NGO.

WMD — We Must Disarm

Saturday, June 13, we were exactly 100 days away from the International Day of Peace, 21 September. The Day was established by the General Assembly as a “day of global ceasefire and non-violence” for “commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace within and among all nations and people.”

Under the slogan “**WMD — We Must Disarm**” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has launched a 100-day campaign to persuade world leaders to work harder for a world free of nuclear weapons, making it safer for all of us, and our children and grandchildren. To read Ban's message visit: www.vivatinternational.org



VIVAT Co-Sponsors Side Event

Sr. Dorothy Stang – Posthumous Winner of the UN Human Rights Prize 2008

One of the possibilities afforded to NGOs with Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) status is hosting parallel events during the Commissions. These events are designed to highlight best practices or introduce participants to new ideas and/or organizations that are relevant to the themes of the Commissions.

VIVAT International in partnership with other NGOs and in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights sponsored the “**Showing of award-winning documentary: Who Killed Sister Dorothy?**” and a debate during Commission for

Sustainable Development May, 2009.

The goal of VIVAT was to facilitate a debate on Human Rights, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, in a special way the right of Indigenous people, as well as bring forth the work of many VIVAT members working in the Amazon area.

VIVAT also co-sponsored the **Mother Earth Day Special**

Event, organized by the UN-DESA Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues of the Division for Social Policy and Development in cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the UN-DESA Division for Sustainable Development and the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests.



Left: Sr. Dorothy Stang. Photo courtesy of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Work... *By Dolores Dorota Zok*

Work — So many people are looking for a job...unemployment in Africa is growing day by day. Still, due to the upcoming Soccer World Cup, recently many people in South Africa found temporary employment, especially in many infrastructure projects taking place in the country. These include constructions of new stadiums, hotels, restaurants... so that everybody could be a little happier: rich managers, poor workers, guests, tourists... Work has a great meaning in the life of every person. Not just to meet the basic needs, but also it shapes one's character, and reveals one's abilities and hidden talents.

Yesterday, during our evening news, it was announced that here in Africa we should legalize prostitution; it should be considered just as another profession. A reporting journalist was very strong in his arguments, stressing that prostitution should be legalized by the government before the world cup, so that it could be practiced legally during the cup. However, just last week that same journalist gave rather abhorring statistics, quoting that "one in four men in our country during his life time raped a woman or a minor, some more than once, and that every five minutes a person is raped, in some provinces every two minutes, also seven million people are infected with HIV virus... and the number of infections is growing daily. As a result the future of many orphans, widows, unemployed and children is at stake. South Africa has the highest number of orphans in the world, all due to the AIDS pandemic. . ." And in spite of these statistics, the decision to legalize prostitution still seems to be of crucial importance, because there are only 350 days left before the kick off...

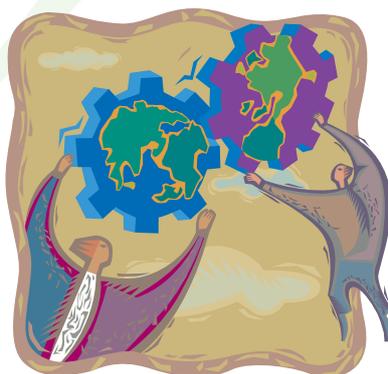
Work...without it we cannot live...work gives meaning to our existence, it enables us to grow and develop... to build relations and to shape our hearts. Tomorrow we are going to attend a special workshop for the care givers working with AIDS patients. Our mission will be represented by more than twenty women who on a daily basis take care of those who went to look for a job in the great cities of Pretoria



and Johannesburg. Some of them never came back, others did come back but not with a promise of a better life, rather with a crippling disease. Still, like everybody else, they want to work. They want to begin anew. They want work which builds and enhances life and does not destroy it. I heard once an African saying: "the beauty of a growing tree depends on the Creator...but the beauty of the entire garden depends on the hands and the heart of the gardener." Let our hands and hearts make this land more beautiful, not only the land of Africa, but wherever we are... because one day each one of us will be asked about our garden of life.

Exploitation and Trafficking

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is a global problem that requires collective action. It is a problem not just for the individual, but for society as a whole. Women and girls are being trafficked every day into conditions in which their safety is jeopardized and their human rights violated. Traffickers target them because of the demand factors



that feed on women's vulnerability, and also because poverty and discrimination deprive women of equal access to employment and education.

We, VIVAT Executive team, applaud and support Benedikta Böckelmann who is networking with "Religious in Europe Networking against Trafficking and Exploitation."

The Dol Dol Catholic Mission Conservation Project Kenya, East Africa

By James Mailady

The Dol Dol, Catholic Mission Conservation Project is conceived primarily as a model conservation and reforestation program for the areas of Dol Dol, Kimanjo and Mukogodo, in East Africa. In this part of the country, soil erosion has reached an alarming level, and is now a deadly force to be reckoned with. During the periods of heavy rain, the top soil is quickly washed off into the rivers. The rain water digs deeply into the soil and creates twenty to thirty feet deep chasms, as the rain makes its way into the river.

Sand harvesting and charcoal burning is also rampant in this area. Once a forest land, today it is reduced to a semi arid desert. So my fear is that if nothing is done today, then within the next twenty five years this place will become a desert. Hence, there is a need and urgency, to take positive action. So, as a parish community we formed a conservation and reforestation program, some two years ago.

In the Dol Dol area we planted 125 trees of 50 varieties. Now they are two

years old and they are doing extremely well for an arid landscape, such as ours. Kimajo is a small village of thirty one kilometers away from our parish in Dol Dol, and there we have planted about 275 trees of 40 varieties. The model project approximately covers an area of three acres of land. This area of land is well secured with a mesh wire fence and barbed wire. Small and big trenches of different sizes are dug to stop the soil erosion and to contain the water that

*“...we planted
125 trees
of 50 varieties.”*

runs down the mountain slopes. Two feet square holes were dug, in preparation, to plant the trees. We also have about 90 flower plants of 40 varieties that we plan to plant as well.

The biggest challenges ahead for us

in the coming few years, are the constant care and the watering of the trees and plants. In a certain sense these trees and plants have to learn to survive in a very hostile environment. The rains are very scarce; the termites are deadly, and the elephants often run wild, and cause serious destruction to our trees and planted flowers.

At first we were experimenting to find the right varieties of trees to plant, but now we have discovered that all kinds of varieties can do well in our area, provided that they have sufficient water and are well cared for. And now, I am confident, that if all goes well within the coming five to ten years, this place would become a mini forest! The local communities and the school children are showing some interest by their visits and inquisitive questions. We hope that this small and humble effort on our part, becomes an exemplary project that can easily be replicated by the neighboring communities and institutions. This is our dream and we know it will come true one day.

Fondwa: A Spiritan-founded University for the poor

Spiritan, Joseph Philippe, has a long history of working with the poor in Haiti. Amongst his projects over the years has been the development of a savings and credit union to facilitate loans for the marginalized to begin their own small enterprises as well as the implantation of a wide range of development schemes in impoverished communities such as road construction, water and agricultural projects and training in trades. Last year he established a university in the Fondwa region of Haiti with the help of the local rural association. Joseph outlines some of the background details about the foundation of the university:

The Association of the Peasants of Fondwa (APF) is an example of a grassroots community effort in Haiti, to help poor people assume their responsibility for their own lives. APF is a peasant membership organization founded in Fondwa on April 24, 1988. Its goal is to empower the people of Fondwa and their neighbors to assume responsibility

for their own lives in their rural communities. Its objectives are to work together with its members as one single body to create basic infrastructures and to provide needed facilities to help people to get access to roads, water, health care, education, communications, financial services and technical assistance especially for agricultural activities. Since

its foundation APF has expanded to become a national NGO which provides services to the people of Fondwa and through its recently founded University, to the other 564 rural communities of Haiti.

Located in the mountains of Fondwa in Haiti, the University of Fondwa, an APF project, is a private non-profit university dedicated to the study of agronomy, veterinary sciences, and management. The university seeks to contribute to sustainable development in Haiti by providing access to higher education to young people from the rural communities who are required in return to go back to their communities and apply their knowledge and skills to the development of their own regions.

On January 4, 2004 church and community leaders, farmers, students and professors gathered to inaugurate the university and its first academic year. The mass was presided by the Archbishop of Port-au-Prince, Joseph Serge Miot. The inaugural class of the University of Fondwa 2004, came from various parts of Haiti. 11 students are studying agronomy, 7 students are studying management, and 2 students are studying veterinary medicine. 10 of them are women and the other 10 are male students.

Our expectation is to get 3 students from 40 different rural communities every year, in order to prepare 3 specialists for each of these communities — we have 565 rural communities in Haiti. Coming from poor families, poor

organizations and poor communities, who should be their regular sponsors, our students cannot afford the annual cost of about US\$4,500 for their studies at the University of Fondwa. Therefore, we are in the process of creating a student revolving loan fund, which will enable students to borrow money for the entire period of their academic program of 5 to 6 years. During those years, the loan will incur no interest and repayment with interest will start six months after graduation.

We will accompany the student to insure that he/she is employed and can start repayment. One of our challenges is to encourage and accompany the organizations from the student home community to get enough financial resources to hire the student after graduation. The

university will serve as a bridge between the students and their home base communities. Every year each student is expected to do at least two internships in his/her community. The University staff is required to do follow-up visits to evaluate the students' work at the internship site. This will also give us the opportunity to evaluate the progress of the students' sponsoring organizations.

The University of Fondwa exists to educate future servant leaders, who will develop innovative strategies to issues of poverty and land use. Graduates of the University of Fondwa will return to their home communities in an effort to share their knowledge of innovative, sustainable agricultural techniques, ethical business practices and a strong sense of values with others in their communities.

Reflections on the UN/VIVAT Experience

By *Ilaria Buonriposi*

Inspired by the audacity of our founder in the topics of justice and liberation from slavery, we, the Comboni Missionary Sisters, believe that justice, peace and the care for the integrity of creation are important dimensions of our being missionaries and we must give them priority. In many Provinces we have Sisters appointed for this ministry and since a few years ago we are associated with VIVAT INTERNATIONAL.

Since last year, I'm in charge of this ministry here in the US, and last April I had the great opportunity to spend two weeks with Zelia and Felix in New York. My main goals were to know Vivat more closely and to try to begin to understand the complex and fascinating world of the UN, but the reality vastly exceeded the expectations. Zelia and Felix were very welcoming and answered with great patience to my many questions. They let me free to "explore" the UN and to participate in the meetings I thought they could be interesting for us, but at the same time they were ready to suggest and tutor me about the best options.



Ilaria Buonriposi, CMS at the UN

I enjoyed very much my time with the VIVAT team; I really hope that it was only a beginning and that soon I'll have more opportunities to join them. I also encourage other associates to spend some time in New York with Vivat: as Felix and Zelia say, it's better to experience what it is than to hear about it.

VIVAT International intends to bring the work and the dreams and the hopes of the members of the VIVAT family around the world to bear on the decisions that are made by the 192 nations that make up the body of the UN. If you are interested, and would like to learn more about us, visit our website: www.vivatinternational.org

By Farzana Talukdar

VIVAT International is an organization that envisions the world as one in which every human being is created with goodness and dignity. Their mission coincides directly with the Millennium Development Goals of United Nations which include eradication of poverty, promotion of women's rights and global warming prevention. As a woman of Bangladeshi descent I naturally identified with the mission of this organization.

Being of Muslim faith, I was a bit apprehensive to how the organization would react to my background, or if this would be a factor in their decision to selecting me as an intern. My reservations were almost instantaneously

appeased when arriving my first day at the office. The kindness, patience, and genuine interest that Zelia and Felix showed me was one that I know can only come from both faith and God and their philanthropic want to help others of all cultures and faith. VIVAT's agenda directly correlates with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and therefore my own.

The overwhelming majority of Bangladeshis live in sheer destitution. I cannot ignore the plight of the Bangladeshi people and destitute peoples around the world, which is why I have decided to pursue a career in global development. My experience working with VIVAT and the United Nations greatly helped

me in that endeavor. I participated in meetings of the Economic Social Council in which ways to achieve MDG's were discussed. I also created informational materials in Spanish regarding the work of VIVAT and the UN.

I also enjoyed working with my supervisors, Zelia and Felix. This was an invaluable learning experience.

VIVAT International works at the UN to influence decision makers on behalf of the most vulnerable. All VIVAT members are entitled to apply for internship. For more details visit: www.vivatinternational.org

Will You Answer a Few Questions?

Survey on Social Integration

Social Development is one of the issues that VIVAT is most involved with at the UN. Your answers to the following survey will greatly assist us in our work. Thank you!

1. If you are involved in a project or program that fosters social integration, please share your experiences with us.
 - ♣ What kind of programs you have
 - ♣ How do you include the excluded, how do you integrate them into the mainstream society?

These can be personal stories and/or experiences from the work of your organization. Please tell us what your project's objectives are, how they are met and critical factors contributing to success.

2. In your experience, what are the main barriers to social integration?
3. What can governments and international institutions do to encourage social integration and an inclusive "society for all" (what kind of policies are needed)?

Kindly e-mail your answers to:

viny@vivatinternational.org

Or mail them to: **VIVAT INTERNATIONAL**
211E 43rd Street,
New York, NY 10017
USA

Upcoming Events

July 2-4: VIVAT East Africa Workshop Preparatory Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya

July 16: VIVAT Board Meeting, Rome, Italy

July 19-25: VIVAT Cono Sur (Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Paraguay, Bolivia y Perú) Workshop Cochabamba, Bolivia

September 9-11: 62nd annual DPI Conference – "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!," Mexico City, Mexico

September 2-4: Second Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, New York

September 25: VIVAT Members Meeting, New York, USA



The name *VIVAT* is derived from the Latin verb '*VIVERE*' meaning '*LIVE*' and expresses the deep wish for all that exists: "*may helshelive live, may all persons live and may all creation live.*" We adopt the name VIVAT International as a unifying symbol of the two Congregations from which the body is originated. The logo depicts three persons embracing, welcoming and supporting one another while at the same time looking beyond their own circle to the larger outer world that is longing for unity and communion. The three olive shoots springing from the second letter of VIVAT stand for the hope and the transformation that VIVAT International envisages for the world.