



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

NewsNotes

A bi-monthly newsletter of information on international justice and peace issues

**May-June 2014
Vol. 39, No. 3**

Africa: Views from Capitol Hill.....	3
Africa and international financial institutions.....	4
South Sudan: Will resurrection occur?.....	5
Honduras: State of independent journalism.....	6
El Salvador: Elections report.....	7
Venezuela: Complex reality.....	8
Ecuador: Making knowledge free.....	9
Philippines: Peace accord with rebels.....	10
Korea: Options for peace.....	11
China: Trade growth affects environment.....	12
Syria: Unabated violence.....	13
CSW58: Implementing the MDGs.....	14
Immigration: Concerns on enforcement policy.....	15
“Information economy”: Is it sustainable?.....	16
ICCR releases Statement of Principles.....	18
Resources.....	19

Published by the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns: Peace, Social Justice & Integrity of Creation

200 New York Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001

Phone: (202)832-1780 Fax: (202)832-5195

ogc@maryknoll.org www.maryknollogc.org

Save trees, postage! Receive NewsNotes electronically

If you would like to receive your bimonthly copy of *NewsNotes* via email, please send a message with your name, city and state to ogc@maryknoll.org, subject line: NN subscription, or check our website.

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns:
Peace, Social Justice and the Integrity of Creation
<http://www.maryknollogc.org>

Maryknoll Sisters
Maryknoll Lay Missioners
Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers

- Gerry Lee, director..... glee@maryknoll.org
- Judy Coode..... jcoode@maryknoll.org
- Susan Gunn..... sgunn@maryknoll.org
- Dave Kane..... dglobalcitizenkane@gmail.com
- Chloe Schwabe..... cschwabe@maryknoll.org
- Sr. Veronica Schweyen, MM..... vschweyen@maryknoll.org
- Fr. Dave Schwinghamer, MM..... dschwinghamer@gmail.com
- Sr. Elizabeth Zwareva, MM..... ezwareva@mksisters.org

MOGC Washington
200 New York Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202)832-1780
ogc@maryknoll.org

MOGC Maryknoll NY
P.O. Box 311
Maryknoll, NY 10545
(914)941-7575
ogc@maryknoll.org

MOGC UN Office
777 First Ave., 10th Fl.
New York, NY 10115
(212)973-9551

Take action - Email, call, fax or write U.S. decision makers

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500
www.whitehouse.gov

Chuck Hagel
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301
(703) 695-5261 phone
www.defenselink.mil

Jim Yong Kim
President
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20433
www.worldbank.org

Vice President Joe Biden
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500
vice_president@whitehouse.gov

Eric Holder
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530
(202)353-1555 phone
AskDOJ@usdoj.gov
www.justice.gov

Christine Lagarde
Managing Director
International Monetary Fund
700 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20431
www.imf.org

White House Comment Desk
(202) 456-1111 phone
(202) 456-2461 fax

John Kerry
Secretary of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520
(202) 647-6575 phone
www.state.gov

Samantha Power
U.S. Representative to UN
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
(212) 415-4000 phone
www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov

Current status of bills:
(202) 225-1772
<http://thomas.loc.gov>

Capitol switchboard:
(202) 224-3121
www.congress.gov

Africa: Views from Capitol Hill

In the summer of 2013 the Obama administration published a statement entitled “U.S. Strategy Towards Sub-Saharan Africa.” Nearly a year later, the U.S. Senate held committee hearings on two of the four pillars of the strategy, namely how to spur economic growth through the Power Africa Initiative and how to advance peace and security through the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), one of nine Unified Combatant Commands of the U.S. Armed Forces. In these hearings, two contrasting perspectives on Africa are evident: “Africa Rising” and Africa as “security threat.”

In testimony before the Senate’s Committee on Armed Forces, Gen. David Rodriguez revealed not only the growing U.S. national interests in Africa but also the transnational security threats and challenges that AFRICOM sees arising on that continent. At the top of his list are regional instability and the growth of Al Qaeda networks, as well as the expansion of drug trafficking networks. In the “Africa as threat” framework of the U.S. military, much attention is given to the “security environment” which is seen to be marked by growing uncertainty. According to Rodriguez, during 2013 AFRICOM conducted 55 operations, 10 exercises, and 482 security operation activities in Africa. The goals of these military interventions are clear: to advance the enduring national interests of the U.S. for security, prosperity, democratic values and international order within Africa.

Much of the security-maintenance activity of AFRICOM is aimed at combating Al Qaeda and is carried out through counterterrorism operations. But, as Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI) pointed out in his opening statement to the hearings, AFRICOM is also called on to meet other security challenges such as evacuation support; training of African peacekeepers; assisting in the training and equipping of dozens of militaries on the continent; enabling and supporting the multilateral effort to remove the Lord’s Resistance Army; and assisting the French military in its operations against extremists in Mali and operations to halt further atrocities in the Central African Republic.

This all costs money. According to Sen. Levin, the U.S. military is facing a fundamental challenge: significant budget reductions and the looming possibility of renewed and damaging sequestration. When asked if AFRICOM’s surveillance needs – a particular focus of the

Committee this year – were being met, Gen. Rodriguez replied that only about 11 percent of the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets were available.

A different view of Africa appears in the testimony given to the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Africa by supporters of the Power Africa Initiative, a key component of the Obama administration’s strategy to spur economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa. In testimony to this committee, Africa is portrayed as a continent with tremendous untapped resources for sustainable electrical power generation including geo-thermal, natural gas, hydro and solar. Such resources could be developed to address the huge lack of access to electricity in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2020, according to its advocates, Power Africa hopes to increase electricity access for at least 20 million new households and commercial entities. It also hopes to help African nations manage their energy resources and increase their cross-border energy trade.

In the “Africa Rising” perspective that underlies Power Africa, a new model of U.S. development assistance is proposed that favors production and access to clean, more affordable energy through a public-private partnership with private energy companies such as General Electric. To date, the U.S. government has put up \$8 billion for this initiative and private companies have pledged \$14 million. But there are catches in this initiative: African governments must improve their investment climate by reforming their laws, regulations, tariffs, market structures, institutions and by improving indigenous capacity to plan, design and negotiate sophisticated transactions. Tariff reform, however, can mean a rise in what consumers pay for electricity.

Critics of the Power Africa initiative raise numerous issues. Is the model of large gas, oil, or coal-powered electrical generating stations the best way to proceed given what we know about the polluting effect of such plants in other parts of the world? What plans are there for the use of renewable resources for the generation of power in Africa? Who will benefit from the extraction of the natural resources like oil and gas? Unfortunately, these and many other questions about the developmental model underlying Power Africa did not surface during the recent hearings because only the voices of the “implementers” – the big energy firms, the U.S. government-sponsored development and financial institutions, and friendly environmental groups -- were invited to testify to the Senate committee. §



Africa and international financial institutions

This article, written by Amadou Sy, was originally published on the Brookings Africa Growth Initiative's Africa in Focus blog.

[In early spring in Washington, D.C., delegations from ministries of finance and central banks from around the globe come] to the World Bank-International Monetary Fund Spring Meetings. You can recognize them as the men and women in black outfits walking briskly on ... their way to meetings. Some of them will be from Africa, and I am betting that they will be discussing the following three issues.

The impact of fed tapering: The IMF has warned that although the global economy has broadly stabilized, new obstacles have emerged. One of the major roadblocks the IMF has recently mentioned—the risk of heightened market volatility associated with the tapering of quantitative easing—has already had an impact on some African countries. In a recent blog, I discuss how Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa are the African countries most at risk from the February market turmoil. These economies are experiencing capital flow reversal and weakening currencies in addition to domestic challenges, such as higher-than-targeted fiscal deficits, an electoral cycle or structural deficiencies. I would now add Zambia to this list, as the country is being hit by portfolio reversal and lower copper prices.

For these countries, discussions with IMF experts about which instruments for managing the effects of capital flows reversal will take center stage. Such discussions will also include macroeconomic and structural policies to address existing longer-term challenges. Now, how about on the other side of 19th Street?

A bigger World Bank: World Bank President Jim Yong Kim recently announced a \$100 billion increase in the lending capacity of the Bank's lending arm for middle-income countries (MICs) over the next 10 years. This move follows a record \$52 billion replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA), the Bank's fund for the poorest countries, following the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings last year.

Unbeknownst to many, 22 sub-Saharan African countries are classified as MICs by the World Bank. These countries have all a per capita income exceeding \$1,036 and below \$12,615 and are themselves divided into lower-MICs (with a per capita income lower than \$4,085) and upper-MICs (with a per capita income higher than \$4,085). Furthermore, a number of African lower-income countries (LICs, with \$1,035 per capita

income or less) such as Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania may “graduate” to become MICs by 2025.

These African MICs and soon-to-become MICs may become eligible to new loans, but should recognize that the larger lending capacity of the Bank will come at a higher cost. For instance, the Bank is restoring its 25 basis point commitment fee that it used to charge on undisbursed balances. This means that a country borrowing \$100 million and not using the money will have to pay a fee of \$250,000.

Given Africa's large infrastructure funding gap, a bigger World Bank may be good news, as it will bring in not only more financial resources but also more technical assistance. But the World Bank is not the only one with an increased interest in Africa. These days, everybody from Beijing and Tokyo to Washington D.C. to Brasilia via Brussels is interested in Africa. The real issue is, therefore, whether African policymakers will make the best out of this growing interest.

I would suggest that, in parallel to the spring meetings, top African policymakers (not the governors and ministers but technocrats such as chief economists and reform team leaders) meet to compare notes and discuss the best way to refine current strategies to transform the continent's economies. At least, meetings along the lines of existing regional economic communities would be useful. ...

Conflicts: Finally, I suspect that delegations will discuss the dire situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan. It is not at all premature to start preparing now for the economic engagement of the Bretton Woods Institutions once peace resumes. These will require a long-term re-engagement of the international community with not only well-targeted technical assistance but also sufficient funding to kick-start the economy and rebuild institutions. The work should not wait for the arrest of hostilities.

There is a consensus on both sides of 19th Street that growth in sub-Saharan Africa will continue at a strong pace in the short term. African governors may therefore be tempted to start the spring meetings with a sense of accomplishment. That would be the wrong attitude. Africa's growth is still jobless and its youth bulge shows no clear sign of becoming a youth dividend. The current positive growth prospects should be seen as windows of opportunity to lay the basis for a higher, sustainable, and more inclusive growth. The policies to achieve this goal should be homegrown and the Spring Meetings provide a good opportunity to test them. §

South Sudan: Will resurrection occur?

The following reflection was written in early April by Br. Bill Firman, an Australian De La Salle brother and friend of Maryknoll who works in Juba. As his on-the-ground account reveals, the situation in the South Sudan has gone from bad to worse. Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to the regional peace talks in Ethiopia underscores the growing concern in the U.S. administration that unless immediate actions are taken, widespread famine could break out. Kerry indicated that the U.S. and East African nations are committed to deploying a predominantly African military force in South Sudan, where there are already 9,000 UN peacekeeping forces. Kerry also warned of a possible genocide if the fighting was not stopped.

[Br. Bill writes:] The conflict in South Sudan grinds on pointlessly ... I don't know why but the words of philosopher and novelist, Albert Camus, come to mind: "What doesn't kill me, makes me stronger." Yes, adversity can make survivors stronger and better able to cope with subsequent difficulties but that is not much consolation for those who are killed. The soil of South Sudan is soaked with the blood of too many people. The philosophy of Camus is often labeled as "absurdism." The conflict in South Sudan is absurd and irrational. The country has become weaker even as we hope some stronger leaders will emerge.

Camus also said, "We turn toward God only to obtain the impossible." Perhaps, but this Holy Week reminds us that God can make the impossible, possible, that the resurrection of Jesus followed his suffering. [In his message, Br. Bill shared some photos taken recently by Paul Jeffrey, a photojournalist. See some examples on this page.] Some of his photos reveal the dreadful conditions in which many displaced people in South Sudan find themselves: the makeshift shelters, the mud, the dangers of unexploded ordinance, the suffering. Other photos, however, reveal indomitable spirit, the joyful attitude of children and the consolation flowing from strong family relationships.

It is hard to know what is really happening in South Sudan. It seems absurd that again renewed fighting is reported in Malakal and Bentiu. South Sudanese soldiers must be asking in the words of the song from the Vietnam war era: "What are we fighting for?"

[Br. Bill also attached two articles that give insight into the way people in South Sudan are suffering.] One article shows the student perspective: "A student in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Malakal Campus, now stranded in Juba, Chirillo Kuony Ayok said: 'The looting and destruction of the university's facility and properties is lamentable and being condemned by all students of Upper Nile University.... [This] is not an isolated institution to one community in South Sudan but it rather belongs to all the tribes and nationals. It should not be targeted for lootings. It is an institution belonging to all and for the development of all.' Upper Nile University has been subjected to destruction since the internal armed conflict erupted in mid-December between loyalists of Dr. Riek Machar and President Salva Kiir."

The other article gives some insight into the challenges faced by the many [NGO] workers heroically trying to assist the people of South Sudan: "It is not the first time that medical care has come under fire in the world's youngest nation since the crisis erupted in mid-December. In Leer, Unity state, [a team from Doctors Without Borders (MSF, its French acronym)] returned to the hospital to find it had been thoroughly looted, vandalised and then burned. MSF's compound in Bentiu, also in Unity state, was looted, too. These attacks took place amid a wave of violence which saw hospitals targeted, as well as markets, public spaces and sometimes entire towns." [MSF report]

In this Easter season, we pray that the two principal leaders in South Sudan, who are both Christian, are moved to "obtain the impossible," to do whatever is necessary to end this absurd fighting and to bring peace back to the troubled land of South Sudan. §



Honduras: State of independent journalism

On April 11, Carlos Mejía Orellana, a radio journalist and staff member at the Jesuit-sponsored community radio station Radio Progreso, was attacked and stabbed to death in his home in the town of El Progreso. In its 2013 report on Honduras, the Committee to Protect Journalists noted: "The Honduran press continued to face violence and intimidation as the country struggled with pervasive crime and general lawlessness. Journalists who covered sensitive topics like drug trafficking, government corruption, and land conflicts were threatened and attacked." Mejía Orellana was precisely one of those journalists with the courage to investigate and report on subjects that put himself and the team at Radio Progreso at risk.

Radio Progreso is directed by Fr. Ishmael Moreno, a Jesuit priest known as Padre Melo. Founded by the Jesuits over 60 years ago, the station has long been fiercely independent and unafraid to criticize elected officials on both sides of the ideological divide. Padre Melo has guided the radio station through threats and occupations since the *coup d'état* in 2009 that overthrew President Manuel Zelaya. Radio Progreso diligently reported on the coup and the abuses committed by the authorities against protestors. As a result, in the days following the coup, the military raided the radio station and stopped it from broadcasting.

Although Radio Progreso was permitted to resume broadcasting shortly after the raid, Padre Melo has said that 15 Radio Progreso employees have received death threats since the 2009 coup. In fact, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) had issued precautionary measures on four separate occasions over the last five years to protect the staff of Radio Progreso from death threats and intimidation. Three of IACHR recommendations for protective measures included Mejía Orellana (pictured above), the last one coming in 2011.

At play in this murder are a number of overlapping concerns. First and foremost is the disconcerting continuation of high levels of violence that pervade Honduran society. Far from being isolated to drug trafficking

and gang-related violence, the elevated murder rate and the Honduran government's inability to curb violence and impunity has led to a situation in which political vendettas are settled with murder rather than through democratic practices. Journalists who dare criticize the Honduran government and the upper echelons of power in the country are at risk precisely because they have the courage to engage in the fundamentals of democracy - working to inform the public.

Padre Melo explained that the murder was far from a random attack against a citizen, but rather was a deliberate attempt to silence a brave journalist and institution that spoke out against human rights violations: "This criminal action against our team member Carlos Mejía Orellana is a blow to our work, our institution and we denounce this murder; it threatens our right to freedom of expression, communication, and the lives of each and every member of our team."

In a condemnation of the Honduran government's failure to protect journalists such as Mejía Orellana, U.S. Reps. Jim McGovern (D-MA), Sam Farr (D-CA), and Janice Schakowsky (D-IL) and Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) released statements extending condolences to the friends and family of Mejía Orellana as well as strongly urging Honduras to actually investigate and bring to justice the perpetrators. In the immediate aftermath of the murder, the police announced that it was likely a "crime

of passion," suggesting that they were ruling out the likelihood of political motivations. Such posturing indicates that the police were uninterested in searching for the likely intellectual authors behind this attempt to silence the journalists at Radio Progreso.

As Sen. Kaine concluded in his statement, "Honduran police failed to protect Carlos, despite repeated requests

to do so from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The police need to take immediate steps to protect Carlos's surviving colleagues at Radio Progreso and its research arm, ERIC, who also live under constant threat." As we work toward building a more peaceful Honduras, the journalists who work day after day to bring the truth to the public must be protected and valued members of Honduran society. §



El Salvador: Elections report

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns team members Susan Gunn and Eben Levey participated as election observers for the March 9 presidential run-off. The following is a report on their experience.

On March 9, Salvadoran citizens went to the polls for the second time this year to vote in the runoff presidential election. Following the first round on February 2 in which the leftist FMLN came away with 49 percent to the right wing ARENA party's 39 percent, the two remaining candidates, Salvador Sánchez Cerén (FMLN) and Norman Quijano (ARENA), were forced into a runoff since neither achieved over 50 percent in round one.

Since the election of Mauricio Funes (FMLN) as president in 2009, a number of social programs have been implemented that have improved school attendance, access to health care, and basic nutrition. For Maryknoll missionaries like Sister Mary Annel, who runs Contrásida, an HIV and AIDS prevention program and treatment clinic, the additional public investments in health services have expanded access to important retroviral drugs for the treatment of HIV and AIDS.

Even ARENA recognized the popularity of the social programs launched by President Funes. Norman Quijano's campaign began with a promise to dismantle the social programs, but upon realizing that this promise was a sure way to lose the election, he reversed course and promised to expand social programs through privatization, repeating time and again that he would make them more efficient.

However, even while trying to capitalize on the popularity of the FMLN's social programs, Quijano repeated incessantly the falsehood that the FMLN was preparing fraud and that the Supreme Elections Tribunal (TSE in Spanish initials) was complicit in the supposed fraud. He announced, before the runoff elections were held, that he would refuse to recognize the results if ARENA did not win. Such statements do nothing but undermine the legitimacy of the TSE, an institution that has undergone tremendous improvement since the 1992 Peace Accords.

As observers, we can attest that the election on March 9 was indeed free and fair. As one previous observer noted, the whole design of the elections process is built upon "mutual mistrust," providing opportunity after opportunity for political party activists to challenge single votes. As every voting table was staffed by representatives of both parties, accompanied in each voting center by representatives from the attorney general's of-

fice and the human rights ombudsman, the amount of oversight and transparency was incredible. Such a structural design ensured that any questionable practices by voters and/or party activists was noted and remedied. Of course there were some signs of human error, primarily in the beginning of the day as the members of each voting table were learning the elections process. However, these irregularities and mistakes were often remedied through (sometimes heated) discussion, and the number and nature of irregularities decreased over the course of the day.

Our group was not alone in noting the transparency and well-functioning elections. The UN and the Organization of American States promptly released statements praising the Salvadoran TSE for running a smooth election, and the U.S. State Department also noted that all reports seemed to be positive. Notwithstanding public praise coming from national and international voices, Quijano declared victory while behind in the vote count and accused the FMLN of fraud. He went further and stated that he and ARENA were "prepared for war," and called on the Salvadoran armed forces to "defend democracy," a call to arms that was a terrible reminder of 12 years of civil war. When the leaders of the armed forces released a statement on March 12 that they would not involve themselves in domestic politics, the collective sigh of relief was palpable across the country.

During the days following the election, the final vote count proceeded apace, with international and national elections observers (including members of our observation team) continuing to watch over the process. After a number of challenges by ARENA, including a motion to annul the entire election, the TSE finally declared Sánchez Cerén the victor on March 25 by a margin of 50.1 percent to 49.9 percent.

The Maryknoll missionaries who live and work in El Salvador are hopeful that social gains will be improved upon and expanded. From health projects to violence prevention efforts, among other ministries, the presence of Maryknoll as companions in building communities and cultures of peace will continue apace. While Maryknoll would be working side by side with the Salvadoran people regardless of which party won the election, we see the election of a former guerrilla commander as a sign that the deep wounds inflicted by 12 years of civil war are beginning to heal, and that our role as companions is to assist in the healing process through helping to build cultures of peace. §

Venezuela: Complex reality

What is happening in Venezuela, rocked since early February by weeks of almost daily protests? The government's arrest of students in the city of San Cristobal denouncing campus insecurity sparked a chain reaction of protests by students and upper middleclass Venezuelans who oppose the populist government of President Nicolas Maduro. Maduro narrowly won an election in April 2013 to replace his mentor and leader of the socialist revolution in Venezuela, Hugo Chavez. The opposition blames him for one of the highest rates of violent crime in the world, an economy racked by high inflation, and chronic shortages of basic foods. They also accuse the government of repression of peaceful demonstrations and control of the press.

Images in U.S. mass media of protesters barricading streets, running battles with riot police or National Guard, and huge demonstrations give the impression of a country on the verge of civil war. Indeed, Secretary of State John Kerry has accused President Maduro of waging “a terror campaign against his own people” and threatens, along with some members of Congress, economic sanctions against Venezuela.

While U.S. media has generally portrayed the situation in Venezuela as peaceful protests being broken up violently by Venezuelan government security forces, the reality is more complex. The government has sometimes forcefully repressed protesters, even to the point that three were shot to death apparently by intelligence agents. On the other hand, many of the protests have been violent as well, and six members of the National Guard have lost their lives. A number of government supporters have also been killed while trying to remove barricades or get around a protest.

Though some protests are peaceful, small groups of masked protesters, especially in wealthier sections of eastern Caracas, wage heated street battles with the National Guard and riot police. At least two citizens on motorbikes were killed when they drove into razor wire strung by protesters across the street as part of their effort to shut down commerce.

Who are the protesters? On January 23, two hard-line leaders of the opposition, Leopoldo Lopez and Maria Corina Machado, called for street protests to force Maduro's “exit.” While discontent with inflation and street crime is widespread, the protests have been largely limited to upper middle-class opposition areas and to university students; poor and working class people in the populous barrios still largely support the govern-

ment. Having lost the presidential election of April 2013 and also local elections last December, the opposition is divided over whether to use violent street protest to achieve what they have failed to do democratically: regime change.

In a February 28 statement, the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) affirmed the right to protest as essential to democracy but denounced “the anti-democratic violence that seeks to change government in Venezuela by force.”

In fact, the protests are less widespread than apparent in the mass media. A School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) delegation of U.S. church people in mid-March was surprised to find most of the country peaceful: “We experienced a country where schools, businesses, transportation and services seem to be functioning at a normal pace. In fact, of 337 municipalities, only 18 have experienced incidents of violent protest. We are, however, aware that in the border states with Colombia and in some wealthy neighborhoods incidents of violence continue to persist.”

The Venezuelan government's response to these protests has varied from heavy-handed to conciliatory. The student protests in February were often met with disproportionate use of force, inciting an escalation of violence. Attorney General Luisa Ortega has recognized that security forces engaged in “excesses” and has arrested 21 members in relation to the three deaths mentioned above and is investigating 60 other alleged human rights violations of protesters.

The Venezuelan human rights group PROVEA is concerned about numerous reports of unidentified civilians firing on protesters and criticizes Maduro for “inciting the population to confront protesters,” using provocative terms such as “fascists” to describe them.

At the same time, the Maduro government has made several overtures to the opposition for dialogue and on April 10 hosted a nationally televised live dialogue between opposition and government leaders – the first public dialogue between them in 15 years.

Indeed, more open dialogue is needed if Venezuela is going to overcome this difficult moment. On February 26 Pope Francis prayed at the end of a public audience that “the whole Venezuelan people, beginning with political leaders and institutions, will endeavor to promote reconciliation through mutual forgiveness and a sincere dialogue” and has encouraged the papal nuncio to Venezuela to take an active part in promoting dialogue.

Breaking with the effort of the United States and

the government of Panama to have the Organization of American States (OAS) condemn the Venezuelan government, the OAS adopted a declaration on March 7 in “appreciation, full support and encouragement for the initiatives and the efforts of the democratically-elected Government of Venezuela” and encouraged it and the opposition to “move forward with the process of national dialogue towards political and social reconciliation.”

Lisa Sullivan served as a Maryknoll lay missionary in Venezuela and now is Latin America coordinator for

SOAW. In March, she wrote from her home in Venezuela: “The violence must end. All Venezuelans can and must contribute to the return of peace and order. The government should continue to detain and investigate security forces who responded with violence. Radical forces in the opposition must take down roadblocks that create havoc for their own neighbors. And the international media should be called for their efforts to misrepresent the current reality in Venezuela.” §

Ecuador: Making knowledge free

Ecuadoran social movements have successfully pressured their government to embark on a historic process to “remake the roots of Ecuador’s economy and thereby begin the transition into a society of free and open knowledge.” The process, called FLOK, for Free/Libre Open Knowledge, is part of Ecuador’s five-year strategic plan called the Plan of Good Living. It aims to undo the antiquated patent and copyright systems that create monopolies over essential items, resulting in huge social and economic costs. By providing legal and societal mechanisms to free knowledge from individual control, Ecuador will allow for more innovation and more equitable distribution of its benefits.

Most countries pay for creating knowledge through patents, copyrights and other policies that establish monopolies, which are often inefficient and result in unnecessarily expensive technologies. This system is especially problematic in the field of medicine as patents significantly drive up prices for life-saving cures, making them unaffordable for millions of low-income families.

Contrary to what proponents argue, patents also limit innovation by making access to and use of information more difficult for other inventors. Unfortunately, instead of moving toward more efficient and equitable ways to reward innovation, major trade agreements currently being negotiated (the Trans-Pacific Partnership between 12 countries and the Trans-Atlantic “Free Trade” Agreement between the U.S. and Europe) aim to strengthen these failed policies by extending monopoly periods and allowing companies to re-patent products whose patents have expired by simply making minute, often insignificant, changes to the original product.

Meanwhile, the government of Ecuador has initiated a process to free up knowledge from these constraints. As noted by Michel Bauwens, leader of the FLOK process and founder of the P2P Foundation, “The

global economy treats nature and material resources as if they were infinite, and knowledge as if it was scarce. We have to swap those two around.” For example, in the area of education, proponents estimate that by providing openly available textbooks and other educational resources free from copyrights or patents, users would spend one-eighth the amount to buy the same materials under the copyright model. Or, perhaps more importantly, eight times more students will gain access to the materials.

A problem faced by many, especially indigenous, communities in Ecuador, is biopiracy, where the communities provide knowledge about natural medicines or processes for free to all who ask, but then for-profit companies take that knowledge, patent it, and reap the monetary benefits without including the communities who provided the original information. One solution proposed by the FLOK Society is “reciprocity-based licenses” which allow other commoners or non-profit enterprises to use the information freely, but if someone were to use the information to make a profit, those earnings would be shared with the original communities.

As peer-to-peer (P2P) networks grow around the world, an increasing problem is the corporate usurpation of the knowledge generated by members of these networks. An example is Facebook, which is an empty platform, built by a corporation, meant for information sharing. The value of Facebook is not in the platform, but the information in it, which is created by its users and then sold to other corporations by Facebook. It is the owners of Facebook who gain all of the monetary benefit.

The FLOK Society is also studying platforms such as FarmHack, Open Source Ecology, Wikispeed and other open hardware projects that gather innovators from around the world to produce free or cheaper-than-market priced goods and services that are available to anyone

connected to the Internet. Instead of a centralized owner of the platform reaping any monetary rewards, the platforms would be designed to distribute them amongst the innovators themselves. These platforms also provide for heavy physical production to be localized while knowledge is free and globalized.

While the FLOK Society is the first time a nation state has begun a process to move toward a peer-to-peer economy, the P2P movement has a longer history. The website Shareable.net documents the numerous non-governmental peer-to-peer initiatives taking place within the growing “sharing economy.”

The FLOK process is not a governmental initiative, but began with an open group of academics, mostly from Ecuador, and members of various social movements. This group submitted a proposal to two ministries asking for funding of the project, which is currently being hosted by the National Institute for Higher Studies, a public post-graduate university. From the beginning,

according to FLOK Society member George Dafermos, they have worked to “involve not only public policy actors but also social movements and activist organizations in the project and in the policy proposals we’re developing so as to create a strong base that no government shall want or be able to destroy, thus ensuring that these policies will not be terminated if or when there is a change of government.”

The FLOK initiative by Ecuador is an important one to follow since it comes at such a critical time in human history. As Bauwens writes in the book *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state*, the current system “discourages human cooperation, excludes many people from benefiting from innovation and slows the collective learning of humanity. In an age of grave global challenges, the political economy keeps many practical alternatives sequestered behind private firewalls or unfunded if they cannot generate adequate profits.” §

Philippines: Peace accord with rebels

On March 27, the Philippine government signed a historic peace accord with the largest Muslim rebel group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), granting the southern Mindanao region political autonomy in exchange for laying down their arms and ending their demand for a separate Islamic state. The Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro replaces the five-province Muslim autonomous region with a larger and better-funded area called Bangsamoro (“Moro Nation.”)

The Moro rebels, along with other insurgent groups, have fought for political autonomy since the 1970s. More than 120,000 people have died in the conflict. The peace accord is a great accomplishment, though armed struggle continues between the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim extremist network, and the Philippine army, which receives U.S. military support.

Prof. Renato Cruz De Castro from De la Salle University in Manila has written about the effect of the global war of terror on the Philippines. After September 11, 2001, “low intensity conflicts,” mostly in Africa but also in the Philippines, were redefined by U.S. policy makers as “the long wars of the 21st century.” Such conflicts are protracted and against Islamic extremist totalitarian movements. Rebel groups such as the MILF were placed on the foreign terrorist organization list, leaving no space for a peace process. Conflict resolution theory teaches us that the ripest moment for negotiation is a

mutually hurting stalemate. The Philippine government and the Moro rebels were compelled by great suffering to accept the framework agreement and ultimately sign the peace accord.

This peace accord demonstrates that the concept of the long wars of the 21st century is false. The ecumenical community played a significant role in calling parties to the negotiating table. The day after the accord was signed, the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP), co-chaired by Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, a Jesuit and archbishop of Cagayan de Oro, called on the government to resume the stalled peace talks with another opposition group, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), a coalition aligned with the Communist party. “We call on both sides to go back to the negotiating table, and talk about the next steps that can be taken, to forge a path to a just and enduring peace,” stated the PEPP. “We call on both panels to continue to work towards peace and to seriously consider the very root causes of why there is ongoing-armed conflict in our country.” Learn more at <http://www.peppphil.net/>.

We can further capitalize on this historic moment of peace by contacting our members of Congress to let them know that we support removing opposition groups in the Philippines from the foreign terrorist organization list, especially the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People’s Army (NPA). This will create space for a peace process. §

Korea: Options for peace

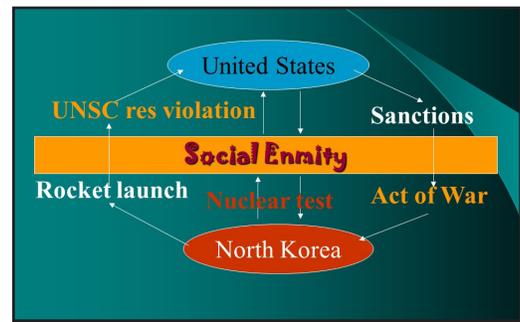
In an October 2011 article in *Foreign Policy* magazine, Hilary Clinton named the “Asia Pivot,” with Russia and China on one side and the U.S.-Japan-South Korea-Philippines-Thailand-Australia on the other. The following month, President Obama said in remarks to the Australian Parliament, “The United States is a Pacific power, and we are here to stay.”

Why is there an Asia Pivot and why did President Obama declare the U.S. a Pacific power? A year earlier, the National Intelligence Council wrote in *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World*: “The global shift in relative wealth and economic power now under way – roughly from West to East – is without precedent in modern history.”

Asian nations will return to political and economic power, and the U.S. government hopes to provide the framework through military power. South Korea is constructing a military base on Jeju Island to station U.S. marines and U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carriers which could carry cruise missiles to destroy Chinese intercontinental ballistic missiles. According to the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Status of Forces Agreement between South Korea and the United States, the U.S. military retains wartime command over South Korea’s military and could use the naval base in a regional conflict. This is the consequence of ending a war without a peace treaty. (July 27, 2014 will mark the 61st anniversary of the Korean War armistice.)

In March, in a workshop entitled “Ending the Korean War: Prospects for a Just, Durable and Lasting Peace,” held at the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days conference, Prof. Jae-Jung Suh of Johns Hopkins University shared this graphic (right) of U.S.-North Korea relations.

“Many policy observers, including myself,” said Professor Suh, “find this vicious cycle frustrating because we know the results: military exercises and nuclear test.” He went on to compare the results of policies of different U.S. administrations over the past 20 years:



	1994-2002	2002-2007	2007-2008	2009-2013	2013-Onward
Policy	Engagement	Military pressure	Engagement	Economic sanctions	Military deterrence
Tool	Geneva Agreement	Preemptive Strike	Six Party Talks	UN resolution	Military exercise
North Korea’s response	Nuclear freeze	Nuclear test	Nuclear disablement	Nuclear test	Military exercise

The table highlights that dialogue works. Professor Suh said, “We need to bear witness to truth, bring truth to officials who make policy. Then we will see policy changes and transformation from crisis to peace.”

On April 4 North Korea’s Deputy UN Ambassador Ri Tong Il accused the U.S. of being “hell bent on regime change” in North Korea. Since 2009, Siegfried Hecker, former director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, has advocated for a U.S. policy of “three No’s for one Yes.” The one Yes is for U.S. acceptance of the North Korea regime, thus ending North Korea’s overwhelming insecurity. This one Yes would enable three No’s by North Korea: no more bombs, no more tests for better bombs, and no export of weapons.

The peace process has been led by ecumenical groups, starting in 1984 when the World Council of Churches brought together delegations from North and South Korea in Tozanso, Japan, for the first face-to-face meetings of non-government peoples. These ecumenical initiatives, known as the Tozanso Process, continue today. The Ecumenical Working Group on Korea, together with other peace organizations, is working to gather one million signatures on the Korea Peace Treaty petition, and to promote screenings of “Memories of Forgotten War,” a 40-minute documentary produced in 2013 which highlights the human costs of the unending war from the perspective of U.S. citizens. For 2015, their efforts will focus on bringing an ecumenical peace delegation to North and South Korea.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Korea and its president, Bishop Peter Kang U-il of Jeju, support the efforts of demonstrators risking arrest to stop construction of the military base on Jeju Island. Bishop Kang said, “This

must be a land of peace, especially in light of the incidents of April 3 [1947, when one-tenth of the population was killed and more than half of the island's villages were destroyed due to fear of a communist uprising.] Bringing the military back to this place means that the meaning of the death of those who have sacrificed for freedom is lost." In the 1990s the South Korean government officially apologized for the 1947 massacre and designated Jeju as "the Island of Peace" where such violence will not be repeated. (Jeju Island has been in the news recently due to the tragic ferry accident on April 16, in which over 200 people were killed; almost 100 remain missing and are presumed dead. Those who died included high school students and their chaperones who

were on their way to visit Jeju for a four-day field trip.)

Pope Francis will visit South Korea in August. Residents of Jeju and the advocacy group Save Jeju Now are urging people to send letters to the pope, asking him to visit Jeju Island and celebrate Mass at the construction site of the military base.

Faith in action:

To learn more about the movement to stop the building of a naval base on Jeju Island, go to <http://save-jejunow.org/>. To write a letter to Pope Francis asking him to visit Jeju Island, go to <http://www.pope2jeju.org/>. To sign the Korea Peace Petition, go to www.endthekoreanwar.org. §

China: Trade growth affects environment

China has seen a huge increase in industrialization and growth in exports since joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. As predicted by many environmental and labor groups, China's lack of environmental regulations and heavy dependence on coal has resulted in a massive transfer of industrial production from the U.S., while China's ecological problems are beginning to affect even the U.S., thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean. Of greater concern is that the Chinese government's current plans to diminish urban smog – which kills an estimated 1.2 million people each year – are likely to vastly increase global greenhouse gas emissions threatening the entire planet.

In just the first seven years of its membership in the WTO, 2.4 million manufacturing jobs were moved from the U.S. to China, according to the Economic Policy Institute. China's lack of environmental protections, which helped lower production costs, was a draw for many transnational corporations. President Bill Clinton's chief trade negotiator, Mickey Kantor, later admitted, "We made a big mistake" by not including environmental safeguards in trade negotiations with China.

But not only trade policies have contributed to China's increasing pollution. U.S. and multilateral financial institutions helped finance at least 20 coal power plants in China between 1994 and 2009, according to the Environmental Defense Fund.

The result has been a marked increase in greenhouse gas emissions, from 2.2 billion tons of carbon in 1990 to 9.9 billion tons in 2012. While the U.S. and Europe proudly announce small decreases in their greenhouse gas emissions in recent years, the WorldWatch

Institute and others estimate that about one-third of China's emissions come from the production and export of cheap goods to the U.S. and Europe.

The results for Chinese citizens have been striking. Recently, an eight-year old girl died of lung cancer caused, according to government officials, by the intense smog in her city. Close to 60 percent of China's underground water is polluted by the intensive industrial production. In response the Chinese government plans to build dozens of "coal bases" in rural areas that will convert coal into cleaner-burning liquid fuels, chemicals and electricity that will be shipped for use in major cities. The process to extract these materials requires huge amounts of energy, which releases greenhouse gases (GHGs), with more gases released in the transport to and use in urban centers. While likely to reduce pollution and smog in most cities, the GHGs released by this plan might possibly be double the current amount.

The 16 coal bases already built or in construction will emit 1.4 billion tons of carbon dioxide per year by 2020. In comparison, fully developing the tar sands in Canada (so dirty, its exploitation has been described as "game over for the climate" by scientist James Hansen) will produce "only" 420 million tons per year.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that if we are to limit overall global warming to two degrees Celsius, we can release another 349 billion tons of carbon into the air. If all the planned plants in China are completed and operational, they will release 110 billion tons of GHGs over 40 years, putting China on track to consume the world's remaining 349 billion tons by 2050, all by itself. §

Syria: Unabated violence

The following article was written by Marie Dennis, co-president of Pax Christi International and former director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC).

On Monday morning, April 7, Frans van der Lugt SJ, a 75-year old Dutch Jesuit who had lived and worked in Syria since 1966, was kidnapped, beaten and executed by unidentified assailants in front of the Jesuit residence in Homs. The Jesuit residence is in the Hamidiyeh district, a traditional Christian neighborhood where fighting between opposition armed forces and the Syrian army has been ongoing for months. Fr. van der Lugt worked with young people with disabilities, and continued to accompany both Christians and Muslims who were unable to escape the violence. The priest was known for a video in which he called on the world for help.

His death should bring international attention to the ongoing violence in Syria, but the complexity of the situation, the failure thus far of a negotiated political solution, and the unwillingness of external players to abandon lucrative arms sales or their support for foreign fighters and extremists (whose numbers have grown from about 1,000 a year ago to perhaps 8,000 now) have left the Syrian people subject to horrific brutality. This includes starvation as a weapon of war; barrel bombs (particularly in Aleppo); suspected additional use of chemical weapons; and displacement at an unimaginable rate. Even the so-called ceasefires in towns and neighborhoods around Damascus and the road to the coast are often negotiated surrenders and, in some cases, the situation still doesn't improve.

Conditions in the Palestinian refugee camp at Yarmouk in Damascus demonstrate the ongoing suffering. Yarmouk is still besieged; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is only allowed to deliver small amounts of food every now and then. An article in *The Guardian* on April 19 notes that “[to] keep the remaining residents from starving, UNRWA says it needs to deliver at least 700 food parcels per day, each of which feeds five to eight people. It has only managed to get in 100 per day on average since the start of the year. However, conditions have drastically worsened in recent weeks, with all supplies stopped amid regime demands that rebel groups inside surrender.”

At the same time, Syrians continue to work for peace and human dignity throughout the country. Women in particular are making a tremendous contribution to

peace and democracy: <http://www.conflictperspectives.imtd.org/index.php/regions/middle-east/96-10-ways-syrian-women-are-building-peace-and-democracy>.

PAX, a Dutch member organization of Pax Christi International, has been working in Syria since 2003, expanding its program and advocacy since 2011 in support of many of these courageous non-violent civil society activists. In cooperation with Syrian organizations and the Dutch Association of Municipalities, PAX developed a program to support local councils and civil society in five pilot communities. The objective of the program is to strengthen the position of these civil society actors, facilitating their interaction with and strengthening their impact on the behavior of armed groups in order to develop a social contract in areas where civil institutions of the state have disappeared.

PAX and its partners have developed an approach to freedom of religion and belief, based on citizenship. Rather than the “minority protection” approach, the program, Kulluna Muwatinin, which runs in Iraq as well as Syria, encourages a young generation of potential community leaders to promote citizenship, organize dialogue and interaction between different religious and ethnic communities, and facilitate discussion about managing diversity.

PAX also has worked with SouriaLi, a grassroots online radio station dedicated to working with the Syrian people to foster awareness about the meaning of civil society, active citizenship, communication, women's empowerment and youth activism.

Faith in action:

There is no military solution to the violence in Syria. In letters to the editor and communications with President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry, urge the U.S. to:

- Support UN decision-making, international law and diplomacy instead of military force.
- Call for and support an immediate ceasefire and a comprehensive international arms embargo on all sides. The U.S. should be prepared to strengthen and enforce end-use agreements on arms exports to exert necessary pressure on its regional allies, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Turkey, Jordan, Israel and more.
- Work to re-open international diplomatic negotiations for a political solution in Syria. Talks must involve all sides in Syria, particularly women and other nonviolent Syrian activists and civil society

representatives. All key outside parties to the conflict, including Iran, must be included. Once the ceasefire takes hold, the international community should also support efforts towards accountability and justice for all individuals responsible for war crimes that have been committed by any side in the Syrian war.

- Make available to UN agencies a major increase in refugee and humanitarian assistance.
- Support a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone throughout the Middle East, with no exceptions.

A more complete statement of these proposals for international action is found on the MOGC website. §

CSW58: Implementing the MDGs

Sr. Meg Gallagher, MM, who served as a missioner primarily in Asia for decades, attended the 58th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in March at UN headquarters in New York; its priority theme was “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] for women and girls.” Following are excerpts from her report.

Approximately 6,000 people, representatives of Member States, UN entities, and NGOs accredited with the UN’s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from all regions of the world, attended this year’s session and 350 side events. As always at these international events, an atmosphere of joy – renewing friendships, sharing hope for a world we want – is the spirit that radiates in and among the participants.



Reports were given, in turn, by each UN region.

The European Union addressed the important issue of participatory governance and the role of civil society in empowering women in moving forward the MDGs. Bringing civil society actors into the consultation process adds an important dimension that is too often absent even when stakeholders from other sectors are actively engaged. Civil society organizations provide one of the more formal channels for ensuring community concerns are heard and addressed.

The Asia Pacific delegation spoke of the culturally and economically diverse region which carries within it many different expressions of needs. The goal of one of the member organizations is to create sustainable region-wide social change by establishing a strong alliance among organizations that work for the betterment of the status of women and girls in Asia.

The African delegation spoke of the challenges present in the country of Liberia, and the actions taken

for improving the lives of women and children. A 14-year long civil war has devastated the lives of thousands, especially those who are poor. Effective remedies have been: promotion of community education and awareness; advocacy for policy reforms in health and education; establishment and support of training schools and facilities in rural areas to create community health providers; and promotion of opportunities in the Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics fields for young girls.

The Latin American delegation has worked tirelessly for political participation in national parliaments; they proudly spoke of their victory when 33 women were elected to the National Congress in Honduras in November 2013.

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, UN Women Deputy Executive Director, addressed the burning issue of trafficking in human beings. Trafficking, as we know so well, is a pervasive problem that knows no borders. The root causes of this phenomenon continues to be gender-based inequalities and discrimination. It is critical, therefore, that the post-2015 development agenda build on the lessons from the MDGs and ensure that trafficking is addressed in comprehensive and gender responsive way.

In her closing statement, UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka declared, “The agreement [at the conclusion of the 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women] represents a milestone towards a transformative global development agenda that puts the empowerment of women and girls at its center. Member States have stressed that while the MDGs have advanced in many areas, they remain unfinished business as long as gender inequality persists.

“... The safety, human rights and empowerment of women are pivotal in the post-2015 debate. UN Women is encouraged by the call of a large number of Member States for a stand-alone sustainable development goal that addresses these issues; this will have a multiplier effect on sustained economic growth. ...”

Read more about the 58th Session of the CSW at www.unwomen.org. §

Immigration: Concerns on enforcement policy

According to the Immigration Policy Center (IPC), the Obama administration soon will reach the milestone of having deported two million people since the president took office in 2009. “Regardless of the exact date this symbolic threshold is reached, it is important to keep in mind a much more important fact: most of the people being deported are not dangerous criminals. Despite claims by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that it prioritizes the apprehension of terrorists, violent criminals, and gang members, the agency’s own deportation statistics do not bear this out. Rather, most of the individuals being swept up by ICE and dropped into the U.S. deportation machine committed relatively minor, nonviolent crimes or have no criminal histories at all. Ironically, many of the immigrants being deported would likely have been able to remain in the country had the immigration reform legislation favored by the administration become law.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has engaged in efforts for significant immigration reform, including enforcement policy, for many years; its position is that legislation which provides a path to citizenship for as many as possible of the current undocumented population living in the U.S. is best for immigrant families and communities.

In late March, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, auxiliary bishop of Seattle and chairman of the USCCB’s committee on migration, sent the following letter to Jeh Johnson, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security:

“... [As] pastors who witness the human consequences of our broken immigration system every day, we are deeply troubled by the division of families caused by current immigration enforcement policies. In this regard, we urge you to take steps within your authority to limit these deportations in a way that protects immigrants who are no threat to the community and who might otherwise benefit from immigration reform legislation, and their families.

“As your agency reviews immigration enforcement policy, we ask that you take the following steps:

“Expand prosecutorial discretion and ensure that the policy is implemented: We support the use of prosecutorial discretion, but feel that the policy has not been robustly implemented and has not achieved the goal of protecting families and low-level offenders from deportation. We urge the Administration to more broadly utilize prosecutorial discretion to protect immigrant families and communities. A person’s equities in

the country, particularly their family ties, should be a determinative factor in making decisions. Persons who are no threat to the community should be considered for prosecutorial discretion and not placed in the Priority One category.

“We recommend that the 2011 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) memorandum outlining the prosecutorial discretion policy be expanded agency-wide to apply to all detention and enforcement decisions and revised to reflect these priorities. The Administration also should create a process whereby immigrants can proactively apply for prosecutorial discretion. Moreover, the low rate of deferrals demonstrates the need for review of these decisions at a higher level within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

“End federal-state enforcement programs: The use of the Secure Communities program—mandated for every jurisdiction—and the 287(g) program has contributed to the increase in deportations and, in our view, undermined basic civil rights. We strongly believe these programs should be phased out, as they create fear and distrust in immigrant communities. State and local law enforcement should be able to focus upon crimes in their community, not immigration enforcement. At a minimum, detainers should be placed on those who are Level One offenders and not to those who have minor offenses.

“End the use of methods that exclude due process protections: The use of such methods as expedited removals, stipulated orders, stipulated removals, voluntary removals, and reinstatements do not include judicial review and were responsible for over 75 percent of removals from the ICE agency in FY 2013. These methods should be minimized, especially with regard to persons who have no criminal offenses and have built equities in this country.

“Reform deportation policies to ensure that those who are returned are safe: For those who are deported, we ask that you ensure that their return is achieved in a safe and humane manner and that they are not returned to particularly dangerous locations. Families should be kept together, all belongings should be returned prior to deportation, and night time deportations should be eliminated. We have concern that migrants who are returned to dangerous places at night will become victims of human traffickers and drug cartels. Unaccompanied children who are returned to Mexico and Central America should be provided family reunification and re-integration services upon their arrival.

“Elimination of Operation Streamline: We are opposed to ‘Operation Streamline,’ which places criminal penalties on migrants who have crossed the border, often to reunite with families or to find work. Migrants who are prosecuted through the program often do not know their rights and are unable to access counsel. Many are placed in detention for up to six months for a first offense and even longer for a second offense. We find this program in violation of basic due process rights. It also fails to deter migrants desperate to support their families and can be considered a waste of precious federal resources that should be targeted toward the prosecution of drug traffickers, human traffickers, and smugglers.

“Expansion of community-based alternative to detention programs: We strongly support the expansion of alternative to detention (ATD) programs that are community-based and based upon a case management model. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are equipped to assist with this ATD program and have

demonstrated success in ensuring that persons appear at their court proceedings and receive legal support. This would help ensure that immigrants without a serious offense are able to better access community resources and adequately defend their rights in immigration court.

“Expansion of ‘Know Your Rights’ presentations: We urge you to deploy system-wide presentations from experts to those who are detained and at risk of deportation on their basic rights. ‘Know Your Rights’ presentations have been used in detention settings to great effectiveness and are not only a benefit to the immigrants but also to the government, as persons are more aware of their rights and are able to exercise them more efficiently.

“... [We] feel that the record number of deportations separating families is a moral crisis which must be addressed. We stand ready to work with you not only to create a workable immigration system but also to implement enforcement policies that are humane and just.” §

“Information economy”: Is it sustainable?

Many point to the paperless “information economy” as the sustainable solution that will allow for continuous economic growth without overtaxing Earth’s ecosystems. Yet there is an active debate about this possibility as demand for Information-Communication-Technology infrastructure (ICT) grows at tremendous rates. Some research shows that the ICT will likely face real world limits to growth due to its rapidly increasing demand for electricity, its dependence on rare earth elements, and the likelihood of reaching “peak data,” in which the radiofrequency spectrum required for wireless services will run out. Meanwhile, other research indicates that applications of these new technologies can result in an overall reduction in the use of energy and other resources.

Energy: Much of the energy used by the ICT is hidden to consumers. Many think the recharging of their computers, tablets or cell phones as the energy involved in their computer usage. But as a recent report by the Digital Power Group points out, “Although charging up a single tablet or smart phone requires a negligible amount of energy, using either to watch an hour of video weekly consumes annually more electricity in the remote networks than two new refrigerators use in a year.”

Meanwhile as monetary costs of computing power decrease, global usage of the ICT is increasing at a rapid pace. “Hourly internet traffic will soon exceed the annual

traffic of the year 2000.” And “[t]hese broad ICT trends – declining costs, rising global demands – are now being amplified by the emerging transformation of the Internet into what is being popularly termed the Cloud, and the Mobile Internet.”

Wireless technology is much more energy intensive than wired, as instead of all the electricity demands coming from central offices, wireless communication requires “power in three locations: central office, cell towers, and at the customer, multiplying the energy” needed.

The power density (watts/square foot) of data centers is much higher than commercial office space and while offices are becoming more efficient, data centers are becoming even more energy intensive. “The average square foot of a data center uses 100 to 200 times more electricity than [that] of a modern office building.”

The report warns that “as the next Cloud-dominated era expands, many existing data centers will be gutted and rebuilt, or entirely replaced with state-of-the-art ICT equipment [with] far more power per square foot of space occupied by the equipment... unlike other industrial-classes of electric demand, newer data facilities see higher, not lower, power densities.”

While computers require high amounts of energy to access the Cloud, energy used in their original production, or embodied energy, is a bigger problem. According to MIT researcher Timothy Gutowski, the energy re-

quirements of semiconductor manufacturing techniques are much higher than that, up to six orders of magnitude (that's 1,000,000 times) above those of conventional manufacturing processes.

For a smart phone, the embodied energy ranges from 70 to 90 percent of the electricity the phone will use over its life, counting recharging its battery. This is quite unlike other consumer products. For a refrigerator, embodied energy is only four percent of total life cycle energy; power to run the fridge dominates. For a car only 20 percent of life cycle energy is in manufacturing. In addition, according to the Electronics TakeBack Coalition, to manufacture one computer and monitor, requires 530 pounds of fossil fuels, 48 pounds of chemicals, and 1.5 tons of water.

The rapid pace at which most ICT technologies become obsolete, often "needing" to be replaced in 3-4 years, means that all of that embodied energy and resource use is lost forever after a machine is replaced. "The embodied energy can't be recycled; it has been consumed." And the disposal of electronic waste is creating social and environmental crises in a number of countries especially in Africa and Asia.

Unfortunately, increases in energy efficiency do not appear able to control this rapid increase in energy use. While there are constant improvements in efficiency, the rate of improvement has slowed notably since 2005, while the number of Internet-connected devices has proliferated greatly. "Trends now promise faster, not slower, growth in ICT energy use."

While the ICT currently uses an estimated 10 percent of world electricity production, current trends indicate huge increases in coming years. Research at the Center for Energy-Efficient Telecommunications in Melbourne shows that "[t]he consumption of the [ICT] network starts to approach total global electricity supply in 2025. Clearly something needs to be done about this."

Rare earth elements: Another limit to ICT growth is its dependency on many rare earth elements (REE) such as neodymium, dysprosium and terbium. An iPhone, for example, uses eight of these elements. Newer technologies tend to use increasing amounts of REE. The scarcity of these resources is hindering not only new ICT technologies but also a number of green technologies that could reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

While some of these metals are not actually as rare as their name implies, they rarely are found in concentrated amounts, making them difficult and expensive to mine. China dominates REE production - in 2011 China

provided 97 percent of world production. Though other countries are trying to ramp up REE production, caring for the toxic and radioactive waste generated in their mining and processing is difficult and expensive creating incentives for countries to lower their environmental standards in order to compete in this market.

"Peak data": All wireless communications pass through a spectrum of radiofrequency and as more spectrums cannot be created, this is a real limit to the growth of a wireless future. According to a report released by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), *World Without Wires*, many global cities are quickly approaching the point of "peak data." "Currently the useable spectrum is divided up and allocated to various uses, such as TV/radio broadcast, emergency services, and mobile phone communications for example," CSIRO's director Dr. Ian Oppermann said. "In the future, how spectrum is allocated may change and we can expect innovation to find new ways to make it more efficient but the underlying position is that spectrum is an increasingly rare resource."

Energy and resource saving applications: While these limits exist, some researchers point to energy and resource saving applications of technology that could result in an overall reduction in resource use. Paul Wellbank, a technology consultant points to a favorite example - the use of car parking apps where drivers save energy and reduce pollution because they aren't driving around looking for the parking spaces. Others point to how digital downloads of music and video use 40 to 80 percent less energy than the sale of physical CDs and DVDs. There are a variety of ICT technology applications that help businesses streamline their supply chains, resulting in significant decreases in resource use, as well as technologies to reduce energy use in buildings and other resource-saving functions.

As the ICT grows rapidly this is clearly an area that needs more research in order to truly understand the total effects of its growth. Perhaps Karen Shapiro of the Telus Institute best summarizes the situation in her review of the book *The Ecology of the New Economy*, written by Nigel Roome and Jacob Park: "The doomsayers predict that [ICT] technologies will fuel the further need for electricity, whereas the optimists project net energy savings. The scholarship encompassed by [the book] suggests that the truth is probably somewhere in between and is largely dependent on how these new technologies are deployed and whether their deployment is guided by sustainable development considerations." §

ICCR releases Statement of Principles

The following article was written by Cathy Rowan.

In commemoration of World Health Day 2014 on April 7, the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) released its Statement of Principles and Recommended Corporate Practices to Promote Global Health. The document, endorsed by over 80 organizations, articulates ICCR members' views regarding the social responsibilities of the pharmaceutical sector to address the human right to health by promoting access, availability, affordability, and infrastructure required to deliver life-saving medicines where they are most needed.

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights make clear companies' responsibility to respect, protect and remedy human rights within their global supply chains. ICCR believes the pharmaceutical industry has a pivotal role to play in respecting and protecting the human right to health.

The launch of ICCR's Principles coincided with an announcement of a new licensing agreement between the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) and ViiV Healthcare relating to ViiV's breakthrough antiretroviral dolutegravir. The agreement enables affordable access to a vital new drug for both adults and children living with HIV, and covers developing countries where 93 percent of adults and 99 percent of children living with HIV reside.

The Medicines Patent Pool, which encourages sharing of HIV/AIDS formulations to facilitate their manufacture by generics companies, is a good example of the type of socially responsible practice that ICCR's Global Health Principles recommend. Established in 2010 through funding from UNITAID, the MPP has been endorsed by the World Health Organization, the UN High Level Meeting on AIDS, and the G8 as a promising approach to improve access to HIV medicines.

The MPP negotiates with pharmaceutical companies to share their HIV medicine patents with the Pool, and then licenses generic manufacturers to facilitate the production of affordable generic medicines well adapted for use in resource-poor settings. The Medicines Patent Pool has concluded agreements with Gilead, ViiV Healthcare, Roche, and BMS and is in negotiations with AbbVie for pediatric formulations of a key HIV medicine. ViiV Healthcare has a previous agreement with the MPP on its pediatric drug abacavir.

At a 2008 multi-stakeholder roundtable on increasing access to medicines, co-convened by ICCR, faith-based and socially responsible investors and public health organizations pointed out that in order to arrive at

a sustainable business model in developing and emerging markets, the pharmaceutical industry must develop new ways to approach the three core elements of its traditional business model: pricing; research and development; and intellectual property. A number of pharmaceutical companies at the roundtable agreed that new approaches were needed.

Another roundtable in 2011 focused on the Medicines Patent Pool and called on drug companies manufacturing AIDS drugs to join the Pool. Subsequent shareholder dialogues with the companies and the ongoing need to address barriers to access to health led ICCR to develop the Global Health Principles.

ICCR members will use these principles and an accompanying set of recommended practices in their future dialogues with pharmaceutical companies. They will also measure companies' performance in relation to the recommended practices.

ICCR Global Health Principles

1. Access and affordability: Global health business models must promote access to health for all, and be equitable and affordable, regardless of one's country or resources.

2. Innovative research and development models: Companies must develop new models that address critical global health needs, including non-communicable diseases, HIV/TB/malaria and neglected tropical diseases that impact the most vulnerable.

3. Ethical business practices: Companies must develop, implement, and monitor a global code of conduct that incorporates responsible marketing practices, anti-bribery corruption measures, fair clinical trials, and robust oversight of supply chain management programs.

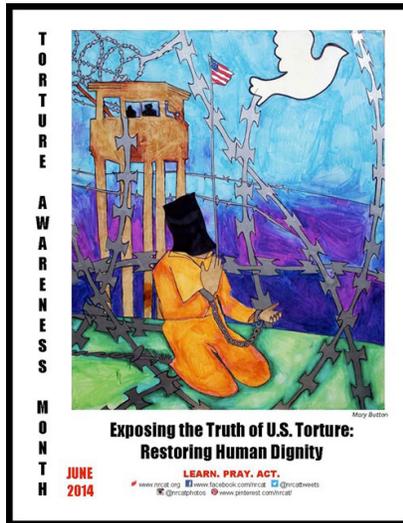
4. Community investment: Pharmaceutical companies working with communities, the private sector and other stakeholders must find solutions to overcome barriers to improving a country's health system infrastructure and supply chain distribution.

5. Partnerships and collaboration: Companies must increase collaboration within the pharmaceutical industry and with other stakeholders to share knowledge and resources to develop and implement access to health initiatives.

6. Transparency and disclosure: Companies must increase transparency and disclosure on access strategies, health outcomes, public policy positions and lobbying activities in order to demonstrate responsible corporate citizenship and enable investors and other stakeholders to hold companies accountable. §

Resources

- 1) **Torture Awareness Month toolkit:** Offered by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), of which Maryknoll is a member, this resource helps community or congregations commemorate Torture Awareness Month, held each year in June. It includes ideas for what you can do during the month, including information on ordering “No Doubt, It Was Torture,” NRCAT’s 11-minute film that explains why the faith community cares about making the information about torture public; worship resources, including sermon notes and prayers, meditations, and poems; a factsheet and educational resources on the Senate Intelligence Committee’s Torture Report; a bulletin insert with an interfaith prayer on one side and educational material on the other; a customizable poster to help you promote Torture Awareness Month; a petition to use to collect signatures in your congregation or community; and a link to NRCAT’s action center for you to share with your friends and community. Find the toolkit at www.nrcat.org or contact NRCAT at 110 Maryland Ave. NE, Suite 502, Washington, D.C. 20002; 202-547-1920.



- 2) **No More Deaths summer volunteer program:** No More Deaths (NMD), which provides an ongoing humanitarian presence in the desert migration corridor south of Tucson, offers a volunteer program during the hottest and deadliest times of the year. Groups and individuals participating in this program provide direct aid in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands, where people migrating continue to unnecessarily suffer and die in staggering numbers. To learn more about the 2014 schedule and how to apply as an individual or group, visit the NMD website, www.nomoredeaths.org or write No More Deaths, P.O. Box 40782, Tucson, AZ 85717; 520-333-5699.

- 3) **National Migration Conference, July 7-10:** Hosted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS), the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC), and Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), the National Migration Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. from July 7-10. The conference is intended to build the capacity of the Catholic Church and society to advance the life and dignity of the human person in our work with immigrants, migrants, refugees, unaccompanied migrant children, victims of human trafficking, and other vulnerable people on the move. Learn more at www.nationalmigration-conference.org or contact MRS at 202-541-3000.

- 4) **JustFaith Catholic, repackaged and renewed:** The JustFaith adult faith education program will now be flexible and adaptable for busy adults and parish communities. The program consists of four phases, each with six sessions (two hours each, with group dialogue and prayer) and an immersion experience (participants are asked to commit to all four phases). It includes opening and commissioning retreats; intriguing books and videos that expose the deeper implications of poverty in the world; and a small faith-sharing group that is connected by sacred listening, dialogue, and trust. After the program graduation, there is a recommended three-week discernment period for continued individual and group mission exploration. Learn more at www.justfaith.org or call 502-429-0865.

- 5) **Joy of the Gospel Study and Action Guide:** NETWORK Lobby, a national Catholic social justice lobby, has prepared a 24-page PDF resource to help Catholics (along with Christians and other faith-curious social justice-seekers) study the words of Pope Francis, specifically his first papal exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium (Joy of the Gospel)*. The guide, which may be used individually or in a group, has two parts: study and action. The Study Guide summarizes each section of *Joy of the Gospel* and offers analysis and questions for reflection, while the Action Guide offers a variety of ways you and your faith community can join in efforts to live the “Joy of the Gospel.” Visit NETWORK’s website at www.network-education.org/JoyoftheGospel to download, or contact NETWORK at 25 E Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20001; 202-347-9797.