



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

# NewsNotes

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

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Our vision of a culture of nonviolence.....3

After Paris: The work for climate justice goes on.....4

Building bridges in the age of migration.....5

UN: Nuclear ban treaty negotiations .....6

Labour Party proposes ownership reforms.....7

Ten year anniversary of Story of Stuff.....8

Philippines: Mindanao, Maute, and Martial Law.....9

Myanmar: Peace is possible.....11

Peru: U.S. mining company revives lawsuit.....12

Central America: U.S. policy denies human rights.....13

Zimbabwe: Bishops appeal for peace in elections.....15

Africa: Migration trends and patterns .....16

Africa Rising: The Kilimanjaro Declaration.....17

Israel/Palestine: Hope despite occupation.....18

Resources.....19

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## Our vision of a culture of nonviolence

*Amid the reality of conflict and violence around the world, the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative is working with peacemakers to cultivate seeds of peace.*

We have a dream of peace flowing like a river. We have a vision of a culture of nonviolence. We believe that, as Pope Francis tells us, it “is not an unattainable dream, but a path that has produced decisive results.”

The reality of global violence is at points daunting: North Korea successfully launches an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States, bringing the possibility of nuclear war even closer. Wars and conflicts go on in the Middle East, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, the Philippines, and Myanmar. In the U.S., gun violence is epidemic and some politicians’ violent rhetoric encourages attacks against immigrants, mosques and synagogues, and African-Americans.

The work of the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative (CNI), of which the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns is a founding member, is to share the good news that creative and active nonviolence is successful and being used by courageous practitioners around the world.

Fr. Francisco de Roux, SJ is promoting reconciliation and dialogue in Colombia, helping to bring peace after 50 years of war. Last month FARC rebels handed over the last of their weapons and Pope Francis announced he will visit Colombia in September in anticipation of a conclusion to the peace accords. Francisco also is working on one of the CNI ‘roundtables’ that is documenting best practices in nonviolence, sharing insights with the Vatican as it develops Catholic social teaching on nonviolence.

In South Sudan, where a brutal civil war has caused famine and death, and forced much of the population to become internally displaced, leaders of Catholic religious communities recently celebrated the power of nonviolence even in such dire circumstances. A group of 46 brothers, sisters, and priests, belonging to 25 religious congregations, all members of the Religious Superiors’ Association of South Sudan, released a message in response to Pope Francis’ 2017 World Day of Peace message on nonviolence. Their message, entitled “Active nonviolence: A way to build lasting peace in South Sudan,” names signs of hope: the resilience of the people in promoting peace talks; Church personnel sheltering vulnerable civilians; a new peace center in Kit that offers trauma healing and nonviolence training.

Even while acknowledging suffering and death, these faithful members of the Church of South Sudan see reasons for hope. They remember their colleague, Holy Spirit Missionary Sister Veronika Rackova, (SSpS), a

doctor who was gunned down by soldiers while driving an ambulance in Yei in May. “Her mission was to save lives and her sacrifice an action of active nonviolence,” the group says in their statement. They invoke the words of Pope Francis: “to act in this way means to choose solidarity as a way of making history and building friendship in society. Active nonviolence is a way of showing that unity is truly more powerful and more fruitful than conflict.”

Their message concludes: “We have understood, however, that nonviolence entails self-sacrifice and are convinced that active nonviolence is a good way to build a just and lasting peace in South Sudan. So, we reaffirm our commitment to make all effort to build peace through active and creative nonviolence.”

In the United States, the Archdiocese of Chicago has initiated a campaign of nonviolence to counter the epidemic of gun violence in that city. Pope Francis took note of this and sent a letter to Cardinal Blase Cupich addressed to the people of Chicago on April 4, the anniversary of Martin Luther King’s assassination, saying:

“I assure you of my support for the commitment you and many other local leaders are making to promote nonviolence as a way of life and a path to peace in Chicago. I urge all people, especially young men and women, to respond to Dr. King’s prophetic words and know that a culture of nonviolence is not an unattainable dream, but a path that has produced decisive results. The consistent practice of nonviolence has broken barriers, bound wounds, healed nations—and it can heal Chicago.”

Cardinal Cupich spoke to America Magazine’s Gerard O’Connell about the pope’s letter:

“It gives us a platform to speak not just about peace-building projects in our neighborhood but, as we are discussing now in the United States, about our budget that includes a massive increase in military spending and the way that is proposed that we cut back on world development aid. These issues are all linked together, and so by having the Holy Father join in our project we also get to join in his project of peace building throughout the world.”§

**Faith in action:** Write Cardinal Cupich to offer your support for his commitment to building a culture of nonviolence in Chicago. Mail your letter to: His Eminence, Blase Cardinal Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, 835 N. Rush St. Chicago, IL 60611. Please let the CNI know you took action: <http://bit.ly/BishopLetters>

## After Paris: The work for climate justice goes on

*President Trump may have left the Paris climate agreement but we, and thousands of others in the U.S., are still in.*

When President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the Paris climate agreement on June 1, he forfeited U.S. leadership on the most critical issue of our time and rejected the international community's best offer to work together for our future on the planet. President Trump's shortsighted decision not to act threatens unique ecosystems, impoverished communities in climate-vulnerable countries, and future generations of people and all species.

Rather than dissolving national and international will, however, President Trump's abnegation of our national responsibility has energized the original spirit that led leaders of 196 countries to the table at Paris and has emboldened global resistance to climate inertia and ignorance. This was the sentiment of Christiana Figueres, who led the original negotiations of the Paris agreement in her former role as executive secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

World leaders also condemned the decision. European G7 leaders, although notably lacking British Prime Minister Theresa May, signed a statement expressing their regret and affirmed that the Paris agreement couldn't be renegotiated as U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Rick Perry had floated. The EU stated jointly that they would strengthen existing partnerships and seek new ones to fight climate change. Just a day after the announcement, China and the EU announced a joint initiative to address climate change. Climate change will also be a top issue at the G20 economic summit in Hamburg July 7-8.

A defiant new French President, Emmanuel Macron volunteered France to lead the world on climate change solutions. Of particular note, he pledged to assist African nations in these efforts. Even Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said that the Paris agreement would be hampered without key actors.

Leaders in climate vulnerable countries also reacted. The small island states of Tuvalu, Fiji, and the Marshall Islands condemned Trump's decision. Fiji is chairing the next COP in Bonn to continue implementation of the Paris agreement this fall.

On May 31, in anticipation of a decision, Bread for the World Germany and Climate Action Network Tanzania released a 100% renewable energy roadmap for Tanzania. It was developed based on bilateral meetings, workshops, conferences, and site visits and builds on the

expertise of Tanzanian government officials, parliamentarians, civil society representatives (climate, environment, faith groups) as well as researchers and energy industry representatives.

In the U.S., governors, cities, counties, investors (including the Maryknoll Sisters), and businesses launched the #WeAreStillIn statement and campaign (<http://wearestillin.com>) committing to, "remain actively engaged with the international community as part of the global effort to hold warming to well below 2°C and to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy that will benefit our security, prosperity, and health."

Even ExxonMobil, the largest gas and oil company in the world took climate action and passed a shareholder resolution to put the corporation in alignment with the 2°C warming scenario that 196 countries committed to in Paris. The Maryknoll Sisters and other members of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility—investors worth more than \$5 trillion in assets—were part of that important shareholder activism.

This announcement also spurred more members of Congress to join the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, whose membership now outnumbers the House Freedom Caucus 46 to 36, and is split evenly between Republicans and Democrats. This effort is one of the most significant advances on climate policy in Congress since 2009.

As Pope Francis said, climate change represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day, one that will take everyone to solve. For more than a century, Maryknoll missionaries have lived alongside marginalized communities that have suffered through violent conflicts, environmental disasters, and economic crises. They are already responding to climate-related emergencies such as the extreme drought in East Africa, hurricanes in Central America, and rising sea levels in Bangladesh. Read our response to the announcement at <http://bit.ly/2tq7Vxx>

Don't give up hope! We will move forward with the world to address climate change. Our commitments made in Paris are achievable and we can even do more. In fact, the U.S. could still stay in. Officially, the U.S. cannot exit the Paris Agreement until January 21, 2021, one day after the next presidential inauguration. §

**Faith in action:** Ask your governor to join the "We Are Still In" campaign at <http://bit.ly/Governors4Paris>

## Building bridges in the age of migration

*The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns has begun a process of discernment to decide how best to offer compassion and welcome and promote justice and peace for migrants and refugees.*

Facing an unprecedented global crisis of more than 65 million people displaced by disaster, conflict, and poverty, and while anti-immigrant sentiment is on the rise worldwide, Maryknoll missionaries are in a unique position to bear witness and testify to the struggles of migrants and refugees as well as provide a powerful counterpoint to the rise of intolerance and hate.

To tap that rich source of witness and welcome, the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns last month led a series of important conversations with Maryknoll missionaries and leadership on migration. Under the banner of “building bridges in the age of global migration,” the two-day series kicked off with a “Food for Thought” brownbag presentation on the global migration crisis, Catholic social teaching on migration and sanctuary, and Maryknoll’s historic role working with and ministering to vulnerable people on the move around the world for more than a century. It concluded with a robust discussion among missionaries about current work, personal experiences, and ideas for future action.

“The desperation exists, and the immigration will persist,” said Brother Marty Shea, just returned from the Petén region of Guatemala where he regularly encounters desperate migrants from Honduras and El Salvador trying to cross Guatemala into Mexico and where he is aghast at the recent rise in the murder of women and girls region wide.

Brother Shea was one of nearly 100 Maryknoll missionaries and employees who attended the brownbag and engaged in a lively discussion afterward. That session, as well as the Maryknoll Office for Global Concern’s meeting with Maryknoll leadership and a two-hour open dialogue the next day, energized a process of discernment to sift apart different ways to respond to new Church statements and direction from Pope Francis, participate in the renewed sanctuary movement in the U.S., and contribute to the UN’s global compact on migration in 2018.

“I encourage this type of thing. We need to do this more,” said Father Paul Masson, whose mission experience includes years in Bolivia, Chile, and Mexico’s Ciudad Juarez. “There’s too much indifference in the world. We need more human stories. We all have them.”

The timing of the talks was fortuitous for all as many missionaries were visiting Maryknoll during the summer months. Some of the people we were happily surprised to see in the room were Sister Janice McLaughlin from

Zimbabwe, Father Ken Thesing from Rome, and Sister Rosemarie Milazzo, who, though she lives at the Sisters’ Center, is regularly working with Christian Peacemaker Teams in the Middle East.

“In Kurdistan the Yazidi people have been in refugee camps for years. They can’t return to Sinjar, can’t return to Mosul or Kirkuk,” Sister Milazzo said of the hundreds of thousands of Yazidis who remain internally displaced. “They don’t know when they’ll be able to go back [home].”

We were appreciative to have the active participation of other missionaries who now live at Maryknoll and have years of mission experience in communities that have been affected by migration. Lay Missioner Debbie Northern spoke about teenagers fleeing gang violence in El Salvador, only to die on the journey north.

Father Fred Hegarty, a veteran of decades of missionary work in Chile, shared these words:

“Many of us have lived through years of great changes. In the course of about 50 years, I saw the transformation of a whole country. In the 1960s in Chile, a third of the population was living in the slums, had no access to education, and was just trying to stay alive.” ... “We were able to offer people a strong religious motivation and an education.” ... “The Catholic Church helped people organize and restructure land ownership throughout the whole country.” ... “This is just one of piles of experiences in Maryknoll with something as big as this crisis.” ... “The message I am saying is ‘Think big!’”

Many of the comments turned to local advocacy efforts and work accompanying migrants and refugees by missionaries in Westchester county: former Maryknoll Lay Missioner employee Dave Loretan and Father Ed Byrne, both from St. Ann Catholic Church, Father Frank Breen and Sisters Maureen Donoghue, Sue Moore, and Ann Callahan, who work with a local refugee agency and Neighbors Link, a nonprofit assisting immigrants. Many missionaries have also completed our online survey and given riveting testimony to suffering and hope.

Others debated the definitions of “refugee,” “migrant,” “asylum seeker,” “internally displaced people.”

“I don’t know those definitions,” said Brother Shea in an emotional plea to see beyond official categories. “I do know it’s not immigration, it’s desperation. They are looking for a life.” ... “We haven’t been a good neighbor to the people to the south.” ... “And they are coming.”§

## UN: Nuclear ban treaty negotiations

*Maryknoll Sister Elizabeth Zwareva reports on the negotiations at the United Nations to adopt a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading toward their total elimination.*

As the UN conference to negotiate a nuclear weapon ban began, I sensed excitement and observed an attitude of listening among the delegates and the president of the conference, Elayne Whyte Gomez, permanent representative of Costa Rica. The negotiations were based upon a draft treaty presented by the UN disarmament panel in May.

I was impressed by the transparency of the negotiations that included comments from civil society and other stakeholders in the room. This set the tone for serious discussions that would enable state parties to finalize a treaty that in the words of Izumi Nakamitsu, UN High Representative for Disarmament, must be “legally sound, technically accurate and politically wise.” There are signs of hope that on July 7 the negotiations will conclude with the presentation of a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons leading to their total elimination.

As the negotiation progressed, there was strong support for the preamble of the treaty to clearly delegitimize and stigmatize the possession and use of nuclear weapons. One state party indicated that in order for his country to agree, the provisions of the new treaty must not undermine those of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Opponents to the negotiations—which include all of the nuclear weapon states—have named upholding the NPT as a reason to boycott these negotiations, but this is false. In fact, Article VI of the NPT calls on states to “pursue negotiations in good faith” toward nuclear disarmament. The NPT entered into force in 1970 but its step-by-step approach has failed to deliver on its promises: to prevent non-nuclear weapon states from acquiring nuclear weapons, to compel nuclear weapon states to eliminate their arsenals, and to achieve complete nuclear disarmament. It is time to lift the voices from every corner of the world to stop nuclear weapon states from resisting, avoiding, and ignoring their treaty obligations.

Representatives of civil society and other stakeholders contributed to the discussions from the perspective of their lived experiences: the catastrophic nature of nuclear weapons on human life, the environment, and the economic system. The mayor of Hiroshima deliv-

ered a statement expressing the desire of the *hibakusha*, survivors of the atomic bombing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to see the ban of nuclear weapons and their total elimination during their lifetime. Although the *hibakusha* are mentioned only in parenthesis in the preamble, their inclusion reflects the risks posed by nuclear weapons to people, human health, humanity’s survival, and the disproportionate impact that nuclear weapons have on indigenous peoples around the world.

Maryknoll Sister Rosemary Cecchini in New Mexico reported to the Maryknoll Sisters that the indigenous community with which she works was sched-

uled to hold a commemoration event of the Church Rock uranium tailings spill on July 15. “The July 15 Church Rock Spill Commemoration is part of the Inter-mountain West Uranium Summit in their first Cross-Border Anti-Nuclear Action,” Sister Rosemary said, “commemorating the anniversary of the largest radioactive accident in U.S. history and the explosion of the first atomic bomb at White Sands, New Mexico.” Sister Rosemary said commemorations such as this are held to raise awareness about the entire nuclear industry, which she describes “from cradle to grave, is one deadly chain.”

“Beginning with extraction of uranium, proceeding to refinement of yellow cake, through transportation on public routes, operation of nuclear power plants and weapons manufacture, to waste disposal

issues, the nuclear process releases lethal radiation to air, land and water,” Sister Rosemary said. “[Nuclear] history is fraught with accidents, illness and threat to all life on Earth. It must stop before it kills more humans and other living things.”

Our hope is that the UN conference will lead to a robust, universal legal instrument to ban nuclear weapons leading to their total elimination. Maryknoll Sisters joined more than one thousand demonstrators in the Women’s March to Ban the Bomb in the rain in New York City on June 17 to encourage the negotiators to protect present and future generations and the Earth, our common home. When we ban nuclear weapons then we can say, with Saint Francis, “Praise be my Lord ...” as we all profess to be “God’s instruments of peace.”§



*A global appeal for a nuclear weapon ban treaty, signed by 838 parliamentarians in 42 countries. Photo: ICAN Australia.*

## Labour Party proposes ownership reforms

*In a stunning turn of events, the Labour Party in the U.K., led by Jeremy Corbyn, defied expectations in a snap general election on June 8 and gained 30 seats in the House of Commons. The following article examines Labour's proposal for ownership reforms, which, if implemented, could have a profound impact on the U.K. economy."*

The Labour Party's recent electoral victory in England surprised many media commentators with some pointing to the release of its manifesto, similar to a party platform in the U.S., as the beginning of the rise of the party's popularity. The platform contains many popular items, like stepping back the austerity measures of the current Tory government with increased spending in health, education, and infrastructure, paid for by increasing taxes on wealthy individuals, corporations, and speculators. One plank that received less attention but could bring about profound structural changes in British society is "widening ownership of the economy."

"While Britain is a long-established democracy," the platform states, "the distribution of ownership of the country's economy means that decisions about our economy are often made by a narrow elite. More democratic ownership structures would help our economy deliver for the many and lead to a fairer distribution of wealth."

In addition, more diverse forms of ownership would address problems linked to publicly-traded corporations: lack of long-term investment, declining rates of productivity, as well as increased levels of inequality and financial insecurity. Collective forms of ownership would also "ensure that the benefits of automation are widely shared and democratically governed."

Numerous studies have shown that corporations, whose primary goal, by law and tradition, is to provide returns to stockholders, are increasingly focusing on short-term profits at the expense of long-term investments and research and development. This has been tied to declining rates of productivity, an important component of economic well-being, especially in the long run. A report prepared to assist the Labour Party in forming its platform proposes "reassigning responsibility for running companies away from those with an interest in extracting value towards those whose interest lies in their long-term viability and growth, such as the workforce or other stakeholders, will help to tackle these problems."

Collective forms of ownership will also help reverse increasing levels of inequality and financial insecurity, as "wage gaps tend to be lower in cooperatives, and, during periods of economic difficulty, [and] cooperatives tend to reduce labour costs by wage reductions/time off rather than job losses, boosting security."

While media has focused mostly on Labour's pro-

posal to (re)nationalize the postal and rail services, their proposals go far beyond that, focusing more on cooperatives and municipal and locally-led forms of ownership. The platform aims to "give more people... a say in our economy by doubling the size of the co-operative sector and introducing a 'right to own,' making employees the buyer of first refusal when the company they work for is up for sale."

The platform also calls for using government purchasing to favor cooperatives and employee stock ownership plans. The preparatory document elaborates on the idea of developing community wealth through anchor institutions - organizations with important links to a place, such as local authorities, hospitals, universities, trade unions, local businesses, and housing associations. These are important for a local economy because, "while many corporations may be able to move, an airport or a hospital probably will not."

Labour's platform also points to privatization of water, energy, and other services in England as the cause of rising prices and poorer quality service, a reality experienced around the world. They propose re-nationalizing the postal and rail services while energy, water, and many other services would likely be turned (back) over to municipal and regional entities that tend to be more responsive to customers. Hundreds of cities worldwide have done the same in recent years.

Finally, moving to more collective forms of ownership is especially important for the future as automation begins to replace more human work. "The goal," according to the preparatory report "should be to embrace the technological potential of modernity... with all its liberating possibilities, while building new institutions around ownership, work, leisure and investment, where technological change is shaped by the common good."

Instead of increasing inequality and raising unemployment, increased automation can benefit all. With democratic decision-making in the marketplace and policies such as higher minimum wages to encourage automation, shorter work weeks, shifting education to promote creativity and skills that compliment machines, and perhaps a universal basic income to supplement labor income, the future could be as imagined by John Maynard Keynes who in 1930 predicted that by 2030 the average work week would have shrunk to 15 hours and technology would give birth to a new "leisure class."§

# Ten year anniversary of Story of Stuff

*Annie Leonard’s seminal video about consumption was released in 2007, instantly becoming a viral hit, and inspiring a book, in-depth website, and a series of videos and campaigns that fuel a movement for social change.*

Ten years ago activist Annie Leonard released the Story of Stuff, an unassuming online video about consumerism and its effect on people and the planet. No one could have predicted that, in time, the 20-minute animated documentary about the lifecycle of material goods would be seen by millions, translated into more than 30 languages, and be the impetus for a series of efforts to educate and mobilize people for social change.

The website, [www.storyofstuff.org](http://www.storyofstuff.org), describes how the video, created with Free Range Studios in 2007, uses simple drawings and Leonard’s engaging personality to explain health and environmental problems created by “the way we make, use, and throw away all the stuff in our lives.” It also describes the failure of consumerism to bring happiness as advertised.

Though the topic can be overwhelming, Leonard maintains a positive attitude and “we-can-fix-it” attitude. “The good thing about such an all-pervasive problem is that there are so many points of intervention,” Leonard says in the video. Within two years, more than 7 million people in 200 countries and territories watched the video online and flooded Leonard with requests for more.

In response, Leonard created the Story of Stuff Project, which has produced a wealth of quality materials, including a book, study programs, and campaigns, to help people address the problems our production and consumption patterns create.

The Story of Stuff Project is best known for its numerous follow-on videos about specific issues and campaigns: bottled water, cosmetics, electronics, cap and trade, and so on. The 8-minute animated video, “The Story of Bottled Water,” was one of the most viral online videos the week of its release in 2010, and has been followed up with other videos about the effects that Nestlé Water has had on communities in the U.S. and campaigns to block the construction of new water bottling plants.

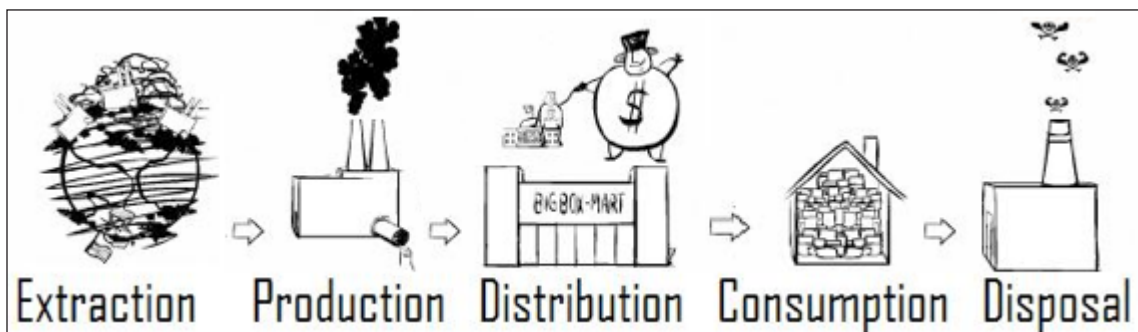
Despite achieving great success in moving people to take action—more than one million people have participated in Story of Stuff campaigns to date—the project decided to shift its focus in 2011 from specific issues and campaigns to systemic social change and helping people identify their role in that change. Their “changemaker personality quiz” helps people see where their passions and skills might be most useful. A four-week online “citizen muscle bootcamp” helps people find their purpose, involve others, and affect change. They also produce resources to help youth and religious groups find their place and purpose in the movement.

The project shifted the focus of its videos, too. In “Story of Citizens United v. FEC” Leonard describes how only a constitutional amendment can rein in the influence of corporate money on U.S. elections. In “Story of Broke,” Leonard takes on the myth that the U.S. government lacks the resources to support its programs. It is not a question of money, she argues, but rather priorities that citizens can change.

“Story of Change,” released in 2012, critiques the idea that significant environmental and social change can be accomplished by changing our buying habits. “This is a great place to start,” Leonard says, “but it’s a terrible place to stop.” “Real change happens,” she says, “when citizens come together to demand rules that work,” and she shows historic examples of that happening.

Leonard released the ninth and final video in the series in 2013. The “Story of Solutions” looks at shifts needed to move our economy toward greater sustainability and equity. “What if the goal of our economy wasn’t ‘more,’ but ‘better’—better health, better jobs and a better chance to survive on the planet?” Leonard asks.

While Leonard has moved on from the Story of Stuff Project to be the executive director of Greenpeace USA, the project continues to produce quality resources, most recently on microbeads and microfibers.§





## Philippines: Mindanao, Maute, and Martial Law

*Fred Goddard, a returned Maryknoll Lay Missioner and former executive director of the Maryknoll Affiliates who works with the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute in the Philippines, wrote the following article on June 26, which was Eid al-Fitr, the Islamic holy day that marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.*

On May 23, government armed forces in the Philippines attempted to capture or kill members of the Maute group, a terrorist group inspired by the so-called Islamic State (IS), in a residential and commercial area just outside of Marawi, the largest city on the island of Mindanao. The fighters were able to retreat into the city and alert other “cells” to join the fighting. The violence escalated quickly throughout the city and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte responded by declaring martial law in all of Mindanao. The battle for Marawi has now raged for over one month.

University of the Philippines professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, chair of the government panel in peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front during the Aquino administration, described the Maute group in a recent article on the Philippine news website [www.inquirer.net](http://www.inquirer.net) as more potent than other small, upstart militant groups in Mindanao that claim to want an Islamic state that is part of a global caliphate.

Brothers Abdullah and Omarkhayam Romato Maute founded the group in 2012, which they called Daulat Ul Islamiyah, and also referred to as IS Ranao. The group has become more popularly known by their family name, Maute.

In the media, the Maute group has been labeled as everything from terrorists and extremists to common criminals and drug lords. This group uses violence to assert their agenda. They have taken innocent lives and destroyed property, often justifying it in the name of Islam. Their connection with IS, however, is not clear. They have raised the black flag associated with IS, but whether there is any real connection or whether they just identify with the militant organization remains to be de-

termined.

The Maute group’s alleged involvement in illegal drug and arms dealing masks a complicated reality in a part of the Philippines that has seen very little investment or development of a formal economy. As in places like Afghanistan, where radical fundamentalist groups have grown among people who live on the margins of the society, such groups turn to financing their operations by illegal means.

Two disconcerting realities seem to be emerging. First, there exist in Marawi terrorist “cells” capable of

quickly joining the fight against government forces. Many people suspected this possibility, but it seems the government either ignored such reports or did not feel these cells posed a threat. This raises questions about the possibility of cells elsewhere in Mindanao or other parts of the Philippines and the possibility of other acts of violence.

Second, disparate factions of similar militant groups in Mindanao seem to be uniting. In her article,

Professor Coronel-Ferrer refers to the “four-cornered alliance” made up of the Maute group, the Abu Sayyaf group (which has operated primarily in the Sulu archipelago and had identified with al-Qaida), the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (known as one of the main forces in the Mamasapano incident in 2015 that left 67 people dead), and the Ansar Al Khilafah Philippines (AKP) group, which operates in South Cotabato and Sarangani.

According to Coronel-Ferrer, the “AKP has been described as having the closest links to IS fighters through their Indonesian and Malaysian comrades.” All four groups in the alliance are break-away groups from the more conventional Moro Islamic Liberation Front



*879 evacuees are housed at Maria Cristina Evacuation Center, in Iligan, north of Marawi, following the clashes between government troops and the Maute Group on May 23. Photo by Angelo Dologmandin/Philippine Information Agency.*

and Moro National Liberation Front, both of which entered into peace negotiations with the government.

To deal with the crisis in Marawi City, President Duterte declared martial law for 60 days in Mindanao on the evening of May 23. Supporters of Duterte inside and outside the government were quick to praise his action. However, many others have raised questions, the most prominent being, why was martial law declared for all of Mindanao when the fighting is limited to Marawi?

The government has reasoned that there could be violence in other areas and by other groups, such as the armed wing of the Community Party called the New People's Army, which has taken police and soldiers captive in the past. Duterte also claims that there is lawlessness throughout Mindanao, seemingly in reference to his "war on drugs" and his desire to continue his violent campaign.

President Duterte has threatened to declare martial law across the Philippines. Many of those who have spoken out against it point to the ability of government security forces to apply necessary and commensurate use of force and to bring the situation under control without such sweeping authoritarian action.

Because the majority in both houses of the Philippine congress supports the Duterte government, they made little more than a cursory review of the martial law proclamation and rejected all attempts to have it rescinded. Oral arguments before the Supreme Court were taking place the week of June 19, but there has been little news regarding these proceedings.

Mindanao is now more than halfway through the 60 days of martial law. Some fear that Duterte will push for an extension. In recent speeches, the president has wavered between pledging to abide by the decision of the Supreme Court or just ignoring it. For many, though, these days bring back memories of martial law under Ferdinand Marcos and have re-traumatized many of the victims.

As of June 26, the battles in Marawi continue. The Maute group still holds hostages, including Father Teresito "Chito" Sukanob, a Catholic priest who has dedicated his life to working among the people of Marawi. Father Chito is a firm believer in interreligious dialogue.

The Maute group is holed up in a few buildings, but also has tunnels and knows the terrain well. The military, for its part, has used air strikes and shelling to try to defeat the Maute group. Sadly, ten soldiers from the Philippine government were accidentally killed in an air strike by their own forces.

The United States has also become involved, with U.S. armed forces providing surveillance for the Philip-

pine government forces in Marawi. According to Philippine television network ABS-CBN, "U.S. assistance is only limited to 'technical support' and assured the public that there are 'no boots on ground.'" President Duterte claimed he had no knowledge of U.S. involvement beforehand, saying, "I am not aware of that, but under martial law, I gave the power to the defense department."

Depending on the source, there are somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 internally displaced people from Marawi, if the surrounding communities are included. Many are fleeing to nearby cities, where local governments, churches and organizations are responding, though they are overwhelmed by the needs.

Beyond the immediate environs, there are also other repercussions. The Communist Party of the Philippines/National Democratic Front and their armed forces, the New People's Army, had apparently considered renewing military offensives in response to the declaration of martial law. The peace talks were disrupted, but are resuming, though tensions are high.

Social media, which is often touted as doing much for democracy, seems to be contributing to the divide. Any critique of the president, the government, or the declaration of martial law is quickly met with an onslaught of criticism. Fake news is rampant, much of it stoking the fear of Muslims. It has been reported that Muslims are finding it difficult to rent apartments or homes in cities that are majority Christian.

In the end, as always, the root causes of the violence must be addressed. Many of those who have joined these militant groups are young people frustrated by the lack of significant change in their communities. They are especially frustrated by the slow progress of talks with the government that are meant to return control of parts of Mindanao that historically have been part of Muslim sultanates to the Muslims themselves.

Amid the violence there are signs of hope. The online newspaper Rappler reported that an eight-hour ceasefire ('humanitarian pause') on June 25 "allowed five Muslim religious leaders to enter ground zero and negotiate with the terrorists to release civilian hostages, especially children, women, and the elderly." There are many reports of those evacuating and those receiving them coming to each other's aid. There are stories of Muslims helping Christians and Christians helping Muslims. There are political figures, religious leaders and other prophetic voices calling for a measured response, an end to martial law, and the negotiations of a peaceful solution. §

# Myanmar: Peace is possible

*Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon, in a message published by ZENIT on June 26, calls for an independent investigation of war crime allegations and appeals for an end to crimes against the Rohingyas minority. On June 30, the government of Myanmar, led by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, denied visas to UN investigators.*

Greetings. I am a pastor. I am not a professional in politics or international law. The terms and laws discussed by the international community are beyond my mandate. I am moved by human suffering. Moved by my faith vision of justice with compassion, I have been raising my voice against all kinds of oppression in this country.

This nation has a great potential to provide a great future to her sons and daughters. But millions are now in poverty, millions in unsafe migration, forced into modern forms of slavery. Conflicts and displacements. I have never compromised on the rights of any people to their dignity. My faith has inspired me to raise my voice at a great personal risk. Even when many voices were muted, I have raised my voice against religious extremism, the plight of IDPs, treatment of minorities. I have opposed all the anti-minority laws.

The sad and the pestering suffering of the people in Rakhine state has been one of my great concerns. This concern is shared by Pope Francis who has raised his voice on behalf of the Muslims known as ‘Rohingyas.’

We continue to raise our voice on behalf of them. When as boat people they were perishing in the seas, I have pointed out the inhuman root causes of this tragedy. At the UN in March 2016 and again in the British Parliament in May 2016 I described the horrific persecution of ‘Rohingyas’ as: an appalling scar on the conscience of my country. Recently when the report of the UN on the treatment of ‘Rohingyas’ we have appealed to the government to ‘Let the devastating report serve as a wakeup call for all.’

Again, it is for legal scholars and human rights experts to determine how to categorize egregious human rights violations in Rakhine State, Kachin State and northern Shan State, and indeed throughout Myanmar. Even experts like Mr. Kofi Annan, the former UN secretary general advised all groups to be careful in use of terms. Allegations of ‘ethnic cleansing’, war crimes and crimes against humanity should be fully and independently investigated. The warnings of potential genocide need to be heeded. Therefore, I called “on the government of Myanmar to work with the international community to investigate the crimes reported by the United Nations, in a truly independent way that results in justice and accountability.”

Myanmar as a nation faces many challenges. We

are anxious that all parties pursue the path of peace. Democracy is not perfect but we are eager that **extreme positions and words** do not force a relapse into days when no one had any rights. Myanmar cannot live through another such spell.

The world is increasingly judging the government on how the IDPs and the minorities are treated in Rakhine. Myanmar government must move away from positions that are not conducive to peace and its good name in the international community. Those who support ‘Rohingyas’ are right in condemning all human rights violations but they too need to move forward maximizing peace based on justice at every opportunity. **Intransigent positions and words** may not further the cause of the victims for whom all of us continue to raise our voice. Continued pressure coupled with an openness to engage all parties is the way forward.

Myanmar is moving, not as fast as the international community and human rights groups wish but changes are happening. Peace Conferences are held where all stakeholders sit for dialogue. Inter religious peace gatherings are gaining strength, sidelining the extremist elements. These steps are not perfect but encouraging signs. Let not words and categories stall the rebuilding process.

We need to bring all parties together in unity, not divide at this moment. Let our actions and words help to strengthen the consensus building processes without sacrificing our commitment to the refugees, IDPs and persecuted people known as ‘Rohingyas’.

## **Peace is possible – Peace is the only way**

With great joy we greet our Muslim brothers and sister “joyous Ramadan.” The holy month has given way to celebration of fraternity. Ramadan is the joyous occasion of our hope of peace and generosity. You have fasted, you have prayed and you have given help to the poor.

The Muslim community has served the poor and vulnerable in this country through commendable generosity. Ramadan reaffirms our commitment to contribute towards peace. There are areas in our country some of our brothers and sisters find life challenged through war and displacement.

May our prayers bring peace and joy to such brothers and sisters. Ramadan wishes and prayers to all.

+ Charles Cardinal Bo, Archbishop of Yangon§

## Peru: U.S. mining company revives lawsuit

*On June 8, the U.S.-based company that owns the infamous and now-shuttered lead smelting plant in La Oroya reintroduced a lawsuit claiming that the government of Peru violated a trade agreement and cost the company profits by establishing regulations to protect the environment in La Oroya.*

La Oroya, Peru, a small city about 90 miles north of the capital of Lima, is considered one of the most contaminated cities in the world. The smelting plant for copper and lead that had been in operation in La Oroya since 1922 is to blame.

In fact, in 2007, La Oroya was rated as one of the ten most polluted cities in the world by the Blacksmith Institute, a New York-based environmental group. The hills around the smelter had been reduced to a moon-scape by sulfur dioxide from the smelters; the river was polluted by untreated water from the smelter; the soil in the city and surroundings had become contaminated with lead; the people in the city, including more than 90 percent of the children, had dangerous levels of lead in their blood and many had bronchial troubles.

The Doe Run Company, whose parent company is the U.S.-based Renco Group, purchased the smelting plant in 1997. When the government demanded that the company conduct remediation for the lead poisoning, the company refused for years. Doe Run declared bankruptcy and shuttered in 2009 and Renco sued the government of Peru under the Peru-U.S. trade agreement in 2011.

The case was not held in just any court. Trade courts are extrajudicial courts outside of national or international jurisdictions. Trade agreements are the law of the land. In the U.S., these cases are heard in the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) within the World Bank. Companies bring forth these suits when they believe their investment has been inhibited in some way. In this case, the Renco Group sued because the Peruvian government refused to bend environmental regulations.

These courts and the investment chapter within trade agreements are designed to put the rights of corporations above the rights of civil society, the government, and nature.

After years of litigation in the ICSID, Peru won the case on a technicality in July 2016 as previously reported in NewsNotes. On June 8, Doe Run reintroduced the suit, having fixed the technical issue in their first suit. So far, no official notice of intent has been made public.

Peru's president, Pedro Kuczynski, a former investor banker, has named restarting the mining operations in La Oroya as a top priority. The Kuczynski administration is now proposing to increase limits on air contaminants.

The investors have tried to auction off the mine and smelter plant but no company wants to buy the plant and be saddled with the liability from the pollution, labor contracts, and needed infrastructure modernization.

Investor-state cases such as this are costly to the governments. Under the previous suit, the Renco Group sued Peru for \$800 million and now even more money is at stake for the government of Peru. Every year, Peru includes money in their national budget for these trade disputes.

Additionally, these investor courts can also act as a de facto appeals court when a case is decided at the highest level of a national court that does not favor the corporation. Even when countries win, they actually still lose. The court cases are opaque and it is difficult for civil society to have a voice in the room.

Maryknoll Sister Patricia Ryan works with the Human Rights and Environment Association (DHUMA) in Peru. They offer trainings for indigenous communities on their rights and have a team of Quechua and Aymara lawyers to defend communities when the government fails to respect their rights. These cases are often related to mining and other extractive projects. In 2015, the ICSID accepted an amicus brief from DHUMA in another trade dispute case, Bear Creek vs. Canada. For the first time, civil society representatives were able to be present in the court room as observers and they livestreamed the event.

While injustice continues for the people in La Oroya, there have been other recent victories for governments in other cases. Last year, Australia and Uruguay both won cases brought by Philip Morris related to anti-smoking laws. In October, El Salvador fended off a suit from the mining company Pacific Rim (now Oceana Gold) over a country-wide mining moratorium; and in March, Canada won a suit brought by Eli Lilly for refusing patents for two medications. §



*Photo of La Oroya taken on May 29, 2008 by Darío Torres/Flickr.*

## Central America: U.S. policy denies human rights

*The newly unveiled U.S. policy is of little help to Central American families who live in fear.*

For millions in Central America, daily life has become a nightmare to flee. In Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala, the countries of the so-called Northern Triangle, gang wars and what some have called “iron-fisted” state countermeasures have normalized violence to the extent that UN officials view the region in the same terms and with the same urgency as violent crises in Africa and the Middle East. At least 50,000 people have been murdered there in the past three years.

The bloodshed has forced millions to flee, at an estimated rate of more than 500,000 a year. Deepening drastically since 2014, the crisis has bled across the border into the United States with the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrants seeking refuge, the vast majority of them are unaccompanied children and families.

Facing the humanitarian emergency, however, the previous Obama Administration tried to stem the flow by hardening the U.S. border and by enlisting Mexico to stop desperate migrants at its border with Guatemala, which U.S. security officials now routinely refer to as our own “frontera sur” (Spanish for southern border). The majority of Northern Triangle migrants – 98 percent, according to rights groups citing Mexican government reports – are now caught and deported by Mexico on their desperate journey north, some 141,000 last year alone.

It’s in this context of crisis that the Trump administration has recently rolled out its own policies for the fractured and bloodied Northern Triangle.

Led by Department of Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, the Administration is actively remilitarizing the region and favors economic policies that would benefit large-scale development over community priorities, strip protections for workers, minority groups and the environment, and would marginalize grassroots participation and deemphasize social programs across the board. Secretary Kelly debuted the policy at a recent summit of regional leaders co-hosted by the U.S. and Mexico, the “Conference on Prosperity and Security,” to which representatives from civil society were not invited.

On the eve of the summit, more than 100 faith-based and human rights organizations – including Church World Service, Mennonite Central Committee,

and the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns – sent a letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson rejecting the Trump Administration’s military-tinted lens.

“An effective response to this forced displacement and migration from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador requires policies that recognize and respect the rights of all individuals to seek asylum in the United States and the region, and foreign policies that address the intersection of root causes and that are based in human rights and in consultation with civil society organizations in the region,” the groups said in their letter to Secretary Tillerson on June 7, one week before the summit kicked off in Miami with a key note by Vice President Mike Pence. “It is precisely for these reasons that we are concerned with the lack of consultation with civil society organizations from Mexico and Central America.... U.S. policies for the region that lack consultation ... limit the extent to which they can be effective, lack accountability and transparency, and may be detrimental to local populations.”

The contested policies bear the stamp of the Trump Administration’s “America First” policy, which Tillerson said required that “We must secure the nation. We must protect our people. We must protect our borders. ... [I]t’s foreign policy projected with a strong ability to enforce the protection of our freedoms with a strong military.”

Homeland Security chief Kelly is a combat-hardened Marine commander who led the U.S. Southern Command during the Obama Administration, which privileged military solutions to the regions’ many social problems. He is the nation’s chief border enforcer and has said he views illegal immigration as an “existential” threat. His toolbox is full of hammers, and social justice advocates fear Kelly sees migrants as so many nails.

Kelly devoted a full day of the summit to closed-door meetings on security deep within the walls of U.S. Southern Command, the Miami-based headquarters for all U.S. military activities in Central and South America, the island nations of the Caribbean, and the surrounding waters south of Mexico, sending “a dangerous signal that citizen security and justice challenges that the Northern Triangle countries face will be addressed from the perspective of the military and defense and not by the State Department and by USAID, which have priori-



tized development assistance, institution building, and strengthening justice systems,” our letter said.

At the same time, the Trump Administration has proposed a 30 percent cut to the State Department budget and has proposed folding USAID’s operations into what remains of State.

“With fewer resources channeled through traditional means,” said analyst Jake Johnson of the Center for Economic and Policy research, “it will be the defense attaches, military group colonels, DEA agents, and other security officials that are empowered to lead U.S. foreign policy. They will be the ones holding and administering the carrots,” further shifting the balance of power to those countries’ militaries, “exacerbate[ing] the root causes of increased violence, devastation, and migration.”

In the letter to Secretary Tillerson, the groups called out U.S. reliance on unreliable police and military forces, citing State Department reports documenting the involvement of all three countries’ forces in “crimes such as excessive use of force, unlawful killings, and corruption.” Alongside gang violence, “human rights violations by various state security forces have also been a driving factor of displacement and insecurity in the region,” the letter said.

Kelly’s plans to use Plan Colombia, the longtime U.S.-funded plan aimed at solving the problem of drug trafficking and internal conflict in Colombia, as a model for the Northern Triangle and enlist Colombian security forces to train police and military forces in the region, even though Colombia’s security forces have committed well-documented civilian executions and other human rights abuses. Some critics see the lack of transparency surrounding the security side of the recent summit as giving green light for the Northern Triangle to follow Colombia’s example of extrajudicial justice and counterinsurgency, tactics to cut crime.

The developing strategy is self-sabotaging, bound to reinforce current trends at the expense of the most desperate people involved. Embedded contradictions include the role of U.S. drug demand and plans to deport and repatriate hundreds of thousands of Central Americans in the midst of the crisis. While Kelly admits that the primary driver of the region’s security crisis is U.S.

demand for illegal drugs, the Trump administration plans to cut myriad domestic programs and budgets aimed at curbing demand and healing addicts at home. Likewise, President Trump has singled out two main Salvadoran gangs for drug trafficking, while experts agree that the gangs mostly deal locally and are but pawns in a much bigger game controlled by cartels and internationally organized crime involving the region’s corrupt politicians, institutions, and banks.

Another concern is Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Central Americans to legally work and live in the U.S. On May 22 Secretary Kelly extended TPS for Haitians for only 6 months. At a press conference after a four-hour visit to Haiti on May 30, he emphasized the “temporary” in the immigration status. Kelly, whose principal job it is to enforce the country’s borders, may

be ready to end Temporary Protected Status for nearly 200,000 Salvadorans and some 70,000 Hondurans living in the U.S., only to deport them back into communities where many haven’t lived for decades and where their neighbors and families are fleeing for their lives – despite warnings from experts and government officials that this could overwhelm local capacity and exacerbate the root causes of instability and migration. In El Salvador, for

example, such a mass deportation would cut off vital remittances that experts say account for about 20 percent of the country’s GDP.

One year ago, we joined more than 200 faith leaders in a letter to President Obama and then Homeland Security Secretary Jey Johnson calling on the U.S. government to grant TPS to refugees in the U.S. who have fled El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. “We cannot sit idly by while our Central American brothers and sisters are returned to the very violence that has forced them from their homes,” our letter said.

The letter to Secretary Tillerson on June 7 concluded with an urgent request to U.S. and Mexican leaders to “ensure that human rights do not take a back seat” and to address the structural violence and root causes of migration in the region, including the legacy of U.S. involvement in Central America based on “America First” policies that never seem to change. §



## Zimbabwe: Bishops appeal for peace in elections

*In advance of the general election in 2018, the Zimbabwe Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter calling on the government and citizens to respect the Constitution and reject the use of violence and coercion.*

The Catholic bishops in Zimbabwe issued a pastoral letter on June 4 in an attempt to prepare the people for the general election in 2018. In their letter entitled “Elections, Peace and Development,” the bishops say they hope to avoid a repeat of the violence that occurred before and after the election in 2008.

Speaking directly to the government, political parties, and the people of Zimbabwe, the bishops list in clear, straightforward language seven points they wish to reflect on, the first of which is “Accept one another.”

“We appeal first for acceptance of one another and respect for different opinions,” the letter says. “We all know that this election will, like others, be contested by people different from us and holding different views. This is not a threat to democracy and peace but rather the very life blood of it.”

The bishops go on to list the importance of choosing words that build unity rather than division and adhering to and respecting the Constitution of Zimbabwe, which was approved by a referendum vote of May 2013. They call on people to become engaged in the political process, to vote, and choose leaders who “show by their actions, rather than just their words, that they are really working for the benefit of all!”

The bishops appeal to the government of President Robert Mugabe to ensure the people’s rights and freedoms as outlined in the Constitution and call for people to pray for present and future leaders “that they may find the courage and the wisdom to put the people’s interests above their own.”

In their seventh and final point, written in bold and italics, the bishops say, “We reiterate: Reject all forms of violence and coercion.”

“Violence and coercion only serve to discredit our elections,” the bishops explain. “Any use of force takes away the credibility and integrity of the elections. People must be able to make free choices according to their own judgement.”

All the Catholic bishops of Zimbabwe signed the pastoral letter which was released on Pentecost Sunday.

Campaigning by presidential candidates has already begun. President Mugabe is organizing nationwide public rallies aimed at increasing support for the ruling ZANU-PF party. Other parties are putting up presidential candidates and individuals are courageously throwing their hats into the ring. One is Nkosana Moyo, who heads the Mandela Institute for Development Stud-

ies in Johannesburg. Moyo was the Minister of Industry and International Trade in Zimbabwe for a short time in 2001 but resigned and moved to South Africa only 11 months later, reportedly due to his frustration over the government’s disregard of the rule of law and attacks on farms and businesses by ZANU-PF activists.

In an open letter to President Mugabe in 2016, Moyo asked, “How can it be that when Zimbabwean citizens have cause to disagree with their government they are labeled as ‘not part of us’ at a national level?” He went on to say:

“There is no amount of outside intervention, support, or assistance that will make Zimbabwe prosper unless Zimbabweans are united internally. I would like to persuade you to take to heart the suffering of the citizens rather than push back at them as if their pleas are not founded on the reality of a dying economy.” ... “To harness the energy, imagination, and innovativeness of the nation, we have to have a better tolerance and capacity for challenge, pushback, and inclusiveness. We have to cultivate the capacity for synthesizing other people’s views into our own to get synergistic multipliers in the national developmental effort.”

Though few expect him to get very far, Moyo may be able to raise some important issues for national discussion, namely corruption, lack of cash flow and financial collapse, and the subsequent decline in the educational system throughout the country.

Meanwhile, Zimbabwean pastor Evan Mawarire, the founder of the #ThisFlag political protest movement, has reportedly been arrested again, this time while praying with medical students at the University of Zimbabwe during their public protest over rising academic fees on June 26. Mawarire inadvertently launched a movement in 2016, after posting a video of himself on social media, draped in the national flag and lamenting the political corruption and economic crisis in Zimbabwe. Mawarire pointingly blamed the government of Robert Mugabe for bringing the flag into disrepute.

The video struck a chord with people throughout the country who struggle to find work and afford food and other basic necessities. Thousands of people took to the streets and even attended graduations and worked in the street markets while draped in the flag of Zimbabwe as a sign of protest.

General elections are scheduled to be held in Zimbabwe on or before July 31, 2018. §

## Africa: Migration trends and patterns

*There are numerous influences in Africa pushing and pulling people to migrate either within their country, or across, away from, or into the continent, spreading new ideas and changes in culture.*

Nowhere are the patterns, characteristics, and causes of migration more complex and misunderstood than on the continent of Africa. Recent media images of African migrants drowning in the Mediterranean Sea have given rise to an apocalyptic image of desperate people fleeing poverty and violence at home and subject to ruthless traffickers and smugglers along dangerous migration routes towards Europe. Not only does this image reinforce the general picture of Africa as a continent plagued by violence, war, and abject poverty, but it also furthers the stereotypes and myths about the reality of migration in general, and African migration in particular, that in turn influence the formulation of responses aimed primarily at managing and eventually curtailing the flow of people.

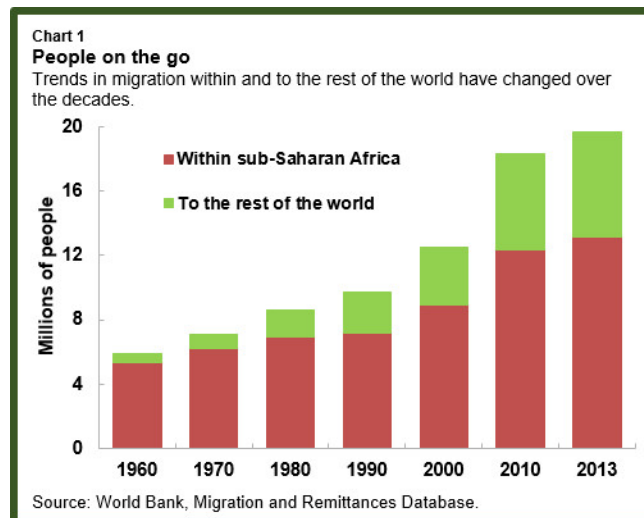
In recent years a number of global and African organizations have produced in-depth research on what is happening to the millions of African who are on the move. One major finding questions the myth that migration in Africa is an uncontrolled phenomenon largely driven by the desperation scenario of escaping from poverty and violence. While this may be true for some young African men, many more African migrants are driven by labor demand and perceived economic opportunities. Their migration takes place in a legal, orderly manner. Most people who are emigrating out of Africa are in possession of valid passports, visas, and other travel documents and are migrating for the same reasons as migrants from other part of the world – family, work, or study. More often than not they are coming out of countries with higher levels of economic development.

While the migration rate (migration-to-population) in Africa has remained steady over the last 23 years at about 2 percent, the number of migrants has increased due to the doubling of population in the same period. Today there are about 20 million migrants on the continent. The percentage of those who leave Africa has increased steadily from a quarter to a third of the total and by 2013 it stands at about 6 million people.

Migration by Africans is becoming a more complex and diverse process with more types of people on the move to a larger number of destinations both within Africa and to other countries around the world. It is impossible to reduce this complex phenomenon of human mobility to the drivers of misery and conflict. Some countries, like Morocco, are experiencing the simultaneous movement of migrants in, out, and through their countries. Ghana experiences internal migration, immigration, transit migration, and emigration to both within and outside of Africa. Over one million Chinese, seeking business opportunities and drawn by more open societies, are reported to have migrated permanently to the continent.

The form migration takes is also becoming more diverse as migrant laborer, traders, commuters, visitors and people working in frontier areas may all be on the same bus crossing one of Africa's numerous borders. The older colonial model of push-pull migration related to labor demands is no longer adequate to capture the complexity of mobility in contemporary Africa.

Despite the continued existence of some of the world's largest refugee camps in northern Kenya, the actual number of African refugees—people fleeing due to war or persecution—has decreased considerably since 1990. In 1990 about half of total migrants were refugees, and this share has declined to only about 10 percent by 2013. However, the number of internally displaced people is increasing. In total, 12.4 million people were internally displaced in Africa as a result of conflict and violence. This is 30 per cent of the total number of people internally displaced by conflict globally (48 million people) and twice the total number of African refugees (5.4 million people). Only recently have organizations like the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center begun to collect information on people displaced by development projects and slow-onset crises related to drought and environmental change. §





# Africa Rising: The Kilimanjaro Declaration

*A new Pan-African movement is gaining momentum in an effort to build strength by joining forces to work for peace, justice and dignity across the continent.*

In recent decades international policymakers and journalists have described Africa with colorful monikers. In the 1990s, it was labeled the “hopeless continent.” Then, the rapid economic expansion of many African nations in the first decade of the 21st century inspired the “Africa Rising” slogan. Recently, the head of the International Monetary Fund, Christine Lagarde, offered a more cautious “Africa Watching” label. A different, more realistic description of Africa as a continent unified in vision and purpose is gaining prevalence among Africans themselves.

Africans Rising for Justice, Peace and Dignity (<http://africans-rising.org/>) is a new Africa-wide social movement focused on fostering solidarity and unity of purpose for the peoples of Africa to build the future they want – a right to peace, social inclusion and shared prosperity. It was officially launched on African Liberation Day, May 25. The movement’s founding charter, entitled, the Kilimanjaro Declaration, is as follows:

We, the citizens and descendants of Africa, as part of the Africans Rising Movement, are outraged by the centuries of oppression; we condemn the plunder of our natural and mineral resources and the suppression of our fundamental human rights.

We are determined to foster an Africa-wide solidarity and unity of purpose of the peoples of Africa to build the future we want – a right to peace, social inclusion and shared prosperity.

On August 23-24, 2016, two hundred and seventy two representatives from civil society, trade unions, women, young people, men, people living with disabilities, parliamentarians, media organizations and faith-based groups, from across Africa and the African diaspora gathered in Arusha, Tanzania and committed to build a pan-African movement that recognizes these rights and freedoms of our people.

THE CONFERENCE DECLARED THAT:

1. Africa is a rich continent. That wealth belongs to all our people, not to a narrow political and economic elite. We need to fight for economic development that is just and embraces social inclusion and environmental care. We have a right to the ‘better life’ our governments have promised.

2. Africans have a diverse, rich and powerful heritage that is important to heal ourselves and repair the damage done by neoliberalism to our humanity and environment. Being African, embracing the philosophy of

Ubuntu should be a source of our pride.

3. African youth are a critical foundation for building the success of our continent and must play a central role in building Africans Rising.

4. Africa’s diaspora whether displaced through slavery and colonialism or part of modern day migration are part of Africa’s history and future. They are a reservoir of skills, resources and passion that must be harnessed and integrated into our movement.

5. We are committed to a decentralized, citizen-owned future that will build support and solidarity for local struggles, empower local leadership and immerse our activists in grassroots work of building social movements from below and beyond borders.

6. We are committed to building a citizen’s movement that is accountable to the constituencies we represent and enforcing the highest standards of ethical behavior.

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE THAT OUR WORK SHOULD BUILD A LOCAL, NATIONAL, CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL CAMPAIGN THAT IS:

- a. Expanding space for civic and political action
- b. Fighting for women’s rights and freedoms across society
- c. Focusing our struggles on the right to equity and dignity
- d. Demanding good governance as we fight corruption and impunity
- e. Demanding climate and environmental justice

CALL ON OUR PEOPLE AND ACTIVISTS TO:

Join this Africans Rising Movement and mobilize our people around this shared vision; organize and connect local struggles under this umbrella; galvanize solidarity with all African struggles. This movement is committed to peace and nonviolent action. We assert our inherent rights as Africans and invite our governments, leaders, other stakeholders and institutions to join us in pursuing the future we want to leave our future generations.

We commit to mobilizing our people in Africa to launch this movement on the 25th of May, 2017, when we deepen the meaning of African Liberation Day and call on all sectors of our society to mobilize and organize events in every African country that will build the momentum towards the genuine liberation of our beautiful continent. §

# Israel/Palestine: Hope despite occupation

*June 10 marked a grim anniversary—fifty years of Israeli occupation of Palestine following the Six Day War.*

As settlements expand and prospects fade for a peaceful two-state solution, the current situation in Israel/Palestine is disheartening. Marking a grim anniversary of this intolerable state this month, organizations including B'Tselem, Amnesty International, Jewish Voices for Peace, and Defense for Children International-Palestine, among others, are hosting events and even year-long campaigns to remind the world that the conflict is far from resolved and that fifty years of military rule and repression of a people can no longer be considered “temporary” and must immediately end.

One such group, Churches for Middle East Peace, hosted a conference and advocacy day June 4-6, titled “50 Years Too Long” which brought together nearly 100 participants, including staff from the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, to learn from a range of leading thinkers of many different backgrounds and faiths. A rabbi from a local congregation, a Catholic Lebanese-American who founded the Arab American Institute, and a Muslim Palestinian working as a legislative aide to Senator Bernie Sanders were among the speakers at the conference who shared their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for peace.

It was simultaneously devastating and hopeful to hear from a young Palestinian man who was shot in the back by the Israeli soldiers who occupied his family’s house for five years, yet has found the strength not to hate Israelis and to spread his message of forgiveness in the halls of the U.S. Congress.

It was simultaneously encouraging and disheartening to hear from an American rabbi who believes that the occupation must end immediately, but shared that his congregation remains “ambivalent” about speaking out. Similarly, in lobby visits to congressional offices following the conference advocating for humanitarian aid to Gaza, congressional staff were sympathetic to our pleas for the protection of civilians, yet unresponsive.

Meanwhile, in Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu marked the commemoration claiming to “seek peace with our neighbors, a real peace” – unfortunately, a vision of “peace” in which Israel “will maintain security control over the entire territory west of the

Jordan River”. Further, he says, Israel will “insist that the Palestinians finally recognize Israel as the national home of the Jewish people”, and refusal to accept those two conditions is what is preventing the solution to the conflict.

It is Mr. Netanyahu who prevents the prospect of peace with such messages. First, the Palestinian Authority has “recognized Israel” and its right to exist as a state many times. Second, Israel cannot maintain security control over a future sovereign state of Palestine.

The past fifty years of occupation are filled with increasing despair for the plight of Palestinians as Netanyahu’s ongoing expansion of settlements dampens hope for a contiguous Palestinian state. Yet there is al-

ways hope in the future, because it is the future that can bring about change.

There was a sign of hope for the future on May 27 in Tel Aviv, where over 15,000 people attended a rally organized by Peace Now with the theme “Two States—One Hope.” The center-left Labor and Meretz political parties co-sponsored the event, with their leaders sharing sentiments that the international community longs to hear from their government: acknowledgement that Israel “forcefully rules another people” and that Ne-


anyahu “lies when he tells us that... ‘there’s no way out’ and ‘there’s no partner’” and finally “the Israeli public supports compromise, an end to the occupation and says yes to two states for two peoples.” The head of the Joint List party, the third largest party in the current Israeli Knesset, called for the establishment of “a democratic camp around common basic principles and a clear call to end the occupation, a call for equality, democracy and social justice for all the state’s citizens.”

A recent poll conducted by an Israeli television channel found that while 39 percent of Israelis are opposed to a two-state solution and 14 percent “do not know,” a 47 percent majority still support the creation of a Palestinian state based on 1967 borders. §

**Faith in action:** Sign a letter to President Trump organized by Churches for Middle East Peace calling for an end to 50 years of occupation with a peaceful solution for Palestinians and Israelis. <http://bit.ly/CMEPlatter>



## Resources

- 1) **Pray for South Sudan** in commemoration of Independence Day on **July 9**. Friends In Solidarity offers a prayer at <http://bit.ly/2sv93vS>
  - 2) **World Day Against Trafficking in Persons** is **July 30**. Find talking points, prayers from various faith traditions, and suggestions for actions in a toolkit offered by The Washington Inter-Religious Staff Community Working Group on Human Trafficking, at: <http://bit.ly/2uvCeR2>
  - 3) **Read the 2017 Trafficking In Persons Report** <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2017/> For analysis of some of the changes in this year's report, see the statement by Alliance to End Slavery & Trafficking <http://bit.ly/2uPzr4B>
  - 4) **64th Anniversary of the Korea Armistice** is **July 27**. To sign the Korea Peace Petition, go to [www.endthekoreanwar.org](http://www.endthekoreanwar.org). To read our analysis on current options for peace on the Korean peninsula, go to <http://bit.ly/2tveXhM>
  - 5) **In commemoration of the atomic bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki** on **Aug. 6 and 9, 1945**, read the personal stories of the *hibakusha*, the Japanese word for the survivors of the bombing, at <http://www.hibakushastories.org/> Also, learn more about "Why a nuclear weapons ban?" on the website of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. <http://www.icanw.org/why-a-ban/> Send a copy of the Vatican's "Nuclear Disarmament: Time for Abolition" to your elected officials and urge them to support the Nuclear ban treaty. Find the document at <http://bit.ly/HolySeeNuclearAbolition>
  - 6) **Watch this 8-minute video** about the leaders of the Aymara people in Puno, Peru, who are on trial for criminalization of social protest. Maryknoll Sister Patricia Ryan works with the community to defend their rights as indigenous peoples and of the rights of Mother Earth, especially her water. <http://bit.ly/2tWWHRJ>
  - 7) **Learn the facts about refugees in the U.S.** in this new report by the Migration Policy Institute. <http://bit.ly/2sv40vk>
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- 8) **Read and share "Just War? Enough Already?"** by Gerald Schlabach, published by Commonweal Magazine in May 31. Gerald Schlabach attended the Nonviolence and Just Peace conference in Rome in April 2016. He argues that "Just war teaching has distracted Catholics from learning and practicing strategic nonviolence." <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/just-war-0>
  - 9) **Watch the movement of every refugee on earth** since the year 2000 in this infographic published by Fast Company <http://bit.ly/2tWWuhc>
  - 10) **Listen to "The Anatomy of Resistance,"** a new free podcast produced by Fellowship of Reconciliation. Co-hosts Erica Chenoweth and Anthony Grimes spotlight the stories and methods of innovative non-violent resistance around the country and world. They'll look at why moments of resistance worked, how they connect with historical victories, and in what ways they shape a new vision for the world. Listen at <https://soundcloud.com/user-588641014>
  - 11) **New free "Discover Your Neighbor" resource** initiative produced by the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers provides teachers and religious educators with access to resources that help young people make faith and life connections to their global neighbors, engage with global issues throughout the liturgical year, explore Scripture and Church teaching, and take action to serve others as missionary disciples. The program for the Fall season, "Care of Creation," is free and online now. <https://www.discoveryourneighbor.org/>