



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

# NewsNotes

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

***If we haven't heard from you, this is your last issue of NewsNotes! Sign up for our electronic version at [www.maryknollogc.org](http://www.maryknollogc.org).***

**November-December 2009  
Vol. 34, No. 6**

From fear to a sustainable future.....3

### **Latin America**

El Salvador: Key verdicts for human rights upheld.....4  
Honduras: An uneasy accord.....5  
Mexico: Drug wars fuel violence.....6

### **Africa/Middle East**

Zimbabwe: Debt tribunal verdict.....7  
Sudan: A critical period.....8  
Kenya: Drought, famine worsen.....9  
Middle East: Two states, no state.....10

### **Asia/Pacific**

Philippines: Update on kidnapped priest.....11  
Philippines: Extrajudicial killings rise.....11  
Philippines: Bishop challenges mining company.....12

Corporations in the U.S., part six.....13  
Ecological economics, part six.....15  
U.S. climate legislation 2009.....16  
Torture: Provide Red Cross access to prisoners.....18  
Global hunger and food security.....19  
UN: "The real wealth of nations".....21  
Rein in commodity market speculation.....22

Resources.....23

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

P.O. Box 29132 Washington, D.C. 20017-0132  
Phone: (202)832-1780 Fax: (202)832-5195  
[ogc@maryknoll.org](mailto:ogc@maryknoll.org) [www.maryknollogc.org](http://www.maryknollogc.org)

**NewsNotes is moving to online/e-version ...** Starting with the January-February 2010 issue, *NewsNotes* will be written and designed in the same way, but will be published electronically. *If you have not already*, send your email address, name, city, state (and country) to [ogc@maryknoll.org](mailto:ogc@maryknoll.org) or sign up on our website, [www.maryknollogc.org](http://www.maryknollogc.org). **If you have absolutely no access to email or internet, please call our D.C. office (202-832-1780) or send us a note (P.O. Box 29132, Washington, D.C. 20017) to let us know.** We will print very few paper copies. *Thank you for your support!*

**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**

Marie Dennis — Director.....[mdennis@maryknoll.org](mailto:mdennis@maryknoll.org)  
 Sr. Ann Braudis, MM.....[abraudis@mksisters.org](mailto:abraudis@mksisters.org)  
 Judy Coode.....[jcoode@maryknoll.org](mailto:jcoode@maryknoll.org)  
 Yamileth Coreas.....[ycoreas@maryknoll.org](mailto:ycoreas@maryknoll.org)  
 Sr. Rose Bernadette (Meg) Gallagher, MM.....[rgallagher@mksisters.org](mailto:rgallagher@mksisters.org)  
 David Kane, MLM.....[dkane@maryknoll.org](mailto:dkane@maryknoll.org)  
 Kathy McNeely.....[kmcneely@maryknoll.org](mailto:kmcneely@maryknoll.org)  
 Rev. Jim Noonan, MM.....[jnoonan@maryknoll.org](mailto:jnoonan@maryknoll.org)

MOGC Washington  
 P.O. Box 29132  
 Washington, D.C. 20017  
 (202)832-1780 phone  
 (202)832-5195 fax  
[ogc@maryknoll.org](mailto:ogc@maryknoll.org)

MOGC Maryknoll NY  
 P.O. Box 311  
 Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545-0311  
 (914)941-7575 phone  
 (914)923-0733 fax  
[ogc@maryknoll.org](mailto:ogc@maryknoll.org)

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

**Take action - Email, call, fax or write U.S. decisionmakers**

President Barack Obama  
 The White House  
 Washington, D.C. 20500  
[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

Robert Gates  
 Secretary of Defense  
 The Pentagon  
 Washington, D.C. 20301  
 (703) 695-5261 phone  
[www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil)

Robert B. Zoellick  
 President  
 World Bank Group  
 1818 H Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20433  
[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

Vice President Joe Biden  
 The White House  
 Washington, D.C. 20500  
[vice\\_president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:vice_president@whitehouse.gov)

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

Dominique Strauss-Kuhn  
 Managing Director  
 International Monetary Fund  
 700 19th Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20431  
[www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)

Hillary Rodham Clinton  
 Secretary of State  
 2201 C Street, N.W.  
 Washington, D.C. 20520  
 (202) 647-6575 phone  
 (202) 647-2283 fax  
[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

Susan Rice  
 U.S. Representative to UN  
 799 United Nations Plaza  
 New York, NY 10017  
 (212) 415-4000 phone  
[www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov](http://www.usunnewyork.usmission.gov)

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

Capitol switchboard:  
 (202) 224-3121  
[www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)

## From fear to a sustainable future

*Marie Dennis, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns and co-president of Pax Christi International, participated in a peace delegation to Iraq in September 2009. Some of her reflections follow.*

Thanks to repeated kidnappings and numerous killings, fear palpably gripped many communities we met in Iraq. Msgr. Louis Sako, archbishop of Kirkuk, who welcomed our small Pax Christi International delegation in mid-September with warm and generous hospitality, moved deliberately into the fear: “Christians are a target of violence,” he said publicly, following the recent kidnapping of a Christian nurse. “Everybody knows that Christians are citizens of this country and this city and no one has any doubts about their devotion to their country or their sincerity.” He spoke of “a culture of humiliation that we reject with force” and called on “government authorities, the decent people of Iraq and Kirkuk, to do everything to protect all citizens, whoever they are.”

A prophetic figure who has exemplified his own call for “dialogue and sincere cooperation,” Msgr. Sako insists that the cooperation he regularly facilitates with both Sunni and Shiite religious leaders in Kirkuk is an essential element of peace-building in Iraq. Like many other Iraqis, he asserts that there is no military solution to the present violent chaos in Iraq, but that the United States, having started a dreadfully destructive war there, has to be held accountable for healing and reconstruction.

The challenge to overcome fear and plant seeds of peace in Iraq is a huge one; fear is pervasive – and with good reason. We did not see many U.S. troops while we were there, but one Iraqi priest described to us a typical encounter with the U.S. military, which previously happened frequently. Iraqis were required to stay at least one kilometer from any U.S. vehicle. If they wandered any closer than that, they could be shot. He told us about one family he knew that apparently crossed the invisible one kilometer line; mother, father and children were all killed. He described his own fright when he realized, as he was driving along, that he was “marked” on his forehead with an infrared beam and could be killed if he didn’t immediately stop or when he suddenly came upon U.S. soldiers with weapons pointed at

his heart. He was terrified; so were the U.S. soldiers on the other end of the gun.

Fear, fear of the “other.” Anyone could be a suicide bomber intent on attacking foreign troops. Anyone could be a kidnapper intent on abducting a well-known Christian. Anyone could be an assassin. Fear in all directions.

Yet, Msgr. Sako, like so many others we met as we travelled across the north of Iraq from Kirkuk to Erbil to Mosul and Dohuk, was fully engaged in creating a new Iraq in spite of deep and tragic damage from the most recent U.S. war there. Cooperation and friendship among religious leaders in Kirkuk; coeducational, interreligious schools and an open university that bring together Sunni and Shiite Muslims, Christians, Yezidie and Turkmen to provide a base of human values and an introduction to human rights; the commitment of the Dominican sisters of Mosul to peace education at a primary level; dedicated health care professionals in Kirkuk who serve Muslims and Christians alike; and LaOnf, the Iraqi nonviolence network, left a lasting impression on our delegation.

Fear always sees “the other” as a potential enemy. Fear demands control and often turns us into enemies ourselves. Fear, even well grounded fear, can be paralyzing. Excessive fear can keep whole societies from avoiding or moving beyond violent conflict. War itself always deepens fear, yet war too often finds its roots and rationale in fear.

Instead of calming fears about potential terrorist attacks, U.S. political leaders orchestrated fear to garner support for war in Afghanistan and Iraq. What I saw in the early days of the U.S. war in Afghanistan and what I saw in Iraq a few weeks ago was fear exacerbating fear. Genuine security cannot be built on a foundation of fear. Many wise Iraqis, including Bishop Sako and his Muslim friends in Kirkuk, know that well. They are witnesses to the power of cooperation, even across vast cultural, religious, political and social differences. The Obama administration claims to understand that international cooperation and dialogue toward inclusive global security would be a more fruitful route to peace than unilateralism and war. We will continue to pray and work to ensure that the administration will demonstrate that belief in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran.

## El Salvador: Key verdicts for human rights upheld

*Early October was a positive time for human rights as important announcements were made regarding two Salvadoran cases.*

On Oct. 5, the U.S. Supreme Court denied former Salvadoran Vice Minister of Defense Col. Nicolás Carranza an appeal of the 2005 verdict which found him guilty of crimes against humanity, torture and extrajudicial killing. The next day, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that



it had started deportation proceedings for former Salvadoran Ministers of Defense Gen. José Guillermo Garcia and Gen. Eugenio Vides Casanova, who have also been found guilty of torture. These decisions should be clear messages that the U.S. will not harbor fugitives; unfortunately, in other cases, human rights abusers are still able to live freely in the U.S.

Due to El Salvador's controversial Amnesty Law that prohibits prosecutions for human rights abuses committed during the civil war, survivors were only able to use civil processes against their abusers in these cases. In November 2005, Carranza was found guilty of torture, extrajudicial killings and crimes against humanity under the doctrine of command responsibility and ordered to pay \$6 million in damages. According to the Center for Justice and Accountability, which brought the case to trial, "the doctrine holds that a military commander is legally responsible for human rights abuses by his subordinates when the commander knew or should have known that the abuses were taking place and failed to prevent the abuses or punish those responsible."

When he served as vice minister of defense from late 1979-early 1981, possibly the most brutal period of civil war, Carranza commanded the three principal security forces. Experts estimate that 10,000-12,000 unarmed civilians were killed in 1980. During the trial, former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White testified that Carranza was a paid informant for the CIA while he was Vice Minister of Defense. Carranza also confirmed that he had received money

from the U.S. government since 1965. Carranza immigrated to the U.S. in 1985, was naturalized as a citizen in 1991 and lives in Memphis.

Generals Casanova and Garcia were initially found guilty of the torture of three Salvadoran citizens in 2002, also through the doctrine of command responsibility. Garcia was the Minister of Defense from 1979 to 1983, in charge of the soldiers responsible for the El Mozote and Sumpul massacres where over 1,367 civilians were killed. Vides Casanova was director of the Salvadoran National Guard and then succeeded Garcia as Minister of Defense.

In February 2005, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the verdict in the case, but later admitted to having made an error and upheld the original ruling in a January 2006 announcement. In July of that year, Casanova was forced to turn over \$300,000 of his own money. This was the first human rights case in the U.S. in which survivors have actually recovered money from their abusers. Usually, perpetrators are able to shift their money in order to avoid paying any penalties. DHS's announcement of their pending deportations means that they should be out of the country within a year.

While these recent announcements are positive in showing the possibility of bringing human rights abusers to justice, other people responsible for such abuses continue to live with impunity in the U.S. For instance, Carlos Posada Carriles, connected to the bombing of a Cuban airline in 1976 that killed 73 people, continues to live freely in Miami despite an extradition request from Venezuela. Former Bolivian president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada and two of his former ministers also continue to live freely in the U.S. despite a request for their extradition from Bolivia for their participation in the killing of 67 people in October 2003. Until the government treats all human rights abusers equally, the U.S. will continue to be seen as a place to go to avoid persecution. Hopefully these recent victories in the Salvadoran cases are signs of things to come.



Former Bolivian president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada

## Honduras: An uneasy accord

*After more than four months of political turmoil and repression not seen since the 1980s, the end of the civil-military coup in Honduras finally appears in sight, though the agreement, mediated by Costa Rican president Carlos Arias, includes some significant hurdles to jump before political normalcy returns. The remaining months of 2009 will be key for the future of Honduras and the region.*

A week before the accord, the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH) released a report on human rights abuses under the coup regime. Between June 28 and October 10, over 4,000 violations of human rights including 21 assassinations and violent deaths were reported. COFADEH's report emphasized its concerns over the treatment of teachers in the country who have been subject to "illegal and arbitrary retention of salaries, profiling, legal suits brought against them by the Public Ministry, persecution, illegal detentions and even assassination." In addition, it described violent repression, especially of youth, media censorship and a sense of déjà vu with the violence of years past. From the report, "The military dictatorship that we live under today is very similar to that of the decade of the 1980s, however, there is an important difference. During the 1980s, those who repressed the people hid their faces and their names. Today, those who repress the people have names, faces and uniforms: 'blue-green – olive and white.'"

The 12 points of agreement reached on October 30 include the establishment of a national unity and reconciliation government with representatives from various political parties and social organizations filling the president's cabinet positions. Both sides agreed to not call for a constituent assembly for a new Constitution until after the new president assumes power in January of next year. According to Laura Carlsen of the Americas Policy Program, "This point of the accords caused Juan Barahona, a leader of the National Front Against the Coup, to resign from the Zelaya negotiating team because it has become central to the movement not only to restore, but to expand Honduran democracy."

The accord calls for elections to be held on November 29 with the transfer of power to the elected president on January 27, 2010. It also calls for a four-member Verification Commission composed

of two members of the Organization of American States (OAS) and two others to be appointed by coup regime president Roberto Micheletti and exiled president Manuel Zelaya. Additionally, "for the purpose of clarifying the events occurring before and after June 28, 2009," the accord establishes a truth commission "to identify acts that led to the current situation and provide the people of Honduras with elements to avoid repetition of these events in the future." The commission should be established in the first half of 2010 by the next government.

The new agreement does not necessarily end the political standoff or the coup regime. Andres Thomas Conteris, a reporter who has stayed with Zelaya in the Brazilian embassy for weeks, pointed out a number of possible barriers. First, the most difficult point of negotiations -- the reinstatement of Zelaya to the presidency -- remains unresolved. For weeks, negotiators reported general agreement on all points of the accord except the issue of the restitution of Zelaya. Two weeks prior to signing this pact, Micheletti agreed to Zelaya's restitution, only to come back the next day demanding that the Supreme Court ratify that decision. Knowing it was unlikely that the Supreme Court would approve -- having ordered his June arrest -- Zelaya countered, proposing that the Honduran Congress decide. Both sides agreed to ask the Supreme Court for their non-binding recommendation and for Congress to make the final decision. As no deadline was set for either body to act, and the proposed elections are less than a month away, the opposition could try to stall the process, although international pressure could persuade Congress to decide quickly to reinstate.

Other difficult issues include the creation of a cabinet with members of opposition parties, and the Verification Commission. Both sides have agreed that no one would receive amnesty, but due to the warrant against Zelaya, he could be arrested as soon as he leaves the Brazilian embassy. If this were to happen, the coup would deepen and repression increase.

Tom Loudon of the Quixote Center said even if all goes quickly and elections take place on November 29, "it is impossible for there to be transparent and fair elections this month." Both opposition candidates who represent the large resistance coalition opposed to the coup "have been subject to extensive

persecution. The independent candidate Carlos H. Reyes has spent part of the last four months in hiding, due to death threats. He was also viciously attacked at a protest three months ago, and has spent his time since the attack in the hospital, and subsequently undergoing therapy for his mutilated wrist.” As Loudon points out, “The obvious danger is that an election under these circumstances could bring a very similar power structure as that present under the putsch government, the repressive apparatus firmly entrenched and a sheen of legitimacy which would have never been possible for Micheletti.”

Whatever happens, this episode in Honduran

history has awakened a vigilant and active people’s movement that will play a significant role in determining the country’s future for years or decades to come. While the elites of the country may think that this agreement may quell demands for a new Constitution, the people’s movement remains clear. In their statement on the agreement, they announced, “We reiterate that a National Constituent Assembly is an unrenounceable aspiration of the Honduran people and a non-negotiable right for which we will continue struggling in the streets, until we achieve the re-founding of our society to convert it into one that is just, egalitarian and truly democratic.”

---

## Mexico: Drug wars fuel violence

*The following article is written by Cecilia Sinohui, an intern with the MOGC.*

For over two decades, U.S. and Mexican administrations have been fighting a “war on drugs,” characterized by a brutality that has resulted in 7,000 deaths during this past year alone.

While most of the participants in the violence are men, primarily women are used as “mulas” (mules, or couriers) to transport the drugs from one country to the other. But if a woman fails to deliver the drugs for any reason either she is murdered or her family is attacked. If she is caught by legal authorities in the U.S., she receives a harsh sentence and is separated from her family for long periods of time.

Femicide also continues in Mexico at a horrifying rate. The situation has improved slightly but disappearances and murders of women continue at an alarming rate. Human rights activists are deeply concerned that Chihuahua’s Attorney General Arturo Chávez, who led the investigations of that state’s femicide crimes at their height (in the 1990s) has recently been named by President Felipe Calderon and confirmed by the Senate as Attorney General of Mexico. According to the *Chicago Tribune* (Sept. 25), “More than 350 women were slain in the city during a 15-year period starting in 1993. Critics said Chavez failed to properly investigate, and they accused Chihuahua authorities of torturing suspects and falsifying evidence.”

Of increasing concern are the recent attacks

at drug rehabilitation centers. Many program participants are former cartel members, committed to turning their lives around. They are attacked by current gang members who worry that once clean from drugs, the former members will turn them in. This has resulted in mass attacks of drug rehab centers where unarmed men and women, patients and nurses are the victims of shootings.

U.S. government officials can take important measures to decrease the violence and actually address the drug issue. The Obama administration made a significant decision to withhold the Merida Initiative funds, a \$1.4 billion deal between the U.S., Mexico and Central America until Mexico addresses its high rate of human rights violations.

The U.S. should also consider how the funds marked for Mexico are used. For instance, the infamous Zeta cartel is known for recruiting young men who were former or current members of the military. This means some members of the Mexican military become members of cartels. Only \$73.5 million of the Merida Initiative funding is required to be used for judicial reform, institution-building, human rights and rule-of-law issues. More money should be directed toward these areas.

But the U.S. also must address its own demand for drugs. Mexico may be the largest trafficker of drugs but the U.S. is the largest consumer. Taking measures to decrease the demand for drugs in the U.S., through educational programs and rehabilitation centers, would help to decrease the violence on the border.

## Zimbabwe: Debt tribunal verdict

*On October 16, Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai “disengaged” from his eight month old unity accord with President Robert Mugabe just before his top aide, Roy Bennett, was to go on trial for terrorism. According to analysts, the move allowed Tsvangirai to say that he had stood up to Mugabe and was not to be seen as a puppet of the government, but both sides have a lot to lose if the partnership ends, especially considering the fact that it has contributed to a measure of economic stabilization after years of crisis. Yet deep challenges remain.*

On October 2, the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) sponsored the Peoples’ Economic Justice Tribunal in Harare. In arriving at the verdict, the tribunal took into account the fact that economic, social and cultural rights are as important in society as civil and political rights and adhered to the principle of the universality of human rights. The tribunal also acknowledged that rights are interdependent, interrelated and indivisible and that the principal responsibility to ensure the general enjoyment of rights in Zimbabwe is the responsibility of the government and those international institutions that enter into multi-lateral and bi-lateral agreements with the government of Zimbabwe on economic development issues.

Given the scope of the evidence, documentation and testimony provided during the tribunal, the verdict recognized that, besides being unpayable, Zimbabwe’s debt is also illegitimate and immoral. Both the external and domestic debt were recognized as a permanent violation of economic, social and cultural human rights as established by the Constitution of Zimbabwe, the UN Charter and other international conventions that the Zimbabwean government has signed and ratified.

Specifically, the judges ruled that

- Zimbabwe’s external debt is illegitimate and should be immediately repudiated and cancelled.
- The people of Zimbabwe should be provided with reasonable compensation as appropriate from the defendants.
- The government of Zimbabwe must do all within its powers, in its international relations,

to ensure that banks, financial institutions and other economic agents are curtailed so that the recurrence of the growth of illegitimate debt is foreclosed.

In particular, they said:

- Finance should be understood to be a public good, i.e. a means to promote development and not to make profit
- The government of Zimbabwe must replace neo-liberal economic policies with more pro-people and pro-poor policies
- In particular, the government of Zimbabwe is strongly advised not to resort to the Bretton Woods Institutions to resolve the current economic social crisis bedeviling the country.

In their October 1, pastoral letter, “National Healing and Reconciliation,” the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference wrote: “Poverty of the marginalized majority, corruption, mismanagement of resources, sanctions, lack of transparency and accountability are continuing sources of conflict. In fighting for our undermined dignity and in defending our economic advantages, we have lost sight of the humanity of others....

“As Zimbabweans, we have made very serious social, political and economic mistakes over the years. It is essential to identify the areas in which we have made these mistakes in order to respond to them. The main cause of conflicts in Zimbabwe is the consistent violation of human dignity and therefore human rights. We have prevented each other from attaining human fulfillment by depriving each other of life, education, shelter, health, information, freedom of speech and association, freedom of conscience, justice and peace...

“Reconciliation is a very demanding responsibility which calls for great commitment, dedication and sacrifice. We must support processes which are already happening in various communities. In May 2009 the Churches and Civil Society came up with a framework for national healing and reconciliation, which proposes a comprehensive process for intervention by Government, the Church, Civil Society and all levels of our society. The framework could serve as a starting point for healing our nation.”

Find the entire pastoral letter in the Africa section of the MOGC website.

## Sudan: A critical period

*On October 19 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, UN Ambassador Susan Rice, and Maj. General Scott Gration unveiled the long-awaited results of its review of U.S. policy in Sudan. The new U.S. policy calls for a mixture of “incentives and pressures,” enabling the U.S. to take a more conciliatory stance toward Khartoum if verifiable progress is made toward tackling its various challenges.*

Increasing concerns about the coming period of time in Sudan are visible in all directions. In a joint statement issued on October 12, the Sudanese churches wrote, “If the CPA is renegotiated or is allowed to fall apart, war or oppressive unity will be the outcome, with serious effects for the whole region, as demonstrated in IKV Pax Christi’s Comprehensive Peace Agreement [CPA] alert of September 2009....The CPA guarantor governments have a duty to their promises and the people of Sudan. As the voice of the large majority of Southern Sudanese people on the ground, the Church proclaims ‘Let my people choose,’ and stands by the rights of all Sudanese people to their fundamental human rights and their right under the internationally-guaranteed CPA to determine their own future.”

On September 20, Duk Padiet village in Twich, Sudan was attacked and at least 167 people, including women, children and elderly people, were killed. Fifty-four civilians died, along with 28 policemen, prison officials and wildlife conservation staff. A military counter-offensive killed 85 attackers and another 50 people were taken to Juba for treatment.

The escalation of violence is such that the rate of violent deaths in the South is now greater than in Darfur. According to the Integrated Regional Information Network, more than 2,000 people have died and 250,000 have been displaced by inter-ethnic violence across the region. Unlike traditional violence between different ethnic groups, these attacks were not about cattle rustling; they raised deep concerns about greater violence in the region, which is awash with weapons, prior to the general elections in 2010 and referendum in 2011.

A government of South Sudan (GOSS) program begun in September to seize illegal weapons collected – in Juba alone – over 1,000 weapons, including AK-47 assault rifles, several heavy machine guns, and rocket-propelled grenades with launchers.

Many in the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) claim the violence is backed by former civil war enemies in the north. John Ashworth, staff in Sudan for IKV Pax Christi said, “Senior figures in the SPLM have blamed the north for supplying arms, and there are plenty of grassroots reports of military aircraft being used, and military uniforms and brand new weapons being seen.” But he added, “Not all the culprits can be traced to Khartoum, and some may have links to SPLM.” Officials in Khartoum have repeatedly denied such claims.

Disarmament efforts like the present GOSS campaign are extremely difficult, especially in areas where there is limited security provided by the state. Previous disarmament campaigns have been criticized for exacerbating violence through selective targeting of communities based on ethnic and political lines, leaving some communities at risk of attack from their still armed neighbors.

The Joint Statement of Sudanese Churches asserts that if the CPA had been “fully and honestly implemented from the outset, a peaceful, attractive unity would have had a chance in Sudan. However, since the signing of the CPA, every protocol has either not been fully implemented or is under discussion for less-than-full implementation, and therefore unity is no longer attractive, especially to Sudanese Christians and those in the marginalised areas...

“[Among other concerns,] reconciliation has not been fully pursued; the National Interim Constitution 2005 declared in Article 5 that all Northern Sudanese legislation is still based on Islamic Sharia Law. Article 139 declared that such legislation cannot be altered without the signature of the President of the Republic. Citizens in the North therefore lack freedoms and are penalised by un-repealed Northern laws which are contrary to the spirit of the CPA...”

In addition, the statement noted that the national census was deeply flawed, the general elections have been postponed twice, bills have not yet been passed governing the referendum process or popular consultations in Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Abyei, and there remains a lack of transparency around the national oil revenue figures.

The threats to peace in Sudan are very real. For more information see the recent IKV Pax Christi report on the CPA at [www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/UK/](http://www.ikvpaxchristi.nl/UK/).

## Kenya: Drought, famine worsen

*Drought and famine affecting millions of people in Kenya continue to worsen and are taking the lives of both people and livestock. But drought is only one of the challenges facing the people of Kenya and East Africa. The bishops of East Africa who are members of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) listed the following in their intervention at the recently concluded Africa Synod:*

### **Impact of global economic crisis:**

The serious recession in the developed world has meant less trading opportunities, fewer new investments, lowered aid levels (for both government and church), increased impoverishment and doubt about reaching the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

**Governance dynamics:** The hope that was raised by the birth of multi-party democracies in 1990s has been tempered by poor leadership, chaotic electoral politics and weak shared power arrangements. Corruption at every level undercuts service for the people.

**Environmental crisis:** Our countries are experiencing the ecological disasters of global warming (with consequent floods and draughts) widespread deforestation, extractive industry pollution, with consequences for food security and displacement of people.

**Intensive violent conflicts:** Armed conflicts continue to threaten people in Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda, and of late we have experienced post election violence in Kenya and in our neighboring countries: xenophobic attacks in South Africa and instability in Zimbabwe.

**Assertive violent presence:** Global Islam's increased position of power influences aggressive demands in many of our countries for more recognition, adoption of Kadhi Courts, introduction of Sharia legislation.

**HIV and AIDS:** The pandemic continues to ravage our populations while in many instances it has slipped from a prominent place of concern and response on the agenda of governments, civil society and even the churches.

They particularly noted poverty eradication and environmental concerns:

"We cannot help but be moved and shamed by the impoverishment of the majority of the people in all our AMECEA countries. The suffering and marginalization of these children of God is simple unacceptable. Advocacy efforts for better government policies and promotion of improved church social services must be a priority of pastoral response. The 'preferential option for the poor' should provide a fundamental question to evaluate government, business, church and personal choices: 'What does this decision mean for the poor?' ...

"We know that the challenges of climate change and global warming are particularly affecting our local people. Serious droughts are causing food security problems and promoting human migrations that are not always peaceful. In several of our countries, extractive industries are creating pollution troubles that foreign investors are not always responsive to. Forests are cut, but new trees are not planted. Pope Benedict XVI has cautioned us that if we want peace among ourselves, we must make peace with creation. Ecological reconciliation is very important for social reconciliation."

According to the Catholic Information Service for Africa (CISA), the drought has led to inter-ethnic violence over scarce water and pasture among some pastoralist groups. In mid-September, at least 30 people were massacred in a conflict between the Pokot and Samburu communities in the northern Diocese of Maralal. Several people, including children, were seriously wounded.

The Kenyan government is buying livestock from herders but some of the animals are too weak to make the trek to the Kenya Meat Commission slaughterhouses near Nairobi.

Yarumal missionary Fr. Vitner Vidal Marting, who works in Maralal, appealed for food aid from the government and humanitarian organizations to feed famine-stricken people in the arid area, where humans and animals compete for the same water points. Fr. Marting said the desperate situation has increased insecurity due to the shortages; the movement of people in search of food, water and pasture for their animals is also causing conflict among the Samburu, Pokot and Turkana communities.



## Middle East: Two states, no state

*The following article was written by Maryknoll Fr. Jack Sullivan, who lived and worked in the Middle East for several years.*

As prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin promoted the Oslo Peace Process between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. A few days before his tragic assassination (November 4, 1995), he spoke of the need for a separation of the Israeli and Palestinian people based on mutual respect rather than mutual hatred. This separation is at the core of the two-state solution to the 60 year-old conflict between Israelis and Palestinians living between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.

However, the current reality presents only one state: Israel militarily and economically controls the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. More than a half million Israelis are now living in settlements on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. The present Israeli government continues to support settlement expansion, Israeli-only access roads, the separation barrier, territorial absorption, checkpoints, and roadblocks. The Palestinian population within the state of Israel continues to increase. One out of every five Israeli citizens is a Palestinian. When the Palestinian population of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza is added to this number, it is becoming more evident that the number of Palestinians in the area under control of Israel will soon equal and surpass that of the Jewish population.

The Israel of today is becoming a multinational state. For an increasing number of Jews this one-state solution is not a solution but dissolution of the Zionist dream for a Jewish homeland and democratic state. The status quo is unsustainable.

In October, 1,500 U.S. and Israeli Jews, along with a number of Christians and Muslims, gathered in Washington, D.C. at the first J Street National Conference. J Street is the political arm of a pro-peace, pro-Israel advocacy movement. In its first 18 months it has attracted over 100,000 supporters. According to its conference program, it promotes "assertive American leadership to end the Israeli-Arab conflicts through a comprehensive, regional peace agreement based on the two-state solution, regional recognition of Israel, and land-for-peace arrangements to settle all outstanding conflicts."

The establishment of a separate, independent, secure, contiguous and prosperous state of Palestine alongside the state of Israel is supported, according to recent polls, by a majority of Israelis and Palestinians, by U.S. Jews, by most Arab and Muslim nations, Europe and the United Nations. The president of the United States is directly promoting this two-state solution. As increasing pressure is put on the present Israeli government to stop the blockade of Gaza, to end the occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, to freeze further construction and begin dismantling of the settlements, realistic hope for a long awaited end to this conflict grows.

Resolution of this conflict through a two-state solution is being seen as in the national interest of Israel and the United States, Israel's primary economic and military partner. This issue is the lens through which the U.S. is seen by most of the Arab and Muslim nations. It is the breeding ground of humiliation, hopelessness and rage leading to terrorism.

A possible two-state solution must include many factors beginning with the renunciation of violence by the Israeli Defense Forces, settlers and Palestinian militants. Israel would withdraw to its internationally recognized 1967 borders with mutually negotiated adjustments. Jerusalem would be shared and contain the capitals of both states. Most settlements would be dismantled with some mutual agreement on the status of the larger settlements near Jerusalem with realistic "land swaps." Palestinian control of all roads, land, and water resources on the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem would be assured; and some form of "right of return" or compensation for Palestinian refugees of the 1948 and 1967 wars would be implemented.

In the absence of a two-state solution, parallels are being drawn between the Israel of today and the South Africa of yesterday, with its apartheid, ethnic cleansing and land confiscation. Increasing calls for the triple response of boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) are being made. The people and leaders of Israel are now choosing their future; one multinational state with years of continued violence, or two states of Israel and Palestine separated with mutual respect, seeking together a common peaceful future.

Check the MOGC website for several books and website resources on this topic.

## Philippines: Update on kidnapped priest

*On October 11, Fr. Michael (Mick) Sinnott, a 79-year old Irish Columban missionary priest, was kidnapped in Pagadian, Philippines. He is a friend and colleague of several Maryknollers. Following is an update posted on the Columbans' Australia/New Zealand website on Oct. 31. For more information, see the Columbans' website: [www.columban.org](http://www.columban.org).*

"They are asking US\$2 million as ransom money," 79-year-old Father Mick Sinnott said in a weak voice on [an Oct. 31] video [obtained by the government negotiators who are responsible for handling the case.] ... [Sinnott], who suffers from a heart condition added, "We are living in the open, in difficult circumstances. I am still in good health, even if I do not have the full medicines."

... [He] named his captor as a commander [called] Abu Jayad, and appealed to Philippines president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Irish government and his compatriot members of the Columban Mission Society "who may have pity... to help so that I can get out of here as soon as possible."

... Fr. Patrick O'Donoghue, [Columban regional superior] said that he is satisfied that the man on the blurry video with poor quality soundtrack is indeed Fr. Sinnott, but believes the words he spoke were not of his own composition. "He was alive and looked relatively well," he added. He said that although he

knows the video is possibly more than one week old, "There was a sense of relief to see him at all. But I also experienced a tremendous sadness at seeing him in this horrendous situation." ...

On the thorny question of ransom, Fr. O'Donoghue said, "We do not pay ransom. I do not believe it right that ransom should be paid. It adds to everybody's vulnerability." He explained that is not only a policy of the Columban society, but all missionary societies working in the area. ...

[According to Fr. O'Donoghue, not paying ransom] has virtually been an accepted policy since [the 1970s]. He said that otherwise, missionaries and priests would simply become market commodities with a price on their heads.

The information officer for the provincial government, Allan Molde, said that the government crisis panel agrees with Fr. O'Donoghue and does not believe that any ransom should be paid. Instead, he said that the security forces would be asked to put more pressure on the kidnappers to free Fr. Sinnott.

A representative of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front ... responsible for a special taskforce set up by his organisation to assist with the rescue of Fr. Sinnott, said that he does not know the of the name of the captor given in the video, but is aware of the general location in the lawless region where he is being held and likely identity of the bandits.

## Philippines: Extrajudicial killings rise

*The following is a reprint of an analysis written by Benjie Oliveros and published on Bulatlat.com.*

... Father [Cecilio] Lucero was ambushed by heavily armed men suspected to be soldiers last September 6 at 8 a.m. [and] died from multiple gunshot and shrapnel wounds. One of his companions, Isidro Miras, also sustained multiple gunshot wounds. Ironically, his police escort ... escaped unscathed.

Surprisingly, the news of Father Luceros killing did not get much attention from the media and the general public. Probably because Northern Samar is so far from Metro Manila, the news of his killing did not land in the headlines. The fact-finding mission that investigated Father Luceros killing, which was

held October 7-10, could have brought more information to the general public. ...

[Unfortunately, the news was not widespread,] as Father Lucero's killing signifies a very alarming development. First, it shows that extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances still persist and impunity still prevails.

[On] October 8, a news item appeared stating that the European Union [and the Philippines] signed a financing agreement whereby the EU committed to provide 3.9 million euros or about \$5.8 million to help the government stop extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. The funding is aimed at strengthening the criminal justice system and supporting the Commission on Human

Rights in prosecuting the perpetrators, establishing a national monitoring system, and providing human rights awareness training to the police and military. Why the EU channeled the funds to the Arroyo government when it is primarily responsible for the impunity is anybody's guess. Barely a week after the signing, the EU announced that it is working out a bilateral agreement with the Arroyo government.

Second, not only do the killings and disappearances persist, those responsible are becoming bolder and more desperate. ... Lucero is the first Catholic priest ... victim of extrajudicial killings since the ouster of the Marcos dictatorship. The perpetrators had the temerity to risk the political implications of killing a Catholic priest who was even involved in human rights advocacy. If they could kill a priest, pastors, doctors ..., lawyers, barangay officials, they could kill just about anybody.

During the first three months of the year, extrajudicial killings were being committed at a rate of one victim per week.

If extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances continue to receive little attention from the me-

dia and the general public, it would surely escalate once more. The number of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances declined in 2007 because of pressures from the international community and the general public. But the fact that no perpetrator has been brought before the bar of justice shows that the Arroyo government has no intention of putting a stop to the killings and abductions; it is merely lying low while the pressure is strong.

Impunity prevails not merely because of the ineptitude of the police ... . It prevails because the Arroyo government has no intention of prosecuting and is obviously protecting the perpetrators. Worse, impunity prevails because extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances are part of official policy: it is integral to and a main feature of Oplan Bantay Laya, the Arroyo government's counter-insurgency program. The Arroyo government has seven months before it would relinquish power, if it would do so. A lot could still happen in seven months if the Filipino people, as well as the international community, would not remain vigilant.

---

## Philippines: Bishop challenges mining company

*Sagittarius Mines, Inc (SMI) runs the Tampakan Project, one of the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposits in the Southeast Asia-Western Pacific region. Operation of the mines has been opposed by the local Catholic church for several years, especially due to the significant damage to the environment caused by the mining process. The following article is reprinted from Catholic News Asia, www.cathnewsasia.com.*

[During an October meeting] with Sagittarius Mines, Bishop Dinualdo D. Gutierrez [of the Marbel diocese] warned that open pit mining is destructive to the environment ... .

"Trees will be cut, thus the lowlands will be flooded. We need to preserve the environment for the future generation," Bishop Gutierrez warned in a two-hour meeting with Sagittarius company officials over its Tampakan project, Minda News reports.

The meeting was the first between the two parties since January 17, 2003 when SMI revived the project previously owned by Western Mining Corp.

"We're waiting for this for so long. Hopefully,

this will be the start of a series of dialogues (with the diocese). All along we wanted to establish communication with all our stakeholders," [John B. Arnaldo, SMI's corporate communications manager,] said.

[Elvie Grace A. Ganchero, manager of SMI's corporate community and sustainability department,] conceded that the track record of the mining sector in the country is not good but that "we as a company are trying to demonstrate a practice that is different from the traditional practice."

She said a company-commissioned perception survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations showed that the Tampakan project had a "high acceptability" among the people in the area.

But Gutierrez belied this, saying the people's acceptability was largely due to monetary considerations offered by the company.

Ganchero said [SMI] was able to get the support of people in the mining area due to the awareness and education campaign they have been doing.

"Expect more opposition in the days ahead (from the diocese)," the bishop told the mining executives.

## Corporations in the U.S., part six

*The previous five articles of this series have examined how, over the course of 100 years or so, corporations in the United States radically increased their influence on government and general society. What are the solutions then? How can we rein in corporate power and influence?*

In order to achieve change, we must be more strategic. In her book *The Divine Right of Capital*, Marjorie Kelly said those interested in addressing corporate influence should learn from the women's movement: "It would not have been enough to see poor funding for girls' athletics as one problem, unequal wages for women as a separate problem, and harassment in the office as still a different problem. These battles became one when their common source in sex discrimination was recognized. Yet today we chase after corporate pollution as one problem, low wages as another problem, and corporate welfare as still a third problem." We need to strategically attack the common cause of these problems: corporate power. Below are some suggestions of reforms that would more fundamentally address corporate power and influence.

### **Electoral and lobby reform**

We first need to declare a separation of corporation and state and work for reforms that remove money and corporate influence from elections and law making. Without diminishing corporate influence on elected officials, it will be next to impossible to pass more substantial reforms. Probably the most effective way to do this is through publicly funded elections. By not depending on large donations in order to be elected, politicians would be freer to make tough decisions. Even business leaders recently placed ads in favor of publicly funded elections. "We are on the receiving end of senators' and representatives' endless fundraising calls. And trust us: we hate getting those calls every bit as much as they hate making them," read part of their ad.

Unfortunately, Congressional initiatives in the area of campaign financing are threatened to be overruled by the Supreme Court. In *Citizens United v. the Federal Election Commission*, the Roberts court could soon allow corporations to make political donations from their general funds even in the

final days of a campaign. Currently, political donations made by a corporation have to be raised for that specific purpose from individual donations, and stronger restrictions are held in the final days of a campaign. The Court could overturn these and other precedents of controlling corporate political spending which date back to the early 1900s.

### **Transparency**

In his book *Tyranny of the Bottom Line*, Ralph Estes argues that it is the defined goal of the corporation - profit for its shareholders - that leads so many ethical managers to do unethical things. He shows how effective something as simple as more information about a corporation can be in changing its behavior. Estes calls for a corporate report to be completed by all corporations and made available to the public at no charge. Corporations already fill out a host of reports for different agencies, but by simply combining all the information into one document, it will cut costs for corporations and, by making it easily accessible to the public, will greatly increase the amount of information to the public.

Armed with the new information, workers, consumers and communities would be much better able to regulate corporations through their choices. In the same way that a corporation wants to know the background of its workers, those workers should be able to know a corporation's safety and employment history. Customers should also know which products are produced with poisonous chemicals or not. After Congress passed the 1986 Superfund law that required corporations to publicly disclose their use of over 300 chemicals, major producers reduced their emissions by 35 percent out of fear of public criticism. If information on issues important to consumers, workers and the communities where corporations function were made available, corporate behavior would change dramatically.

### **Media**

Large media conglomerates should be broken up to guarantee a plentitude of voices. Technically, their licenses require media corporations to serve the public good, but these provisions are not enforced. They should give a much larger percentage of their programming to public service announcements. To

make elections significantly cheaper, all media outlets could be required to provide free air time to candidates for office, which is the case in many countries. By doing a survey of how other countries use their media during elections, we could adopt those ideas that best fit.

### **Corporate crime**

More money and lives are lost due to corporate crime than from street crime, yet much of it goes unpunished. Daily we see cases of corporations charged with breaking the law but either they settle with their accusers for undeclared amounts of money in exchange for silence regarding the case, or they are found guilty and given nominal fines that are considered the cost of business for most corporations. Clearly, the government needs to take a stronger line with corporate crime. In order to make an impact, fines should be based on a percentage of a corporation's gross income instead of a nominal monetary amount.

An International Corporate Crime Tribunal has been proposed by social movements to address crimes committed by corporations throughout the world. Repeat offending corporations should have increasingly significant penalties levied against them, up to and including the death penalty for a corporation: the revocation of its charter.

### **Corporation charters**

As Estes wrote, "When our cars or computers don't work right, we go back and read the instructions. Similarly, we need to return to the original concept of corporations: organizations that were granted charters to serve the public interest." By chartering corporations at the federal level we could avoid the race to the bottom between states as they compete to give better conditions to corporations. These federal charters could redefine the purpose of the corporation to serve social and ecological goals in addition to providing profits to its shareholders. The charters could include demands such as requiring a percentage of recycling, or use of clean energy, etc. In her article "Corporations for the seventh generation: Changing the ground rules," Jane Anne Morris lists a number of measures that could be included in corporate charters.

Requiring that corporations renew these char-

ters every 10 to 20 years would significantly improve our ability to keep check on corporate behavior. At these 10-year reviews, corporations that failed to fulfill their social role and/or were guilty of too many crimes could be disbanded as they routinely were in the first decades of our country.

### **Corporate personhood**

Probably the most effective way to control corporate power is by reversing the legal precedent that corporations have equal rights under the Constitution. Corporations are never even mentioned in the document. Only people have rights, inalienable rights. "We the people" grant or revoke corporate privileges through our government. A long term campaign would be to pass an amendment specifying that corporations do not have the same rights as humans. To help progress toward that, local struggles incorporate the issue of corporate personhood into their demands.

### **How to get involved**

A number of ways to address corporate power and influence are available, many not mentioned here. The key factor is an informed citizenry. We first need to overcome our colonized minds and see the real potential for reining in corporate power. Perhaps the best way to start is to organize a group of people interested in these issues to study the history of the corporation. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has an excellent 10-session study packet that such groups can read and discuss together.

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) helps local communities struggling against corporations for clean air or water, or against big box stores, etc., to use their local efforts to challenge the concept of corporate personhood. Many cities have passed ordinances banning corporate activity and negating the concept of corporate personhood. More ordinances and legal cases challenging this concept will make their way to appellate courts and eventually to the Supreme Court.

A very promising proposal is the Strategic Corporate Initiative that explains how we could move "toward a global citizens' movement to bring corporations back under control." The Initiative provides an excellent framework from which to work in a variety of areas, including some of the proposals discussed above.



## Ecological economics, part six

*The previous five articles of this series have examined the various aspects and challenges of our current economic system. How do we move forward to a steady state economy, which recognizes the limits of economic growth? It will require significant changes in a number of areas, from lifestyles and mindsets to localizing economies and more. Below are a few public policy reforms that would assist in making this great paradigm shift.*

### **New well-being measurements**

Gross domestic product (GDP) growth must not be used as the principle economic goal for the reasons explained in the first part of this series. Workable alternatives have been created, most recently the green net national product (GNNP). As described by Joseph Stiglitz, co-creator of the GNNP, "The 'green' means that GDP must be reduced to take into account the depletion of natural resources and the degradation of the environment - just as a company must depreciate both its tangible and intangible assets. 'Net' national product (NNP) means that there has to be an adjustment for the depreciation of the country's physical assets. A country that gives away its natural resources will see gross domestic product rise, but gross national product - which focuses on income earned by those inside a country as opposed to what is produced inside a country - may not rise much, since the value of what is produced accrues to foreigners." Other alternatives include the Happy Planet Index and the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare. Shifting governmental priorities away from increasing GDP to higher scores on these other indexes would result in dramatically more ecological and equitable public policies.

### **New form of money creation**

Currently, new money is created through the fractional reserve banking system, a seemingly simple yet mystifying mechanism. For every \$1,000 deposited, the bank is only required to keep a fraction, currently about one-tenth, or \$100, on reserve. The other \$900 can be used by the bank to be loaned out, with the expectation of interest. This is the method by which most "new" money is created.

Say the \$900 loan is used to buy a sofa. The seller of the sofa can then deposit the \$900. That

bank can then lend out \$810 that money, which will eventually be deposited in another bank which then has \$729 available for loans, and on and on. Eventually, from an initial \$1,000 loan, banks can have \$9,000 of "new money" to loan. The Federal Reserve has produced a comic book that describes this process more fully. Chapters 7 through 9 of Chris Martenson's "Crash Course" also explain this well.

The important point is that all dollars are loaned into existence, which means that more money must be created to pay the interest on old money, which will again demand even more money. So our money supply also grows at an exponential rate. It took the U.S. until 1973 to create its first trillion dollars in stock. That means the total value of every road, building, car, etc. made in the U.S. until 1973 cost \$1 trillion. The last \$1 trillion of goods created in the U.S. took only 4.5 months. As Martenson asks, when will this end? When will we create \$1 trillion of goods in 4.5 days? Hours? Clearly this is not a sustainable system.

The fractional reserve system is one of the fundamental drivers of our growth economy, and it must change in order to create a steady state. The alternative proposed by Herman Daly and others is to raise the reserve requirement to 100 percent. Banks would only be able to loan as much money as they had on hand. They would make profits from the difference in interest rates between their deposits and loans. New money would be created by the government that would spend new money into existence on public works projects and other societal needs. As Daly explains, "One hundred percent reserves would put our money supply back under the control of the government rather than the private banking sector. Money would be a true public utility, rather than the by-product of commercial lending and borrowing in pursuit of growth."

### **Financial regulations**

The financial part of the economy should be much smaller than it is now. The 100 percent reserve rate would shrink commercial banks in size, but to diminish the size investment banks, hedge funds and other financial institutions, governments can use financial transaction taxes to reduce the amount of unnecessary trading that destabilizes the market

while providing much needed public funding.

Commodity future markets, especially for food and energy commodities like wheat, corn and oil, must be treated differently than regular financial instruments. The deregulation of those markets in the Commodity Futures Modernization Act of 2000 allowed massive influxes of capital from outside speculators. The result was the oil and food bubbles of 2008. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) should place limits on the amount of money from speculators not directly involved in producing and buying commodities. If Congress decides to develop a carbon market, it should also have the same strict standards that are needed for food and energy commodities.

### **Tax reform**

Governments need to create fairer tax systems through international ecological tax reform. It is critically important to put a price on the scarce and currently under-valued contribution of nature. A simple guideline would be to tax what is bad – pollution, resource depletion and environmental degradation – rather than “goods” (value added by capital and labor). Using ecological taxes would help to establish some of the real costs of mineral and resource extraction not included in the current system which will indirectly limit pollution and force greater efficiency in other stages of production.

Ecological taxes would create new incentives toward creating lower carbon technologies generating productive investments in the real economy. Included in this ecological tax reform would be a tax on carbon emissions. Revenues from such a tax could go towards helping small island states and less industrialized countries of the southern hemisphere to adapt to the damaging impact of climate change.

Funding could also be directed towards low-income consumers to compensate for higher energy prices, and to the development of appropriate, carbon-neutral technologies in non-industrialized, resource-strapped countries for further qualitative development and poverty reduction.

### **Labor/Income reform**

Despite new jobs in the “green” economy, the cumulative effects of peak oil, climate change and loss of biodiversity will bring increases in unemployment. Two policies that address that reality are a shorter work week and a universal income. A shorter work week would generate more employment while allowing people more leisure time.

With the rise in unemployment, more people struggle to make ends meet. A universal income, or basic income grant, provides all citizens a basic level of income, as of right, with no means test, and regardless of age, gender, marital or work status. Proposed by John Locke in the 17th century, the idea is growing increasingly popular around the world, with Brazil being the most recent country to adopt a guaranteed basic income in 2004.

### **Community-based economy**

As a response to dwindling resources, we must move away from a global economy to multitudes of sustainable local economies. A host of new business initiatives will help consolidate these local economies, such as community development corporations, employee-owned firms, community development financial instruments, land trusts, co-ops, municipal enterprises, state asset building initiatives and others. Governments at all levels should shift financial and other incentives away from transnational corporations and into local efforts like these.

---

## **U.S. climate legislation 2009**

*In June the House passed HR 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) bill and on September 30 Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA), chairs of the Foreign Relations Committee, and Environment and Public Works Committee respectively, unveiled a draft climate change bill called the Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act scheduled for markup in mid-*

*November. The following analysis points to three critical areas where these bills can be improved for the U.S. to respond equitably and adequately to the threat of global climate change.*

### **Mitigation**

Globally, the U.S. has historically been the country with the highest level of greenhouse gas

emissions. At this point the U.S. bears the responsibility to put in place an aggressive program to both power down and to cut these emissions by shifting to cleaner energy. While members of Congress are interested in creating new green jobs, their targets for emissions reduction are far too low.



The House's ACES bill would reduce carbon emissions from major U.S. sources by 17 percent by 2020 and over 80 percent by 2050 compared to 2005 levels. The House expects that complementary measures in the legislation, such as investments in preventing tropical deforestation, will achieve significant additional reductions in carbon emissions (up to 23 percent by 2020). The Senate proposal from Sens. Kerry and Boxer aims to reduce carbon emissions by 20 percent by 2020 using the same 2005 baseline; it sets a mid-term target of 53 percent reductions by 2030 and a long term target of 83 percent by 2050.

Analysis from the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), based on the best science currently available, supports a 35 percent reduction of carbon emissions based on a 2005 baseline. This panel and the international community are using 1990 as a baseline for all levels of reduction which U.S. legislators refuse to do. By moving the baseline from 1990 to 2005, legislators give the appearance that they are complying with scientific recommendations, but according to the 1990 baseline, the Senate's proposal represents only a seven percent reduction of emissions.

### **Offsets and carbon markets**

While the ACES bill sets targets for carbon emissions reductions it also provides for a maximum of two billion tons of offsets per year for U.S. capped entities. U.S. based industries that reach their "cap," or limit of greenhouse gas emissions, would be allowed to purchase international offsets, up to 1.5 billion annually; and domestic offsets up to one billion tons annually. Additionally, the legislation strips the regulatory authority from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set performance standards for new and existing coal fired plants. The Senate draft proposal is an improvement in that the EPA maintains its authority (though it is hard to know whether it will stay in the bill as it is introduced)

and the Senate version favors domestic offsets over international offsets.

Revenues from the sale of carbon pollution permits will be dedicated to a number of programs aimed mostly at reducing domestic energy costs (26 percent would go to fossil fuel based and energy intensive industries for cleaning up their own pollution, and to encourage them not send jobs overseas). Only seven percent is to be invested overseas, mainly to reduce tropical deforestation, and only one percent is to be used for international adaptation.

In theory, international offsets reduce the cost of achieving global emission reductions based on the thinking that it is cheaper to cut pollution in "developing" countries than it is to do so in "developed" countries. However, offsets delay emission reductions, actually allowing U.S. emissions to increase for an additional nine to 20 years relative to today's standards according to Congressional Budget Office data. And in practice, the international Clean Development Mechanism established by the UN's Kyoto protocol as a global carbon market has failed to meet its dual goals of reducing costs of cutting GHG in industrial countries and promoting sustainable development in less industrialized countries.

### **Adaptation**

Countries suffering the most intense effects of climate change are for the most part the least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions. As one of the historically highest emitters of GHG, the U.S. has the moral responsibility and obligation to fund programs that will help people in vulnerable countries adapt to climate events. Catholic Relief Services and other international development agencies are urging Congress to allocate \$3.5 billion of the funding generated by any climate and/or energy bill passed to international adaptation programs starting in 2012. They hope this is increased rapidly to \$7 billion annually by 2020 so that people living in poverty around the world can be protected from the worst terrible effects of climate change.

As mentioned above, the House bill allocates only one percent of revenues raised from selling permits to pollute toward international adaptation programs. The Senate draft proposal contains placeholder language around authorizing funds for climate adaptation, but no specifics are provided.

**Faith in action:**

Write your senators and ask them to support the following recommendations for climate change legislation: No offsets; deep domestic greenhouse

gas reductions consistent with IPCC recommendations; U.S. mitigation and financial obligations to developing countries not replaced by international offsets.

## Torture: Provide Red Cross access to prisoners

*The following article is written by Elaina Ramsey, an intern with the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.*

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 7: 12)

A disturbing study recently conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life indicates that 62 percent of white evangelicals, 51 percent of white non-Hispanic Catholics, and 46 percent of white mainline Protestants approve the use of torture against suspected terrorists.

These statistics change dramatically though when the question’s phrasing is changed: In a 2008 Faith in Public Life study, only 38 percent of white southern evangelicals believe that the use of torture is never or rarely justified. However, the number jumped to 52 percent when respondents were asked whether the U.S. government should use methods against our enemies that we would not want used on U.S. soldiers. When Christians think beyond utilitarian justifications for torture and consider biblical mandates on treating others as we want to be treated, torture becomes a moral issue that cannot be ignored.

Within two day of taking office, President Obama signed an executive order against torture in order “to promote the safe, lawful, and humane treatment of individuals in U.S. custody and of U.S. personnel who are detained in armed conflicts.” Despite his signature, President Obama’s ban is not permanent until Congress passes it into law. Many people of faith, consequently, are lobbying to codify certain elements of the executive order into law.

For instance, the National Religious Campaign Against Torture recommends that Congress uphold the provision in Obama’s executive order which states that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) be allowed access to all detainees. Un-

der international law, the ICRC is mandated to serve as a neutral observer in conflicts and to protect civilians, prisoners, and others from abuse. The ICRC ultimately ensures that detainees are granted the rights guaranteed to them under international law.

It is not only politically expedient for the United States to respect and uphold the role of the ICRC, but it is a moral imperative as well. The ICRC ensures that captured soldiers and suspects are not subjected to inhumane treatment or simply “disappeared.” This past year President Obama shut down secret prisons in Eastern Europe and elsewhere that were established by the CIA during the Bush administration. Former detainees claimed to have been tortured in these clandestine prisons, but their allegations have yet to be verified. Without the accountability of neutral entities such as the ICRC, interrogators have free reign to potentially “disappear” or torture detainees.

As the U.S. government maintains the rights of foreign prisoners and follows international norms, it can better safeguard the rights of U.S. soldiers. If, as polls suggest, U.S. citizens would not use any interrogation techniques considered to be illegal or immoral if used on our own troops and citizens, the same restraint must be extended to enemies of the United States. Reporting all detainees to the ICRC and granting the ICRC access to them could, therefore, protect all prisoners from being tortured or mistreated.

Providing the ICRC access to detainees would not only restore U.S. credibility on the issue of torture, but is simply the right thing to do. As people of faith who affirm human dignity and the image of God in others, we cannot stand by as prisoners are “disappeared” or abused. Call on Congress to uphold the biblical mandate to treat others as we want to be treated by permanently making the ICRC access provision of President Obama’s executive order into law.

## Global hunger and food security

*At the end of September the Obama administration released its Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative Consultation Document. The document is a work in progress and will continue to be expanded over the coming weeks. More information is available at the State Department website where comments and input from the U.S. and global community are welcomed. The issues and concerns raised in the following article represent aspects that the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns hopes will be added to the final initiative.*

Food security means having a reliable source of food and sufficient resources to purchase it. The administration's proposal follows a familiar pattern of embracing this definition, but then turning immediately to investment in agricultural productivity as its response. Such investments are needed but the sole focus on agricultural productivity and the default response of supplying inputs (such as high tech seeds and fertilizers) overlooks many of the vulnerabilities that small holder farmers in less industrialized countries face. A U.S. food security initiative should begin with a detailed study of these vulnerabilities and an analysis of how past, seemingly unrelated U.S. policies such as trade and finance policies have played a role in intensifying the factors that make rural producers more vulnerable.

First, agriculture in most less industrialized countries plays a major role in those nations' economic development. Any U.S. food security plan must therefore make explicit how it seeks to fit into overall country development plans. Poverty is closely related to hunger in both urban and rural communities. In many parts of the world small producers who rely on farms of less than five acres for their food and income make up the majority of those living in poverty and food insecurity. In most African countries, agriculture provides about 70 percent of all employment and is the backbone of the economy; it is the largest contributor to GDP, the biggest source of foreign exchange – and it still accounts for about 40 percent of the continent's hard currency earnings; and is the main generator of savings and tax revenues.

Agricultural development then can be a driver of national development goals. The development

of national and regional food production systems which support broad participation of small producers offers an opportunity to reduce significantly both hunger and poverty by improving agricultural productivity and rural incomes. This includes improving the quality of livelihoods in impoverished communities as a necessary strategy in combating hunger and food insecurity.

It is time to turn away from failed national and multilateral agricultural policies and international aid efforts favoring large-scale, capital-intensive industrial export production and invest in the world's small holder producers. Investments in small-producers in particular drive broadly-shared economic development and poverty reduction in developing countries, increasing rural incomes and purchasing power. With greater prosperity, the consequent higher effective demand for industrial and other goods would induce dynamics that would be a significant source of economic growth in parts of the world where growth would contribute to a better quality of life.

Small holder farmers in less industrialized countries have traditionally been locked into schemes of trading their raw products (especially grain and fiber) in markets that are already flooded with these same products. Development focused planning for the greatest success in rural areas would include plans for training, capacity building and infrastructure designed to empower small holder farmers and rural entrepreneurs to expand value-added processing and marketing so that their agricultural products bring them greater profits.

When it comes to selling their products, small holder farmers are particularly vulnerable at harvest time. It is well known that at the time of harvest, commodity prices drop. Added to this simple factor of supply and demand, unregulated speculation in food and energy commodity futures markets exacerbates regular supply and demand price fluctuations, prompting highly volatile global food prices. The recent steep rise in prices affected families here in the United States and was particularly devastating for impoverished people in rural and urban areas in developing countries. Reinstating regulation in food and energy commodity futures markets is necessary to protect people from being unable to afford the

food they need for survival.

Sustainability that takes into account Earth's carrying capacity must also be a central concern if the U.S. wants to effectively respond to global hunger and food insecurity for the long term. Fossil fuel based agricultural systems are often assumed as the model that worked for the U.S. and therefore are best shared and multiplied in less industrialized countries. But this approach does not take into account long term sustainability in the face of diminishing fossil fuel resources, and the impact of these technologies on the soil itself. With regard to the sharing of high tech seeds and fertilizers, it is critically important for the long term to protect the natural resource base upon which agriculture depends, including seed varieties and traditional farming techniques.

Now is the time to invest in research to develop "closed-loop" agricultural systems. A U.S. initiative should heed the recommendations highlighted in the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), a process that brought together governments, NGOs, the private sector, producers, consumers, the scientific community, and multiple international agencies involved in agricultural and rural development sectors to share views and gain common understanding and vision for the future. This study took seriously long term sustainability in reducing hunger and poverty, improving rural livelihoods, and facilitating equitable, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development through the generation, access to, and use of agricultural knowledge, science and technology.

Consistent with the IAASTD findings, the U.S. should support sustainable techniques and low-input practices to increase productivity and build ecological resilience. In doing so, it is important to support innovative, culturally appropriate initiatives in the food system locally and globally, including: private enterprise, cooperatives, and public institutions.

Another area where small producers are extremely vulnerable is in land ownership and use. Land reform policies have long been a point of contention in many developing countries. Since small holder producers' access to and control of land is crucial to improving their productivity, it is impor-



tant for the U.S. to respect partner countries' right to enact land reforms for the purpose of improving food security and enhancing small producer livelihoods. This will mean coordinating trade and investment policies to ensure that countries have the freedom and policy space to exercise this right.

The U.S. should focus on creating an enabling policy environment for well-functioning, vibrant local, national and regional markets. For markets to enhance food security and poverty reduction they must be characterized by competition among diverse entrepreneurs. Concentration at any point along the agricultural value chain can lead to abuses of power and trust which deny farmers a fair return for their crops and force consumers to devote more resources for food.

Small holder producers must have choices among the entrepreneurs with whom they do business. Markets function best when regulations are transparent, mechanisms exist to enforce contracts, policies are predictable and anti-trust laws are robust. The United States could contribute to strengthening enabling policy environments by improving the ability of governments to collect and analyze market information; training private sector trade associations and farmers organizations in how to engage local and national governments; and supporting reform and implementation of policy and regulations that promote vibrant markets and agricultural investment which promotes food security and small holder producer livelihoods.

Food security is often threatened by food scarcity in times of drought and other emergencies. U.S. food security policy could also support the establishment of regional food reserves to enable countries to supply food to vulnerable populations when needed. Such reserves may also stave off sudden price spikes when market supplies are low (planting season in many rural areas).

### ***Faith in action:***

Write to the State Department ([globalhunger@state.gov](mailto:globalhunger@state.gov)) expressing your views of how the U.S. can best respond to global hunger and food security, include personal stories of your experience as a U.S. consumer or producer and any experiences you know from living with or talking to consumers and farmers in less industrialized countries.

## UN: "The real wealth of nations"

*In preparation for the United Nations Summit on Climate Change the UN NGO Working Group on Climate Change invited Dr. Riane Eisler, author of The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a caring economics, to speak at the UN on September 16. Following is a summary of Dr. Eisler's speech, titled "The real wealth of nations: From global warming to global partnership," prepared by Ana Cristina Maldonado, law student and intern for the Climate Change Working Group.*

Current crises (climate, financial, hunger, poverty, violence) are symptoms of an underlying dysfunction but are also opportunities. According to Dr. Eisler, we live in a domination system: man over man, man over woman, race over race, religion over religion, and man over nature. Addressing these crises and preventing others involves working for a cultural shift to a partnership system that better honors Mother Earth; is more peaceful; has a more equitable wealth distribution; and is more egalitarian between men and women. Progressive movements (human rights; feminist; abolitionist; civil rights; anti-colonial; anti-violence movements; environmental) are shifts away from domination and on the continuum towards partnership. ("Cultural transformation," the shift from one system to another, is explained in her famous book, *The Chalice and the Blade*.)

Dr. Eisler's new book, *The real wealth of nations*, promotes this shift in economics. Dr. Eisler calls on us to move beyond the tired old capitalism/neoliberalism versus socialism argument. Old categories don't answer the basic question: What kinds of

*The Real Wealth of Nations is a call to action. I wholeheartedly agree that it is not only politicians, businesses and financial institutions that must change, but rather each one of us must play a role in developing a more caring society. This book is an important tool that can help us make that happen.*

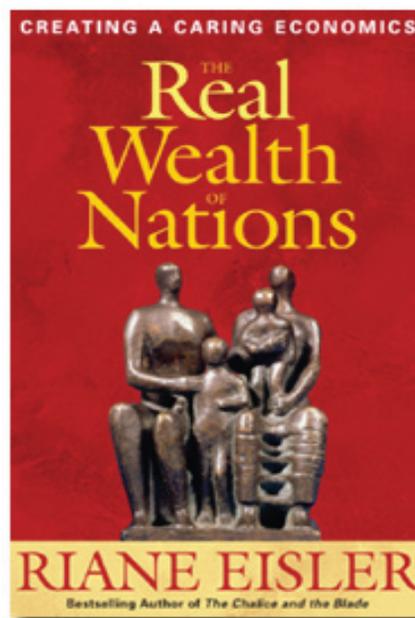
*~ Jane Goodall Ph.D., founder, the Jane Goodall Institute and UN Messenger of Peace*

beliefs and institutions (family, education, religion, politics, economics) support or inhibit our human capacity for caring, for empathy, for sensitivity, and violence? We must retain and strengthen the partnership elements in both the market and government economies and leave behind the domination elements. We need a new "full spectrum," "caring" economic system that recognizes that the real wealth of nations is not financial, but the contributions of people and nature.

According to Dr. Eisler, we are measuring the wrong things. [In our current model], activities that harm and take life (cigarettes, oil spills, armed conflicts) are great for measuring productivity, GDP and GNP -- trees and parenting are not. However, embracing the feminine is very economically efficient. The "Women, men, and the global quality of life" study by the Center for Partnership

Studies compared statistics from 89 nations on the status of women with measures of quality of life (infant mortality, human rights ratings, and environmental rating), and found that the status of women can be a better predictor of a nation's quality of life than GDP. (See *NewsNotes* article on ecological economics, page 16.) The Real Wealth of Nations public policy initiative is creating new metrics to shift funding priorities to more caring policies (See samples at [www.rianeeisler.com](http://www.rianeeisler.com)).

Richer nations need to contribute money for climate change mitigation that should be used to involve women in disaster response planning and training; studies show this reduces casualties of women, children and the elderly. We can each play a part in the shift from domination to partnership by changing the conversation from capitalism versus socialism to caring economics.



## Rein in commodity market speculation

*As the legislative season winds down, a key bill needs to be pushed through Congress. The Stop Tax Breaks for Oil Profiteering (STOP), S. 1588, sponsored by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), will drastically reduce speculation in oil and natural gas commodities and therefore halt the volatility of those markets. The MOGC is working to expand the bill's purview to include food commodities and any carbon markets created by the climate change bill.*

Currently, farmers, granaries, mills, and others who use commodity futures markets as they were intended to be used pay short term capital gains taxes (15-35 percent) on any income from those markets. But hedge funds and other financial institutions that buy and hold commodities futures only pay long term capital gains taxes (currently 15 percent) on profits from these markets, giving them an unfair advantage. An even larger benefit is provided to tax-exempt funds like endowments and pension funds that pay no taxes whatsoever on their profits from commodity investments.

Wyden's STOP bill will make speculators in the oil and natural gas markets pay the same taxes as legitimate users of those markets. By removing these tax breaks, the bill will reduce excess speculation in these markets and stabilize their prices. If the bill is expanded to include food commodities as well, it will help stabilize food prices significantly and avoid future food bubbles.

In the past few years, investors like pension funds, endowments, hedge funds, etc. poured money into the futures markets, which drove up prices. When the money was pulled out toward the end of 2008, prices fell. Food and energy prices cannot continue to be determined by the whims of investors.

Following is a letter circulated by the MOGC, to be signed by collegial organizations, addressed to Sen. Wyden, asking him to add food and carbon commodities to STOP, S. 1588.

"We, the undersigned organizations, write to commend you for the Stop Tax-Breaks for Oil Profiteering (STOP) bill (S. 1588), and what you are do-

ing to fight excessive energy speculation. We recognize the potential it has for significantly reducing excessive speculation in energy commodities markets. It was this excessive speculation that played a large role in last year's oil crisis and this year's rise in oil prices despite global supply surpluses. By bringing hundreds of billions of dollars into the relatively small commodity futures markets, speculative investors in hedge funds, endowment and pension funds, and sovereign wealth funds have reaped huge profits while driving world energy prices to economically destructive levels.

"Our organizations are also concerned about the role of excessive speculation in last year's food crisis. More than 100 million people were driven to hunger in great part due to excessive speculation. In addition, excessive speculation has destroyed the price discovery function of food commodity futures markets, rendering them useless for farmers. By giving tax advantages to financial institutions, the current situation encourages unnecessary and excessive speculation by institutional investors. We cannot allow such essential markets to be dominated by the whims of investors.

"We ask you to strongly consider including food and carbon commodities in bill S.1588. We see food commodity markets also being increasingly influenced by index funds and are especially concerned that if your bill does not include food commodities, it could give incentives to index fund managers to shift their allocations more heavily into food commodities. While many of our organizations are concerned about the possible creation of carbon derivative markets, if Congress chooses to create these carbon commodities, we want to guarantee that these newly formed markets would not be unduly influenced by excessive speculation from index funds and exchange traded products."

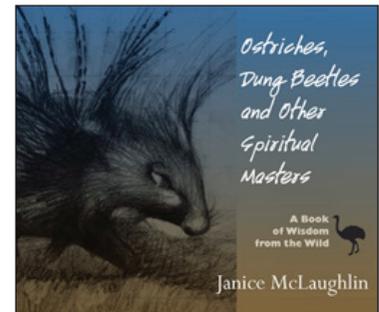
### **Faith in action:**

Contact your senators and ask them to support the STOP bill, S. 5188.

**Stop gambling on hunger** Learn more about actions and education around the commodities market at [www.stopgamblingonhunger.com](http://www.stopgamblingonhunger.com), a new website maintained by the MOGC and other organizations concerned about the effect of speculation on hunger and food security around the world.

## Resources

1. **“Posada”**: This award-winning documentary examines the tragedy of unaccompanied migrant children in light of the Advent tradition of Las Posadas, which commemorates the journey of the Holy Family. The film, part of the Posadas Project, [www.posadas-project.com](http://www.posadas-project.com), was made by Mark McGregor, a Jesuit priest who teaches film at Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA, and tells the story of three young people who migrated alone to the U.S. Shot on location in California and Mexico in 2005 and 2006, its running time is 55 minutes.
2. **“The end of poverty?”**: This is a thought-provoking and timely documentary by award-winning filmmaker Philippe Diaz, revealing that poverty is not an accident. Global poverty today has reached new levels due to unfair debt, trade and tax policies. Filmed in Latin America and Africa, the film interviews Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, Susan George and others, including leaders of social movements in South American and African nations. Narrated by Martin Sheen. 104 minutes. More information on the film and how to help its promotion at [www.theendofpoverty.com](http://www.theendofpoverty.com).
3. **Sparkling Change: Poster Art & Politics**: This 2010 peace calendar from the War Resisters League includes some of the world’s most evocative socio-political posters in vibrant colors. Weekly date pages list historical events with a small monthly calendar on each page. Includes a directory of U.S. peace and justice organizations and publications. 52-plus color images. 128 pages, 5.5 x 8.5 format, spiral. \$14.95 plus shipping and handling. Order by phone, 877-234-8811 or at [www.warresisters.org](http://www.warresisters.org)
4. **“Forced to Flee” and “The Gathering Storm”**: IRIN Films has made several series of short films on a variety of subjects. “Forced to Flee” and “The Gathering Storm” are series on internal displacement and the human cost of climate change, respectively. Check these series (and additional ones on HIV/AIDS, violence and other topics) at <http://www.irinnews.org/filmtv.aspx>.
5. ***Ostriches, Dung Beetles and Other Spiritual Masters: A Book of Wisdom from the Wild***: Written by Maryknoll Sister Janice McLaughlin, who now serves as the Congregation’s president, this 160-page book includes insightful stories of human virtues as exemplified by African wildlife—from an ostrich to a dung beetle to a baobab tree. During more than 30 years in Africa, Sr. McLaughlin has not only become deeply attuned to all that we can learn of our Creator from nature, she has also accumulated a fund of rare wisdom useful in daily life. As she tells about the wildlife of Africa, she also teaches us about ourselves and what we’re capable of: how we can strengthen our understanding of community from the elephant and how the hippopotamus can teach us much about humility and self-acceptance. \$18.00. Available from Orbis Books, [www.orbisbooks.com](http://www.orbisbooks.com), (914) 941-7636, ext. 2576 or 2477, Box 302, Maryknoll, NY 10545-0302.



6. **A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples: Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2010**: Be a part of an action weekend addressing this global issue. Worship, study and dialogue with hundreds of people of faith at the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days. Then join us as we go to Capitol Hill to advocate for our members of Congress to remedy these global injustices. The 2010 conference will be held **March 19 – 22** at the DoubleTree Hotel in Crystal City, Virginia just outside Washington, D.C. We encourage groups from churches, denominations and regional councils of churches to charter buses and bring large groups to this important faith-in-action event. For more information about Ecumenical Advocacy Days, please visit [www.advocacydays.org](http://www.advocacydays.org). Please let the MOGC know if you plan to attend; we hope to have a strong Maryknoll representation at this gathering.