



Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

NewsNotes

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Climate change: Inspirations, disappointments.....	3
Climate change: "Deal" but no seal in Denmark.....	4
Africa	
Sudan: A critical time.....	5
Namibia: President Pohamba reelected.....	6
Tanzania: Maasai face land loss, extinction.....	8
Africa: AFRICOM and U.S. policy.....	9
Zimbabwe: Termites in the ship of state.....	10
Latin America	
Chile: Indigenous continue to suffer.....	12
Bolivia: Morales reelected in landslide.....	13
Brazil: Maryknoll statement on economy.....	14
Middle East	
Palestine: Kairos document published.....	16
A call to integrate faith, ecology and global economy.....	17
Debt relief: Jubilee Act introduced.....	19
Migration and climate justice.....	20
Better climate bill introduced in Congress.....	21
House financial reform bill full of loopholes.....	22
Resources.....	23

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Climate change: Inspirations, disappointments

MOGC staff members Sr. Ann Braudis, co-chair of the UN NGO Committee on Sustainable Development, and Kathy McNeely, coordinator of the MOGC's Faith-Economy-Ecology program, attended the UN conference on climate change, held in Denmark in early December 2009. The following article is a reflection by Sr. Ann; Kathy's article, which focuses more on the economic dimensions of this challenge, follows on page 4.

For several months prior to the conference, the UN NGO Committee on Sustainable Development focused almost exclusively on climate change, using a widely circulated discussion paper. Through the resulting broad conversation on climate change issues, a one page Summary of Recommendations to Governments was drafted. The summary was clear in its moral foundation and rich in expressing the complex interwoven nature of the climate change crisis. In retrospect, the NGO response to this project gave an indication of the widespread concern of civil society for the crisis gradually enveloping the globe and dramatically experienced at this time by poor, "developing" countries lying in the range of the most severe changes in weather patterns. Participating in the conference affirmed these indications.

Thousands of NGOs and other representatives of civil society attended the summit. Arriving in Copenhagen in the dead of winter, with little light and much cold, one could not help but be impressed as, day after day, floods of people made their way to that far corner of the earth to attend the conference.

Regardless of where people came from, with few exceptions, they held in common one message; we are all citizens of one planet with a moral responsibility to make decisions that secure planetary sustainability for future generations. This requires significantly cutting greenhouse gas emissions, protecting the integrity of the earth's forests, and sharing funds, technology and knowledge with those in need and most threatened by the effects of climate change. Lastly, it is necessary to keep the global temperature below an increase of 2° Celsius. FAB became the byword, standing for a Fair, Ambitious and Binding treaty.

However, as the conference progressed, it became evident that it would be impossible for governments to finalize a binding treaty in Copenhagen.

While this was disappointing, it was inspiring to hear Nobel peace prize recipient Wangari Maathai of Kenya encouraging civil society to remember what it had achieved in the past and to renew its commitment to bring about a just and binding treaty as soon as possible. Vandana Shiva of India cited the strength of indigenous farmers in their determination to protect life in its myriad and interconnecting manifestations and to stand firm before the destructive forces of mechanization and fragmentation.

Speaking of economics, Penn State professor and ethicist Donald Brown stated clearly that it is morally unacceptable to choose to preserve the economic well-being of any nation over the well-being of others and the planet's sustainability. In view of the position of small island states, Dr. Brown's words were heavily weighted. Representatives from Cape Verde said, "We demand to survive. We demand a commitment to our survival. If we disappear we will not disappear alone; we will simply precede you in disappearing."

The Intergovernmental Panel of Scientists was enthusiastically supported by the overflowing crowd attending their presentation. Roaring applause showed agreement in accepting the findings of the panel as the foundation for any climate change agreement. Lastly, the youth were unrelenting in posing the question, "Where will you be in 2050?"

In the end, true to predictions, government negotiators were unable to achieve a binding treaty. Rather, they arrived at a general agreement to reduce emissions according to national standards; to allow for external monitoring where required; and to provide aid to poor countries (\$100 billion a year starting in 2020 and \$30 billion for the next three years). To bring the pact to the point of being a legally binding treaty will require a great deal of further work. Civil society will have to double its vigilance to ensure that this happens.

In spite of disappointments it is clear that there is a global movement that shows a new level of consciousness with its inherent responsibility for the well-being of the whole planet. In a letter to the Bolivian Mission at the conference, theologian and philosopher Leonardo Boff captured this point: "A new time begins, the biocivilization, in which the Earth and humanity recognize their mutual belonging, their common origin and common destiny."

Climate change: “Deal” but no seal in Denmark

The 15th Conference of Parties for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Negotiations concluded on December 18, 2009 producing no binding agreement defining a global way forward on climate change. Though leaders remain committed to continuing talks throughout 2010, a familiar backroom negotiating tactic – where a deal made among a small number of countries was presented to the remainder of nations for approval – left the climate deal “unsealed” in Copenhagen.

As reported in *NewsNotes* articles throughout the past year leading up to Copenhagen, the disparity in negotiating positions among countries were many. For some small island nations and African countries the stakes are extremely high as their populations face the disastrous impact of rising sea levels and climate changes that cause drought and severe storms. Despite huge differences, increased momentum from the year-round negotiations had kindled hopes that nations would find a way to move forward.

One major division was between the U.S. and middle-income “developing” countries, especially China, India and Brazil. The U.S. focused its negotiation strategy almost exclusively on pressuring China to make a formal commitment to verifiably cut greenhouse gas emissions. In actuality what seemed to play out was a costly game of chicken between the U.S. and China – China waiting for the U.S. to put what it was willing to do on the table before making any commitments and the U.S. doing the same.

The strategic focus on China is based on a fear held by members of Congress that if the U.S. cuts emissions by the targets set by the House Energy bill (equivalent to a meager four percent by 1992 levels), and China does nothing to cut its emissions, the U.S. would be handing its economic power over to China. Although the White House secured the freedom to negotiate on its own at Copenhagen through an historic EPA finding announced the day the conference began, members of the U.S. delegation said that they wanted to bring home a treaty that would meet Congressional approval.

This pressure to please U.S. members of Congress inspired President Obama to attend the climate change talk and spearhead side negotiations for a political agreement among five countries: the United States, South Africa, Brazil, India and China. When

this accord was taken to the assembly of nations for approval and closing formalities, the 193 countries present agreed to “take note” of it, leaving countries to choose whether they would associate with it or not. At present, 28 countries have decided to do so.

Although Larry Summers, director of the White House National Economic Council, said in mid-December “everybody agrees that the recession is over,” Congress is still more concerned about U.S. economic welfare than about climate change. This mindset needs to change in the coming year if we are to have any positive outcome when it comes to the global fight against climate change.

British economist and academic Nicholas Stern, delivering the Royal Economic Society (RES) public lecture in Manchester in 2007, said that “climate change is a result of the greatest market failure the world has seen.” As long as economic costs continue to be externalized and negatively impact vulnerable communities and Earth, and as long as over-consumption remains a reality in the global north, we will continue to overlook Earth’s needs and carry the burdens that climate change brings. What is needed is a dramatic shift in the global economic framework to truly address current ecological issues.

An underlying issue for many developing countries has been to come to an agreement on how more industrialized countries (major emitters of greenhouse gases) would pay for the damage caused by climate change in less industrialized countries. Rich countries did pledge to provide developing countries \$10 billion a year between 2010 and 2012 with a goal of raising that to \$100 billion a year by 2020 for climate adaptation and to help them develop green technologies. No details were spelled out on how the fund would be administered, or on where the money would come from. Observers fear that funding could be diverted from existing foreign aid budgets, and/or that “developing” countries themselves would have to pay into a global fund.

In *The Guardian*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, “The failure ... to achieve a fair, adequate and binding deal on climate change is profoundly distressing. A higher purpose was at stake but our political leaders have proven themselves unable to rise to the challenge. We must look to the future. Our leaders must regroup, learn and make good their failure for the sake of humanity’s future.”

Sudan: A critical time

Marie Dennis, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, participated in a Pax Christi delegation to Sudan in early December. Her reflections follow.

The tall young man came from a cattle camp to the Pax Christi-sponsored workshop on gun control in the small town of Bor, Sudan, which is slowly coming back to life after being caught in the middle of Sudan's long war. He borrowed his brother's suit so he would be "presentable" and joined 30 or so others, mostly cattlemen and young like himself, to discuss and respond to inter-community violence in Jonglei state where Bor is located.

In 2009, violent inter-ethnic conflict killed 2,500 people in Southern Sudan, which is awash with weapons, and displaced more than 350,000. A recent report from the International Crisis Group (ICG) says that this inter-tribal fighting, while not a new phenomenon, has taken on a new and dangerously politicized character. Doctors Without Borders writes that recent killings are different from past violence over land and cattle in that this year, villages have been attacked, and raiders have targeted and killed women and children. In November, the Sudan Ecumenical Forum expressed alarm about the "increase of violence in some parts of Southern Sudan including the abuse, rape and killing of women, elderly and children, aimed at destroying the social fabric within and between communities."

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed in 2005 between the Government of Sudan in Khartoum and South Sudan is extremely fragile. With elections in a few months and the 2011 referendum on whether the South will secede or form a united Sudan in a little over a year, renewed fighting between North and South is considered very likely.

Our delegation spent several days in Bor and saw there both hope and danger. When the governor of Jonglei state, Kuol Manyang, addressed the workshop we were observing, his message was clear: Unless we stop killing each other we will never be able to improve the quality of life for our communities. He told the youth gathered that in other places in the world people have cement floors in their hous-



Street children and their advocates promote gun-free elections in South Sudan. Photo by Marie Dennis.

es and electricity and water. They have paved roads and schools and, he said, we can have the same. We have to diversify our economy from its total dependence on cattle herding, learning to grow food in our fertile soil and start small businesses that create jobs. We could get some oxen to help plow the land – or even a tractor.

But the failure to realize many benefits five years after the CPA was signed is not all the fault of local conflict and observers are not optimistic about the future. Many elements of the CPA have never been implemented, largely due to the intransigence of the National Congress Party (NCP), the majority party in the Khartoum government. In late December, however, the NCP and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM), representing the Government of South Sudan (GOSS), reached some level of agreement on crucial aspects of the CPA including the referendum bill, popular consultations and the Abyei referendum.

The Sudan Ecumenical Forum notes that "there are no post-referendum arrangements yet in place. Therefore, it is high time to start planning for the period after 2011. In view of the various scenario exercises and post-2011 negotiations planned, we call on those involved to put the safety, security, livelihoods and rights of the poorest and most vulnerable, including women, children, elderly, IDPs and

refugees first. Whether the referendum leads to one united nation or two separate nations, it is essential to put in place meaningful arrangements for a peaceful transition. In the case of unity, issues of national identity, power- and wealth-sharing need to be addressed. If separation, issues such as the position of southerners and churches in the north, the arrangements for resources such as oil and water, and the status of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile, need to be addressed to ensure peaceful relations between the two new neighbors.”

According to the ICG, “Unless the international community, notably the U.S., the UN, the African Union (AU) Peace and Security Council and the Horn of Africa Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD), cooperate to support both CPA implementation and vital additional negotiations, return to North-South war and escalation of conflict in Darfur are likely....

“The challenge is to craft a process that produces credible and fair elections, an on-schedule referendum and, if its decision is independence, two economically viable and stable democratic states. The CPA provides the overall political framework but does not address the Darfur crisis, the post-2011 arrangements or intra-South issues. Consequently, an additional protocol that addresses these issues,

unites the several peace processes and revises the timing of some benchmarks should be negotiated.”

A recent delegation of “eminent persons” from the All Africa Council of Churches to Juba articulated recommendations to individual nations, the AU and the UN that emphasize accompaniment of the CPA implementation with funds and political pressure; investigation, monitoring and control of small arms flows into and within Sudan; ensuring that pledges from the international community to Sudan are honored and that the appropriate international agencies are mandated to resume the resettlement program. The “eminent persons” delegation further recommended that the international community, with the local government, ensure the security of all returnees; investigate and take action on the human rights violations that are continuing in the oil producing regions of Sudan; and closely accompany the election process, helping to secure a coordinated, just and peaceful process that gives the people of Sudan the possibility to make an informed and free choice of its leaders. Communities of faith were particularly encouraged to “step up the accompaniment for Sudan and continue to pray, engage and advocate (at the centers of power and on the issues identified above) for peace, truth, justice, reconciliation and development for all people of Sudan.”

Namibia: President Pohamba reelected

In late November, Namibia’s incumbent president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, was elected to a second five-year term. The elections seemed to provide a decisive win for the country’s former guerilla movement, the South West African People’s Organisation, or Swapo, although in late December a Namibian court ordered authorities to release documents to eight opposition parties contesting the results.

Namibia, a former German colony that was governed by neighboring South Africa during the apartheid era, is seen as a peaceful and stable democracy. Although rich in diamond and uranium deposits, about 40 percent of the nearly two million Namibians live below the poverty line. The government, which has received some praise for its “sound” economic policies and for broadening access to education and health care, is the largest employer in the country, but unemployment remains

a major problem and AIDS has had a devastating impact on the population.

Dr. Henning Melber, executive director of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in Uppsala, Sweden, and a member of Swapo since 1974, commented on the elections in an article, quoted below, for the Heinrich Böll Foundation. The complete article is available from the Heinrich Böll Foundation/Southern Africa website.

Three African observer missions – from the Southern African Development Community, the Parliamentary Forum of the Southern African Development Community and the African Union – quickly declared the elections transparent, peaceful and fair, although some recommendations were made to improve the counting process, media balance, and the accuracy of the electoral roll.

The observer mission of the Pan African Parliament was somewhat more critical, noting the bias

toward Swapo of the state-owned radio and television company and raising concerns over the printing of 1.6 million ballot papers (for an registered electorate markedly below one million) as a potential recipe for vote-rigging. “Although the mission had concluded that the elections took place within the constitutional and legislative framework, it felt that Namibia could do much better.”

Namibian civil society election observation teams fielded by the Namibian Institute for Democracy (NID) and the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) also seemed “largely satisfied that the results reflected the will of the voters.” But other local observers and opposition parties widely alleged voting and counting irregularities.

“Notwithstanding such dubious symptoms, many observers would however concede that the Swapo dominance only reconfirmed the firm and efficient control exercised over the Namibian electorate by the party in political power...

“For the first time a considerable number of young voters were able to express their preferences. These ‘born free’ were ... due to their sizeable numbers, considered to be of some influence over the outcome and hence a much speculated ‘unknown variable.’ This could have positively influenced the campaign strategy by Swapo as for the first time the cultivation of the liberation gospel was complemented by an emphasis on the claimed achievements since independence. At the end, the ‘born free’ seemingly did not play any decisive role in changing the voting pattern.”

Previously prominent opposition parties lost ground in this election. The Congress of Democrats’ (COD) presidential candidate, for example, had weak support and the party lost seats in the National Assembly, significantly curtailing its political influence.

“Despite being the new kid on the block, and notwithstanding the fact that it has emerged as the new official opposition, the RDP [Rally for Democracy and Progress] has little reason to celebrate. ... While the RDP boasted of having a database with close to 400,000 supporters, they only managed to garner less than 100,000 votes. As of 21 March 2010, four of their eight MPs taking seats in the National Assembly have in their earlier political life



Hifikepunye
Pohamba

already represented Swapo in this august house. They will have to show in the five years ahead that they can make a difference and are more than old wine in new bottles. This will not be an easy task, especially when confronted with the merciless dogmatic and unforgiving dominance of Swapo, which will be anything but accommodating.

“The results of the presidential election, conducted in a parallel voting act on separate ballot papers, showed – as in all previous elections – that the votes for Swapo’s candidate actually exceeded those for the party. Hifikepunye Pohamba received almost 9,000 votes more than the party list, which underscores his status as a respected leader who is entrusted by the electorate with running the affairs of the republic as the head of state. This is a remarkable vote of confidence after a number of internal disputes during his first term ..., when party factions challenged his policy of reconciliation towards some party members accused of being ‘unreliable’....

“The re-elected president Pohamba could use this vote of confidence ... to execute with authority his comparatively moderate line of policy in the party he represents. Originally almost forced into office as the declared crown prince of the founding father Sam Nujoma and reluctant himself to pursue such a career, he was a representative of a reconciliatory approach, who declared to take a firm position on combating corruption. During his first term in office, he did not meet such expectations and too often showed leniency towards the orthodox party hardliners pushing for a more exclusivist and dogmatic approach. At times he seemed to be caught between his party loyalty and his own values as a man who prefers peace and harmony to polarization.”

Another challenge for Namibia is made clear by the fact that the election results, according to New Era, pushed the country “further away from meeting the Southern African Development Community (SADC) requirements of a balanced parliamentary gender representation that comes into effect in 2015... [T]he country’s fifth Parliament will start with 16 women parliamentarians out of the possible 72, which makes it a 22 percent representation down from the previous 33 percent. SADC targets 50 percent women representation in Parliament for all its member states in the next five years.”

Tanzania: Maasai face land loss, extinction

The following article was written by Elaina Ramsey, who was an intern with the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns in fall 2009.

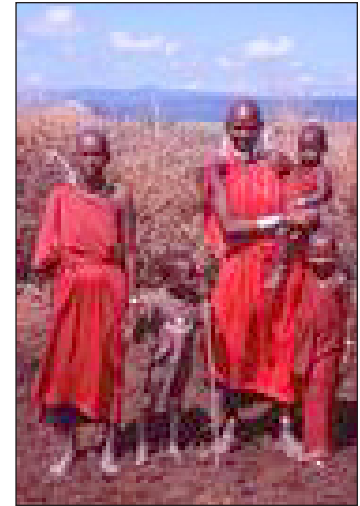
According to various media reports confirmed by Maryknoll sisters in Tanzania, the nomadic people known as the Maasai face violent eviction from their homelands in the northern Loliondo district of Ngorongoro, Tanzania. Traditionally pastoralists, the Maasai (meaning “endless plain”) rely on the land to graze their cattle and to maintain their livelihoods. But the Tanzanian government continues to unlawfully sell the land of the Maasai to foreign investors.

For centuries, the Maasai have dwelled throughout Kenya and Tanzania. In 1959, the British colonial government began to remove pastoralists from the plains of East Africa. Deeming pastoralists’ land as unproductive and waiting to be settled or developed, colonial administrators acquired huge areas of land on which to establish game parks and reserves, and resettled the Maasai to the crater of Ngorongoro. But after 1961, the new Tanzanian government began to evict the Maasai. Viewed as uncivilized drifters, the government established a policy of discrimination against the Maasai. Their language was banned from schools, and their traditional garments were outlawed.

With the creation of more national parks and the parceling of land to foreign investors, grazing options for the Maasai continue to be limited and overcrowded. Without access to the land previously promised to them, the Maasai are not able to maintain their cultural identity and subsist as pastoralists. In order to promote and protect the rights of indigenous groups, the International Labour Organization adopted the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No.169 in 1989. So far only 20 countries have ratified ILO Convention No. 169 and are required to implement policies that end discrimination against indigenous peoples and stop the exploitation of their land and resources. The Tanzanian government has yet to endorse ILO Convention 169, and consequently there are no provisions to uphold the rights of the Maasai.

As a result, eco-tourist industries and agribusinesses have developed throughout the land of the

Maasai. Even the Otterlo Business Corporation linked to the Royal Dubai family claims the property of the Maasai in Loliondo as their own by citing it as hunting grounds purchased from the government of Tanzania. By claiming that the Maasai are not actually indigenous but are nomads from Kenya, the Tanzanian



government refuses to recognize the land rights of the Maasai. Thus, the government and foreign investors have sought to evict the Maasai with violence and harassment. As their villages are burnt to the ground, hundreds of Maasai are displaced without food and shelter, and are hard-pressed to rebuild their lives and communities.

The United Nations has shown support by strengthening the role and rights of Maasai women, and by helping to ameliorate the effects of climate change on Maasai pastoral practices. But more needs to be done by the UN to address the territorial plight of the Maasai, and to preserve their cultural heritage. Local activists have also tried to maintain the rights of the Maasai, but are routinely arrested and threatened by government officials. Without adequate support, the Maasai face possible extinction.

The sacred land of the Maasai should not be parceled off to the highest bidder for corporate farming, tourism, or gaming. Such illicit acts not only threaten the economic security of the Maasai, but erode their cultural identity and spiritual well-being as pastoralists.

To learn more about the Maasai and to help safeguard their rights, watch videos on the Indigenous Peoples Issues and Resources website of the devastation in Loliondo after eight Maasai villages are illegally burnt, and write a letter to encourage President Jakaya Kikwete to stop the eviction of the Maasai from Tanzania: H.E. the Hon. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President, State House, P.O. Box 9120, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Africa: AFRICOM and U.S. policy

The Obama administration apparently will continue the militarized approach to Africa of the past two U.S. administrations. Based on a careful study of FY 2010 budget requests for the Departments of State and Defense, Daniel Volman, director of the African Security Research Project and a specialist on U.S. military policy in Africa and African security, has concluded that President Obama has decided to follow the AFRICOM (U.S. Africa Command) path “to ensure that America can satisfy its continuing addiction to oil and to deal with the threat posed by al-Qaeda and other Islamist extremist groups.” Alternatively, the United States could partner “with the people of Africa and other countries that have a stake on the continent (including China) to promote sustainable economic development, democracy and human rights in Africa and a global energy order based on the use of clean, safe and renewable resources.”

A 2009 Congressional Research Service (CRS) report on AFRICOM points in the same direction: “In recent years, analysts and U.S. policymakers have noted Africa’s growing strategic importance to U.S. interests. Among those interests are the increasing importance of Africa’s natural resources, particularly energy resources, and mounting concern over violent extremist activities and other potential threats posed by uncontrolled spaces, such as piracy and illicit trafficking. In addition, there is ongoing concern for Africa’s many humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and more general challenges, such as the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS... As envisioned by the Department of Defense (DOD), AFRICOM aims to promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with African states and regional organizations to help strengthen regional stability and security through improved security capability and military professionalization. If directed by national command authorities, its military operations would aim to deter aggression and respond to crises.

“The 1998 bombing of U.S. embassies in East Africa, and more recent attacks, have highlighted the threat of terrorism to U.S. interests on the continent. Political instability and civil wars have created vast ungoverned spaces, areas in which some experts allege that terrorist groups may train and operate. Instability also heightens human suffering and re-

tards economic development, which may in turn threaten U.S. economic interests. Africa’s exports of crude oil to the United States are now roughly equal to those of the Middle East, further emphasizing the continent’s strategic importance.” The CRS report provides a broad overview of U.S. strategic interests in Africa and the role of U.S. military efforts on the continent.

According to Volman, many analysts believe that terrorism does not constitute a significant threat to U.S. national security interests and that it would be far more effective to treat terrorism as a crime, reducing the threat of terrorism by employing traditional law enforcement techniques. (This was the reaction by the Bush administration to convicted “shoe bomber” Richard Reid in 2002, and is the response by the Obama administration to the attempted attack by Umar Abdulmutallab on the flight landing in Detroit on Christmas Day.)

Additionally, Volman writes, “President Obama understands the danger of relying upon the importation of a vital resource from unstable countries ruled by repressive, undemocratic regimes and the necessity of reducing America’s reliance on the use of oil and other non-renewable sources of energy. But, for understandable reasons, he has concluded that there is simply very little that he can do to achieve this goal during the limited time that he will be in office. He knows that it will take at least several decades to make the radical changes that will be necessary to develop alternative sources of energy, particularly to fuel cars and other means of transportation (if this is even technically feasible).”

Furthermore, public support for the Obama presidency is tied to his ability to provide a reliable and relatively cheap supply of petroleum based energy for U.S. consumption. In the event of a substantial disruption in the supply of oil from Nigeria or any other major African supplier, there will be enormous political pressure “to employ the only instrument that he has at his disposal – U.S. military forces - to try to keep Africa’s oil flowing.”

In May 2008, the Army Training and Doctrine Command, the Special Operations Command, and the Joint Forces Command conducted a war game scenario for Nigeria set in the hypothetical year 2013, which was, according to Volman, “designed to test the ability of the United States to respond

to a crisis in Nigeria in which the Nigerian government fragments and rival factions within the Nigerian military begin fighting for control of the Niger Delta, creating so much violence and chaos that it would be impossible to continue oil production. The participants concluded that there was little the United States could do to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict and that, in the end, they would probably be ordered to send up to 20,000 American troops into the Niger Delta in what the participants clearly recognized would be a futile attempt to get

the oil flowing again.”

The Resist AFRICOM Campaign is comprised of concerned U.S. and Africa-based organizations and individuals opposed to AFRICOM. The campaign will continue to “press the Obama administration to abandon its plan for AFRICOM and to pursue a policy toward Africa based on a genuine partnership with the people of Africa, international cooperation, democracy, human rights and sustainable economic development.” (Volman)

Zimbabwe: Termites in the ship of state

Recently, the 2009 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award was presented by President Obama to Magodona Mahlangu and her organization, Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), a wonderful recognition for Zimbabweans. Suffering intimidation and torture, the women of WOZA have organized peaceful resistance opposing rape and violence. Mahlangu said that the \$30,000 award will help the Bulawayo-based group to deepen the human rights and advocacy work. While this amount does not go far in Zimbabwe, the award, according to Maryknoll Sister Fran Kobets, whose update on the current reality there follows, is appreciated and in the right place.

Termite hills in Africa are huge with long tunnels underground. If you leave a piece of wood on the ground, the termites will exploit it in a few days. While the termites in nature have their purpose, the “human termites” among us cause chaos, confusion, suffering, and demotivation. Two-legged termites are riddling the ship of state producing a Zimbabwe that is a fragile shell. The ship of state? It is not recognizable.

Zimbabwe’s reality resembles a genetic mutation. It is often “more of the same” with increased suffering and alterations to the problems that make it difficult to get out of the hole we are in. A common denominator to all problems in Zimbabwe is currency and how it is used. The U.S. dollar (USD) and the South African rand are the official currencies at present. The use of the USD did put food on the shelves, but at a price. Most people have just a few dollars to rub together, or none. Although bread

lines are few and maize meal is available, etc., goods and services can only be had at a very high price. Pricing is a nightmare and a means of exploitation.

HIV/AIDS programs depend on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and church/volunteer groups. Government health and pharmaceutical services have hit rock bottom. Aspirin might cost \$3 for 12 tablets in one pharmacy; in another the cost can be 30 tabs for \$1. The higher price occurs when the hospital has no aspirin, or when doctors take the aspirin, supply it to pharmacies, and split the profit. The result is that few people can afford aspirin. A few nurses have withheld medication for AIDS patients as they capitalize on the fact that some folks do not want to be recognized. The antiretroviral medicines (ARVs) which are available are often sold for a price as nurses take advantage of people too shy to be treated. This is especially prevalent in the rural areas and in small towns.

Politically, a huge stumbling block to unity is the presence of Gideon Gono, the long-standing governor of Zimbabwe’s reserve bank. He makes no secret of wanting to return to the Zim dollar as legal currency. While this would be a repeat performance of past miseries, it would enrich those at the top through the use of the black market (the availability of large amounts of worthless zim currency which, in exchange for USD, provides wealth for the top). Often, ordinary people would prefer a return to the black market because they can get more for their money. Past Gono policies meant there was less to buy, but there was more manipulation to make money -- crossing the borders looking for things to

buy and sell, etc.

Both sides in the unity effort are affected by corruption. July and August saw an upturn of shops and businesses making a comeback and of healthy questioning by the public. By the beginning of September, however, there was a downward trend and return to insecurity. ZANU PF, the party of President Robert Mugabe, continues as before with intimidation, torture etc. and the MDC, the opposition party, has not been able to move. (See previous *NewsNotes* articles on Zimbabwe's unity efforts.)

The effort of Swaziland, Mozambique, and Zambia to promote unity agreements between the parties continues in frustration. Any deadlines imposed have been met with resistance and verbal and written orders by Mugabe for ZANU youth to take what they want if things don't go their way.

Peak Mine, a longstanding chrome mine, is now controlled by the Chinese. A regular mine laborer is paid US\$20 per month, while many managers are paid US\$800 per month. Safety precautions are ignored. In 1988 warnings were given about the need for safety maintenance and it was predicted that in 10 years the mine would cave in. Now peo-

ple who live over the mine are hearing stress noises and "rocks falling." In recent weeks, seven houses have fallen into bottomless pits; one mother and son are missing, while others flee their homes, especially at night, when the noises are most evident. People are being moved out of the homes most in danger, but some are being rescued only as their house sinks into a hole, with neighbors grabbing occupants at the last minute.

Illegal diamond mining, involving unemployed people digging in pits, is exploited for control and wealth. Members of the army intimidate miners by tying their legs and hands to trees and then setting dogs on them. Blood diamonds are now a reality in Zimbabwe, with revenue from the diamonds propping up the Mugabe regime. The environment has suffered greatly from all mining at this point.

The increased value of gold has caused chaos in the Midlands. Between Gweru and Shurugwi, miners compete for the illegal diggings and chase one another into towns and villages. As a result, many have died. The miners are rough and manipulative with the gold dust and they take advantage of orphans in the area for labor and sex.

**A Place to Call Home:
Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples
Ecumenical Advocacy Days March 19-22, 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. For more information about Ecumenical Advocacy Days, please visit www.advocacydays.org.

Please let the MOGC know if you plan to attend; we hope to have a strong Maryknoll representation at this gathering.



Chile: Indigenous continue to suffer

When Michelle Bachelet was elected president in 2006, many Chileans expected a marked improvement in human rights since Bachelet herself had been imprisoned and tortured during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Yet government treatment of indigenous communities struggling to maintain their land and rights has not improved; some say it has worsened during Bachelet's administration.

Chilean forests have been exploited for export for over 500 years, but it was General Pinochet's free market reforms in 1974 that established Chile's modern forest industry. He reversed previous governments' agrarian reform efforts and privatized the forestry industry by selling off forests and processing plants to a handful of companies at incredibly low prices. He then provided those same companies with generous subsidies to cut down native forests and create large plantations of invasive species of trees like Monterey pines and eucalyptus that grow more quickly in order to bolster Chile's export earnings. In addition to losing their land to these mega-plantations of eucalyptus, indigenous communities have seen how these trees poison the land and drain underground reservoirs creating "green deserts." Companies are cutting down native trees to replace them with exotic tree plantations at an estimated rate of 75,000 hectares per year. The Central Bank of Chile estimates that the nation's unprotected native forests may be entirely destroyed by 2015.

In what appeared to be a significant advance in 2008, President Bachelet ratified the ILO's Convention 169 that contains numerous guarantees for the respect of indigenous lands. Article 15-1 states, "The rights of the peoples concerned to the natural resources pertaining to their lands shall be specially safeguarded. These rights include the right of these peoples to participate in the use, management and conservation of these resources." And article 3-2, "No form of force or coercion shall be used in violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples concerned, including the rights contained in this Convention."

Despite ratifying the Convention, conflicts over land continue to boil over. A small number of indigenous, frustrated with the bureaucracy and failure to keep promises on the part of the government, are beginning to use increasingly violent means to stop

the destruction of their lands including property damage to logging trucks, plantations, and fences. This has made things more difficult for those working through legal and peaceful means as the actions of a few have brought on a campaign of persecution and harassment from the police.

Maryknoll lay missionary Carolyn Bosse, who has lived and worked with the Mapuches for years, wrote in an email about the recent unrest: "Houses in the communities are searched without a warrant. Children are terrified to see their house torn apart and their parents pushed around. Police helicopters fly over communities causing terror and police vehicles patrol towns and outlying areas. Some houses are searched on numerous occasions. The Service of Psychiatry and Mental Health Program from Angol Hospital have documented that children in the Community Cacique José Guiñón suffer psychological and physical effects from the violence."

In October 2009, a delegation of human rights activists witnessed what so many indigenous have had to endure. According to the delegation's written report, on October 16, in the José Guiñón community, they "arrived to find the community's spiritual healer, the machi Andriana Loncomilla, in handcuffs. She had been beaten, dragged by her hair and thrown to the ground in front of her children. Her two daughters, ages 11 and 8, had also been roughly handled by the police as they tried to defend their mother." An estimated 15-20 police had just raided their house without a warrant, took a bag of money and arrested her husband, their 13-year old son, and two other community members. A few hours later her husband and son were released, both bloodied from beatings from the police. Similar attacks have been reported in other indigenous communities.

In a letter to President Bachelet, delegation members wrote, "We call on you to direct the Chile security forces to stop these terrible actions. Children are not the problem. Land is the issue. You must find a solution. For the children of Adriana and Jose Cariqueo, and all Mapuche children who have suffered under the increased repression in these last weeks and months by Chilean police forces, we ask that you respond with actions that will turn a page in the difficult history of Chile. No more terror. No more harassment. No more cruelty. No more humiliation or discrimination."

Bolivia: Morales reelected in landslide

On December 6, with over 95 percent of eligible Bolivian voters participating, President Evo Morales was reelected with 64 percent of the vote, more than double his closest opponent, Manfred Reyes Villa, who received 27 percent. No other elected president has won more than 25 percent of the vote in this politically divided nation, so the results show an unprecedented level of support for Morales' policies since taking office in 2006. Morales' political party, the MAS, and allies won the two-thirds of the seats in both houses of Congress which are needed to pass more controversial legislation. Morales and the Congress now begin an ambitious legislative program aimed at solidifying the changes in the new Constitution that was passed by referendum in January 2009.

In addition to creating the new Constitution, Morales has followed through with two other difficult mandates from his first election in 2005: to keep a larger portion of the profits from gas and mineral exploitation in the country, and to carry out long overdue agrarian reform. Instead of nationalizing gas and minerals outright, Morales chose to renegotiate contracts with foreign corporations to extract natural resources. From giving only 18 percent of profits to Bolivians through taxes and royalties, they now turn over 40 to 80 percent. Instead of hobbling the economy as many predicted, this change has allowed for impressive economic growth while dramatically increasing government revenues, resulting in notable increases in social and other government spending and a budget surplus for the first time in over 30 years.

According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), Bolivia's economic growth has averaged 5.2 percent annually in the first three years of Morales' mandate, higher than any time in the last 30 years. Despite "falling remittances, declining foreign investment, the revocation of trade preferences by the U.S. and declining export prices and markets," Bolivia has also weathered the current global economic crisis well with projected growth in 2009 to be the highest in the hemisphere. CEPR predicts 4.0 percent growth in 2009, a year in which most of the region will experience negative growth and only one other country, Guyana, will have positive growth over 2.0 percent. Even the IMF has praised

the Morales government for its "very responsible" macroeconomic policies.

With the increased government revenue from gas and mineral contracts, the Morales government has initiated a number of new social programs have brought notable improvements in the lives of millions of Bolivians. Bolivia has eradicated illiteracy within its borders and started three key programs to address the high levels of poverty.

The Bono Juancito Pinto program, begun in 2006, gives 200 bolivianos (about US\$29) annually to children who are enrolled in school up to the sixth grade. This has increased school attendance and helped many families' budgets.

The Renta Dignidad is an expansion of the previous Bonosol program that addresses the problem of extreme poverty among the elderly by giving all low-income residents over 60 years old grants. Those who receive Social Security get 1,800 bolivianos (about US\$258) from the program while those without Social Security receive 2,400 (about US\$344) annually.

Finally, the Bono Juana Azurduy, which began in May 2009, gives financial assistance to uninsured mothers for pre-natal medical check-ups, childbirth and doctor's visits until the child's second birthday. This program will reduce infant and maternal mortality rates.

Looking ahead, the Bolivian administration and new Congress have a number of difficult measures to pass in order for the new Constitution to come to bear. Perhaps the two most difficult tasks will be to combine Bolivia's traditional legal system with a variety of indigenous community justice systems, and to define the various types of autonomy -- departmental, regional, indigenous, and municipal.

Having a two-thirds majority in both houses of Congress will not necessarily make it easy, as could be expected. As Kathryn Ledebur of the Andean Information Network points out, "A majority in the legislature could prove to be a double-edged sword." First of all, the MAS party is less a political party than "an umbrella for diverse social movements, unions and other interests groups with diverse and often conflicting demands." As the Democratic party in the U.S. has struggled to maintain unity, it should prove difficult for the MAS too. The administration will face significant pressures for appointments to

key posts which could result in destructive infighting. The MAS “calculates that there are at least 100 key pieces of legislation essential to implement the new constitution,” not an easy task for any legislature.

While facing difficult challenges ahead, the Morales government has the highest popular sup-

port in the democratic history of Bolivia and its opposition is weak and divided. The changes that Bolivia is trying to accomplish represent a fundamental shift away from over 500 years of political domination by a minority ruling class. If successful, Bolivia will be a beacon for people’s movements around the world fighting for dignity and equality for all.

Brazil: Maryknoll statement on economy

The following statement was written in November 2009 by members of the Maryknoll mission community in Brazil, a collaborative effort of priests, sisters and lay people who work in various ministries with impoverished and marginalized people.

The Brazilian, U.S. and international media have published much recently regarding the growth of the Brazilian economy. We, Maryknoll missionaries in Brazil, have followed these news reports as well as collective and individual realities, both at national and local levels. The majority of the printed articles depict a positive picture of how industries have grown, some people who lived in poverty have entered the middle class and the natural resources of Brazil are being turned into energy and products to be consumed the world over. We recognize that economic conditions have improved for some people. The accomplishments of generating wealth and a growing economy along with the far-reaching welfare program known as Bolsa Familia have been much touted “successes” for the Lula government.

An account [in 2009] from Reuters states that “Brazil’s exports of beef, iron and to a lesser extent soy – the main products from Pantanal – have rocketed in recent years, driven largely by global demand.” Domestic consumption is rising as well; according to *Business Week*, “Brazilians are also buying more food, clothing, and household goods. . . . ‘Over the next five years, we’ll see a doubling of sales of durable goods in Brazil,’ says José Roberto Tambasco, vice-president for operations at Pão de Açúcar.” *High Growth Markets* magazine enumerated several reasons why investors should like Brazil, including: the improved investments rating it has



received from Standard & Poor’s, the expanding domestic consumption, the plans to make major improvements in infrastructure, and the development that will go into hosting the 2014 World Cup.

These examples and many more show that Brazil’s economy has indeed grown in significant ways.

It also shows how Brazil’s economy is connected to a diversified range of markets around the world. But how is all of this economic growth affecting Brazilian society? Who is getting left behind in Brazil? How is this impacting the environment?

Our concerns

Brazil is a country with great extremes of wealth and poverty. According to the GINI Index provided by the United Nations Development Programme, Brazil ranks as the eleventh worst country for income inequality. As Maryknoll missionaries, we work with people who live in situations of poverty and are marginalized. By the nature of our work we take a different view of what is going on in Brazil. Our perspective seeks to affirm the God of life that is active in the world of those with whom we live and work, and it challenges us to denounce the injustices that we see. To the extent that we do this, our view of history and current realities is prophetic. We are aware that behind the “good news of profit” numbers published in the business sections of newspapers there is a growth in the numbers of people living on the streets and individuals and families struggling to survive.

There is a story that is not being told in the descriptions of Brazil as a good investment opportunity. For every anecdote about an individual’s success in leaving behind the favelas, there are millions who remain trapped in poverty, violence and a lack of

opportunities. According to October 2009 statistics from the Brazilian Institute for Geography and Statistics (IBGE), almost one-half of Brazilian children and adolescents live in poor families, with less than half of a monthly minimum salary per capita. Thirty nine percent of Brazilian cities do not have electricity, running water, sewage or trash disposal. Only 18 percent of Brazilian children are enrolled in day care centers. Sixty three percent of Brazilian youth between the ages of 18-24 work without finishing high school.

The story of Marta reveals the experiences of many Brazilians struggling against poverty. She and her husband Antonio moved to the city of São Paulo from the northeast of Brazil in the 1980s hoping for jobs that would help them escape the crushing poverty in which they lived. Without an education it has been impossible for them to gain employment with a sustainable salary. Marta has cleaned houses and washed clothes to earn money, and Antonio has worked in a factory. In order to care for the special needs of their youngest daughter, Marta now stays home and watches the children of her neighbors for a little money.

Early in 2009, Antonio was laid off and has been unable to find work. The family gets milk and approximately \$50 a month from a government program; this assistance does not meet their expenses. One of their teenage sons was recently arrested for shoplifting in a desperate effort to help the family, the other is being recruited by local drug dealers. This hard-working family has little hope that their economic situation may improve in the future. Their story is not uncommon. Many factors cause internal migration in Brazil: drought in the northeast, land concentration, economic insecurity, situations of urban and rural violence. This migration creates further instability and exacerbates poverty, violence and desperation in the communities that receive these migrants.

Our hope

We look at the Brazilian people with whom we journey in the struggle for a more just world and we celebrate with them the small, personal victories of employment, education and a growing confidence in their own abilities. We also look at the progressive social movements that have a vision of a new Brazil.

One example of how Brazilians are working to

make systemic change is in the work of the National Secretariat of the Solidarity Economy and the Brazilian Economic Solidarity Forum (FBES). This government agency supports solidarity-based economic enterprises. One such enterprise is the Catende-Harmonia that is administered by the workers themselves since they rescued their factory from collapse in 1993. The 2,300 workers came up with a plan to keep their jobs and make the factory profitable. Inter Press Service describes the initiative as “cooperative, self-managing, and based on economic solidarity, with a large proportion of sugarcane plantation and industrial refinery workers also growing cassava, fruit, maize, potatoes and even raising livestock.”

This story highlights for us what happens when businesses are seen for what they provide people: employment, food security and a strong community. This contrasts strongly with the goals in the articles cited above where a company’s profits are valued and people are just seen as consumers.

As we continue to reflect on the enormous political and economic changes in Brazil and around the globe we offer the following questions for ourselves, for those who work in the media and for those who work in the world of international investments.

- Who benefits from the media reports that highlight the very small number of people who succeed economically? What assumptions are being made about the millions of people who remain on the margins?

- Do current and potential investors know about the grave damage that is being done to the environment and the egregious violations of labor rights in Brazil? What processes are there for investors to make responsible decisions that positively impact the working lives of Brazilians and protect the environment from degradation?

- How can projects of economic solidarity be expanded in Brazil and other areas of the world? How can people in the developed world support these initiatives?

Our hope is that we can continue to work with others and expand our partnership to continue addressing the urgent need for change in the unjust and exploitative structures in Brazil.

Signed: Joanne Blaney, Kathy Bond, Heidi Cerneka, Daniel McLaughlin, Carolyn Moritz, Angel Mortel, Mercy Mtaita, Theresia Ndesoma, Éfu Nyaki, Chad Ribordy, Flávio Rocha, Anne-Marie Yu-Phelps, Jonathan Yu-Phelps

Palestine: Kairos document published

In December, a group of Christian Palestinian leaders published a 16-page Kairos document that tells the reality of life in Palestine. The writers request that “the international community ... stand by the Palestinian people who have faced oppression, displacement, suffering and clear apartheid for more than six decades. The suffering continues while the international community silently looks on at the occupying state, Israel. Our word is a cry of hope, with love, prayer and faith in God. We address it first of all to ourselves and then to all the churches and Christians in the world, asking them to stand against injustice and apartheid, urging them to work for a just peace in our region, calling on them to revisit theologies that justify crimes perpetrated against our people and the dispossession of the land. ... As Palestinian Christians we hope that this document ... will be welcomed positively and will receive strong support, as was the South Africa Kairos document launched in 1985, which, at that time proved to be a tool in the struggle against oppression and occupation. We believe that liberation from occupation is in the interest of all peoples in the region because the problem is not just a political one, but one in which human beings are destroyed. We pray God to inspire us all, particularly our leaders and policy-makers, to find the way of justice and equality ...”

Following is an excerpt from the document; read it in its entirety at www.kairospalestine.ps, or contact the MOGC for a hard copy.

Our land has a universal mission

We believe that our land has a universal mission. In this universality, the meaning of the promises, of the land, of the election, of the people of God open up to include all of humanity, starting from all the peoples of this land. In light of the teachings of the Holy Bible, the promise of the land has never been a political program, but rather the prelude to complete universal salvation. It was the initiation of the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

God sent the patriarchs, the prophets and the apostles to this land so that they might carry forth a universal mission to the world. Today we constitute three religions in this land, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Our land is God’s land, as is the case with all countries in the world. It is holy inasmuch as God is present in it, for God alone is holy and sanctifier.

It is the duty of those of us who live here, to respect the will of God for this land. It is our duty to liberate it from the evil of injustice and war. It is God’s land and therefore it must be a land of reconciliation, peace and love. This is indeed possible. God has put us here as two peoples, and God gives us the capacity, if we have the will, to live together and establish in it justice and peace, making it in reality God’s land: “The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Ps. 24:1).

Our presence in this land, as Christian and Muslim Palestinians, is not accidental but rather deeply rooted in the history and geography of this land, resonant with the connectedness of any other people to the land it lives in. It was an injustice when we were driven out. The West sought to make amends for what Jews had endured in the countries of Europe, but it made amends on our account and in our land. They tried to correct an injustice and the result was a new injustice. ...

Our connectedness to this land is a natural right. It is not an ideological or a theological question only. It is a matter of life and death. There are those who do not agree with us, even defining us as enemies only because we declare that we want to live as free people in our land. We suffer from the occupation of our land because we are Palestinians. And as Christian Palestinians we suffer from the wrong interpretation of some theologians. Faced with this, our task is to safeguard the Word of God as a source of life and not of death, so that “the good news” remains what it is, “good news” for us and for all. ...

We also declare that the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is a sin against God and humanity because it deprives the Palestinians of their basic human rights, bestowed by God. It distorts the image of God in the Israeli who has become an occupier just as it distorts this image in the Palestinian living under occupation. We declare that any theology, seemingly based on the Bible or on faith or on history, that legitimizes the occupation, is far from Christian teachings, because it calls for violence and holy war in the name of God Almighty, subordinating God to temporary human interests, and distorting the divine image in the human beings living under both political and theological injustice.

A call to integrate faith, ecology and global economy

The following statement, produced and promoted by the Washington, D.C.-based Faith Economy Ecology Working Group, asks people to look at the economic connections underpinning our current ecological crisis. It is currently open for organizational and individual signatures by contacting Kathy McNeely at kmcneely@maryknoll.org.

As hope-filled people, we stand in awe of Earth's goodness and its capacity to provide abundant life for all God's creation. We recognize our interconnection with Earth -- with air, water, land, plants and other creatures. We recognize the dignity of the human person as an individual and as part of a community. We embrace our power and responsibility to create a human economy that fits within Earth's ecological boundaries, more authentically serves human needs and builds community.

We envision:

- A new economic model that embodies social and ecological values bound by Earth's biophysical limits.
- A sufficiency-based economy where all people, regardless of gender, race or other characteristics, equitably share access to Earth's gifts that nourish and sustain them: nutritious food, clean water, suitable shelter; where "development" is measured by a society's success in increasing human well being while preserving ecological balance rather than by its gross domestic product.
- A just global distribution of resources, knowledge and technology such that well-being flourishes in communities of less industrialized nations that have experienced "underdevelopment" – and "de-growth," or downsizing occurs in communities in industrialized nations that use a disproportionate share of Earth's resources.
- A world where all have secure, meaningful, and ecologically responsible livelihoods and where human activity, based on cooperation, promotes ecological regeneration, the preservation of beauty and the restoration of previous damage.
- A "closed loop" real economy where recycling and reuse are maximized.
- People with sufficient resources, opportunities, freedom, and time to care for one another, engage in civic life, expand their creativity, and deepen their spirituality.
- Communities living in peace with sufficient public resources and freely shared knowledge to ensure health and wholeness for Earth and all its inhabitants.
- Governance that is participatory and transparent, through which policy decisions are made as locally as possible, consistent with the reality that every locality is part of a global society.
 - Yet we witness:
 - The destructive power of a growth-driven economic model that ignores Earth's limits and its need to rest and regenerate.
 - The valuing of money and material goods more than humans and ecosystems.
 - The inherent violence of an economy that grows along with the wealth of a few individuals and corporations while the natural world and human well being – the clearest signs of God's bounty – suffer and deteriorate.
 - The use of international financial institutions, corporate lobbying and marketing, think tanks, major media and military force to secure the wealth and power of a small part of society while a great many others, especially women and people of color are often excluded.
 - "Free trade" and economic globalization that increase ecological depletion and leave masses of people vulnerable through deeper poverty and insufficient access to food, water, education and health care.
 - The loss of people, cultures, species and traditional knowledge forced aside as our lives are dominated by a world view that seeks economic growth regardless of the consequences.
 - Soul-deadening over-consumption and the endless quest for "more" that paralyzes far too many people in wealthier societies.
 - We also witness the sheer increase in throughput of material and energy in the economy due to expanding consumer demand and economic growth that contribute to climate change, species extinctions, loss of biodiversity, depletion of freshwater and other resources, ocean dead zones, topsoil degradation, deforestation, dying coral reefs and the decimation of ocean fish stocks.

We stand firm in our commitment to a new way of life and a different economy, based on the integ-

riety and dignity of all creation, the common good, ecological health and resilience, sufficiency, equality, solidarity, caring for the most vulnerable and impoverished, and decision-making at the most local level possible. This will require innumerable inter-related changes; among them, the four that follow will serve to guide our work:

1) Paradigm shift in mindset and values: A shift from an ethic of exploitation to an ethic of right relationship is essential for individuals and for society. This will entail change from a focus

on material goods to holistic well-being; from excess to sufficiency; from exclusion to inclusion; from competition to cooperation; from pursuing privilege to serving the common good; from the pre-eminence of humanity to the reverence for all life.

Toward this end we will be guided by the wisdom of our sacred scriptures and religious traditions, especially Sabbath traditions of Leviticus and Deuteronomy and the inclusive table of Jesus, which

- provides enough for everyone, with no one storing up more than is needed;
- cares for the widow, orphan, stranger, traveler;
- honors a weekly Sabbath, providing rest and human restraint from busy, frenetic economic activities;
- allows the land to rest every seven years;
- decrees a Jubilee every 50 years, when slaves are freed, debts cancelled and families have their land restored to them; and
- models the breaking of bread, by creating strong communities built on care for one another.

2) Public policies for an economy of right relationship: Starting from the deep recognition that the economy must fit within Earth's limits – where resources are not used faster than they can be regenerated and wastes are not deposited faster than they can be safely assimilated. Policies must change to move toward a steady state economy in overdeveloped industrial countries and sustainable development in impoverished countries. Current institutions and rules must change so that individuals,



communities and whole societies can participate equitably in the economy and share in Earth's bounty. Financial institutions should embrace the principle of subsidiarity, allowing decisions to be made at the most local level possible. Priority should be given to policies that distribute wealth widely and decentralize economic power.

Toward this end we will seek to understand more fully what transformations are required to attain economic right relationship. We will promote a serious reorientation of the global economy away from growth

and toward human development. We will pursue changes in laws, policies, international agreements, and institutions to create a more durable, resilient and fair economy. We will examine our lifestyles and decrease consumption. We will advocate for sustainable levels of resource use and safe quantities of waste production, including equitably assigned reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

3) An economy of thriving and resilient communities: In living the new paradigm and strengthening its hold on society we will shift from a perception of ourselves as independent individuals to ourselves as interdependent members of thriving communities. All have something to contribute as we give and receive gifts and talents among neighbors through barter systems, cooperatives and worker-owned businesses. Community-based investment and economic development will help individuals to deepen their connection with the place where they live and will keep resources circulating locally. This will build community assets and strengthen social ties. We will embrace subsidiarity – decisions will be made at the local level by the very people whose lives are impacted most.

Toward this end we will learn more from the sustainable community-level examples known well by indigenous peoples and already functioning in our local communities in the United States and around the world, spread those ideas, participate in them ourselves and express our solidarity by supporting their efforts.

4) **Return of corporations to their proper place in society:** In order to achieve the changes described above, it is clear that we must decrease the amount of influence that corporations wield in government and society in general. The reigning forces in our world should serve the interests of the common good, rather than the private interests of a wealthy few. Corporations should be accountable not only to shareholders, but also to their workers, regulatory bodies, the communities in which they are embedded, and the natural world.

Toward this end we will study the history and design of the corporation to better understand its proper role in a just world. We will declare a separation of corporation and state and work for initiatives to decrease corporate influence in government, the media and our lives. We will work to stop reckless financial practices that exploit natural resources

and people. We will help cultivate financial institutions that respect Earth's limits and ensure economic participation with dignity for all people.

Our call to others: Grounded in our faith and speaking from our core principles and values, we call on people of good will to join us in re-examining the false panacea of a development model dependent on over-consumption. We seek a new understanding of the proper place for humans in the created world and right relationships within the human community and between the human and Earth communities. We place our hope in God's grace and the human capacity to face all these challenges with innovation, faithfulness, and creativity and to ensure the common good so that all living things might flourish.

List of endorsers: <http://faithetheconomyecology.wordpress.com/>

Debt relief: Jubilee Act introduced

The Jubilee USA Network, an alliance of more than 75 religious denominations, human rights groups, and development agencies, including the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns, recently welcomed the introduction of the Jubilee Act of 2009 (HR 4405) in the U.S. House of Representatives by a bi-partisan group of Congressional leaders. The legislation would authorize the expansion of debt relief to poor countries that meet strict eligibility requirements but need debt relief to fight global poverty; reform policies of international financial institutions; and urge more responsibility in future lending in borrowing to the world's poorest countries.

Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA), the bill's lead sponsor, was joined by original co-sponsors Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA), chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, and Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL), the committee's ranking member. Other original co-sponsors include Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL), Rep. Emmanuel Cleaver (D-MO), Rep. Luis V. Gutiérrez (D-IL), Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ), and Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR).

The legislation calls the U.S. Treasury Department to negotiate a multilateral agreement for debt cancellation for up to 22 additional poor countries

that need cancellation to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In addition to authorizing broader debt cancellation, the bill seeks to reform current IMF/World Bank policies and other global lending practices by:

- Urging that more resources be devoted to grants for the world's poorest countries;
- Requiring greater transparency at the IFIs, including a policy of maximum disclosure in project and loan documents;
- Urging the adoption of more responsible lending practices in the future;
- Limiting the conditions that may be required of countries going through the debt relief process to those ensuring that money released by debt relief is used transparently and accountably to address poverty; and
- Directing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to undertake an audit of "odious, onerous, or illegal" lending by the World Bank, IMF, and U.S. government in specific countries.

Faith in action:

Encourage your Congressional representative to support the Jubilee Act of 2009 (HR 4405). For additional information see www.jubileeusa.org.

Migration and climate justice

As Congress prepares to work on an immigration reform bill in 2010 while continuing to work on the details of climate justice, members of Mobilization for Climate Justice's Climate Justice and Migration Working Group recently issued a statement pointing to the critical links between climate and migration. The following article highlights main points from the position statement, which can be found on the MOGC website. Please contact the MOGC if you would like the statement mailed to you.

[As] national and international faith-based, human rights and immigrant rights organizations concerned with climate change and its effect on migration around the world, the Climate Justice Migration Working Group lifts up the fact that an estimated 25 to 50 million people have already been displaced due to environmental factors, and that number could rise to 150 million by 2050. The statement acknowledges the ways in which policies and corporate practices negatively impact environmental conditions around the world creating conditions where migration and movement are people's only option.

The statement cites research by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification representative Massimo Candelori that reports that the combined effect of climate variation and unsustainable agricultural practices causes erosion and soil depletion, which leads to meager harvests. The statement points to melting glaciers in Bolivia that left rocky soil which can no longer support the traditional farming practices of its inhabitants: "[I]nstead of being able to sustain themselves with their crops and sell the surplus,...Bolivian farmers face hunger as their harvests diminish...This and similar phenomena affect the traditional lifestyles of a range of citizens, and have led to the movement of peoples throughout Latin America."

Most countries of Sub-Saharan Africa will be especially vulnerable to environmental strains because they lack "the resources and infrastructure to adapt traditional agricultural practices to new weather patterns and soil conditions." Since most African agriculture is rain-fed rather than irrigated, it is vulnerable to both floods and droughts caused by climate change. African farmers will be forced to move and seek new land to cultivate.

Though most of the carbon emissions that cause these climatic changes come from Northern coun-

tries, about one third of less industrialized countries are threatened by rising sea levels, and have large proportions of their populations living in low-elevation coastal areas. But in most cases, countries do not have the capacity to cope with the destabilizing factors of climate change.

The statement calls for:

- International protection of the human rights of people displaced due to environmental factors, including recognition of refugee status and guarantee of all ... rights and accommodations achieved through support and expansion of international rights agreements on refugees, the internally displaced and migrants, as well as the formulation of multilateral migration agreements.
- Recognition of the right of human mobility.
- Increased policy and public awareness of environmental refugee and migration issues, including investment in further research drawing the link between environmentally degrading practices, climate change, and migration.
- Provision of a legal framework and financial assistance to allow migrants displaced from their home countries entrance to other countries.
- International recognition of the ways in which climate change has impinged on the rights of nations, as outlined by UN conventions.
- Provision for nations whose security is threatened by the disappearance of habitable land. As these "disappearing states" lose territory, we affirm the right of every nation to sovereignty.
- A reduction of domestic carbon emissions, mindful of the ways in which our energy use endangers the environment internationally. We ask that the U.S. and other developed nations model environmental responsibility by adhering to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's suggestions, which indicate that the global community must reduce emissions by between 25 and 40 percent by 2020 and by a minimum of 80 percent by 2050, below a 1990 baseline, in order to remain sustainable.

For more information on the Climate Justice and Migration Working Group, contact Michelle Knight at the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach; mmknight@columban.org or Colin Rajah at the National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights; crajah@nnirr.org.

Better climate bill introduced in Congress

Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) recently introduced the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal Act (CLEAR Act, HR 2877) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pave a path for renewable energy. The CLEAR Act is far superior to the more problematic American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES Act, HR 2454), passed by the House in December, which would allow major polluters in the U.S. to avoid any real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by giving them free polluting permits, allowing questionable "offsets" and subsidizing coal extraction.

The Friends' Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) gives seven reasons the CLEAR Act surpasses the ACES Act; the following analysis is based on FCNL's information:

1. **One hundred percent auction of pollution permits:** There are no free giveaways to industry; every emitter of a ton of fossil fuel carbon dioxide pays an equal price. If polluting industries in the U.S. do not have to pay for the right to pollute, they will not have any incentive to reduce their levels.
2. **Refund of pollution revenue:** Although putting a price on carbon will increase prices in the short-term, 80 percent of the public will feel no net financial impact because 75 percent of the pollution revenue collected by the government is returned to every resident of the U.S. This aspect makes the bill politically viable. With any sort of carbon cap or tax, energy costs will increase for the average person. It is hard to imagine that Congress would continue to vote to increase those costs, which is necessary if we are to reduce overall emissions. It would be politically difficult, if not impossible. But by distributing the money raised from the sale of carbon permits to consumers, this bill would give every person in the U.S. a payment to compensate for increases in their energy costs. Eighty percent would break even or even make money on the deal, while only the richest and highest polluters would lose money. Yet by raising the costs of energy for all, it will naturally lead people and businesses to be more efficient and energy conscious.
3. **Protection from market manipulation:** To address concerns about Wall Street traders driving up or down the price of carbon purely to make profit and potentially jeopardizing the entire pollution-reduction system, CLEAR limits who can participate in the carbon market to those who must turn in carbon permits. Friends of the Earth put out an excellent report on the problems of creating a multi-trillion dollar carbon derivatives market that would be dominated by the same Wall Street players that created the current global economic crisis. Besides possibly undermining the goal of reductions in greenhouse gases, a carbon derivatives market could bring about the same sort of economic chaos that we are dealing with today.
4. **No offsets: CLEAR contains no offsets.** Carbon offsets are used in other climate legislation to substitute for industry pollution reductions, but the Government Accountability Office concludes that offsets are impossible to verify as real emission reductions.
5. **Does not pick technology winners and losers:** CLEAR does not subsidize nuclear power, coal, or renewable energy. Instead it puts 25 percent of the carbon revenue into the normal congressional appropriations process to be allocated separately every year.
6. **"Upstream cap":** CLEAR requires compliance as high up in the economy as possible, at the wellhead, coal mine, or import point. This reduces the administrative burden to only two to three thousand producers and importers and ensures catching the vast majority of fossil carbon that enters the U.S. economy. Focusing on a few thousand "upstream" industries that produce the original greenhouse gases is much more realistic than caps on millions of "downstream" industries that would require monitoring and regulating emissions from almost every factory and business in the country.
7. **Keeps Clean Air Act protections:** The ability of the Environmental Protection Agency to set minimum standards for greenhouse gas-emitters is left intact.

Faith in action:

Write your senators and urge their support of the CLEAR Act.

House financial reform bill full of loopholes

In the summer of 2009, it appeared that the Congress and administration would seriously address financial reform to avoid another meltdown. In the important area of excessive commodity speculation, Gary Gensler, President Obama's appointee to head the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, made bold proposals to rein in this practice and reduce systemic risk. Proposed bills from key committees in both houses of Congress contained strong measures that would create a safer, saner market. Yet in the bill that finally passed in the House in late December legislators caved to Wall Street concerns and allowed four major loopholes that make the bill practically worthless. The over-the-counter (OTC) markets – unregulated, opaque markets that greatly affected today's crisis – will remain open for business unless the Senate's bill is stronger.

The following analysis of the four loopholes is from Adam White, director of research at White Knight Research & Trading:

1. **Foreign exchange exemption:** Foreign exchanges, which represent approximately eight percent of total OTC derivatives exposure, would remain opaque and unregulated. "Think of it this way," writes White. "Would you be happy to know that for every 100 people boarding your airline flight, there were eight people that did not have to pass through the metal detectors?"
2. **End-user exemption:** Wall Street swaps dealers have scared their corporate clients into opposing reforms that would be to their own benefit. Responding to this pressure, Congress excluded a number of end users from clearing on exchanges, which would have increased transparency and reduced systemic risk. These end user exemptions are between 16-21 percent of the OTC markets.
3. **"Balance sheet risk" exemption:** This exemption would allow hedge funds to participate in un-

regulated OTC markets in order to circumvent possible financial losses. Under this loophole, another 15-16 percent of all derivatives exposures would not be cleared on exchanges. Combining these three loopholes together, Congress is effectively exempting between 40-45 percent of all derivatives from clearing.

4. **Alternative Swaps Execution Facility (ASEF):** The final loophole is perhaps the most impressive. Congress has also bowed to Wall Street's request to allow it to avoid trading on a public exchange altogether. Instead swaps dealers can use ASEFs instead of exchanges. These alternatives can include even "voice brokerage," or, in other words, a telephone call between swaps broker and client. With this loophole, "100 percent of all OTC derivatives can trade through ASEFs" which would be almost completely unregulated.

As Chris Whalen, managing director of Institutional Risk Analytics in Torrance, CA, said, "The OTC reform has gotten to be basically irrelevant as far as change. ... There are some things in there that are irritating to [Wall Street], but compared with what we thought we were going to get over the summer, it's night and day." Paul Miller, an analyst with FBR Capital Markets in Arlington, VA, added, "Wall Street is probably happy with the slowness of the process because the slower the process is, the more you can drag it out and water it down." Recipients of TARP money have spent \$344 million in 2009 alone to defeat derivatives reform regulation.

Faith in action:

Contact your senators to demand that these loopholes be removed from any Senate financial reform bill. Go to www.stopgamblingonhunger.com for an easy way to send a letter to your Congresspersons on the issue. Explore the site for more information on the issue.

Stop gambling on hunger Learn more about actions and education around the commodities market at 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. **2010 African Proverbs Calendar:** Download this year's calendar or view and/or print out a particular month at the website www.afriprov.org. The 2010 calendar's theme is "Healing, health care and wellness," with monthly themes such as "Planning ahead in health care," "Healthy diet," "Making healthy choices to prevent malaria," "Compassionate healing," "Simple lifestyle" and "Preventative medicine" that correspond to the proverb of that month along with African-themed photographs.
2. **The Bartimaeus Institute (BI):** BI holds mid-winter opportunities for pastoral leaders, activists and students for intensive study of scripture and social justice with Ched Myers and others in the beautiful coastal foothills of central California (Oak View). Two upcoming events for 2010: **January 18-22:** Ambassadors of reconciliation: A New Testament theology and diverse Christian practices of restorative justice and peacemaking;
3. **"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>.

February 22-26: Ecojustice, Sabbath economics and Luke's gospel, co-sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, commemorating the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of Sister Dorothy Stang in Brazil. Registration for either event: Commuter fee \$400; residential: \$575 (double occupancy), \$685 (single occupancy). Academic credit and limited scholarships are available. Space is limited to 30 per Institute. Register on website, www.bcm-net.org, email inquiries@bcm-net.org or call 323-449-5170.

School of the Americas Watch delegations in 2010: **EL SALVADOR, March 19-26:** Commemorate the 30th anniversary of Oscar Romero's assassination. Walk in the footsteps of martyrs such as the four churchwomen, the Jesuits of the UCA and others. Visit high level Salvadoran government officials to ask that El Salvador send no more soldiers to this school of assassins. **VENEZUELA, April 9-18:** Commemorate the anniversary of a people's victory in overturning a *coup d'etat* and learn about how the eight-member countries of ALBA are forging an exciting new economic model of cooperation and solidarity. Join Lisa Sullivan in getting a different view from within of this country where she has lived for 25 years. Meet with Colombians in exile in Venezuela and hear from them and from Venezuelans about their concerns for U.S. militarization along the Colombian border of Venezuela. Contact SOA Watch at 202-234-3440, or email info@soaw.org. **HONDURAS:** Attention towards Honduras has diminished after U.S.-approved November elections legitimized the June coup, while assassinations of resistance members has increased. Leaders of the human rights community have requested a constant presence of international visitors to bring attention to this situation and help protect the lives of Hondurans. Activists are urged to join the Task Force on the Americas delegation to Honduras from March 13-20 (contact Dale Sorensen, geodale1@earthlink.net), a Quixote Center delegation (contact Jenny Atlee, jennya@quixote.org) or the January 24-31 Rights Action delegation (contact Grahame Russell, info@rightsaction.org). **COLOMBIA:** With over 10,000 troops trained at the school, Colombia is the SOA's largest customer and has the worst human rights record in Latin America. The 8th Day Center for Justice and Witness for Peace are organizing a delegation to Magdalena, Colombia from August 7-17. The delegation will focus on human rights, corporate abuse, military repression and internal displacement. Delegation participants will meet with community leaders, displaced persons, and human rights defenders. For more information, contact Erin Cox, Erin@8thdaycenter.org, 312-641-5151 or Ashley Valchek, Ashley@8thdaycenter.org or email wfpmagdalena@gmail.com.