



# NGO REPORTER

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## *MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: CIVIL SOCIETY TAKES ACTION*

### 57<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DPI/NGO CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR 8–10 SEPTEMBER



The large and dedicated Planning Committee for the 57th Annual DPI/NGO Conference at work.

Over 2,000 NGO representatives from all over the world will gather in the General Assembly hall at United Nations headquarters in New York City from 8 to 10 September 2004 to hear Secretary General Kofi Annan address the opening session of the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual United Nations DPI/NGO Conference. Entitled *Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action*, the conference will focus on the role and plans of civil society organizations to help implement the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by world leaders at their high-level millennium session in 2000, with a target date of 2015. The Conference is organized by the United Nations Department of Public Information in partnership with the NGO/DPI Executive Committee.

Centered on the most critical problems causing tensions in the world today, the MDGs are designed to give people worldwide the tools to care for themselves in healthy, sustainable environments. Specific MDG targets are set to: alleviate poverty, treat and prevent the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, provide universal primary education and gender equality, reduce child and maternal mortality rates, lower by half the number of people who suffer from hunger or lack access to safe drinking water, empower women and create a global partnership to foster good governance and economic development in the least developed countries, including opening world markets to their goods.

Conference delegates will attend seven plenary sessions with Governmental, UN Agency, NGO and Civil Society representatives to assess the progress made on the Goals. Emphasis will be placed on reviewing successful programs to be replicated, possible strategies for raising resources required for the implementation of the MDGs, and heightening public awareness of the Goals. After networking at Interactive Midday Workshops, delegates will draft recommended plans of action to be presented to the closing panel comprising expert respondents.

Registration is open to representatives of NGOs associated with DPI, those in consultative status with ECOSOC and those working with UN Agencies. Additional information on the conference program is posted on <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngpsection>.

Joan Kirby

## NGO REPORTER FOUNDER HONORED

Sylvan M. Barnet, Jr., former Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee (1990-1992) and founder of the NGO Reporter (1991), received the 2004 Eleanor Schnurr Award, offered each year by the Executive Committee of the Council of Organizations of UNA/USA. The award was given in recognition of his "exceptional commitment to the goals of the United Nations and to the constructive participation of the United States in the U.N. system."

## MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A VISION FOR YOUTH

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are more than reminders of the problems we, as a global society, are facing today. The active participation of civil society in realizing these goals has long been asserted, in light of the fact that many non-governmental organizations have long performed work in that direction, both locally and internationally. However, partnership and communication among NGOs is not a given, and a disparity between grass roots operations and NGO representation at major forums persists.

The Youth Committee for the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual DPI/NGO Conference *Millennium Development Goals: Civil Society Takes Action* has chosen to live up to the Conference title. We wish to align our efforts with all groups who support the MDGs and to direct our energy particularly towards raising awareness about the MDGs among young people everywhere. Recognizing significant youth organizations and activities already in existence, we call out to all groups to share knowledge regarding youth projects for the MDGs that may already be underway. Through this pooling of data, we can target our own action more effectively and better empower others to engage themselves as well.

In this context, young people can play an important role and their energy and vitality can be channeled constructively. If they are given the opportunity to participate in projects for the betterment of their own lives, a sense of empowerment will prevail, along with a capacity to see beyond the walls of inherited conflicts and prejudice.

*Shamina de Gonzaga*

## EMINENT PERSONS PANEL BRIEFINGS

On 7 June 2004 the report of the Panel of Eminent Persons on United Nations–Civil Society Relations entitled *We the peoples: Civil Society, the United Nations and Global Governance* was submitted to Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Following publication and circulation of the report, members of the Panel, as a group and individually, have held a series of meetings with interested NGOs. On June 24, Dr. Mary Racelis, a Panel member, met with the DPI/NGO Conference Planning Committee, and on 30 June, CONGO facilitated a meeting with John Clark, the Panel's Project Director. Both sessions allowed for a thorough review of the Panel's findings and its implementation recommendations.

*Joan Levy*



## BOOKS AND VIDEO-CONFERENCING PROGRAMS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH

Reverend Moses Williams, of the Olof Palme Peace Foundation (Ghana), recently coordinated a project, Linking America to Africa with Books, which involved Rutgers University and a host of religious and community organizations in New Jersey. High school students volunteered to sort and pack the 40,000 donated children's books that were sent to the Tswelopelo Community Development Project in South Africa. The shipment arrived on April 21, Freedom Day, the 10th anniversary of the country's first democratic elections. This youth linkage with South Africa is also pursued through video-conferencing programs between American and South African teenagers, which are held as public events at Rutgers and at several locations in Johannesburg.

Contact: [www.moswil@rci.rutgers.edu](http://www.moswil@rci.rutgers.edu)

## RECENT NGO/DPI COMMITTEE MEMBERS' OUTREACH INITIATIVES

- Mini-Conference in Bulgaria prior to the 56th Annual DPI/NGO Conference in New York
- Roundtable Discussions in Amman, Jordan on *Arab Voices Responding to Human Security and Dignity in the Middle East* in relation to the 57th Annual NGO/DPI Conference in New York
- A research/advocacy program in Morocco, involving NGOs and the media
- A peace education program in Ireland, bringing youth participants to the United Nations
- Video conferencing programs on the Millennium Development Goals

### UNDERSTANDING NGO/DPI COMMUNICATIONS: A FOCUS ON PROJECTS AND INNOVATIONS

NGO/DPI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
Chair, 2 Vice-Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer  
13 Directors

Sub-Committees

Budget • By-Laws  
Communications Workshop  
Conference Planning • Fundraising  
Internet Technology • Nominating  
Outreach • Resource Center

The *NGO Reporter* is the official publication of the  
NGO/DPI Executive Committee

The NGO/DPI Communications Workshop Committee sponsored a daylong workshop in late May. Entitled *Understanding NGO/DPI Communications: A Focus on Projects and Innovations*, the workshop was almost entirely devoted to an explanation of the organization and work of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee. The Executive Committee acts as a liaison between the NGO community and DPI in the provision of services, the production of materials and the use of UN facilities. The Committee, in effect, is a service organization that helps UN-associated NGOs make use of the available information and material to increase knowledge about, and public understanding of, the UN purpose, structure, policies, actions and programs.

The NGO/DPI Executive Committee is composed of eighteen elected main or alternative representatives of UN/DPI-associated NGOs. Those elected are called Directors. Election to the Executive Committee is based on UN-associated organizational membership.

However, once elected, each Executive Committee Director acts in the interests of the entire NGO community.

The Workshop evolved primarily around the functions and operations of the nine Sub-Committees: Budget, By-Laws, Communications Workshop, Fundraising, Nominating, Outreach, Conference Planning, Resource Center, and Internet Technology. Speakers repeatedly urged the members of the audience to participate in the work of the various sub-committees and invited them to seek nominations for election to the Committee itself.

Some of the information presented during the Workshop is reported on elsewhere in this issue. Of particular note, however, was the Sub-Committee on Fundraising presentation and its emphasis on a yearlong drive for donations to help defray annual Conference costs and to partially underwrite the Conference reception. This past year, the Sub-Committee has broadened the scope of its fund-raising activities in order to provide support for other Executive Committee priorities.

While presenters stressed issues of concern to their particular sub-committees, several key points of information stressed throughout the day:

- NGO representatives are strongly encouraged to provide feedback and to get involved as sub-committee members. NGO representatives can be sub-committee members without being part of the Executive Committee. Outside expertise is essential to the effectiveness of all sub-committee projects.
- The Executive Committee is always open to new ideas, and is sensitive to the new Communications Technologies. Here, too, outside expertise is needed, and will be welcomed.
- Future goals of the Executive Committee include adding an official Youth Committee, developing virtual participation possibilities for future conference, and creating live web casts of conferences for those unable to attend in person.

*Lester Wilson and Diane Di Candido*

## RESOURCE CENTRE REORGANIZATION UNDER WAY

Reordering and updating information is a top priority for Resource Room staff. Although a number of official documents are on display, most can now be ordered online and staff will assist with the ordering and copying of requested materials. Literature and brochures are on display at the front of the Center, while the video and audio lending library is housed at the rear. Visitors are encouraged to consult with a staff member whenever problems arise in locating reference materials.

*Mona Gillet*

### Editors' Desk

#### DOROTHY (DORRIE) WEISS, 1923-2004



Dorrie Weiss, longtime editor of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee's *NGO Reporter*, died on May 19th, following a courageous two-year struggle with lung cancer. She was well known throughout the United Nations and NGO communities for her service in a wide variety of capacities. For fifteen

years, she represented Economists Allied for Arms Reduction (ECAAR), where she developed position papers, wrote, and made conference presentations.

Dorrie was Vice-President for Publications of the NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security, and helped edit *Disarmament Times*. She conceptualized what was to become the *Guide to Disarmament*, published by the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs.

Dorrie held various offices when she was a member of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee. Her work as *NGO Reporter* Editor was her most outstanding contribution. She made sure that each issue included articles covering the work of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee and contributions from the global NGO/DPI community. Until her final months, she kept in touch with the new Editors and provided much-needed guidance and encouragement.

The NGO/DPI Executive Committee and *NGO Reporter* Editors mourn her death and extend deepest condolences to her family.

### USEFUL LINKS:

Information on the 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference is available on the interactive web page, [www.unngodpiconference.org](http://www.unngodpiconference.org). The password is **DPI57**.

The UN-NGO–Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) Project newsletter, *Update*, [www.unpan.org/NGO-updates.asp](http://www.unpan.org/NGO-updates.asp), is a monthly compilation of information on NGO activities and upcoming events. To subscribe, send an email entitled “**Subscribe**” to [Karaborni@un.org](mailto:Karaborni@un.org).

U.N. Wire, [unwire.org](http://unwire.org), an independent daily news service for people interested in the United Nations and world affairs. To subscribe, refer to the web page address.

The last edition of CIVICUS, World Alliance for Citizen Participation, focuses on the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. To become a CIVICUS member, contact [membership@civicus.org](mailto:membership@civicus.org).

NGO/DPI Executive Committee Calendar, [ngodpiexecom.org/calendar.cgi](http://ngodpiexecom.org/calendar.cgi), is a source of information on future NGO activities and events. Use the form provided to list a meeting, conference, workshop or other event.

### NGO REPORTER

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