

16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

“Last month, I traveled to Goma in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where over 1,100 rapes are reported every month. I met with survivors of sexual violence. And the physical and emotional damage to individual women and their families from these attacks cannot be quantified, nor can the toll on their societies. The dehumanizing nature of sexual violence doesn’t just harm a single individual or a single family or even a single village or a single group. It shreds the fabric that weaves us together as human beings, it endangers families and communities, erodes social and political stability, and undermines economic progress. We need to understand that it holds all of us back.”

These words were spoken by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on September 30 when *Resolution 1888 to Combat Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict* was adopted by the Security Council. Unfortunately, it is known that up to 70 per cent of women experience physical or sexual violence from men in their lifetime. It happens everywhere – at home and at work, on the streets and in schools, during peacetime and in conflict.

SAY NO – UNITE
End Violence against Women

Take some action to raise awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue in the 16 days which concludes on December 10, International Human Rights Day

Let the bells ring for climate justice!

UNANIMA International communities are invited to join in solidarity with each other and other people of faith.

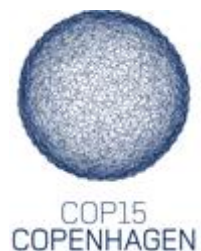
The 13th of December is the defining moment for faith organizations and churches to conduct a church service and ring bells, sound conch shells, or beat drums or gongs 350 times. For centuries, across the world musical instruments like bells and drums have been used to warn people of imminent danger – but also to call people to religious service, marking important moments in worship and seeking to connect to God. Sunday 13 December marks the height of the talks at United Nations climate negotiations in Copenhagen.

Why 350 times? 350 refer to 350 parts per million: This is the safe upper limit for CO₂ in our atmosphere.

See: <http://www.oikoumene.org/events-sections/countdown-to-climate-justice.html>

UN Climate Change Conference – COP15, 7 – 18 December 2009, Copenhagen

UNANIMA is very pleased to now have observer status with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This will assist our work on environment issues in the coming years. Catherine will attend the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference. It is hoped that some directional steps will be taken at the Conference, and we know the hard work of Civil Society Organisations must continue between now and 2012 to get an effective and just international response to climate change when the next climate protocol will be agreed. Follow developments at www.unfccc.int



Counter- trafficking action: Winter Olympics, Vancouver 2010 - Call for international solidarity

The Sisters of Saint Anne, the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame, the Sisters of Providence and the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who are all members of CATHII, the anti-trafficking arm of the Canadian Religious Conference, invite other UNANIMA International members to join them in a prayer vigil on December 4.



2009 Parliament of the World's Religions, 3 - 9 December 2009, Assembly Meeting, Melbourne, Australia

The Parliament of the World's Religions will hold its 2009 assembly from 3 to 9 December 2009 in Melbourne, Australia. The gathering is expected to bring together more than 8,000 people of faith, spirit and goodwill from around the world. NGO colleagues at the UN in New York and some of the Brigidine Sisters will be present. Australian Catholic Religious Against Human Trafficking will be conducting a side event. For more information visit [the Parliament of the World's Religions website](http://www.parliamentofreligions.org)

Universal Periodic Review

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years and is conducted under the auspices of the Human Rights Council. This is a new process established in 2006 which is an opportunity for each country to declare what actions they have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. The ultimate aim of this new mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur. NGOs can submit information which can be added to the "other stakeholders" report which is considered during the review. In 2009 the United States is listed to report. UNANIMA International is working collaboratively with other NGOs to develop a report. To learn more about the UPR see: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRmain.aspx>

Coming events

- ❖ 48th Session of the Commission for Social Development 3 to 12 February 2010. The focus is "Social Integration". UNANIMA International has been involved in the preparation work with the Grassroots Task Group which has received 190 surveys identifying barriers, best practices and recommendations to government from a wide range of groups: women, persons with disability, migrant populations, indigenous peoples, homeless and other marginalized groups
- ❖ 54th Commission on the Status of Women (1-12 March 2010) will be a celebration of 15th anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women and a review of the Beijing Platform for Action. The NGO Global Women's Forum will precede this on 27 and 28 February 2009 in New York.

Welcome Back

Catherine was warmly welcomed back to work at UNANIMA by all of us, especially Jessica and Louise, after Thanksgiving. We trust her sabbatical time has been re-energizing! She is being thrust into the Copenhagen discussions and many other areas where we look forward to her leadership once again.

Advent Prayers with the Theme of Human Trafficking will be on the UI website.