Another World is Possible ≈ World Social Forum 2007
Compiled from contributions from Catherine Kathei, Therese Kathuure, Shalini Podimattam, Catherine Mutindi, Margaret Wangeci, and Jane Karimi.

Twelve Good Shepherds joined the 50,000 participants of World Social Form (WSF) 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya last January. People gathered with different desires and aspirations but one goal: Justice. WSF people represent the prophet Hosea of today - challenging the oppressive structures of the mighty such as the G8 Summit, which exploits poor countries through unjust trade policies.

GS participated in activities of the Forum that ranged from exhibitions, speeches, open discussions, demonstrations and peace walks. All through the Forum symbols, slogans, drama and performances told the world that we need change: We need a world free from war, poverty, HIV/AIDS, slavery, child labor, human trafficking, social abuse, physical abuse and all issues which deprive humanity of freedom.

Human rights issues dominated the WSF with emphases on women’s rights, peace, environment, freedom of expression, education, child rights, politics, religion, war and violence. All were enriching. At WSF the poor themselves demanded the sharing of global resources. Africa rejects being referred to as “poor,” while her resources are used to enrich the powerful. The WSF pronounced a big “NO” to a culture of violence in the name of fighting terrorism. The WSF was a way to unmask structures that are not life-giving, a moment to say, “Enough is enough!” Change begins with each person.

Comments from GS people attending WSF for the 1st time:
-It opened our eyes and broadened our vision at the world level. So many organizations are involved in facilitating and creating “another world!”
-Even though we prepared, the WSF was overwhelming - it is an “animal” too big to fully comprehend.
-One thing we understood: all the participants had an urgent commitment to a new world, which is possible. It is up to us to make it so. How do we, as GS persons, really participate meaningfully?

-We took time to reflect and share both before and after the Forum. We think it is important that GS in the WSF host country take initiative for local participation. We can support the movement. We need to take initiative to invite
and prepare for regional and continental GS participation.
-It is also vital that the women and children from our projects and programs be present with us at such international gatherings. GS people must make use of such global events to enhance our awareness, strengthen our organization and build up our networks.

The biggest challenge remains after the Forum: to make strategies for action. It is time to join with other organizations in efforts to make “poverty history.” Civic education is crucial. We need to become aware of the power within ourselves and stand up for our rights, everyone’s rights. We need a commitment to a common good, we need prophets, we need actions accompanied by love, we need to speak before our governments and hold our governments responsible and demand accountability for policies that deny education, that oppress and enslave people. It is a challenge but this is our gospel duty today.

--- ♥ ♥ ---

**Good Shepherd at CEDAW**
The Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

**Syria Active at CEDAW**
Good Shepherd was one of seven Syrian NGOs submitting a joint report to the 38th session of CEDAW in May 2007 at the UN in New York. Sister M. Claude Naddaf was the Syrian GS representative who accompanied three Syrian NGO delegates to the session. The NGOs expressed appreciation for the government’s report to CEDAW but clarified that the government overstated its achievements on behalf of women. The NGO report went, article-by-article, naming and substantiating shortfalls on women’s human rights.

The NGO report calls for funding so that laws can be implemented. It names areas of social discrimination to women in both law and customs. The report points out specific negative stereotypes of women. A statistical section is included showing how poorly women are represented in education and public life. A section on Article 6 specifies the violence done to women in systems of trafficking and prostitution.

Good Shepherd is singled out in the report as the only shelter service in Syria to protect women from violence. GS is only 25 years old in Syria yet it has made use of tools such as CEDAW to challenge the structure and systems that discriminate against women and keep them embedded in poverty.

More on the 38th Session (English only although reports have links to official UN languages): <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/38sess.htm> Photo to left is Sr Marie Claude and colleague Madame Asma Keftarou.

**GS Hungary makes CEDAW report**
The 39th session of CEDAW reviewed the government of Hungary. Working with a local NGO, Sr. Gilma Calderon compiled a NGO report that was submitted through the GS NGO office. In line with GS direct services, the NGO report focused on the issue of prostitution. It outlined the violation of rights of women in prostitution and called on the government to enact laws on the Swedish model, to provide gender-sensitive social services, to enact public service campaigns against violence to women, and to set a 10- year program to become a prostitution-free country.

Since 1997 GS in Hungary has been working against the prostitution of women.
The collaborative services include prevention and formation as well as accompaniment and concrete support for women. GS in Hungary sees the connection between direct service and the systems and structures of society that keep women disadvantaged. Their CEDAW contribution will amplify the voice of women and help to empower women throughout Hungary towards greater social equality and personal empowerment. More on the 39th Session here: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/39sess.htm>

---♥♥---

**Migration on the Agenda**

While the UN took a lead in Dialogue on International Migration and Development last September, this year’s Global Forum on Migration and Development in Brussels (July 9-11) was a voluntary but State-led continuation of dialogue on migration. International NGOs worked hard to intervene so that Human Rights and Gender would have prominence on the agenda. Sr. Magdalena Franciscus was prepared to represent Good Shepherd in Brussels but, with very limited NGO space, Good Shepherd was not accepted.

Nevertheless the NGO office will follow these issues, so important to so many ministries of GS. We will continue to seek ways to raise our voices on behalf of migrants who are so easily marginalized and find themselves in vulnerable situations.

In a report on the Forum sent from GS JP Contact María Lourdes Orihuela, we learned that the Forum left a bitter taste because the governments made no decisions. Policies are controlled and selected by Western governments according to financial gain, not human rights.

If you are active at local or national levels on this, please communicate your activities and initiatives to Shalini and to Clare.

Learn more about the Global Forum here: http://www.gfmd-fmmd.org/en/node/92

---♥♥---

**GS Germany and the G-8**

Sr. M. Roswitha Wanke rgs, promoter for justice, peace and solidarity in mission, German province, excerpts from report:

“Promote strong justice initiatives giving priority to the problems of economic injustice…” GS Gen Chapter document of 2003

A year before the G-8 Summit gathered in Germany this past June, we, Good Shepherd in Germany, joined the “justice-now” campaign and participated in activities such as writing letters to Angela Merkel, emphasizing issues of the summit, and collecting signatures against unjust plans of the WTO. We signed big balloons in a project against the illegitimate international debt. We spoke, together with other women’s groups, for economic justice for women and for gender equality; and we reminded people of the continuing scandal of human trafficking.

We are only five Good Shepherd Sisters in our local community but all the Good Shepherd People of our province were collaborating, and the activities spread out to friends and family members. We spread the work in parishes by preparing a liturgy on Justice for the whole parish. We prayed for those suffering and for those causing this suffering.

One of us was invited to write a column in our local newspaper during the Summit. It was entitled *Protesting and Praying.* During the Summit week we prepared a prayer column relevant to the issues.

Across Germany youth groups and protest groups were active with prayers, candlelight
processions, discussions and demands for justice. There was some concern about groups promoting violence to further their message. But all in all we are hopeful that our whole society has taken seriously the issues of peace and justice. Political leadership cannot ignore the voices that call for a human world for every person.

The decisions we have seen taken by the G8 are not yet strong enough. Still, it is encouraging to see that more and more politicians are working on concrete proposals to make our world function in a truly social and sustainable way.

---

**GS Asia-Pacific Anti-Trafficking Conference**

The challenge of responding to the problem of trafficking is enormous; GS Asia-Pacific is active toward solutions. In July, the GS units of Philippines and Singapore-Malaysia, with the support of the GS Asia-Pacific leadership, sponsored a 4-day Good Shepherd Anti-Trafficking Workshop.

GS Philippines accommodated over 40 participants with Unit JP Contact Persons encouraged to participate. The workshop aims included:

- Increase understanding of trafficking with a focus on women and children in Asia Pacific region;
- Create a network of GS collaboration to strengthening the regional network; and,
- Explore options and plan for future anti-trafficking work.

Long before the July gathering, participants were each asked to take responsibility for the following pre-conference activities: Expose oneself to the reality of trafficking; gather data on how, why and where trafficking takes place and who is involved; explore their own country and its complicity as a route of destination or source and how crime networks succeed; identify organizations (government, religious, non-government, etc.) with whom to establish networks; update knowledge of local laws on trafficking; and gather suggestions about GS’s ability to respond.

The conference organizers made links to the JPSM and NGO offices who, although not able to be present, united themselves through letters and various communications to the conference participants. We eagerly wait to hear more of the results of the conference and increase our support for Asia-Pacific activities against trafficking.

---

**Events and Resources:**

**A World Fit for Children: 5-years**

The 2007 session of the UN General Assembly (in December) will review commitments made at the Special Session on Children five years ago. It will be an opportunity for the world to reaffirm a shared commitment to children, to advance the Millennium Agenda, and to build a World Fit for Children. Watch the UN and UNICEF websites for further information and background. Look for local activities on the CRC, Convention of the Rights of the Child: [http://www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/) (links to languages)
Empower Women - CSW 2008
The Commission on the Status of Women in March ‘08 will consider the theme: Financing for Gender Equality. This is very relevant to Good Shepherd and our congregational direction toward economic justice. See website for further information: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index.html

Economic Justice - WTO
Global Economic Justice is a topic of the ongoing Doha negations of the WTO. Be literate and look for local opportunities for advocacy on global economic justice. See: http://www.wto.org/English/tratop_e/dda_e/dda_e.htm

370 million indigenous people
On the International Day for Indigenous peoples (Aug. 9) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted the discrimination, marginalization, extreme poverty and conflict suffered by the world indigenous peoples. He called for urgent action to deal with these pressing concerns.

Peace - always in season
Keep up with International Peace news through Pax Christi International. Pax Christi International is a non-profit, non-governmental Catholic peace movement working on a global scale on of issues in the fields of human rights, security and disarmament, economic justice and ecology. See: http://www.paxchristi.net/

CEDAW 25 years
Twenty-five years ago the UN CEDAW entered the international human rights treaty system. CEDAW’s adoption in 1979 was the culmination of decades of international efforts to protect and promote the rights of women. CEDAW has provided NGOs with partnership opportunities to strengthen the status of women, to empower women and to promote women’s rights.

Around the World - GS Notes:

From Malaysia, JP Contact:
In June, Good Shepherd in Malaysia supported interfaith vigils to highlight infringements of religious freedom. The misuse of religion causes great suffering. Case examples include persons who are treated as “Muslims” against their will; detention for “rehabilitation,” when a religious choice is not recognized by the state; and parents who are threatened with loss of children due to religious conversion. Civil society action has the endorsement of major Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Christian groups. NGOs call on the government for legislative reforms. As Malaysia approaches 50 years free from colonial rule, it seeks a nation where all ethnic, religious and cultural differences can be resolved through peaceful engagement, mutual respect, and genuine dialogue.

From New York, Good Shepherd Services (GSS) honored nationally:
Adolescent stress accompanied by vulnerabilities such as poverty, death of parent, or early parenthood, leads many teens in New York to quit high school. In collaboration with the public school system, GSS gives an alternative. Social supports, intensive instruction, and personal attention empower teens. The GSS South Brooklyn Community High School has small classes and demanding expectations. Many “would-be drop outs” become successful college students. This school was featured in the national magazine, Time, May 14, 2007.
Congratulations to Sr. Paulette who oversees dozens of model programs that implement “best practices” and ensure quality services.

From Philippines-USA, Networks Supports Human Rights:
The US Senate has acted to bar US military Aid to be used against Philippine civilians, including civilians who are members of political opposition parties or human rights groups. The bill calls for monitoring of extrajudicial killings and abuses supported by the Philippine government. The US “war on terror” has created a climate of impunity in the Philippine government concerning human rights abuses.

The work of grassroots Filipino groups who spoke to US congress in March was instrumental in getting the US to address human rights; US citizens and religious communities also lobbied Congress on human rights in the Philippines. The GS JP team in the Philippines and the GS NGO office in New York were, together, active on these issues.

From Kenya, Against Trafficking:
Kenya has become notorious for serving as a route for trafficked persons to exit the country at the seaport of Mombassa. Some GS people were glad to work against this through supporting a local initiative, "Mijikenda." The Catholic Church has condemned the evil and is creating awareness through the Catholic Radio while congregations like Good Shepherd are raising awareness. GS saw how the evil of trafficking is disguised - last month sisters discovered that a “training center” offering German language, home management and computer skills was actually preparing girls to be trafficked to Germany. The sisters are following up on this complex issue.

From Damascus, Syria
In Feb. 2007 Sr. Claude Nadaff was awarded the Human Rights Prize of the French Republic, awarded by the Ambassador of France in Syria. The prize was in recognition of the work of Good Shepherd in response to women in distress. Friends and coworkers of Good Shepherd as well as many dignitaries, including the Patriarch of Damascus, were present to honor Sr. Claude and to share the joy of the award.

From Peru, a new JP website:
Congratulations to the Unit of Peru on the new JP website section. Go to the GS Peru website and then to the section on the Secretariat of Justice Peace:

Journal notes prepared by
Congregation of the Good Shepherd
See this publication on the website at:
http://www.buonpastoreint.org/index.htm

Clare Nolan, Good Shepherd NGO Office
Email: cnolan8345@aol.com

Shalini Podimattam, Int. Office for Justice, Peace and Solidarity in Mission
Fax: 39 06 6641 8864 Email: icjpc@buonpastoreint.org

Original in English
Translated in Spanish by Victor Carasco
Please distribute to all communities, programs and Good Shepherd Friends in your province. Thank you.