



## Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

NGO in special consultative status with the **Economic and Social Council** of the United Nations since 2013 and the **Department of Public Information** since 2006.

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RSHM at the UN

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### Introduction

Over the last two years our “News from the UN” has highlighted the importance of the **UN’s Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development**, featuring a different Sustainable Development Goal in nearly every issue. With this November/December edition we complete the cycle of **17 SDGs**, featuring **SDG 12 on Sustainable Production and Consumption** (see p. 2). What better SDG to focus on in this Christmas season where we are surrounded by so many pressures to acquire “*more, faster and better*”! The need for a vital shift in how we use earth’s limited resources



was highlighted in the recent **Climate Conference COP 23**. It lies at the core of our “care for our common home” as **Pope Francis** stressed in **Laudato Si**. “*Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it*”. (# 23) Let us take up this challenge, and work for a more just, equitable and sustainable world, “*so that all may have Life*”!



### International Day – Elimination of Violence Against Women.



Every woman and girl has the right to a life free from violence. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, the UN held an Official Commemoration of the International Day for the **Elimination of Violence Against Women**. The Secretary General, António Guterres noted that violence against women is fundamentally about power. It will only end when we achieve the full empowerment of women. The Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka highlighted how we must pay attention to the less visible victims of violence. Morgen Chinoon, Programmes Officer at Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe also stressed how women with disabilities have an especially difficult journey when they are subject to violence. Access to justice is

particularly hard when there is no knowledge of providers, communication is difficult, and the distance to the necessary resources is long. Ending violence against women is possible but it will take dedication from everyone to make it happen.

➡ [Watch a short video](#)....

### HIV AIDS and The Right to Health

The human right to health will not be achieved without access to HIV treatment for all.

**December 1<sup>st</sup> was World AIDS Day.** At “**The Right to Health**”, speakers from around the world spoke on their experience with AIDS and how we can work to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030. While there has been enormous progress in preventing and treating AIDS, 1 million people still died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2016. AIDS is not over. It is easy to celebrate the remarkable progress we have made, but “*complacency will kill*”. Mr. Maher Nasser, Director of the UN Department of Information’s Outreach Division, noted that the people most affected by HIV are the people on the outskirts of society. Dr. Nata Menabde from the World Health Organization explained that there are still 36.7 million people living with HIV and AIDS without the proper health care to meet their needs. In 2016, 40 percent of the total number of new infections occurred in vulnerable populations. A large number of these populations do not have the awareness or education on the disease itself. They cannot prevent AIDS if they do not understand AIDS. All speakers advocated for stronger health systems in order to treat, prevent, and educate on the disease. ➡ Learn [more about the day](#)



### Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Year of the Declaration of Human Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, “It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.” December 10<sup>th</sup> was Human Rights Day. To celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there were performances by the UN Chamber Music Society, UN Singers, and even a presentation by an Eleanor Roosevelt impersonator. ➡ [Read more about it](#) ...



➡ [Add your voice in solidarity](#), standing for human rights by recording yourself in any language reading an article of your choosing from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



### Targets to achieve this Goal include the following:

**12.1** Implement the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production... with developed countries taking the lead...

**12.2** By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

**12.3** By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

**12.4** By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle...



**12.5** By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

**12.6** Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

**12.7** Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities

**12.8** By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature...

 [Read more...](#)

### Fashion and Sustainability

**"Look good, Feel good, Do Good."** The UN Department of Public Information held an event on **Fashion and Sustainability** that discussed the environmental, social and economic impact that the fashion industry has on the world. In particular, this event spoke on the negative impacts of the "fast fashion" industry, or companies that release up to 52 micro-seasons of clothing every year. This type of clothing is not meant to last long; their products are often thrown away after a few wears and customers come back for more. One in six people in the world are employed by the fashion industry. However, these employees are often underpaid and overworked. In addition to mistreatment of workers, the fast fashion industry is also devastating to the environment.



Making a cotton t-shirt takes 2700 liters. That is enough drinking water for 900 days for 1 person. The fashion industry is resource intense industry. As consumers, we have power. The speakers at the event encouraged attendees to get behind "slow fashion": buy less and buy better. Shopping from fair trade companies or second-hand stores significantly lowers your impact on the environmental and social injustices in the world.  Read more about [fashion and sustainability here](#)

#### Fast Facts:


- ❖ **Approximately 60% of the earth's resources** have been degraded over the course of the last **50 years**
- ❖ **96.2% of our global water footprint** is "invisible", related to **goods on the market**.
- ❖ **Making a cotton t-shirt takes 2700 liters.** That is **enough drinking water for 900 days for 1 person**
- ❖ An estimated **1/3 of all food produced** (worth around **\$1 trillion**) ends up **rotting** in bins, or **spoiling** due to poor transportation or harvesting practices
- ❖ Currently **only 25% of waste** is recovered or recycled.
- ❖ If people worldwide switched to **energy efficient lightbulbs** the world would save **US\$120 billion annually**

### Caring for the Planet Starts from the Ground






On December 5<sup>th</sup>, we learned that **"Caring for the Planet Starts from the Ground"** at an event for **World Soil Day**. Speakers highlighted how the health of the soil leads to the health of humanity. **Didi Pershouse** from **Vermont** explained that soil is an important part of

preventing flooding and serves as a barrier between natural disasters and communities. When soil is healthy, it is able to act as a sponge and soak up water when intense rainfalls create the flooding of rivers, lakes, and other water systems. However, if soil is dry and lacks structure, flooding water systems will wash the soil away instead of using it as a blockade between communities and the water. Beautiful rivers become fierce when soil does not absorb rain. In order to create this barrier, soil needs carbon. While reducing the effect that our carbon emissions have on the atmosphere, soil uses carbon to build the structures and functions that create a healthy and stable earth. We must take care of the ground. We can no longer trample on it literally and figuratively. In the decades to come, this ground will have to provide ecosystem services to provide for over 9 billion people. It takes centuries to build an inch of soil, but it can be washed away in a single season. In the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt, **"A nation that destroys its soils, destroys its itself."** **Why is soil so important?**

 Watch the [short video](#)

### Campaign Corner

-  Plant trees by using [this search engine](#)
-  Measure [your ecological footprint here](#)
-  Sign the ["Beat the pollution" pledge](#)



#### Distribution:

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Portuguese translation by **Maria Luisa Pinho, RSCM.**