



## Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

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

News from the UN # 107

RSHM at the UN

December 2019/January 2020

*In his message for 1<sup>st</sup> January - the World Day of Peace, - Pope Francis spoke about PEACE as a “JOURNEY OF HOPE: DIALOGUE, RECONCILIATION AND ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION”. As we begin this new decade and the 75th year of the foundation of the United Nations, his words serve as a strong challenge to us. “We should never encapsulate others in what they may have said or done, but value them for the promise that they embody. Only by choosing the path of respect can we break the spiral of vengeance and set out on the journey of hope”. May our journey of hope into this new decade be grounded in the dialogue, reconciliation and ecological conversion that make for peace!*

### International Human Rights Day

December 10<sup>th</sup> is celebrated as **International Day of Human Rights**, commemorating the day in Paris in 1948 when the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as Resolution 217! The commemoration included celebrating young human rights defenders who “are not just the future, but the present”. Among the panelists were **Fatou Toufah Jallow**, an activist against sexual violence from Gambia, **Carl Smith** a Climate activist from the indigenous Yupiaq tribe in Alaska and **Alexus Lawrence** from New York who is engaged in activism for youth and children facing homelessness. Each of these young activists dynamically told their stories as well as leading a rallying cry for the UN and other national and international bodies to listen to **youth Human Rights Defenders** now before it is too late. All of this followed a lively game of **UDHR 'Kahoot!'**, in which our RSHM ntern took 5th place out of a room of around 200 players! Well done, Dejah!



### Women in Peace-building

**1325**  
women | peace | security

How are women being engaged in Peacebuilding, conflict mediation and the prevention of violent extremism? In December, the **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)** sponsored several panels comprised of UNAOC Fellows from 13 different countries, who spoke about grassroots programs and best practices to engage women and youth in peacebuilding. Speakers were young professionals, civil society leaders, lawyers, and NGO founders who are creating innovative programming for communities which are vulnerable to radicalization. For instance, **Marwa Shabbar** is a young civil society leader from Iraq who established a program helping young Muslim women engage in spaces that were historically exclusive of them. Participants also shared best practices for achieving the goals of **UN resolutions 1325 and 2250** relating to **women, peace and security**. These included unrestricted funding opportunities for programming and engaging women in decision making processes by implementing binding national commitments on meaningful participation and quotas for women and youth. ➡ [Read more](#).....



### Youth Leaders for Peace



“Youth are not the leaders of tomorrow but the leaders of today.” This is an ideal that drives **Rondine Cittadella della Pace**, a civil society association in Italy that is active in peacebuilding. Rondine provides its participants, young people from conflict-torn nations, with the education on peacebuilding necessary for them to be change agents in their post-conflict societies. It is just one year since the **Global Leaders for Peace** campaign was launched on the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In December, Rondine brought many of their peace ambassadors from **Sierra Leone, Mali, and Columbia to the UN**. They spoke about the Rondine way of peace, reconciliation and intercultural dialogue. The belief espoused is that giving young people the opportunity to learn about peacebuilding and leadership is crucial in allowing them to take their place on the world stage. Peace

education can change the physical, mental, and emotional status of future world leaders creating situations for optimal performance and contribution toward a culture of peace. We were happy to learn from Georges, a young Malian leader who shared his testimony, that a young woman from Kimparana Village, Mali, is among the young leaders being prepared to return home from Italy as a youth leader for peace. ➡ [Learn more](#)....

*“Youth are our future, and we must have a dialogue. This dialogue between the past and the future is important”.*

Pope Francis, Address to the UN 25 September 2015Y

## Holocaust Remembrance Week

**Holocaust Remembrance week** is celebrated at the UN during the last week of January each year. Since 2020 marks the **75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz**, the ending of the Second World War and the establishment of the **United Nations** in response to these atrocities there was a special tone to this year's commemoration. The theme chosen for Holocaust education and remembrance this year highlighted the continued importance of collective action against antisemitism and other forms of bias and discrimination in order to ensure respect for the dignity and human rights of all people everywhere. Exhibits, films, panels and the official



### Did you know that:

- **More than 300 human rights defenders were assassinated in 31 countries in 2019.** 40% of them were working on land, indigenous peoples' rights and environmental rights.
- In 2019 **121 member states** contributed **97,620 peace-keeping personnel to staff 13 peace-keeping operations** globally.
- **UN Peacekeeping** is the second largest deployment in the world, yet it accounts for less than **0.5% of the world's military expenditure.**
- Despite the fact that peace agreements with women signatories are associated with durable peace, between 1992 and 2018 **women constituted only 13% of negotiators, 3% of mediators and only 4% of signatories.**

commemoration in the General Assembly all developed this theme. As **Melissa Fleming**, the **Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications** noted at the Civil Society briefing on 30 January, "**Hate speech encourages the de-humanization of peoples and groups and is used to justify discrimination and other acts of violence...The same anti-Semitism that fueled the Holocaust fuels hate speech today....**" Challenging the denial of history matters, if we want to build a peaceful and just world! → [Leia mais..](#)

### International Day of Disability.

December 3<sup>rd</sup> was the **International Day of Persons With Disabilities!** Robert Hansel said, "Determination has no disability." Thomas Iland, an advocate for persons with disabilities echoed it today during a DESA event RSHM NGO had the opportunity to attend at the UN. Iland, other persons with disabilities, as well as various member states, all came together to emphasize that persons with disabilities need more opportunities for personal and professional growth and that the SDGs cannot be achieved without giving persons with disabilities a seat at the table!



→ [Watch the short video...](#)

## RSHM News Briefs



**Colegio Sacro Cuore de Maria in Fatima, Portugal**, has been an active member of the "**Eco-Schools**" programme in Portugal since 2009, fulfilling the requirements and meeting the criteria each year by undertaking environmental activities to bring about behavior change and a more sustainable planet. This year they were happy to receive their **12<sup>th</sup> "Bandeira Verde"** (Green Flag). something that strengthened their commitment to continue educating for the protection of the environment and working to promote the sustainability of the planet.

→ [Read more....](#)

From 2 – 6 December, two of the new **RSHM General Leadership team**, **Srs. Ana Luisa Pinto and Sipiwe Phiri RSHM**, participated in the **JPIC Promoters' Formation Workshop** held in Rome while **Sr. Mary Jo McElroy RSHM** participated online. Among the many themes treated were an overview of congregational and JPIC structures, the spirituality of JPIC/religious vows. the role of a JPIC promoter, Networking, Working Groups and Planning.

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As an activity linked to their Global programme, the entire **9<sup>th</sup> grade class of Marymount School of New York** visited the **United Nations Headquarters in NY** on 16<sup>th</sup> January. The day started with learning a little about the history of the UN with their history teacher. They then did **group tour of the UN**. This was followed with a session on the **RSHM NGO ministry** at the UN, where **Veronica RSHM** shared some of the main ways in which we engage with others in collaborating, networking and advocacy on global issues at the UN.

#### Distribution:

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