

Follow up on the 65th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference

By Ann Grosjean

Last August six of your DKG UN representatives attended the 65th Department of Public Information/Non Governmental Organization Conference at the UN. Over 2,500 NGO representatives worldwide met under the theme: *2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda*. The

opening session included welcomes from the Conference Co-chairs (Jeffrey Huffines and Jeffrey Brez) and DKG rep, Anne-Marie Carlson, Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee.

Samantha Powers, the United States ambassador to the United Nations, praised the progress made in advancing the 2000 MDGs (Millennium Development Goals). In order to continue this momentum she said the 2015 SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) must include sustainable energy, climate change and be relevant to all countries. She would like to see all people feel empowered by the new SDGs saying the goals “must be transforming, enduring and measurable.”

Maryanne Diamond, a blind person, spoke on behalf of persons with disabilities who constitute 15% of the world’s population. Since the 2007 UN Convention for the Rights of the Disabled some improvement has been made, but promoting equality in the SDGs must include the disabled for whom she advocates.

Andrea Carme represented Indigenous Peoples around the world. Issues with cultural preservation, land ownership, resources and respect are still unanswered.

Cyril Ritchie of ECOSOC emphasized the need to validate our goals, causes and values. He called for the UN, governments and civil society to work together to create the future we want.

On the last day, the Conference Outcome Declaration was adopted. Suggestions and recommendations were sent to the UN Post 2015 SDGs General Assembly Goal Writing Committee for consideration as



Anne-Marie Carlson, NY; Mary Ann Baldari, NY guest; Lochie Musso, NY; Grace Murphy, NY; Joan Goldstein, NY; Ann Grosjean, CT at DPI/NGO Conference.

they draft the Sustainable Development Goals being presented to the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

A Town Hall Meeting

By Joan Goldstein

Occasionally, “Town Hall” meetings are held to inform and/or discuss specific issues of the DPI. Moderator Jeffrey Brez, Co-chair of the UN DPI/NGO Conference Planning Committee, opened this session which focused on the August Conference and the Outcome Document adopted at that event. It was held in the UN ECOSOC Chamber. Maher Nasser, Acting Head of DPI, commended everyone on their steadfast commitment to build a better world and to insure grass roots organizations and civil society have a voice in resolving key global challenges. He thanked the volunteers with certificates, praising them for their dedication to making the Conference a success. Referring to the Conference Outcome Document he announced that it has been made available to the President of the General Assembly for dissemination and is now posted on the NGO Relations Website (see below).

Our Anne-Marie Carlson, Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee, focused on the fantastic attendance by people from all over the world (over 2500 representing 700 NGOs from 100 countries) and their enthusiasm as well as the 75 workshops and exhibits.

Jeffrey Huffines, Conference Co-chair and UN Representative of CIVICUS, spoke of the two parts to the Outcome Document: 1> the vision, recommendations, monitoring and accountability framework, global partnerships for an “Action Agenda” on poverty eradication, sustainable development, human rights and climate change of NGOs worldwide; 2> the Resource Document identifying targets. He emphasized the need to hold governments and ourselves accountable. The Document gives a comprehensive view of all 17 goals and the means of implementing them, and the financing of sustainable development. He recommends using this document as a base for developing our own advocacy strategies.

The panel of UN High level speakers shared their perspectives: Corrine Woods, Director UN Millennium Campaign UNDP, spoke of the passion for partnership and passion to hold it accountable; Lotta Tahtinen, Major Groups Programme Coordinator UN DESA, talked about the need for engagement in the community and at all levels where political decisions are made; Tala Dowlatshahi, Senior Advisor, Partnerships and Outreach, Office of the President of the General Assembly, stated that her office received the document and assured all that it will be taken into account. Four interactive events and five High Level thematic debates are planned.

Mr. Nasser concluded by encouraging all to share the document with our constituencies and fight for it. The member states are now engaging in a definitive process that will lead to the adoption of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

To read more about this Outcome Document, go to: outreach.un.org/ngorelations/conferenece



The UN at 70 - Making a Difference

Friday, 30 January 2015 is the date for the next CTAUN Conference at the UN in NY. “The UN at 70 – Making a Difference” is the theme which honors the 70th Anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter in 1945. The all-day event will be opened by a high ranking UN Official. The morning panel will focus on Peace and Security while the afternoon panel will deal with the Humanitarian efforts of the UN. Historical aspects of the creation of the UN, spotlights on Heroes of the UN and educational programs by the UN will be featured. Best Practices awards and Poster Contest winners will be announced. Special hotel rates are available as well as discounted group rates. Go to www.teachun.org for more information and registration. All are welcome to attend this annual event.

We will keep you updated on CTAUN conferences being planned in Houston, TX, Saturday, 11 April 2015 and another in Atlanta, GA, 2015.



Eileen Venezia is on the right with the children

DKG Rep Stars at Local School

United Nations International Day of Peace (24 October) was celebrated by P.S. 119, The School of Global and Ethical Studies, in Brooklyn, NY and your Representative Eileen Venezia was invited to participate. Eileen opened the ceremony with a reading of the “Preamble to the Declaration of Human Rights.” Then the elementary children, community leaders and parents led by principal Lisa Fernandez and a police escort, went on a Peace March through the Flatbush neighborhood chanting “What do we want? Peace! When do we want it? NOW!” all to the recorded tune of Cat Steven’s playing “Peace Train.”

Following the march the children returned to the school grounds where “Seeds of Peace” were planted in the community garden. Throughout the day, students, teachers and parents recited poems of peace

and read excerpts from the Declaration on Human Rights. If you would like more information about this great activity, you can contact Eileen at her email below.

THANK YOU to a dedicated DKG Member

Without the talents and dedication of Margaret Anzul, NJ, this newsletter would never have been! We give thanks and praise for the outstanding job she has done for 10 years initiating, maintaining and promoting DKG @ UN. Her exceptional skills at writing and editing are a difficult act to follow. She set the bar high. She has promised to act as consultant and we will hold her to that! Thank you, Margaret, and we send you warm wishes for many healthy, happy and fulfilling days in retirement.

Your DKG/UN Reps plan to continue this communiqué bringing you news from and about the UN, the people in the UN, and stories from your representatives as well (See Eileen Venezia's experience above.)

YOUR UN REPRESENTATIVES

The members of The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International listed below are your official representatives at the United Nations Department of Public Information and the Economic and Social Council. Most of them also work with CTAUN. You can email us for further information.

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