

The IBVM NGO Office at the UNITED NATIONS

November 2009

Mary Owens speaks to Subcommittee on HIV/AIDS in New York

In late September we fortunate that Mary Owens, already in the USA for Nyumbani, could make a side trip to New York. Mary was well received and appreciated. Her message: change from talking about affordable ARVs to **free ARVs** and lobby for access to the more recently-developed ARVs available in the developing world.

Climate Change Action – lead up to Copenhagen Conference in December

The many meetings and negotiations in preparation for this important conference have been in the news for some time now, unfortunately not with hopeful expectation. Let's pray urgently for government leaders and civil society (that's us) alike. This could be our prayer:

We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Take time to support projects and efforts you know about.

Let's each one be aware of what our particular's country's stand is, and affirm or challenge.

Good News for women: GA Adopts Resolution to Establish a New Women's entity

At the annual United Nations General Assembly in September, and after three years of discussion, a resolution was adopted that takes the next step in the process to establish **a new women's rights entity at the United Nations**.

The new gender entity would allow for gender to be represented within the United Nations as other development issues. So far women's issues have been dealt with as an aspect of other issues. The hope is that a new entity will be able to work with greater effect. Much needs to be accomplished to set this in motion; we remember this in our prayer too.

Other news: Ending Conflict-Related Sexual Violence against Women and Children

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton chaired a UN Security Council Session which resulted in the unanimous adoption of a resolution which calls for the end of sexual violence against women and children in areas of conflict. Systematic rape as a weapon of war has been ignored for too long. Now the US is leading this new effort to protect women and children in conflict situations and to end impunity for the perpetrators.

A resource:

"Half the sky" by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn "lays out an agenda for the world's women and three major abuses: sex trafficking and forced prostitution."

<http://www.un.org/apps/sg/sgstats.asp?nid=4067>

<http://www.halftheskymovement.org/>

62nd Annual DPI Conference was held in September in Mexico. It's theme was "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now." This web link will provide summary information.

<http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?article1595>