

# Shalom-UN/NGO Newsletter

Volume 8 Issue 2

April 2007

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## **Bolivian Government Honors S. Dorothy Young** by S. Patricia Ferrick

In a special ceremony the Bolivian government awarded S. Dottie Young (AM) a medal for her notable service to the people of Bolivia. Part of the text of the municipal ordinance reads:

“That the notable and meritorious Sister Dorothy Young, in the development of her professional activities of service to the canton of Anchallani, has realized important activities in her professional career and in her support in favor of education, health, culture, basic health, scientific activities, and solidarity.



Resolved:

1st Article – To bestow the decoration on Sister Doctor Dorothy Young with the coat of arms on the level of distinguished services for her notable professional labor and her valuable contribution to the development of the canton of Anchallani.”

Congratulations to Dottie on having served the Anchallani people for 25 years.

## **SSNDs Take Part in The World Social Forum** by S. Joan Mukhwana

The seventh World Social Forum (WSF) and the first full WSF to be held on African soil was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from January 20 - 25. The Forum brought together thousands of delegates from across the world to put social justice, international solidarity, gender equality, peace, and protection of the environment among other issues on the world's agenda. "Yes indeed another world is possible" was the overriding theme of the WSF. There were marches through the slums and protests against injustice, war, abuse of human rights, and globalization. The WSF took place under the banner "people's struggles and people's alternative." Most of the presenters, panelists, and activists identified the struggles of the people from various parts of the world and shared with the world ideas about building a better world.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame participated in the various activities that were held at the forum. Among those who attended were S. Cathy Arata, our international coordinator, S. Peg Malone, our district councilor, and S. Jacinta, our African branch representative. In total, 18 of us (sisters and postulants) attended the WSF. It was an opportunity to listen to the 'cries of our world,' voices calling for: justice, peace, equitable use and distribution of resources, democracy, tolerance, and protection of the environment.

One of our key moments was spent listening to three women Nobel Prize laureates speak to us on our role in peace building for a better world. Most speakers called for networking and collaboration, sharing information, and advocacy for just policies

For most of us it was solidarity with and listening to the cries of the peoples of our world. After participating, conversing, marching, dancing, dreaming, networking with our brothers and sisters across our world, we were left with the question ‘What next?’ As one Nobel Prize Laureate says, "Any single individual who cares can make a difference."

## **SHALOM Latin America Branch Meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina** by S. Cathy Arata

If the reports of the contact sisters of the Latin America Branch are an indication of the health of SHALOM in Latin America, we can say that “SHALOM is alive and well on the continent.” The Millennium Development Goals, the Social Doctrine of the Church, participation in the four United

Nation Days of Women, Environment, Peace, Human Rights, Amazonia, and the Cries of Earth and Its Peoples were only a few of the topics on which everyone shared.

Special attention was given to a discussion about groups that do not bear the name “SHALOM Club” but do in fact share the same values as SHALOM. It is important that we include such groups in the structure and reporting of SHALOM activities.

Letters were written to each of the bishops of the dioceses where SSNDs serve in Latin America, urging them to promote and advocate for the achievement of the MDGs at the CELAM (Conference of Latin America Bishops) meeting, which will take place in May in Brazil. The preferential option for the poor, always a theme in CELAM, relates to each of the eight MDGs.

Expressions of gratitude were given to S. Mirta Cucchetti, Branch Representative and S. Cathy Arata, International Coordinator, for their eight years of service to the SHALOM network. In a spirit of prayer and trust, S. Susanna Tomatti, contact sister for the province of Argentina, was elected to serve as the Latin America Branch Representative.



Left to right: S. Patricia Ferrick, S. Roseli Duarte, S. Mirta Cucchetti, S. Canisia Alger S. Inês Camiran, S. Cathy Arata, S. Suzanna Tomatti

### **Fight Hunger: Walk the World** by S. Cathy Arata

On May 13, 2007, Caritas Internationalis and promoters of Justice and Peace are again partnering with the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) for **Fight Hunger: Walk the World**, WFP’s global advocacy effort designed to create a sense of urgency around the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving the number of poor and hungry people in the world by 2015.



Last year, 800,000 people walked in 118 countries in 420 locations. Most important, however, political leaders took note, and on the day of the Walk, they pledged to do more to feed hungry children. Newly elected Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf committed to do more for hungry children, the President of Honduras pledged to use debt relief to feed more children in more schools, and hundreds of parliamentarians and ambassadors all over the world took part in this huge public demonstration in support of the first MDG.

Our partnership with WFP is based on our shared belief that the more citizens become publicly active, the more likely it is that policymakers will listen and act accordingly. The key to making this global event as successful as possible is to utilize the Walk the World website at [www.FightHunger.org](http://www.FightHunger.org). At this site you can register for Walks, learn how to organize events in your own community, post your thoughts and comments, and join a nascent but growing global community of activists dedicated to ending hunger in our time.

Last year, SSNDs organized and participated in marches in 14 locations, including Guam, Honduras, Ghana, the United States, Argentina, and Brazil. Organize a march in your area, and let us know about it.

### **Employment and Decent Work for All by S. Ann Scholz**



It is estimated that 195 million men and women were unable to find work in 2006 and that 1.4 billion people—half the global workforce—held jobs that did not pay enough to lift them above the US\$ 2-a-day poverty line. The [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO) has reported that in the last decade, although world productivity increased by 26 percent employment rose by only 16.6 percent. This era of “jobless growth” hit young people aged 15 to 24 the hardest, with 86.3 million young people unemployed in 2006.

In addition, the employment gap between women and men persists. In fact, the employment situation for women seems to be getting worse instead of better. In 2006, only 48.9 percent of women over age 15 were working compared to 49.6 percent in 1996. The comparable male employment-to-population ratios were 75.7 in 1996 and 74.0 in 2006.

The 2007 meeting of the UN [Commission for Social Development](#) focused on reviewing effective practices in employment and job generation. The findings will serve as the basis for the second year’s work, which will set forth recommendations for policy development at the international, national, and sub-national levels. SSND submitted two written statements to the Commission, one *Education and Child Labor* and the other *Gender and Work*.

The NGO Committee for Social Development is collecting examples of “effective practices” in the area of employment creation. If you would like to participate in the survey, please contact [ssndunngo@earthlink.net](mailto:ssndunngo@earthlink.net).

### **Girls Back on the Global Agenda by Ann Scholz, SSND**



The 51<sup>st</sup> session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW) reaffirmed previous commitments to ensure the full implementation of the human rights of the girl child and urged governments to enact legislation on eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and to put in place adequate mechanisms to monitor compliance.

Carolyn Hannan, Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, called the Commission’s work a step forward from the 1995 [Beijing Platform for Action](#). Meeting with NGO representatives, Ms. Hannan declared, “We have put the girl child back on the global agenda.”

The 220 girls and more than 2,000 adults, including the 26 members of the SSND delegation, representing Africa, Europe, and North and South America, deserve much of the credit. Girls were clearly visible at this CSW. They addressed UN member states at the opening plenary session and the high level round tables, participated in scores of parallel events, and lobbied their national officials.

[Vanessa Juarez Arevalo](#) of Mother Theresa Technical Secondary School, Tejedores, Peru presented the findings of the [Voices of Youth](#) survey to delegates at the high level round table. “Every girl should get an education,” was the key recommendation identified by the 1,318 children and young people from 59 countries and eight regions who responded to the survey. Respondents included youth with whom SSNDs work in Germany, the Gambia, Ghana, Poland, Puerto Rico, Peru, Nigeria, and the USA.

Panels discussed female genital cutting, forced marriage, child labor, trafficking, and the plight of girls caught up in war. Girls from Togo, Ghana, and Haiti told stories of violence and discrimination that they and their peers face and offered solutions to eliminate abuse. The panel, co-sponsored by SSND, included Agnes Agyemang Barnie, Notre Dame Girls Secondary School, Sunyani, Ghana. SSND delegates spent time caucusing with their peers and meeting with government delegates in an attempt to ensure that the outcome of the Commission--its [Agreed Conclusions and Resolutions](#)--reflected the needs and concerns of girls.

The locus of their work now moves to the national level where girls and women will monitor implementation of the commitments made in New York.

View additional pictures, read more about SSND activities, and hear directly from SSND delegates at [www.ssnd.org](http://www.ssnd.org).



SSND delegates included (front) Jamie St. Eve, USA; Ann Scholz, SSND; Agnes Agyemang-Barnie, Ghana; Linda Rogers Kennedy, USA; Vanessa Juarez Arevalo, Peru; Marleny Bardales, SND, Peru; Mary Peter Colantuoni, SSND, USA; (middle) Felizitas von Boeselager, Germany; Leonora Tucker, SSND, Ghana; Juliane Bungartz, Germany; Beth Huggins, USA; Yasmin Karimian, USA; Carolyn Jost, SSND, USA; Ethel Howley, SSND, USA; (back) Eileen Reilly, USA; Nadine Binder, Germany; Jennifer Testi, USA; Oliva Reekie, USA; Yvonne Nosal, SSND, Peru; Stephanie Braun, Germany; Caitlin Byrnes, USA; Not Pictured: Joan Burke, SND, USA; Julie Gilberto-Brady, USA; Joan Connelly, SSND, USA; Maureen Flemming, SSND, USA; and Michelle Quinn, Ghana and USA.

**International Women’s Day Celebration at St. Theresa Girls Secondary School, Gekano, Kenya** by S. Ebele Okoye interviewed by S. Cathy Arata

Not only did the SHALOM Club of St. Theresa Girls Secondary School, Kisii, Kenya choose to highlight the dignity of women in its own recognition of [International Women’s Day](#), but the members’ enthusiasm and hard work motivated the Justice and Peace Commission of the Diocese of Kisii to mark the day with consciousness raising and celebration. Information on International Women’s Day from the SSND web site was distributed. Posters made by the Justice and Peace Commission, with the theme of supporting women in Parliament, were placed throughout the town. “Affirming Women, Important for the Building of Society” was another theme that caught the attention of all those gathered for the event.

A special mass was celebrated in honor of women. Afterwards, SHALOM Club members gave speeches about the women in their lives. In his closing remarks, the parish priest reminded all present that women and men are equal in dignity and stressed the importance of thinking differently in order to act differently.

After the liturgy students and teachers gathered to talk about, “Women Mentors in My Life.” They alternated stories with the recitation of the [Prayer for International Women’s Day](#) and with breaking bread and sharing food.

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*Shalom–UN/NGO Newsletter*  
a bi-monthly publication of the School Sisters of Notre Dame  
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