



# NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 6 • JANUARY 2020



## SUMMARY

The information in our newsletters comes from various members of our team each quarter. The next newsletter will be about our active participation in the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council (24 February - 20 March 2020)

## IOLDC'S NEWSLETTER

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# THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF VOLUNTEERS

BY EMILIE GUIGNON



*"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much".*

HELEN KELLER

On the 5th of December, we celebrated **the international day of volunteers**. This international day has been created by the United Nations in 1985 to promote and acknowledge the power of volunteer work.

For the IOLDCs, this day is the opportunity to share our enthusiasm about the fact that 10 volunteers recently joined the organization. They will support our work for the promotion of the achievement of the sustainable development goals in the least developed countries (LDCs) and contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in the LDCs, including by participating in the session of the Human Rights Council and its subsidiary bodies. This is the opportunity for the organization to develop our activities while allowing these recently graduated students to gain some professional experience in their fields of expertise.

# THE FIRST GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM

BY ELENA MULLER

The Global Refugee Forum that took place in Geneva on 17 and 18 December 2019 is an initiative that resulted from the Global Compact on Refugees, which the UN General Assembly adopted in 2018.

According to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), over 70 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide. The vast majority of them live in developing and the least developed countries. Because of their limited economic capacities, these states struggle to provide adequate services for the forcibly displaced people they host. The Global Compact and the Global Refugee Forum seek to support these states and find ways to equally share this burden.

It was inspiring to witness the immense support of the international community, when I volunteered at the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva.

Different actors, such as government representatives, NGOs and the civil society, among them displaced persons, came together to share good practices and make valuable commitments. In numerous presentations experts from the Global South were able to discuss the challenges they are facing in terms of education, energy and infrastructure as well as their capacity to protect displaced persons from conflict, violence and human rights violations.

Over 770 pledges have been made in the course of the forum. Most commitments foresee financial or material assistance. While sharing the burden of providing for displaced persons is essential, discussing and combatting the roots of displacement is equally important. IOLDCs' focus on conflict prevention in crisis affected LDCs constitutes an important contribution to this cause.



# 30 YEARS OF THE CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILD

BY M. MAHESHWARI



The 30 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was celebrated in the Palais des Nations, Geneva from 18th-20th November 2019.

The conference witnessed participation from States, civil society and other stakeholders, but also children, who were given the opportunity to voice their concerns and discuss possible recommendations to protect and promote the rights of every child.

Each State was asked to submit a pledge to renew their commitment by the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Though progress has been made, there are **many challenges to be faced:**

- Child marriage,
- Recruitment of child soldiers,
- Child malnutrition,
- Lack of equal access to essential service:
  - safe and healthy environment for children,
  - child poverty,
  - social exclusion,
  - education.

*"Bringing up children and young people secure in their rights is fundamental to the future of humanity. Thirty years after it was adopted, the Convention on the Rights of the Child continues to be a vital guide for us all".*

MICHELLE BACHELET

# UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE COP25

BY IULIA DUCA



The United Nations Conference on Climate Change, COP25 that took place in Madrid, from 2 to 13 of December, under the Presidency of Chile and with the logistical support of the Government of Spain, gathered more than 25.000 representatives from 200 countries.

The conference has been designed to achieve the successive and necessary steps in the United Nations climate change negotiations process. With the agreement on the application of the rules of the Paris Agreement at COP24, held in Poland in 2018, the main objective was to review the pending issues for the full implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres highlighted, in his opening speech, that there is “no time and no reason to delay” the actions that need to be taken in order to “beat the climate emergency”. He also emphasized that parties need “to step up next year”, adding that “the world’s biggest emitters need to do much more.” Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the UN General Assembly highlighted that is “imperative” that the COP25 delivers “significant results now

Through the 2 weeks of tense negotiations, many significant initiatives were taken. Italy and Mexico committed to ramp up climate and environmental education, 73 nations announced that they will submit an enhanced climate action plan (or Nationally Determined Contribution). The European Union announced its commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050 and called for this example of climate action “to be followed worldwide”. A groundswell of ambition for a cleaner economy was also evident at a regional and local level, with 14 regions, 398 cities, 786 businesses and 16 investors are working towards achieving net-zero CO2 emissions by 2050. The UN Global Compact, which works with the private sector, announced that 177 companies have now agreed to set science-based climate targets that align with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and reaching net-zero emissions by no later than 2050.



Despite all of these, as the COP25 came to an end, many disappointment voiced could be heard. Among them, the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, who said that “the international community lost an important opportunity to show increased ambition on mitigation, adaptation & finance to tackle the climate crisis”. He also “appealed to the delegates of all Member States to convey a message of ambition to the world”.

# Climat Action is important

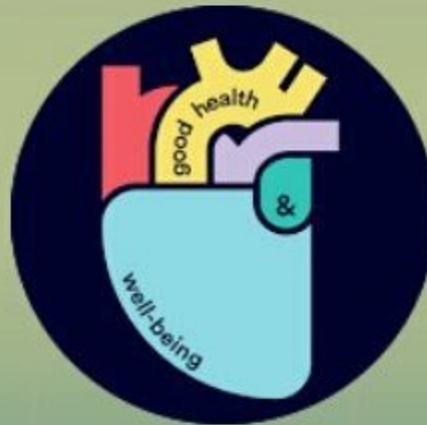
BY ALBULENA AJDINI

Environmental degradation is not an isolated case because the consequences of global warming are interconnected and affect several economic and social domains.

Climate change creates a fertile ground for extreme and uncertain natural conditions such as hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, which has serious consequences for :



**1. No Poverty**



**5 Good Health and Well-Being**



**16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**

## Quality of life :



- climatic conditions have a major impact on the quality of life of the population. Most natural disasters cause many casualties: in eighty years, they have killed 606,000 people and affected more than 4.1 billion people, whether injured or homeless[1].

## Health of the general population:



- Environmental risks are not distributed equally, with the poorest communities often facing the biggest risks to their health and from the environment.
- those will be exacerbated the situation of people already exposed to poverty and has a significant impact on their health and their well-being.

## Government and Institutions :



- Climate change can exacerbate tensions in conflict situations and it complicates the achievement of SDG 16 in fragile states...
- They are likely to be exacerbated by limited capacities from household and community level to governmental institutions.