

International Movement of Catholic Students
IMCS - Pax Romana - MIEC

UN Advocacy Team Report

2013 - 2014

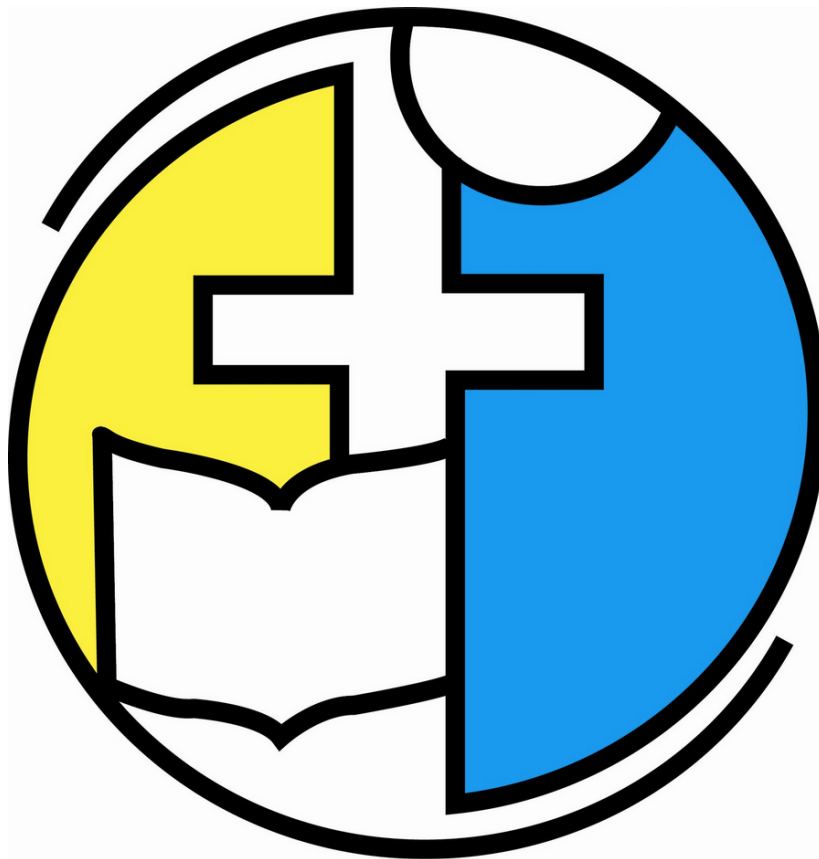
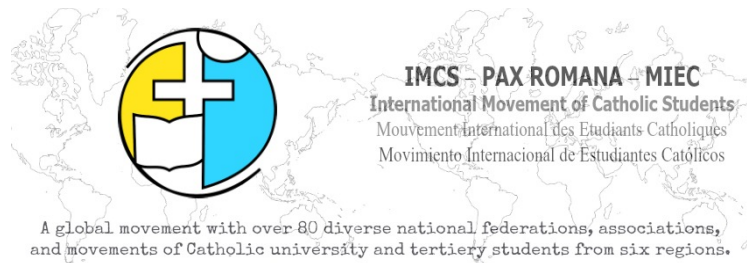


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Introduction:

The 2013-2014 year was certainly an intense but productive one for the UN Advocacy Team. From New York to Sri Lanka to Azerbaijan to Sweden and beyond, the UN Advocacy Team was able to take the message of Pax Romana and its millions of members to political negotiations, UN meetings, NGO trainings, and other important events throughout the year. Today, the hard work and efforts of the members of the UN Advocacy Team means that young people are moving closer to creating a youth-led and youth-based advocacy infrastructure in New York that can serve IMCS, ICMICA, ICMYO, the MGCY, and all other civil society partners for years to come. The UN Advocacy Team is laying the bedrock by acting as the first official **ICMYO Liaison to the UN**, and taking a leading and primary role in the MGCY. It is with great pride that the UN Advocacy Team presents this report and hopes the International Teams of the Pax Romana movement will accept and share it with all regional coordinators and national movements.

Organization of the Report:

This report is organized into **process clusters** of events and meetings. This is primarily because many of the meetings in which the UN Advocacy Team participated were part of larger policy processes. As a result, it is much simpler to read about the activities of the team in these process clusters.

Process Cluster 1- The Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals:

The Open Working Group (OWG) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was a process that came out of Rio+20, a critical event in the UN's long sustainable development journey. The OWG consisted of 13 meetings where Member States, UN agencies, the Major Groups (MGs), and other civil society stakeholders came together to flesh out what is now the foundation of the SDGs and the overall Post-2015 Development Agenda. Because of the UN Advocacy Team's leading role in the UN Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY), the voices of the Pax Romana and ICMYO played a major part in the policy advocacy and work of the MGCY.¹



Drafting an MGCY statement



The 13th Session of the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development

Primarily, the UN Advocacy Team helped in the drafting of MGCY statements, lead capacity building workshops (MGCY Youth Blasts) before each OWG, and took a leading role in bilateral meetings with Member States and UN agencies. The team's advocacy efforts throughout the OWG process bolstered the strength and position of the MGCY and of the youth-led organizations that were active at each meeting. At the final OWG in July 2013, the UN Advocacy Team spent the night at the UN and worked tirelessly with Member States, UN agencies, and other NGOs to ensure that the OWG report, which is a negotiated document that spells out what is now the SDGs, was as transformative as possible.² Now, it is safe to say that the goals and targets that will most likely make up the future Sustainable Development Goals have been highly influenced by the efforts of the UN Advocacy Team and others in the MGCY.

¹ General information about the policy positions of the MGCY can be found on its website, childreneyouth.org.

² General Assembly, *Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1579SDGs%20Proposal.pdf>



Process Cluster 2- The World Conference on Youth in Sri Lanka:

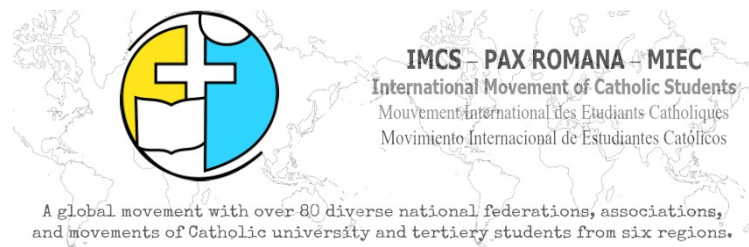
IMCS had the very great honor of continuing its work and efforts around the planning and preparations of yet another World Conference on Youth (WCY). After an open election within ICMYO in 2013, IMCS joined a number of other ICMYO organizations in the planning of the conference through the International Youth Task Force (IYTF), which was made up partly of ICMYO organizations and partly of local youth leaders from Sri Lanka. Of course, IMCS played a much larger role than the other organizations because of the fact that Christopher Dekki, the UN Advocacy Team Coordinator, was seconded to Sri Lanka with the help of the UN to work directly on the conference with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development of Sri Lanka. Nonetheless, this secondment only took place only after a great deal of pressure was put on the Government of Sri Lanka to understand the importance of having a member of the IYTF in Colombo working with all relevant partners and stakeholders. The need for the secondment became especially apparent after a number of IYTF meetings in Sri Lanka and New York in 2013 and 2014 bore little fruit, even though the IYTF was able to set the policy direction of the WCY and put into place a number of plans that, if followed more closely by the Government of Sri Lanka, would have ensured a more successful WCY.



The International Youth Task Force (IYTF) for the World Conference on Youth, Sri Lanka

Chris' secondment to the WCY Secretariat in Colombo began in the midst of the chaos of the final conference preparations. For this reason, his work on behalf of the conference was intense from the moment he moved to Sri Lanka. Although he was already privy to the problems and aware of what needed to be done, there was very little room for adjustment because of the immediacy with which his time and attention were needed at the WCY Secretariat.

After attending diplomatic outreach missions in London and New Delhi with the Sri Lankan Minister of Youth and ICMYO leaders from the European Youth Forum (YFJ) and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), as well as a meeting with UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, Chris moved to Colombo to begin his work. Upon his arrival, his first impression of the WCY Secretariat was that it was staffed mainly with volunteers and interns, many of whom lacked any knowledge of development policy and international affairs. Basic knowledge of geography was completely missing among so many within the Secretariat and this had a negative impact on how official invitations and delegate selection was organized.



Although everyone at the Secretariat was working very hard and with extreme dedication, notwithstanding the fact that most were volunteers, Chris noticed that there were many mistakes being made, namely in outreach to governments, UN agencies, regional bodies, and critical youth-led organizations. Those leading these efforts, specifically from the Sri Lankan Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), simply seemed as if they did not understand how to deal with such sensitive diplomatic issues. Oftentimes, it seemed as if the MEA just did not care one way or another. Instead of taking the lead and behaving as it should, the MEA dumped many of its responsibilities on the young people working at the Secretariat. The MEA provided no guidance to these young people and made no effort to clarify, for example, the difference between the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth of Independent States or the difference between the European Union and the Council of Europe.

When the time came to begin flight bookings and make final delegate arrangements, even more chaos ensued as those tasked with overseeing the bookings had waited much too long to arrange the flights. As a result, many delegates did not receive their tickets until the day they were meant to be boarding a plane for Colombo. Moreover, one of the two travel agencies hired to book flights was exceedingly incompetent. At one point, local members of the IYTF had to go to the travel agency themselves and take over the flight bookings. Of course, for a company being paid to do this work, having unpaid volunteers take over is outrageous. Nevertheless, it is proof that the young people who have been working on this process have been stellar in everything they have done while those with some form of political influence have often been nothing more than obstacles to progress. When the conference was but a few days away, the difficulties only intensified. Luckily, the IYTF was on hand to deal with as many issues as possible, namely, a ridiculous plan by the Deputy Minister of Education to have a dinner hosted and sponsored by McDonald's. As a team, the IYTF had decided to boycott such a dinner. Luckily, the Minister of Youth himself intervened and had the dinner cancelled. Still, the logistical problems with the conference continued to plague the members of the IYTF. It became so bad that Christine Sudbrock from ICMYO organization the International Falcon Movement - Socialist Education International (IFM-SEI), resigned from the Task Force. Losing Christine was a major blow as she was the one who had volunteered to organize the rapporteurs for the thematic policy round tables and was the IYTF member responsible for compiling their work from the sessions.

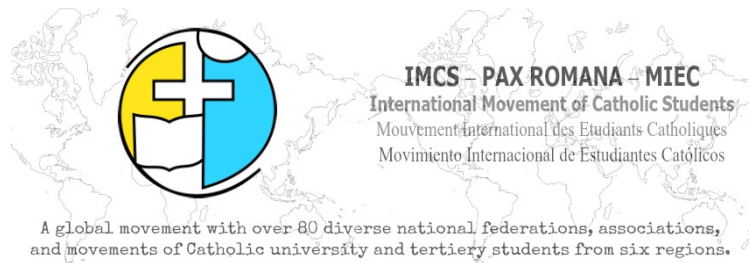
Nevertheless, although the list of problems with the conference is long and can certainly not be fully tackled in this report, it is important to focus on the successes associated with Chris' secondment. Thanks to his placement within the WCY Secretariat, Chris was able to ensure that what the IYTF put into place during their meetings was actually carried out by the Secretariat and the Government of Sri Lanka. This means that:

- A proper training session was conducted for the members of the WCY Secretariat so they could understand the purpose of the WCY and how it fits into current post-2015 processes, as well as understand the decisions of the IYTF and how to best carry them out;
- The zero draft of the Colombo Declaration on Youth was prepared and all initial consultations with local stakeholders and the UN were compiled;
- The initial draft of the Annex section of the Colombo Declaration was prepared and all additions were compiled;
- Invitations to important youth-led organizations, especially those that are part of ICMYO, were written and sent;
- There was proper coordination between the UN Country Team and the WCY Secretariat;
- There was someone in the Secretariat who could answer policy questions, especially in regards to current sustainable development, post-2015, and youth policy processes;

- The agenda and speakers list for the conference was created and finalized;
- The final selection of relevant side events and parallel events was completed and the details of those events that had been selected were transferred to the appropriate subcommittees;
- There was constant pressure on the side and parallel event subcommittees to make sure that all selected events were given due attention and were properly organized logistically;
- The pre-conference policy and advocacy trainings were organized as best as possible;
- There was always someone who could put pressure on people within the Government of Sri Lanka when it seemed as if things were not moving quickly enough;
- There was proper coordination between the Secretariat and members of the IYTF responsible for reaching out to specific regional bodies and governments, namely those in the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region;
- During the conference, there was a member of the IYTF who knew all of the key players and could reach out to the appropriate person when a problem needed to be solved;
- Someone with knowledge of ICMYO, the MGCY, and other youth-led constituencies was always present to liaise with those networks and organizations and ensure that their needs were being met by the Secretariat;
- The political follow up to the conference was arranged and properly planned;
- A mechanism was established through which governments and other stakeholders can be engaged following the conference.

In terms of the outcome document, the Colombo Declaration on Youth³ is certainly not revolutionary in regards to policy. It does not break new ground in the area of youth rights or provide language that is radical in scope. Nevertheless, it is a critical document going forward primarily because of the process through which it was negotiated. During the conference, young people were treated like a full Member State, with rights to negotiate and be directly involved in the policy discussions. This is certainly unprecedented and goes beyond even the very open and civil society-friendly modalities established by the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) and its progeny. This is mainly the reason why the members of the IYTF and many other youth are excited about what may come next.

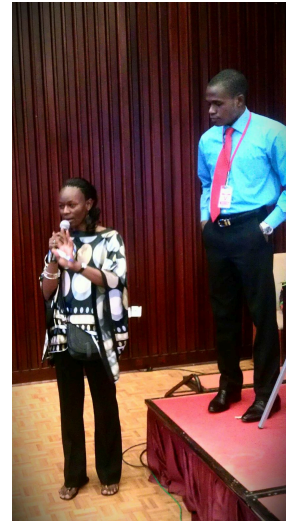
³ World Conference on Youth 2014, *The Colombo Declaration on Youth: Mainstreaming Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, http://www.youthpolicy.org/library/wp-content/uploads/library/2014_Colombo_Declaration_On_Youth_With_Annex_En.pdf.



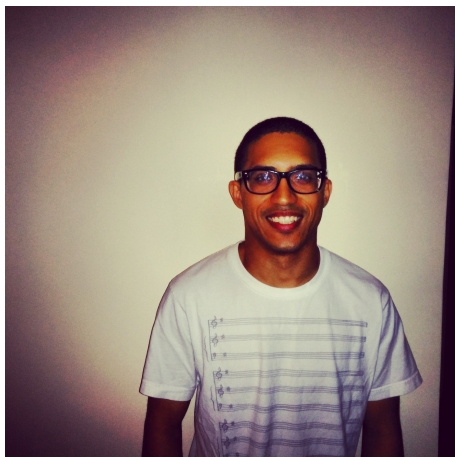
Vivek D'Souza, member of All India Catholic University Federation



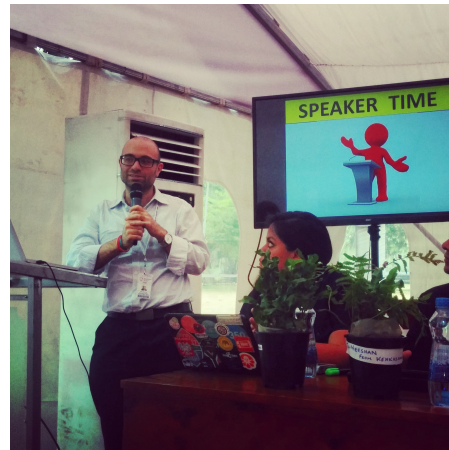
Felicia Parera, IMCS - Asia Pacific Coordinator



Chantal Bengaly
IMCS Africa Coordinator



Carlos Lopes, UN Advocacy Team Member



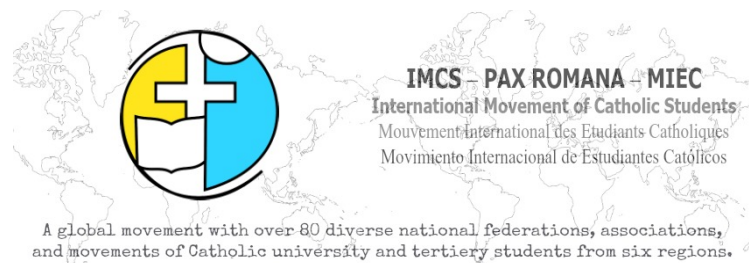
Christopher Dekki, UN Advocacy Team Leader



Vivek D'Souza, Christopher Dekki, and Sally Mouakkad



Vivek Dsouza and Sally Mouakkad as members Of the Social Media Fellows for the Conference



Process Cluster 3- UN General Assembly:

The 2013 UN General Assembly (UNGA) was an important one for the UN Advocacy Team. The reason being, the UNGA Third Committee negotiated a resolution on policies and programmes involving youth, which is a resolution that is put forward every other year by Portugal, Moldova, and Senegal. The resolution in 2013 was especially critical because it was the year that youth activists hoped to operationalize the proposals put forward in UN-HABITAT's Youth 21⁴ agenda, which deals with the methods and depth of the participation of young people in UN processes and policy making.

Together, with partners in the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the UN Advocacy Team continued its tradition of hosting an advocacy training for the UN Youth Delegates and youth-led NGOs active at the UNGA. Through this training, the team prepared the young people for their work and advocacy at the UNGA, and helped them to understand and appreciate the importance of IMCS and ICMYO's lobbying positions in terms of the resolution on youth. The team also taught them about the Post-2015 Development Agenda and other important aspects of ongoing UN processes.

In terms of specific language within the resolution, the UN Advocacy Team lobbied, along with the Government of Brazil and some other Member States, for the inclusion of an operative paragraph (OP) referring to the need to establish a permanent mechanism through which youth can become more involved in the decisionmaking processes of the UN. As mentioned before, this comes directly from Youth 21, which calls for the creation of a UN Permanent Forum on Youth. The team's advocacy around this issue did not go very far as there were a number of obstacles preventing success, namely Member States that did not understand or appreciate the importance of such a participatory mechanism. European and other western states were especially hostile to this proposal and fought against Brazil and its allies during the negotiations.

Although the final version of the resolution⁵ did not contain specific language on the UN Permanent Forum on Youth, it did contain an OP that called on the UNSG to report on the status of participatory mechanisms for youth in the UN System. Thanks to this OP and the UNSG's youth-focused Five Year Action Agenda, there is hope that the conversation around permanent mechanisms for youth engagement can begin again and hopefully be operationalized in the 2015 UNGA Third Committee youth resolution.

⁴ Youth Unit UN-HABITAT, Youth 21: Building an Architecture for Youth Engagement in the UN System, http://www.unep.org/content/dam/unep/documents/governance/Youth/Youth%2021%20-%20Building%20an%20Architecture%20for%20Youth%20Engagement%20in%20the%20UN%20System%20-%202012_EN.pdf.

⁵ Third Committee of the 68th Session of the General Assembly, Policies and programmes involving youth, <http://daccessddsny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N13/574/78/PDF/N1357478.pdf?OpenElement>.

Another major part of the 2013 UNGA was the MDG Summit, which took place during the High-Level Segment of the UNGA. NGOs from around the world came to New York to participate in an event that saw Member States commit to accelerating efforts around the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Also during the High-Level Segment, the UN Advocacy Team worked with members of the Sri Lankan delegation to ensure that the President of Sri Lanka mentioned the World Conference on Youth in his address to the UNGA. Thanks to lobbying efforts done by the team both in Colombo and New York, the President brought attention to the work that was being done around the World Conference on Youth during his official address.

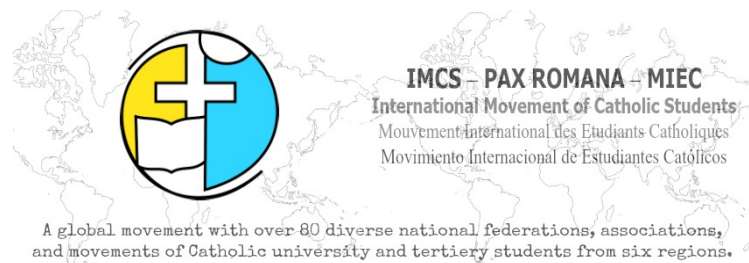


The MGD Summit - United Nations Headquarters in New York



UNHQ, New York

The 2014 UNGA was much less eventful than the 2013 UNGA, mainly because there was no youth resolution in the Third Committee. Also, much of the UN Advocacy Team's energy was focused on post-2015 matters. Nevertheless, the team did partner once again with YFJ to host a youth advocacy training and lead the UN Youth Delegates in their advocacy. Moreover, the the Government of Sri Lanka, through the Group of 77 (G77) Member States, passed a UNGA resolution on the establishment of a youth skills day. The UN Advocacy Team was able to work on the language of this resolution and assisted with the advocacy around its successful adoption. Finally, the team was invited to participate in a breakfast event with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte, the Executive Director (ED) of UNFPA, the UNSG's Envoy on Youth, and other dignitaries to discuss the the state of youth development around the world. The result of that event was then adopted by UNFPA and the Dutch Government as inputs into their programming work.



Process Cluster 4- The UN Commission for Social Development:

The UN Advocacy Team participated in the 52nd Session of the UN Commission for Social Development (CSocD), with specific attention to the follow up and review of the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY).⁶ Months before the commission, the team hosted an online consultation with the movement in order to prepare a more representative policy submission. The policy submission focused primarily on the role of youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the importance of the implementation of WPAY in terms of youth development and participation in society. It also stressed the importance of permanent mechanisms for youth engagement in policy making, specifically through a UN Permanent Forum on Youth.⁷

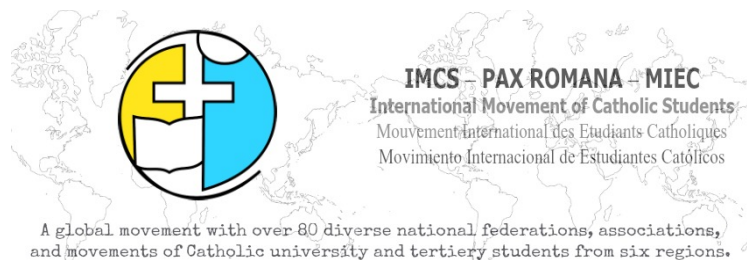
During the CSocD, the UN Advocacy Team, along with ICMYO partners from the European Youth Forum (YFJ) and several UN bodies, hosted an advocacy training for the UN Youth Delegates and youth NGOs present at the commission. Moreover, because of the great experience of the team in advocacy, the team helped YFJ lead the UN Youth Delegates in their advocacy around the ECOSOC resolution dealing with the follow up and implementation of WPAY which, as detailed in the report of the UNSG⁸, is not given the serious attention it deserves by Member States. Although the formal negotiations around that resolution were closed, the team was able to influence the process through the youth delegates.

Although the CSocD has traditionally been a critical meeting for the UN Advocacy Team, there has recently been a shift in the importance of meetings such as this. Thanks to the huge groundswell around the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the overall sustainable development process, the team's advocacy has refocused a great deal. The UN Advocacy Team will continue to participate in these commissions, but there are far more important and open processes in which the movement can participate more fully and completely and with tangible results.

⁶ General Assembly, *The World Programme of Action for Youth*, <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/nyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf>.

⁷ Pax Romana, *Statement submitted to the 52nd Session of the Commission for Social Development*, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/575/73/PDF/N1357573.pdf?OpenElement>.

⁸ Report of the Secretary General, *Policies and programmes involving youth*, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N13/587/74/PDF/N1358774.pdf?OpenElement>.



Process Cluster 5- The UN Commission on the Status of Women:

The UN Advocacy Team did not participate fully in the 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) because of the fact that Chris was living in Sri Lanka at the time and the team was more focused on SDG and post-2015 matters. Nevertheless, the team did conduct an online consultation with the movement in preparation for Pax Romana's policy submission for CSW⁹ and Chris Malano, the former Secretary General of IMCS, was in New York liaising with ICMYO partners, namely the YWCA and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), and helping other youth with their advocacy. As mentioned previously in this report, the team is focusing much less on ECOSOC commissions like the CSW and putting much more energy into post-2015 and related processes. For further reading, the agreed conclusions of the CSW are available online.¹⁰

Process Cluster 6- Youth Development and ICMYO:

On the youth policy front, the UN Advocacy Team has taken the lead within ICMYO to push for a stronger UN youth development agenda. Besides the aforementioned resolutions in the UNGA and ECOSOC, the team has been at the forefront of every youth-related discussion at the UN. Since this topic intersects with many of the others, it is broken down according to the relevant organization or body with which the UN Advocacy Team has worked.

ICMYO:

At the ICMYO Annual Meeting (AM) in New York in the fall of 2013, the UN Advocacy Team was eager to help lay the foundation for a stronger, more cohesive ICMYO. As a founding member of ICMYO, the team believed it was important for ICMYO to continue to grow into the premiere network of the world's greatest youth movements. As a result, when the reformation of the ICMYO Guidelines was being negotiated by the leaders of the ICMYO members present at the meeting, the team was clear with ICMYO colleagues that the only way forward was to create a stronger, more evolved ICMYO. Together with the IMCS President, who was present at the meeting, the UN Advocacy Team helped write the new Guidelines and paved the way for the start of the formalization of ICMYO. Also during that meeting, IMCS returned to the ICMYO Task Force and was soon after appointed to be the official ICMYO Liaison to the UN.

⁹ Pax Romana, Statement submitted to the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2014/NGO/113.

¹⁰ Economic and Social Council, Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2014/L.7.



The UN Advocacy Team also participated in several other important ICMYO meetings throughout 2014, over and above the monthly ICMYO Task Force calls. After the World Conference on Youth (WCY) in Sri Lanka, the UN Advocacy Team, joined by the IMCS Pan-African Coordinator and other IMCS members from various national movements, helped lead an ad hoc ICMYO meeting. Chris presided over the meeting and team members took notes during the session. This meeting was important as it allowed ICMYO to reflect on its deep, often problematic, participation in the planning of the WCY, as well as continue its drive to increase the number of organizations that have ratified the new ICMYO Guidelines.

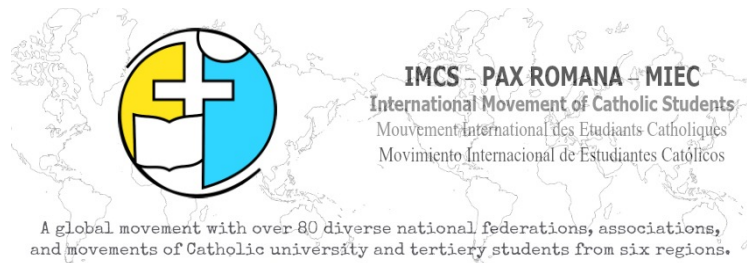


The UN Advocacy Team along with the IMCS Pan-African Coordinator, IMCS Asia-Pacific Coordinator and other IMCS Members at the World Conference on Youth, Sri Lanka



The ICMYO Task Force Meeting hosted by the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY)

At the start of September 2014, the UN Advocacy Team traveled to London to participate in the ICMYO Task Force meeting, which was hosted by the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY). At this meeting, the team once again took a leading role and delivered a report on its work as ICMYO Liaison to the UN. Also, the Task Force planned the next ICMYO AM and prepared for a number of relevant meetings that were happening at the end of 2014. Finally, the Task Force reviewed a number of applications for ICMYO membership and decided how to best proceed with either their acceptance or rejection.



In October 2014, directly after the First Global Forum on Youth Policies in Baku, Azerbaijan, the UN Advocacy Team participated in the 2014 ICMYO AM. During this meeting, ICMYO dedicated itself to a number of thematic and substantive areas that would be the focus of collective ICMYO advocacy. Also at this meeting, several new members joined ICMYO, including the United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY), the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC), and the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA).

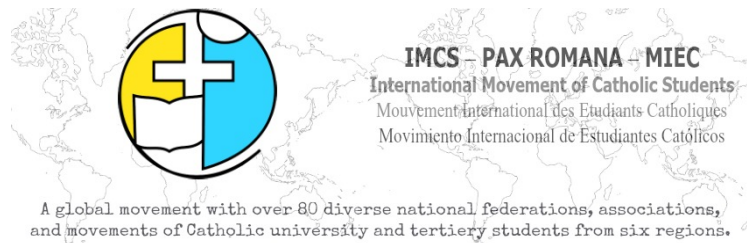


ICMYO Annual Meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan

Several other organizations also joined as associate members, including the European Students' Forum (AEGEE). Moreover, this AM was significant because it was the first time the ICMYO Task Force was elected, as per the new ICMYO Guidelines. At the time of the election, IMCS, along with the European Youth Forum (YFJ), received the most votes. This is a testament to the hard work of the movement and the UN Advocacy Team in terms of its work with other youth-led organizations.



The 2014 - 2015 Task Force



The 2014-2015 ICMYO Task Force consists of:

1. IMCS
2. YFJ
3. International Federation of Medical Students Associations (IFMSA)
4. World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)
5. AIESEC
6. World Alliance of YMCAs (WAYMCA)
7. World Esperanto Youth Organization (TEJO)



The 2014-2015 ICMYO Task Force Members

Further information and documentation can be found on the ICMYO website.¹¹

UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development:

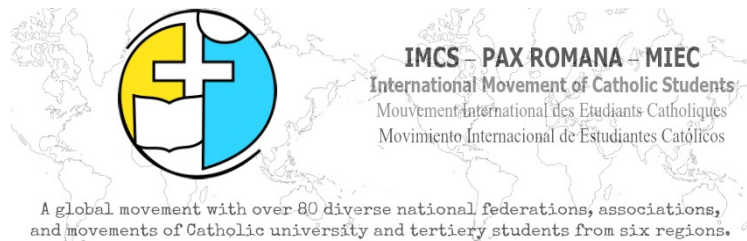
The UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD), according to its website, consists of "UN entities, represented at the headquarters level, whose work is relevant to youth. The aim of the Network is to increase the effectiveness of UN work in youth development by strengthening collaboration and exchange among all relevant UN entities, while respecting and harnessing the benefits of their individual strengths and unique approaches and mandates."¹² Although the UN Advocacy Team works directly with many IANYD members, it has, on multiple occasions, worked with them collectively, particularly when it comes to planning panels, side events, and larger, more major events.

In 2013, the UN Advocacy Team participated in an open meeting hosted by the IANYD about the UN System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on Youth.¹³ This meeting gathered young people from around the world, as well as youth-led organizations, ICMYO, and the MGCY, to discuss and collect inputs on the formal work plan of the IANYD, which is contained in the SWAP. The Youth SWAP is the document that guides the programming work of the IANYD members and is a major aspect of their engagement with youth-led organizations. During this meeting, the team helped lead a number of sessions and helped draft a response to the SWAP itself. Currently, the Youth SWAP is being reworked by the IANYD and it is likely that further youth inputs will be requested

¹¹ <http://icmyo.org/>

¹² United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, *Overview*, <http://social.un.org/youthyear/unianydy.html>.

¹³ <http://unyouthswap.org/>



UNDESA:

As the permanent co-chair of the IANYD, the UN Focal Point on Youth, which falls under the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) Division of Social Policy and Development (DSPD), is ultimately the central player in the youth policy field. As a result, the UN Advocacy Team has made every effort to have a strong relationship with the UN Focal Point on Youth. For the most part, the team works with the Focal Point on Youth to help train and guide the UN Youth Delegates while they are in New York. Moreover, as the technical team that prepares all relevant resolutions on youth in the UNGA and ECOSOC, the UN Advocacy Team is always ready to provide inputs to these resolutions once negotiations begin.

ECOSOC Youth Forum:

The 2014 ECOSOC Youth Forum took place in June at the UN. The forum was a two-day event that was divided into four sessions: Promoting Youth Employment - Creating Decent Jobs for a More Sustainable Future, Advancing progress in Africa beyond 2015, Youth: The Future They Want Beyond 2015, and the "Road Map:" Youth and the 2015 Development Summit. The UN Advocacy Team played mostly a support role during the forum, especially for ICMYO. Statements were delivered on behalf of ICMYO and the MGCY outlining positions in regards to the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Here, the team helped with the preparation of these statements and assisted with advocacy around these position.

The Commonwealth Youth Program:

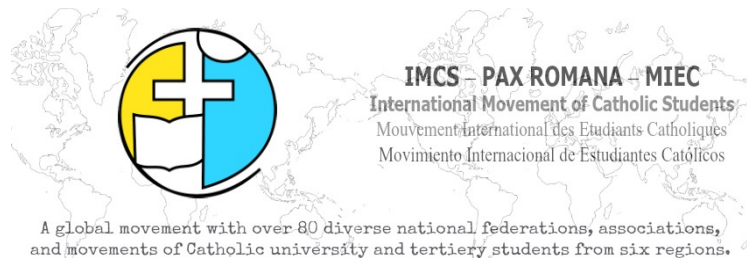
The UN Advocacy Team has been engaging with the Commonwealth Youth Program (CYP) for over a year. Since then, Chris was invited to the 2013 Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) in Sri Lanka, a sub-meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). Moreover, the UN Advocacy Team continues to work with the CYP within the framework of youth-related post-2015 advocacy. During the 2013 UNGA, the team, as part of the MGCY, helped plan a side event to launch the CYP's Youth Development Index (YDI).¹⁴ Chris spoke on the panel, and discussed the work of IMCS on the WPAY indicators in 2007. Interestingly enough, the launch of the YDI helped bring youth movements and older person advocacy organizations together. By comparing the YDI with the HelpAge International's Global Age Watch Index¹⁵, the MGCY and age organizations published a joint paper that detailed how age can be better mainstreamed throughout the Post-2015 Development Agenda.¹⁶

In June 2014, the CYP organized a meeting to discuss the creation of new youth development indicators for the WPAY and the overall post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Thanks to the experiences of the UN Advocacy Team with the development of indicators for the measurement of the implementation of the WPAY in 2007, the CYP invited Chris to this meeting in London as an expert on youth and post-2015 policy. At this meeting, a number of UN agencies were present, including the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), as well as representatives of other youth-led movements, and youth-friendly Member States, like Brazil and Sri Lanka. Chris led sessions on indicators pertaining to youth in conflict and violence.

¹⁴ The Commonwealth, Youth Development Index, <http://youthdevelopmentindex.org/views/index.php#OVER>.

¹⁵ Help Age International, Global Age Watch Index, <http://www.helpage.org/global-agewatch/>.

¹⁶ "Leave No One Behind:" A discussion paper on options for integrating youth and older people into the Post-2015 Development Framework, <https://childrenyouth.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/options-for-integrating-youth-and-older-people-into-the-post-2015.pdf>.



Office of the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth:

The UN Advocacy Team has fostered a very positive relationship with the Office of the UNSG's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY) on behalf of IMCS, ICMYO, and the MGCY. This has culminated in the inclusion of IMCS, ICMYO, and the MGCY in a number of projects, programs, and events hosted by the OSGEY. The current Envoy, Ahmed Alhendawi, is especially close to the members of the UN Advocacy Team, which means that the team is very often on the Envoy's mind whenever he is in need of advice or consultation from youth-led organizations. The OSGEY was established in 2013 and began working on a number of projects throughout that year and 2014.

One of the major projects of the OSGEY is the Global Youth Call, which endeavored to gather youth positions on the Post-2015 Development Agenda from around the world. This massive online crowdsourcing platform became a critical input into the post-2015 process. It covered a number of thematic areas, like governance, health, and employment. The UN Advocacy Team was asked to take the lead on the governance theme on behalf of ICMYO. Working with UNDP and Restless Development, the UN Advocacy Team helped guide the work of ICMYO and collected the many inputs young people made on the topic of governance. The team also did some work on the employment theme as it was the MGCY that was tasked to take the lead there. The Global Youth Call¹⁷ was officially released at the 2013 ECOSOC Youth Forum.

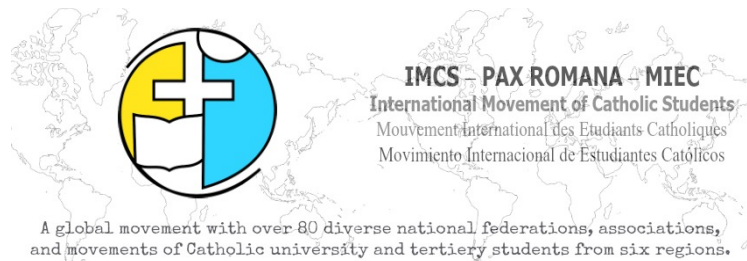


The First Global Forum on Youth Policies in Baku, Azerbaijan

Another major program of the OSGEY was the First Global Forum on Youth Policies in October 2013 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Forum brought together youth ministers, youth practitioners, youth activists, representatives of UN and government entities, and youth-led organizations in an attempt to review youth policies on all levels and share best practices in the field of youth policy and development. The UN Advocacy Team played a leading role in the planning of this event. It helped the OSGEY in the selection of youth speakers and panellists and also facilitated the participation of ICMYO organizations and the MGCY. During the event itself, Chris co-moderated two sessions on youth participation with UNDP. Although the Forum did not produce a negotiated outcome, it created commitments and a way a forward for youth policy on all levels¹⁸, including the beginning of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the World Programme of Action on Youth (WPAY).

¹⁷ The Global Partnership for Youth in the Post-2015 Agenda, *The Global Youth Call: Prioritizing Youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The_Global_Youth_Call.pdf.

¹⁸ 1st Global Forum on Youth Policies, *Baku Commitment to Youth Policies*, <http://youthpolicyforum.org/documents/commitment.pdf>.



UN-HABITAT:

The UN Advocacy Team resuscitated ICMYO's relationship with UN-HABITAT's Youth Unit. This has led to a number of opportunities for IMCS and ICMYO organizations, namely around the progress of the Youth 21 initiative. UN-HABITAT asked the UN Advocacy Team to spearhead the creation of an ICMYO Advisory Board on Youth 21. This body, which consists of a number of ICMYO organizations with IMCS at the lead, is acting as the youth voice around the further development of Youth 21.

This ICMYO Advisory Board played a central role in a meeting hosted by UN-HABITAT called the Asker Conference on Youth and Governance in Asker, Norway in November 2014. This meeting brought together the ministers of youth of Nigeria and Somalia, as well as leading members of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development of Sri Lanka and the youth desk of President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil. The UN Advocacy Team, along with the other ICMYO organizations, lead panel discussions and sessions on youth participation and the role of youth in the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The team also helped draft the Asker Communique, which summarized the outcome of the meeting and the political commitments of the participants going forward.¹⁹



Asker Conference on Youth and Governance in Asker, Norway

UNIDO:

The UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was the co-chair of the IANYD for 2014. Its term ends in March 2015. Although UNIDO does not have a great number of programs focusing on youth, especially based out of the New York office, the UN Advocacy Team maintained a close relationship with the youth specialists in this UN entity.

UNDP:

The UN Advocacy Team has entered into a strong relationship with the UN Development Programme (UNDP), especially with its new youth policy specialist based in New York. Since UNDP was one of the hosts of the Global Youth Policies Forum in Baku, the team has gained much from this relationship and will be able to play a role in future events of this type. Moreover, UNDP will take over as co-chair of the IANYD for 2015 beginning in March. This means that the UN Advocacy Team will certainly continue to play a central role in the work of the IANYD.

¹⁹ The 2014 Asker Conference on Youth and Governance, *Communique*, <http://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Final-Communique.pdf>.

Process Cluster 7- Post-2015 Process and the High Level Political Forum:

The Post-2015 Development Agenda process has been a complex and arduous journey. It includes a number of other processes that are described in this report, but also some events that require a separate description. As a result, this section of the report will detail a number of events within the larger post-2015 framework that are not necessarily part of a separate policy process, namely the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

The High Level Political Forum:

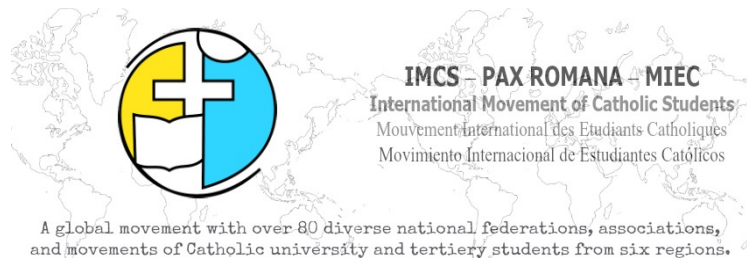
The HLPF is the body that is meant to oversee the implementation and review of the SDGs. It was established at Rio+20 to replace the faltering and weak UN Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD). The HLPF is a complex entity as it alternates between being under the auspices of the UNGA and ECOSOC. Nevertheless, civil society is meant to play a prominent role in the HLPF and at both initial meetings of the body, the UN Advocacy Team was active.



Vivek D'Souza, Member of the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF) delivering a statement on behalf of the MGCY

At the last meeting of the HLPF in July 2014, which took place under the auspices of ECOSOC, there was a bit of a fight to make sure that civil society would continue to play a meaningful role in the monitoring and implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. A member of the All-India Catholic University Federation (AICUF), the Indian national movement of IMCS, was invited to speak at the closing of the HLPF and at an event happening at the same time, the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF). Vivek D'Souza delivered the statement on behalf of the entire MGCY.²⁰ Now, the struggle to ensure a strong, participatory, and transparent HLPF continues and will likely continue into 2016.

²⁰ UNMGCY, *HLPF Closing Speech*, <http://childrenyouth.org/2014/08/22/hlpf-closing-speech/>.



President of the General Assembly Dialogues on the Post-2015 Development Agenda:

PGA John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda sought to make civil society engagement a major part of his presidency. As a result, he hosted a number of dialogues with Member States, the UN, and civil society as a way to gather inputs on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The dialogues revolved around a number of key issues, like youth, women, water, sanitation, and other topics. During the final dialogue, the High Level Stocktaking Event on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the MGCY was requested to deliver a statement on behalf of all of civil society. The UN Advocacy Team took a leading role in drafting that statement, which was delivered by a young MGCY member from Brazil. The statement²¹ was well received by all in the audience and left a lasting impact on the PGA's dialogue process.

Synthesis Report of the Secretary General on the Post-2015 Agenda:

The release of the UNSG's synthesis report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, entitled *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*²², was a milestone in the post-2015 process. It has helped to frame the negotiations and gave insights into how best to move forward on the overall agenda. The UN Advocacy Team, as part of the MGCY, worked with the Office of the Secretary General's Envoy on Youth to submit additional inputs prior to the release of the report.

Process Cluster 8- Financing for Development:

The UN Advocacy Team is the only active MGCY organization to take a leading role in Financing for Development (FfD) process. Although the topics can be quite complex, the team has been able to lead the youth conversation around financing the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The team has connected with other major organizations, especially Catholic ones like CIDSE, as to help civil society organizations better organize their advocacy and FfD efforts.

The UN Advocacy Team took part in the meetings of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF), a body organized in order to come up with a plan on how to best finance the sustainable development agenda.²³ The team formulated and delivered statements on behalf of the MGCY that focused on a number of issues, including illicit tax flows, transforming the global financial regime, ecological tax reform, the reformation of international financial institutions (IFIs), and a range of other topics. At the moment, the team is preparing for several months of advocacy during the negotiations that will take place in preparation for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2015.

²¹ UNMGCY, *Statement: High Level Stocktaking Event on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, https://childrencyouth.files.wordpress.com/2014/09/mgcy-statement-pga_stocktaking.pdf.

²² Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Agenda, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*, http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/reports/SG_Synthesis_Report_Road_to_Dignity_by_2030.pdf.

²³ Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Sustainable Development Financing, *Report*, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/315&Lang=E.

Process Cluster 9- Disaster Risk Reduction:

It came as a surprise to most when the civil society modalities for the next World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), which will take place in March 2015 in Sendai, Japan, highlighted Major Groups as the primary vehicle for stakeholder engagement. The WCDRR is meant to produce an update to the world's disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategy, which was initially spelled out in the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) in 2005. Already, the MGCY has been actively contributing to the formulation of the HFA2. The current zero draft has been highly influenced by the young people active in the DRR process through the MGCY. The UN Advocacy Team, because of its leadership in the MGCY, has been assisting with the MGCY's advocacy, primarily through capacity building and lobbying.

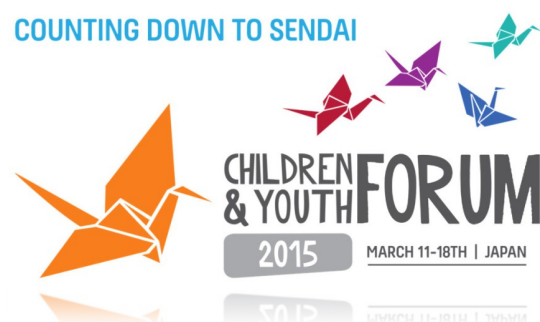


The UN Advocacy Team at the DRR PrepCom

The UN Advocacy Team traveled to Geneva in November 2014 to participate in the Preparatory Committee of the next WCDRR in Sendai. There, the team lead advocacy workshops during the youth forum that was hosted by the MGCY. Over 40 young people were able to take the knowledge they gained from the UN Advocacy Team and other experienced activists to the Preparatory Committee at the UN in Geneva. The team helped push MGCY and youth priorities through bilateral meetings with Member States and through statements delivered at the technical sessions of the Preparatory Committee. The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), the main UN body dealing with DRR, was key in helping the UN Advocacy Team travel to Geneva.

Now, as Member States prepare for the WCDRR in Japan, the UN Advocacy Team continues to support the DRR efforts of the MGCY through further engagement with UNISDR in New York and interested Member States. The next Preparatory Committee will take place in March and the team hopes to travel to Japan to help prepare young people for the WCDRR through capacity building workshops at the children and youth pre-forum directly before the conference. At the moment, informal negotiations are taking place

in Geneva and the UN Advocacy Team continues to provide technical support to the MGCY remotely.



Process Cluster 10- HABITAT III:



The UN Advocacy Team helps deliver the MGCY statement for HABITAT III PrepCom I

HABITAT III, the next step in the UN's global urban policy framework, will take place in Ecuador in 2016. It is sad to say that the process is not going very smoothly. At this point in the preparations (January 2015), the Secretariat has yet to formalize the modalities for civil society engagement. As a result, the first session of the Preparatory Committee, which took place in New York on 17 - 18 September 2014, was not productive for NGOs. For the most part, the HABITAT III Secretariat has ensured that the modalities for civil society engagement will take place through the Major Group structure. As a result, the UN Advocacy Team, with partners in the MGCY, attended the first Preparatory Committee and helped prepare and deliver a

statement on behalf of the MGCY.²⁴ This statement drew on MGCY positions from the OWG that dealt mainly with sustainable urbanization and housing.

Over and above the work done with the MGCY, the team also lead the advocacy efforts on behalf of ICMYO. As the ICMYO UN Liaison, the UN Advocacy Team submitted the position of ICMYO on the HABITAT III process.²⁵ These positions revolve mainly around youth participation and on the further development of HABITAT's Youth 21 initiative. Because of the direct work of the team on Youth 21 with HABITAT's Youth Unit, the team was strategically placed during the Preparatory Committee to continue to lobby HABITAT and other interested stakeholders to make sure that there is renewed energy around Youth 21 and its call for the establishment of a UN Permanent Forum on Youth.



The MGCY at the HABITAT III PrepCom

²⁴ UNMGCY, *Intervention for HABITAT III Preparatory Meeting 1*, <http://childrencyouth.org/2014/09/18/intervention-for-habitat-iii-prepcom-1/>.
²⁵ ICMYO, *Input of ICMYO into the HABITAT III Preparatory Process*, <https://icmyo2.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/icmyo-input-into-habitat-iii.pdf>.



Process Cluster 11- World Humanitarian Summit:

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), which is being hosted by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), will take place in Istanbul in 2016. The WHS was initiated by UNSG Ban Ki-Moon as to renew the world's coordination of humanitarian assistance. OCHA reached out to the UN Advocacy Team to discuss how to involve youth in the WHS consultation and policy process. After making the necessary connections, OCHA is now working with the MGCY and ICMYO organizations to establish a WHS Youth Task Force, which will be the lead youth body throughout the WHS process. The team is playing a leading role in the creation of the Task Force and will participate in its work. Already, a survey is being formulated to gather the voices of youth in preparation for the WHS.

Other Notable Events:

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Youth Solidarity Fund Training (5 - 10 February 2014):

UN Advocacy Team member, Carlos Lopes, attended a training hosted by the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) in Istanbul, Turkey. The training featured four days of workshops on the topics of gender mainstreaming, evaluation and monitoring, organizational strengthening and development, and social entrepreneurship. The training session primarily focused on smaller youth-led organizations that were early in their life cycle. An important development occurred during these sessions in which organizations were granted a donor-mapping package: Pages of organizations the UNAOC had researched that would help Pax Romana in achieving its goals. Each of these packages was specifically curated for each individual organization to meet appropriate goals and targets.



Rio+20s/Children and Youth International Board Meeting (May 2014):

Directly after the World Conference on Youth in Sri Lanka, the members of Rio+20s met in order to elect a new board and chart a way forward for the organization and the MGCY. Essentially, Rio+20s is the body that oversees the finances of the MGCY. As a result, the board at the time believed it was important to expand the number of board members and seek to elect a more diverse group of

people. Chris and Aashish Khullar, the UN Advocacy Team's Expert on Sustainable Development Policy, were elected to the board and now work with other young people from every corner of the globe on the programming work that allows the Major Groups to actually receive the grants earmarked for them by organizations like the European Union. In order to move away from a strong association with the Rio+20 conference, the organization has now changed its name to Children and Youth International (CYI) and is in the process of finalizing the projects and programs that will release funds from a number of grants to the MGCY.

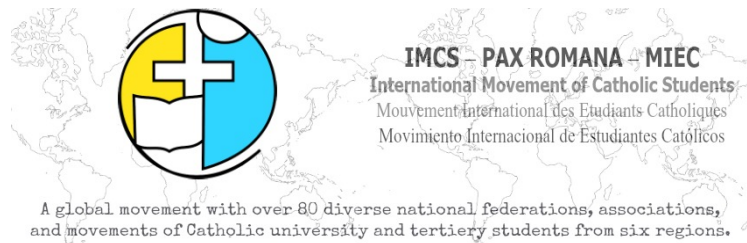
World We Want Trainings (Spring and Fall 2014):



Pictures of UN Advocacy Team Member Anna Marienko in Bonn, Germany



UN Advocacy Team Member, Anna Marienko, represented IMCS and the MGCY at the *WorldWeWant.de and Friends* workshop in Bonn, Germany in the spring of 2014, as well as in Berlin in the fall of 2014. Twenty young people between the ages of 15 and 21 coming from different countries, with different social, cultural and economic backgrounds, but having a common vision of a fair and sustainable future for all, attended the workshop. The workshop aimed at integrating the voices of youth from all over the world into the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It allowed young people to discuss, develop, and share ideas and suggestions for the "World of Tomorrow" that future leaders and global citizens would inherit. It was observed that although *WorldWeWant.de* is a fairly new program, it has already initiated significant steps in terms of helping young people to voice their concerns and demands around the international sustainable development debates. Conceived in 2013 by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German National Committee for UNICEF, *WorldWeWant.de* is part of the current consultations on the SDGs and has been organized with the help of the German Development Policy Forum (GIZ). The BMZ made the workshops open to international participants in order to widen the areas of discussion and include the voices of young people not only from developed countries, but from across the globe.



European Youth Forum United Nations Advocacy Meeting (June 2014):

The UN Advocacy Team was invited to help lead and plan the European Youth Forum (YFJ) annual UN Advocacy Meeting (UNAM) in Brussels. While there, the team lead sessions on advocacy, general UN processes, the MGCY, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This program is meant to help the UN Youth Delegates from Europe and some of their NGO colleagues prepare for the UNGA and other UN meetings. This year, the UN Advocacy Team's participation helped to solidify important relationships between the team and the UN Youth Delegates, an essential means to improving advocacy around UN youth policy.

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations - EF Summer Schools (2013 - 2014):

Chris has played and continues to play a leading role in the UNAOC - EF Summer Schools, the UNAOC's training workshop for young social entrepreneurs. Chris conducts trainings on advocacy, especially advocacy around the UN and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Chris has also played a central part in helping to expand the Summer School to include more youth activists coming through other UNAOC youth programs, like the Youth Solidarity Fund. Chris will continue to support the Summer School and other UNAOC events as to maintain the strong relationship IMCS has with the UNAOC.



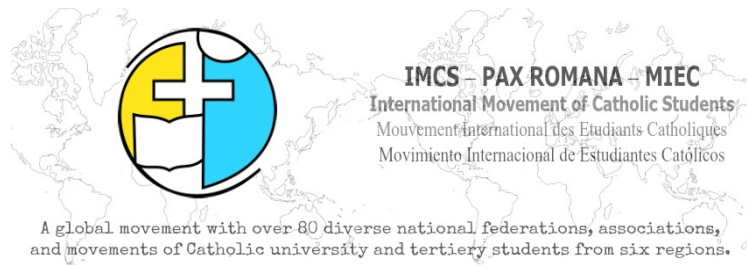
Christopher Dekki at the UNAOC - EF Summer School Event

UN Department of Public Information NGO Conference (August 2014):

Chris and Aashish played leading roles in this year's UN DPI/NGO Conference. They were invited to sit on the drafting committee of the conference's outcome document. Although this role came as a bit of a surprise to the UN Advocacy Team, Chris and Aashish were able to work together with the other members of the committee to engage the NGOs active at the conference and gather their views on the OWG report and the overall SDG framework. Chris and Aashish were also able to secure young people to read the outcome document aloud at the conclusion of the conference. The outcome document is quite extensive and contains a plethora of suggested additions and changes to the OWG SDG report.²⁶

The UN Advocacy Team also took advantage of its role at the conference to reach out and network with other NGOs, namely Muslims for Progressive Values (MPV). MPV is seeking to engage with the MGCY, ICMYO, and others and the UN Advocacy Team has been helping MPV to accomplish this.

²⁶ 65th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, Outcome Document - Declaration, <http://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/files/2014/09/Declaration-Final.pdf>.

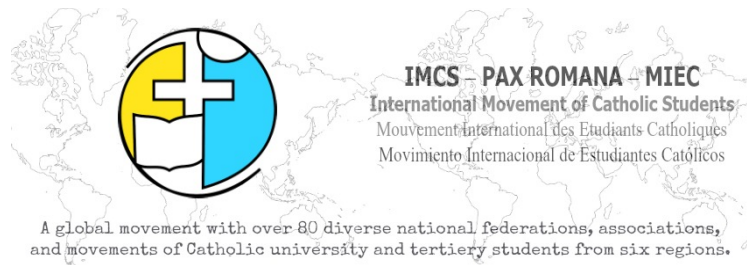


International Union of Socialist Youth Global Seminar (November 2014):

The International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY), a leading political movement in ICMYO, invited Chris and Aashish to their Global Seminar in Stockholm, Sweden in November 2014. Chris and Aashish conducted a number of workshops on the UN and the Post-2015 Development Agenda and helped the participants of the Global Seminar formulate a post-2015 policy and advocacy roadmap for IUSY.



Christopher Dekki addressing young people during the IUSY Global Seminar in Stockholm, Sweden



Conclusion:

The UN Advocacy Team is ready to take 2015 head on. As the Post-2015 Development Agenda negotiations begin in earnest, the UN Advocacy Team is poised to help lead ICMYO and the MGCY in representing the views of young people globally. The team is also working on a number of projects that can help put into place a framework for the participation of youth in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Moreover, Chris was asked by the UNSG's Envoy on Youth to advise his office on the post-2015 negotiations and how to better link his work with the priorities of youth-led organizations and ICMYO. The goal now is to ensure that all of the work that has been done to promote a just, transformative, and inclusive development agenda, is translated into development on the ground for all people everywhere.