

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2025 | VOLUME 9 ISSUE 1



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## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

Dear friends,

Welcome to the first edition of the MGA Newsletter for 2025! We hope you had a joyful Christmas & New Year break and are settling into the year with energy and optimism. We are delighted to be back on board and connecting with our global Mercy community once again.

We are incredibly excited for everything in store for 2025. In terms of upcoming events at the United Nations, the Commission for Social Development is set to take place from 10 – 14 February, followed by the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) from 10 – 21 March. Our team is collaborating with the UN NGO community to host two parallel events alongside these conferences. Read on for more details.

The CSW will coincide with the New York City immersion of Cohort 4 of the MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship. We can't wait to welcome the Fellows to New York, where they'll engage in learning and advocacy around the theme of 'Leading with Dignity'.

Other significant moments on the horizon include the UN Oceans Conference in June, the 4th International Conference for Financing for Development in June and July, the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, the 15th GFMD Summit, the Second World Social Summit, and COP30 in November.

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This year, we will continue to focus on our priority justice issues: Water, Migration, and Women's Leadership. We look forward to advancing the Mercy Water Justice Coalition and launching two new Task Forces in preparation for the greatly anticipated Second World Summit for Social Development and COP30 in November. If you're passionate about the issues of poverty eradication, decent work, social inclusion and climate justice – keep your eyes peeled!

We look forward to the adventures ahead, and please remember that we love hearing from you. Contact us anytime at [mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie](mailto:mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie)

Yours faithfully,  
The MGA Team



## • *Reflections on a Jubilee Year*

Today, the announcement of a Gaza ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas is very welcome news and a great sign of hope for the world.

As the final negotiations for a ceasefire are put into place, we pray that peace will prevail. In particular, we remember those traumatised by the violence that has transpired and those who have lost loved ones and who continue to experience immense grief and sorrow. May they find some comfort and consolation in all peace making efforts. In this Jubilee year, declared as the 'Jubilee Year of Hope' by Pope Francis, it is indeed heartening that 2025 should begin with such promising news of peace.

When first announcing the Jubilee Year of Hope, Pope Francis stated, "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far sighted vision." This year as part of fanning the flame of hope and bringing about a new vision, the Mercy Global Action office will continue to pray for peace in all areas of our world where conflicts persist. We will also join with other faith-based organisations in calling for the cancellation of debt for those countries experiencing debilitating financial concerns. The forgiveness of debt is traditionally a biblical practice of Jubilee years. 2025 comes at a critical time when the world faces an unprecedented crisis, with:

- Over 100 countries in a debt crisis, with 65% of their debt controlled by private lenders
- 60% of low-income countries at or near debt distress
- 3.3 billion people living in countries where debt repayments outpace essential spending on health and education

*(Caritas Internationalis)*

We call on all throughout the Mercy World to respond to the call of Pope Francis to be 'Pilgrims of Hope' and to join in the work of Mercy Global Action to bring about peace and justice.





## MERCY GLOBAL ACTION EMERGING LEADERS FELLOWSHIP

### APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR COHORT 5

DEADLINE TO APPLY:  
JANUARY 24, 2025



## One Week Left to Apply for Cohort 5 of the MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship (2025-2026)!

The Mercy Global Action Office is pleased to invite expressions of interest for the MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship, a fully funded international leadership program designed to empower women to create positive change in their communities and build meaningful connections within the global Mercy World.

This transformative fellowship combines three international immersions, virtual webinars, interactive learning modules, mentorship, and more, providing a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth. Fellows are supported to expand their creative and critical thinking, enhance their collaborative leadership skills, and engage in deep personal and theological reflection. As a core component of the program, each Fellow undertakes a research project on a justice issue of their choice, applying their learning to a real-world problem that aligns with their passions and community needs.

If you or someone you know would be a great fit for this opportunity, please refer to the program information pack below for more details on how to apply:

[\*View the Program Information Pack\*](#)

Applications are due by January 24, 2025 to [mariettalatonio@mercyinternational.ie](mailto:mariettalatonio@mercyinternational.ie)



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE

Image: Canva license

### • *International Migrants Day Event 2024*

On Monday, 16 December, the NGO Committee on Migration, in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Canada, Mexico, and Luxembourg, co-organized a reception in honor of International Migrants Day entitled "Bringing Communities Together Through Art." This was the third year that the NGO CoM has collaborated with Canada to organize this event showcasing the arts as a means of promoting social cohesion and inclusion for migrants and their communities.

At the event, MGA's Cecilie Kern, in her role as Chair of the NGO CoM, delivered opening remarks, along with Ambassador Bob Rae from Canada, Ambassador Hector Vasconcelos from Mexico, and Ambassador Olivier Maes from Luxembourg. In her remarks Cecilie said, *"Art transcends language, culture, and borders. It creates spaces where diverse experiences can be shared, understood, and celebrated. Through its universal language, art can celebrate the shared humanity among us, challenge stereotypes, and counter misinformation, replacing fear and misunderstanding with empathy and connection."*

Rather than holding a traditional panel-style event, the Permanent Mission of Canada transformed into an art gallery, offering a dynamic and interactive approach that allowed participants to network with each other and talk to the featured artists in order to raise awareness and mobilize action to create inclusive and cohesive societies.

Participating artists included:

- [Nathalie Sayago](#), a photojournalist and documentary photographer focusing on social and human rights issues, based in Venezuela and New York City
- [Sanika Phawde](#), an illustrator, educator, cartoonist and reportage artist born and raised in India and based in Boston whose work strives to capture and communicate instances of emotional connection and immigrant culture, and
- [Grupo de Mujeres Latinas](#), a program that focuses on capacity building and fostering community through skills classes on topics such as sewing and crafts, based in the Bronx.



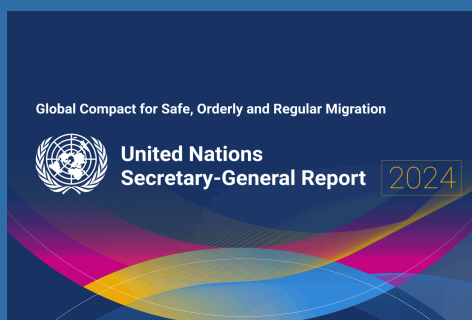
# USEFUL RESOURCES:



'Spes Non Confundit'  
Bull of Indiction of the Ordinary  
Jubilee of the Year 2025  
- Pope Francis



'Awakening to a New Consciousness  
on Extractivism' Webinar  
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas



2024 Report of the UN Secretary-  
General on the Implementation of  
the Global Compact for Safe,  
Orderly and Regular Migration



## UPCOMING EVENTS & INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS

- January 24:
  - Applications due for MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship
  - International Day of Education
- February 10-14: 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development
  - MGA side event: 13 February, 10:00-11:15am EST - "Centering homelessness in the light of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and achieving Agenda 2030." In-person event (UN HQ, CR E)
- March 10-21: 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
  - MGA parallel event: 20 March, 8:30-10:00am EDT - "Women, Water, and Extractivism: Reclaiming Resources, Restoring Rights, Building Justice." [Zoom Registration](#)



Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative fortnightly e-newsletter (MercyNews). Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)  
Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations:

[\[Link\]](#)