



Human Rights Office

International Institute Maria Ausiliatrice - IIMA

NGO in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2017

Introduction

In 2017, IIMA carried out various activities in accordance with the following Pillars of Action: Advocacy, Training and Capacity Building, and Communication.

Pillars of Action

1 – **Advocacy**: we provide UN experts and Member States representatives with relevant and reliable information on how human rights are being implemented at the local level, including denunciation of violations. IIMA Human Rights Office carries out this action in close collaboration with local members. Moreover, we provide local human rights defenders, including educators and youth, with the possibility to participate in relevant UN meetings and to advocate for their own rights.

2 – **Training and Capacity Building**: we organize training courses, in Geneva and at the local level, to make Human Rights Defenders aware of the UN international mechanisms and procedures intended to protect human rights.

3 – **Communication**: we disseminate information in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national level.

Within the above-mentioned pillars of action, we work in synergy with other NGOs and Institutions in order to bring major issues to the attention of the international community and to identify top priorities for the human rights agenda.

The pillars of action are further defined below, and include their relationship to the strategic objectives of the organization.

2017 Activities

Pillar of Action	2017 Activities
	<p>➤ Objective 1: IIMA enables local actors, including children and young people, to express their views on the implementation of their human rights and share best practices throughout the world in order to support Governments in complying with their international human rights obligations.</p>
Advocacy	Universal Periodic Review (UPR)



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- Produced **reports** for human rights defenders in the field on the UPR sessions of Ecuador, India, and The Philippines.
- Issued a **joint submission** at the UPR of Colombia.
- Delivered **oral statements** during the 34th and 36th sessions of the Human Rights Council Item 6, pertaining to the UPR of Togo, Timor-Leste, Haiti, Ecuador, India, Philippines, Brazil, and Tunisia, respectively.
- Co-sponsored an **oral statement** during the Human Rights Council Item 6 General Debate, pertaining to the UPR.

HRC and Treaty Bodies Participation

- Participated in the **Human Rights Council and Treaty Bodies sessions** for the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Committee Against Torture (CAT), the Committee on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), and the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

Human Rights Council (HRC)

- Produced and/or co-sponsored **eighteen** additional **oral statements** at the HRC on various themes, including violence and sexual abuses against children, maternal mortality, environment, international solidarity, the right to development, the right to peace, human rights education, youth, and unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents.
- Promoted a **HRC resolution on Youth and Human Rights**, by assisting Member States in drafting and negotiating the text of HRC resolution 35/14 adopted in June 2017 at the 35th session of the HRC.
- Promoted **HRC resolution 36/5 on Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Adolescents and Human Rights**, which was adopted in September 2017 at the 36th session of the HRC.
- Organized a **side event** titled "**Youth for Human Rights and the Common Good**" during the 34th session of the HRC (March 2017), in collaboration with VIDES



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International and the Permanent Mission of El Salvador. Co-sponsored by twenty-two States and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the event panel featured H.E. Carmen Elena Castillo from the Permanent Mission of El Salvador; Michel Forst, the UN Special Rapporteur of the situation of human rights defenders; and five young speakers from Uruguay, the Syrian Arab Republic, Philippines, the Republic of Congo, and Slovakia. Mr. Nuno Cabral from the Permanent Mission of Portugal was the moderator.¹

- Co-sponsored a **side event** titled “**Unaccompanied Children on the Move: Preserving their Dignity and Rights**”, held during the 34th session of the HRC (March 2017). Fr. Juan Carlos QUIRARTE MÉNDES represented IIMA in the Panel sharing Salesian experiences and best practices with migrant children and youth in Mexico.

Other Advocacy activities

- Organized meetings with Permanent Missions and UN experts in preparation for the side event in the framework of the Human Rights Council.

Research-based reports

- **Compilation of the activities carried out by IIMA around the world in addressing migrants and refugees.** The report will serve as a foundation for further research and analysis of contributions made by local human rights defenders on this issue.

- **Objective 2:** IIMA reinforces the use of the defense mechanisms for the rights of children and youth among both IIMA educators and society at large.

Training and Capacity Building

- **Provided a training session (March 2017) in Geneva for 18 youth activists** who worked in the IIMA Human Rights Office and/or with IIMA members in the field.
- **Provided a training session (June 2017) in Geneva for 7 human rights defenders, especially educators,** who operate at the local level through courses, seminars and interactive workshops to raise awareness on

¹ For more detailed information, please refer to the executive summary of the event “YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COMMON GOOD - Calling for Action and Partnership to Empower Youth”, July 2017, available at <http://www.iimageneva.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Rapport-IIMA.pdf>



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Human Rights and the UN mechanisms for the protection of these rights.

- **Provided Training in Paraguay and Japan** for IIMA local human rights defenders.
- **Contributed to Workshops in Austria and Germany** organized by IIMA local members.

➤ **Objective 3:** IIMA shares advocacy tools as well as other human rights-based materials with local human rights defenders and international organizations.

Communication & Fundraising

- **Participated in various NGO working groups** and platforms such as the Right to Education, the Right to Solidarity, the Catholic NGO Forum, and the International Catholic Center of Geneva.
- **Creation of IIMA website in English and Italian.**
- **Disseminated information** through the IIMA website (www.iimageneva.org) in order to raise awareness of human rights at the national and international levels. Twenty (20) web articles were produced in English and Italian in 2017. Information on IIMA's activities was also posted on Facebook and Twitter.
- Produced the booklet on the [YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE COMMON GOOD - Calling for Action and Partnership to Empower Youth](#).²
- Submitted a funding application for a project on climate change and children's rights.
- Narrative and financial reporting for a project on youth.

² Idem.