



## E-Bulletin 3. September 2015.

### World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation.

Pope Francis has established the 1<sup>st</sup> of September as an annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, inspired by the example of the Orthodox Churches who have observed this day for a number of years. Pope Francis wishes to remind us that: "Christians are called to "an ecological conversion whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them." Thus, "living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience." (Laudato Si', 217).

[www.UNANIMA-international.org](http://www.UNANIMA-international.org) shares a series of Reflections and Prayers.

### Restriction of public interest organisations.

Several women's rights and human rights organisations may be forced to close or even flee certain countries following the introduction of laws designed to curtail the activities of non-governmental and civil society organisations. Such restrictions of civil society are incompatible with the U.N. Strategic Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 Agenda.

The legislation is currently being drafted or has been passed in more than sixty countries, including China, Ecuador, Israel and Russia. Countries in both Central Asia and Europe (e.g. Hungary) are also included amongst the sixty countries introducing laws which will have varied impacts ranging from directly affecting funding; require registration and prohibit rights to protest.

For more, see <http://www.theguardian.com/law/2015/aug/26/ngos-face-restrictions-laws-human-rights-generation>

### Shock and Horror as decomposing bodies found in an abandoned truck on a motorway in Austria.

Police believe a Human Trafficking ring is responsible for the neglect of more than seventy migrants leading to their deaths in an abandoned truck found near the Hungarian border, on the motorway that links Budapest with Vienna. What is easily a most benign sight on the side of motorways across the world, a parked truck calls little attention until the discovery on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August last.

Risking harm from ruthless people smugglers and possible death at sea, men, women and children are desperately fleeing war, persecution and poverty in the Middle East and Africa. Following the continued tragic loss of lives both at sea and now in an abandoned truck, this is yet another example of how smugglers have little regard for life and the dignity of the human person.

This latest grim discovery proves that people smuggling is no longer reliant on travel across the Mediterranean Sea. Human traffickers are now exploiting the open borders amongst the European member states. New routes through Greece and the Balkans have become popular amongst migrants and people smugglers have been quick to cash in on the misfortune of others.

There has been a marked increase in some E.U. member states in their attempts to detain and prosecute suspected people smugglers. In Austria, so far this year there has been more than eight hundred investigations into people smuggling with eighty suspected smugglers detained in the month of July alone.

For an update on the Refugee crisis in the Balkans, the Middle East, South East Asia, Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Sea, see [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) for an article by Patrick Boehler & Sergio Peçanha entitled The Global Refugee Crisis, Region by Region.

### **500+ Days since abduction of 200 girls in Chibok, Nigeria.**

#### **Lest we forget.....**

The 27<sup>th</sup> of August, 2015, marks the 500<sup>th</sup> day since the abduction of the girls who were studying at the Government Girls Secondary school (GGSS) with the intention of sitting the West African Examination Council examinations. The Bring Back Our Girls Advocacy group organised a Global Week of Action as a reminder to the world to continue prayers and campaigning for their safe return. During a two-day visit to Nigeria which began on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August last, General Ban Ki-moon, U.N General Secretary, appealed "as U.N. Secretary General and personally as a father and grandfather" for the unconditional release of "the Chibok girls and the many children and adults kidnapped in the North East."

The week of activities included prayers, tree planting in honour of the girls, a march, candle lit processions and a meeting with the National Human Rights Commissioner (NHCR). For full information, please see [www.bringbackourgirls.ng](http://www.bringbackourgirls.ng)

RENATE continues to join with people of goodwill in Nigeria and the international community in praying for the safe return of the Chibok girls and all other hostages.

### **Kevin Hyland was officially appointed as Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner for the United Kingdom from Friday, 31st July, having carried out the role on a designate basis since November 2014.**

Working in the role on a designate basis since November 2014, Kevin Hyland has actively engaged with and established strong relationships with Organised Crime Task Forces, non-governmental Organisations and Statutory agencies throughout the UK.

See [www.traconline.co.uk](http://www.traconline.co.uk) to read of TRAC representatives (& RENATE Members) meeting with the new anti-slavery Commissioner at a Migrant Forum meeting in London, on the 4<sup>th</sup> December last.

### **Prayer Card from NJPN (National Justice and Peace Network).**

*Lord, you call us to discipleship and loving service.*

*In prayerful response may we be beacons of light where there is darkness; may we bring hope where there is despair, fostering love and compassion where there is hatred and division;*

*May we strive at all times to live simply, finding joy in small things, content to have less so others may have more. Mindful of our responsibility as stewards of creation may we tread lightly on the earth, respectful of all living things. Rooted in faith, may we work together to make your kingdom of peace and justice a reality for all people.'*

© Anne O'Connor 2014

(Words by Anne O'Connor & design by Anne McGough).