

Thursday, December 9, 2010
3:30~6pm
Church Center for the United Nations
New York, NY

TRIBUNAL ON SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In recognition of:

World Dignity Day

10 Days of Action on Social Exclusion

16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence

Human Rights Day



*The **socially excluded** are those who are systematically marginalized on account of their race, gender identity, ethnicity, caste, age, ability, HIV status, immigration status, sexual orientation, or religion.*

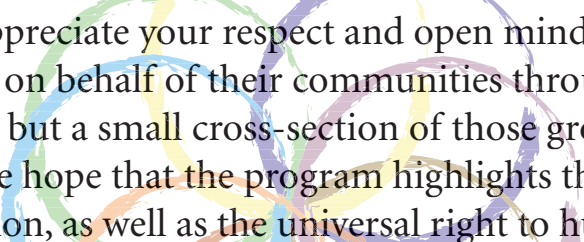
Marginalization occurs through discrimination and alienation, by which an individual or group is barred access to full participation in the social and political spheres of the greater community. Excluded persons consequently experience isolation, lowered quality of life, unequal citizenship and reduced opportunities for success, often making them those who are “hardest to reach and easiest to ignore.”

December 5th – World Dignity Day – was observed for the first time in 2004 at the World Social Forum (Mumbai, India). We have selected **December 9th** for our celebration to take advantage of the confluence of global actions occurring within the same time frame, including the 10 Days of Action on Social Exclusion (Dec 1-10), Human Rights Day (Dec 10), the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence (Nov 25-Dec 10), and International Migrants Day (Dec 18).

Recognizing the further exclusion of women among the socially excluded as defined above, the **Feminist Task Force and the Task Force on Social Exclusion of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)** have joined with the **Office of the Chaplain of the Church Center for the United Nations and the Human Rights Project of the Urban Justice Center** to organize Tribunal on Social Exclusion to provide a platform for individuals from a number of socially excluded communities to stake their claim to dignity and human rights before a panel of expert “jurists.”

The jurists will hear and respond to the testimonies of these individual “witnesses,” providing recommendations and policy points bound for such fora as the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women. The recommendations will also feed advocacy efforts around such tools as the Universal Periodic Review and existing human rights campaigns.

We appreciate your respect and open mind for the individuals coming forward to speak on behalf of their communities through their personal stories. Unfortunately, this is but a small cross-section of those groups that are systematically marginalized, but we hope that the program highlights the common threads of discrimination and isolation, as well as the universal right to human dignity we all share.



PROGRAM

Introduction by *Chaplain Kathleen Stone*

Musical Opening – *Artemus McCallum*

Introductory Remarks - *Meena Jagannath*, Feminist Task Force-GCAP

Moderator *Prof. Vasuki Nesiah* introducing jurists: *Radhika Balakrishnan*, *Glenda Muzenda*, *Michael Ratner*, and *Gemma Adaba* (invited)

CASE 1: SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Frank Mugisha, Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG) (LGBTI community)

Petra Gelbart, Voice of Roma (Roma community)

Responses from panel of jurists

Spoken word – *Vaimoana Niumeitolu*, Mahina Movement

CASE 2: SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE U.S./NEW YORK

Sharon Shapiro-Lacks, Yad HaChazakah-JDEC (disabled community)

Representative, Picture the Homeless (Homeless community)

Film clip - *Americans on Hold*, NYU Center for Human Rights and Global Justice

Responses from panel of jurists

Musical Transition – *Petra Gelbart*, Via Romen

CASE 3: SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE CROSS-BORDER CONTEXT

Patricia Francois, Domestic Workers United (domestic worker community)

Representative, National Day Laborers Organizing Network (NDLON) (day laborer/migrant community)

Responses and closing remarks from panel of jurists

Slam Poetry – *Mark Gonzales*, Def Jam poetry

Announcement by *Erin Markman*, Human Rights Project, Urban Justice Center

Comments from the Audience

Closing by *Rosa Lizarde*, Feminist Task Force-GCAP

Reception on 2nd Floor

WITNESS BIOS (in order of appearance)

Frank Mugisha, Sexual Minorities Uganda

Frank Mugisha is a gay man from Uganda who started advocating for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) rights in 2004 while he was still in university, when he founded Icebreakers Uganda, a support organization for LGBTI people coming out of the closet. He is also the director Sexual Minorities Uganda - SMUG. SMUG is the umbrella organization for LGBTI people and work is to advocate for the rights of LGBTI people in Uganda. Frank was among the brave Ugandan LGBTI people who first came out in a media campaign titled “Let us live in peace” in 2007. He has supported numerous advocacy efforts on behalf of the LGBTI community, and was named by Advocate magazine as one of the leading under 40 activists worldwide. He has been at the forefront of efforts to stop the anti homosexuality bill introduced in Uganda parliament in 2009, and has repeatedly been the target of harassment and persecution for his outspokenness and activism.

Petra Gelbart, Voice of Roma

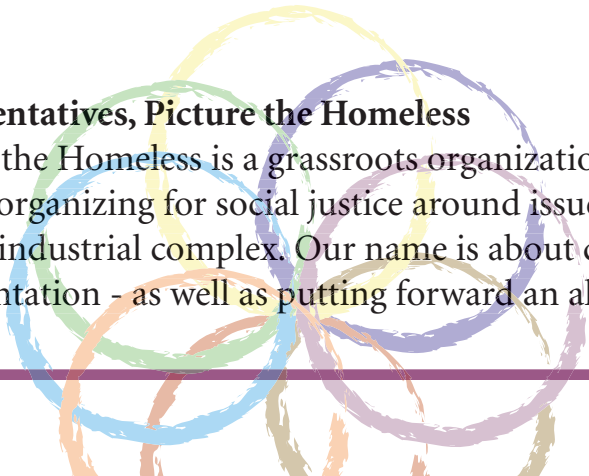
Petra Gelbart, who has spent half of her life in the Czech Republic, is a Romani (Gypsy) activist and scholar with an interest in minority children’s rights. She recently completed a Ph.D. at Harvard University with a dissertation on the Czech education system. Petra is the lead vocalist in Via Romen. She also serves on the Board of Directors of Voice of Roma, a nonprofit that provides humanitarian aid to Kosovar Romani refugees and works to fight stereotypes about Roma in America.

Sharon Shapiro-Lacks, Yad HaChazakah—JDEC

Sharon Shapiro-Lacks, the founding executive director of Yad HaChazakah—JDEC, is a social entrepreneur, systems advocate, and project developer. An Orthodox Jew with a significant physical disability and a Cum Laude graduate from Hofstra University, she entrenched herself in the Independent Living disability movement for over 20 years and has served in almost every capacity, including former executive director and current board member of the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, director of advocacy for the Center for Independence of the Disabled in Manhattan, and counseling and advocacy services provider at Bronx Independent Living Services. She has served on at least 12 statewide and local boards, councils and taskforces throughout her tenure, thus far.

Representatives, Picture the Homeless

Picture the Homeless is a grassroots organization, founded and led by homeless people. We are organizing for social justice around issues like housing, police violence, and the shelter-industrial complex. Our name is about challenging images, stigma, media (mis) representation - as well as putting forward an alternative vision of community.



WITNESS BIOS (cont'd)

Anila Ali on CHRGI Film: *Americans on Hold*

Produced by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) at New York University School of Law, *Americans on Hold: Profiling, Prejudice, and National Security* reveals the harmful effects of prejudicial and ineffective U.S. counter-terrorism and immigration policies. Through the personal stories of Anila Ali and Zuhair Mahd, and expert testimony, the film exposes discriminatory profiling at the heart of citizenship delays and border-crossing detentions and delays.

Ali, a teacher, mother, and community organizer originally from Pakistan, became an American citizen in 2002, but faces humiliating and invasive treatment by Customs and Border Protection officials as a consequence of her national origin.

Patricia Francois, Domestic Workers United

Patricia Francois is a member of *Domestic Workers United* who has worked for many years as a nanny and recently left an abusive situation in Manhattan. She has been a strong spokesperson for domestic workers in the lobbying efforts for the passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. [more bio to come]

Domestic Workers United was founded in 2000, by members of Kalayaan/Women Workers Project of CAAAV, in collaboration with Andolan Organizing South Asian Workers. Filipina domestic workers who are members of CAAAV's Women Workers Project began outreach to domestic workers from the Caribbean and Latin America in 1999, after having done two years of advocacy for individual domestic workers who were underpaid or abused by their employers, because they saw the need for industry standards and a voice for all domestic workers, particularly those who were not being organized.

Luz Maria Arias, Latin American Workers Project

Luz Maria Arias has long been an impassioned and effective advocate of working class men and women, empowering and inspiring her comrades in Williamsburg to organize to prevent labor and civil rights abuses, demand fair salaries and to create democratic and sustainable economic alternatives to their unemployment. Luz became the first woman laborer to lead and found a worker cooperative in the history of the Latin American Workers Project (LAWP). Recently, Luz was appointed to the Executive Board of the Latin American Workers Project, Inc.

Founded in 1997, The Latin American Workers Project (LAWP) is a community based organization formed and led by low-income Latino workers. LAWP's mission is to empower immigrant workers, through organizing and education, to become leaders in their communities and to achieve better living and working conditions.

JURISTS

Radhika Balakrishnan, Center for Women's Global Leadership

Radhika Balakrishnan has a Ph.D. in economics from Rutgers University and is Professor of Economics and International Studies at Marymount Manhattan College. She has worked at the Ford Foundation as a program officer in the Asia Regional Program. She is currently

on the board of Women's Edge Coalition, and is the Chair of the Coordinating Committee of the U.S. Network on Human Rights. She was the Chair of the Board of the Religious Consultation for Reproductive Health, Population and Ethics, and was also on the board of the International Association of Feminist Economics. Dr. Balakrishnan is currently working on a project trying to use human rights norms to evaluate and construct macroeconomic policy.

Glenda Muzenda, Womyn Speak

Glenda Muzenda is Human Rights Advocate Graduate of the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University. She currently works for Womyn Speak, an organisation aimed at openly enhancing awareness and advocacy with LGBTI networks in Africa for human rights and seek mentorship without fear of discrimination. She has continued to work in South Africa to create safe spaces for women to openly discuss sexuality and networking forums for minority women, including lesbians, to eliminate discrimination in South Africa.

Glenda has worked as the Network Coordinator at Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA), an advocacy institution, in July 2007, when she stated as the country facilitator. She coordinated research aimed at improving AIDS-related care work policies targeted at women and girls in Southern Africa. Glenda volunteered with British Columbia People with AIDS (BCPWA) in Canada from 2002-2005. She writes widely on gender justice, human rights, women's rights, democracy, and sexuality, and contributes frequently to both print and online media outlets in Southern Africa.

Prof. Vasuki Nesiah - Moderator and Jurist, NYU-Gallatin

Vasuki Nesiah is Associate Professor of Practice at the Gallatin School in New York University. She is a legal scholar whose field of expertise is international law, with a particular interest in law and policy related to human rights and humanitarianism. Her current research is on the politics and history of transitional justice. After completing a doctorate in public international law at Harvard Law School, Nesiah spent a decade combining work in academia and practice. She has taught at Columbia and Brown Universities, and she also worked in the field of post-conflict human rights as Head of the Gender Program and Senior Associate at the International Center for Transitional Justice. In addition to ICTJ's global gender programs related to prosecutions, truth commissions

JURISTS (cont'd)

and reparations, she also headed country work in South Africa, Ghana, the Philippines, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka. She has published in venues such as the Harvard Human Rights Journal and the Columbia Journal of Gender and Law on topics that are continued research and teaching interests, including international human rights, humanitarianism, feminist theory, comparative law and postcolonial studies. Originally from Sri Lanka, Nesiah completed her undergraduate studies at Cornell University in 1990, her law degree and doctorate at Harvard Law School in 1993 and 2000 respectively, before going on to a post-doctoral fellowship at Columbia Law School.

Michael Ratner, Center for Constitutional Rights

Michael Ratner is President of the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), a non-profit legal organization dedicated to protecting the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. His leadership in the arena of human rights continues to strengthen the role of the international rule of law to promote justice and oppose armed aggression. Over the last four decades CCR has lent its expertise and support to virtually every popular movement for social and racial justice. He is President of the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), a non-profit organization dedicated to using European and international law to seek redress for those whose human rights have been egregiously violated. Michael Ratner is the author of many books and articles, and he has taught law at Yale Law School and Columbia University Law School. Ratner is also the co-host of the popular radio program "Law and Disorder." The recipient of many honors, he was also included in The National Law Journal's list of "100 of the Most Influential Lawyers in America." In 2007 he was honored with The Puffin/Nation Prize for Creative Citizenship.

Gemma Adaba, formerly of International Trade Union Confederation (invited)

ARTISTS (in order of appearance)

Artemus McCallum

Artemus McCallum is a songwriter/musician that follows the legacy of blues-inflicted democracy in real time. Originally from North Carolina, he believes music is an integral part of minimizing the numbness of indifference.

Vaimoana Niumeitolu, Mahina Movement

vaimoana litia makakaufaki niumeitolu is a poet, painter, actor, activist, and educator. She was born in Nuku'alofa, Tonga; raised in Hawai'i and Utah; and now lives, creates, and loves in New York City. moana is the author of a poetry, performance text, and visual art chapbook, tonga provo harlem. She is a co-founding member of the women of color performance troupe, Mahina Movement, which has performed at more than 400 stages.

ARTISTS (cont'd)

Their CD is *Speak the Fire*. moana has shared her poetry and painting across the U.S. and in Fiji, Tonga, Ireland, Italy, and South Africa. She has been seen acting at the Metropolitan Opera and sharing her one-woman show, *Tongue-in Paint*, which had its world premiere in the 5th Annual soloNOVA Arts Festival at Performance Space 122 in NYC in 2008. Her other production, *A Prayer for Tonga*, premiered at Harvard University. She graduated from New York University, earned the Ellen Battell Stoeckel Fellowship from Yale University, and attended Columbia University's M.F.A. Program in Acting. email: indigoartista@yahoo.com

Petra Gelbart, Via Romen (SEE WITNESS LIST)

Mark Gonzales, Human Writes Project

One of the most engaging voices of a generation, Mark Gonzales has appeared on HBO's *Def Poetry*, Fox News, Mun2, NPR, and performed on over four continents. A poet whose energy is drawn from Allah and the middle Americas, his work has received acclaims from educators, senators, foster youth, former prisoners, and members of the United Nations. As founder of the Human Writes Project, he curates creative approaches to healing and human right; his tongue tap-dance tangos between Brooklyn mothers and Baghdad sons, and he hums in the name of both. With a Masters in Education from the University of California, Los Angeles, Mark Gonzales utilizes creative intellect to heal historical trauma and claim the communities we envision. In 2008, he became the first poet of the Hip Hop generation to perform in Syria. He shows no signs of slowing, only growing. For questions, please email: BeHEARD@HumanWritesProject.org

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many thanks to give for the success of this event. **THANK YOU** to:

Our fantastic witnesses, jurists and artists;

Our generous and supportive co-sponsors: Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP), National Council of Churches in Christ, The New Seminary, World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul Daughters of Charity NGO, Unitarian Universalists United Nations Office, United Religions Initiative, Committee of Religious NGOs, Center for Constitutional Rights, Sisters of Loretto Community;

Our volunteers;

Our organizers: Kathleen Stone (Chaplain, Office of the Chaplain of the CCUN); Rosa Lizarde (Coordinator, Feminist Task Force-GCAP), Meena Jagannath (Event Organizer-World Day of Dignity, Feminist Task Force-GCAP), Erin Markman (Human Rights Project, Urban Justice Center), Rajiv Joshi (GCAP Global Council, Task Force on Social Exclusion), Marta Benavides (Siglo XXIII, Co-chair, GCAP Global Council).