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Outsourcing: Globalization and the Impact of Labor
by SHANTA BRYANT GYAN

The focus group, "Outsourcing: Globalization and the Impact of Labor," led by the Rev. David M. Schilling, director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, put a spotlight on how outsourcing has impacted the global economy and workers' rights around the world.

Mr. Schilling, an ordained United Methodist minister, defined outsourcing as delegating non-core operations or jobs from internal production within a business to an external entity. Offshoring is defined as transferring to another country. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the United States lost 3 million manufacturing jobs in the past five years.

Mr. Schilling explained that in an effort to reduce production costs, many U.S. companies are outsourcing some of their operations to remain competitive entities and increase profits. For example, shoe manufacturer NIKE closed its production plants in Oregon and outsourced those operations to focus on design and marketing efforts.

Consequently, this process transfers the financial risk to suppliers.

Focus-group participants viewed a 10-minute segment of the documentary, "Selling Their Hearts Out," on Wal-Mart's business model. The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, of which Women's Division is a member, has engaged with Wal-Mart to improve its practices in the areas of diversity and labor rights.

In an effort to deliver low-cost products to its customers, the retail giant uses a business model that presses its suppliers to cut costs.

Ms. Schilling said the model produces a chain reaction, as the company managers push their suppliers to produce goods for a lower cost. To meet the

demands, the factories "squeeze" their workers by failing to pay a legal minimum wage and overtime, and often forcing workers to work excessive hours.

Globalization has disproportionately impacted women workers, causing many to be systematically denied a fair share of the benefits of globalization.

Ms. Schilling pointed out that women workers want and need their jobs in supplier factories to help support themselves and their families. They should be paid fairly, treated with dignity, and provided a safe and healthy work environment, he said.

Project Kaleidoscope, an Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility project, encourages factories to meet sustained codes of compliance. In China's Guangdong Province, research and monitoring by the center, found most young women work 150 hours of overtime each month.

The project works with 10 factories in Guangdong to improve worker's rights. U.S. companies with suppliers in the province, such as McDonald's fast-food restaurants and Disney, are encouraging the center-supported codes of conduct throughout their supply chains.

United Methodist Women advocates were urged to begin holding the U.S. government accountable for the rights of workers worldwide.

They can ask U.S. government officials and congressional leaders to reprioritize U.S. policies and adopt universal corporate codes of conduct for suppliers to improve workers' rights.

Additionally, they can press retailers, who have considerable leverage, to make changes in the labor practices around the world. The center and other faith-based investors are increasingly addressing purchasing practices and using their influence as shareholders to impact change.

By implementing a standard corporate code of conduct, the positive results will include an improvement in air quality and an increase in wages and benefits, Mr. Schilling said.

**Globalization:
A Handful of Education
A Handful of Opportunity**
2006 Schools of Christian Mission
Closing Plenary (Full Script)

Altar is set with batik cloth, cross, lighted candle, and several colorful flower garlands. Peace Pole is placed in front of altar. Table is to one side of stage. A pitcher with water is on the table and three chairs are at the table.

[Upon entering the auditorium, each participant is given a 12" piece of yarn.]

Gather and Sing

*Call to Worship

Psalm 150

Leader: Praise the Lord!

People: Praise God in God's sanctuary!

Praise God the mighty firmament.

Praise God for God's mighty deeds;

Praise God according to God's surpassing greatness!

Praise God with trumpet sound;

Praise God with lute and harp!

Praise God with tambourine and dance;

Praise God with strings and pipe!

Praise God with clanging cymbals;

Praise God with loud clashing cymbals!

Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!

All: Praise the Lord!

*Hymn

God of Many Names

UMH

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Woman 1 - Hasanti: *(Enters stage, struggling to carry in a case of bottled water, while talking on her cell phone which is cradled between her ear and shoulder. Slightly winded, she puts the case of water on the table and sits in chair.)*

Oh! Hello! My mom told me that I would hear from you, but I didn't expect your call for a while yet. *(Looks at and taps watch.)* Yeah, this is a good time. I just got home.

Now, tell me again just why *you* want to interview *me*? ... Uh-huh...OK... great...OK, let's get started. My name's Hasanti. You can just call me 'Santi; that's what my friends call me. *(Pause)*

(Nodding) Yes, I'm a graduate of Isabella Thoburn College. I studied economics. Some people think that is a really boring subject. But I get a charge out of seeing how an occurrence in one part of the world impacts everyone everywhere. We are all **connected**, you know. It's part of the what's being labeled "globalization". That's a pretty big word, but it *is* a very big deal!

For example... I'm sitting here looking at a case of bottled water. We could track this water and you'd be surprised at how many lives are affected. *(Hasanti "freezes" in place.)*

Leader: Just like you used to “follow the bouncing ball” with sing-along cartoons, we are going to pass the yarn ball as we follow this water trail! But you’ve got to stand, as you are able, to better see what’s going on!

(*Said slowly so group will understand directions*) The “Do-Wop Trio” and “Do-Wop Helpers” will start the yarn balls by tossing them out to you. When the yarn comes to you wrap a loop around one hand and hold on tight. Then toss the yarn ball up and over, to someone else. When you hear the **gong**, “hold everything”, no more tossing - but listen up!

(*“Do-Wop Trio” tosses 3 HUGE balls of yarn into the congregation. 6 other balls are started from the back by “Do-Wop Helpers.” Tossing takes place while the pianist plays “Pebbles”. After approximately 2 minutes, the **gong** sounds.*)

Woman 1 - Hasanti (*Holding bottle of water*): When we hold a bottle of water, we don’t usually think much about it. But there are three major bottlers: Nestle, Coca Cola and Pepsi and several global managers. Suddenly, provision of water - what was once a public service – has become privatized, “owned” by a few, and provided to the many . . . “for a price!”

“Do-Wop Trio” sings first verse of *Pebbles from Sisters and Brothers Sing!*
p. 136.

One little pebble and the circles begin,
Circle in a circle they go on without end.
Ripples on the water, move across the pond,
The pebble disappears but the circles move along.

Leader: Those who first caught the yarn balls, tug on your yarn. Can any of you others in the web feel it? Hmmm... we seem to be **connected** here... maybe we are getting the feel of globalization.

“Do-Wop Trio” sings refrain of *Pebbles*:

Circles on water from one little stone,
The water is smooth if you leave it alone.
Each pebble you toss makes a difference, you see,
The ripples that circle can touch you and me.

Leader: Time to toss and share again. Keep the yarn balls going until you hear the **gong**.

(*Tossing the yarn balls takes place while the pianist plays “Pebbles”. After approximately 2 minutes, the **gong** sounds.*)

Woman 1 -Hasanti: Although 70% of the earth is water, less than 3% is fresh water. By the year 2025, at least 2/3 of the world’s people will be facing water problems. Right now, 1.2 billion people have no access to safe water. Does it surprise you that most of those 1.2 billion people don’t have the means to

purchase bottled water – the water “owned” by big corporations? Many of these people are among those who live on less than one dollar per day.

“Do-Wop Trio” sings second verse of *Pebbles*:

Pebbles of good, pebbles of bad,
Circles of happiness and circles of sad.
No way to stop them once they begin,
Stop and think a minute,
Then drop your pebble in.

Leader: Let’s take a hard look at the United States and its water. 50% of the people in the U.S. drink bottled water. 40% of bottled water is tap water. 20-30% of bottled water is contaminated.

Tap water costs 1/1000th the price of bottled water. Bottled water degrades the environment through draining aquifers... and uses 1.5 million tons of plastic... how much of that do you think gets recycled?

Last ones to get the yarn balls, tug a little...did you feel that?

Globalization...limited water resources...environmental degradation... everybody tug!

Tug again!

Connected? You bet we are!

“Do-Wop Trio” sings refrain of *Pebbles* (2x):

Circles on water from one little stone,
The water is smooth if you leave it alone.
Each pebble you toss makes a diff’rence, you see,
The ripples that circle can touch you and me. (*“Do-Wop Trio” exits stage*)

Leader (*Said slowly to the people*): Please have a seat and drop your yarn. (Pause) Now, whoever has the ball of yarn, start re-winding the yarn. Work together to bring the yarn together. Although this task sounds difficult and maybe a little irritating, think about how much work it will take to repair our water systems. While we re-wind our yarn, think about repairing our world and listen to Hasanti.

Woman 1 – Hasanti [*Still sitting at table and talking animatedly into phone*]: Once I graduated, I knew exactly where I wanted to “plug in” and make a difference. I wanted to work for a Non-Governmental Organization, an NGO, and help women all across India become self-sufficient. Now I am doing exactly what I had dreamed! I travel throughout the country teaching groups of women how to pool their meager resources and start their own micro-businesses.

They use the skills that they already have, like farming, cooking, weaving, or designing and making batik cloth. They sell their goods, pool their profits and set up their own cooperative business - complete with investments *and* loans to women or other groups just starting up.

It is such a joy to return to the established groups and find them thriving, flourishing. But the best thing of all is to see the pride that these women have in their work, and the self-confidence that they have gained. It's like a miracle! Just a **handful** of education and another **handful** of opportunity **connect** many women, and make such a difference their lives and the lives of their families! It's a real ripple effect. God uses those **handfuls** in such wonderful ways!

(Loud knock sounds off stage) Uh-oh, someone's at the door. Can we talk some more later?... great! It's been nice talking with you. Maybe next week you can tag along to visit a very successful micro-business in Bareilly. Maybe ... [Knock, Knock]... OK... talk to you later. Gotta go! Bye! *[Hasanti clicks off phone; sets it on table; walks to door at side or back of stage and freezes with hand on knob.]*

Reader 1: Now hear the Good News from the Gospel according to **Luke, Chapter 10, verses 29 – 37.** (NRSV)

... he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So, likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.'

Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

He said, "The one who showed him mercy."

Jesus said to him "Go and do likewise."

(After the reading, say the following):

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. *[Tinkling bells sound off stage and Reader exits.]*

Hasanti: [opens the door.] Mom! Grandma! I'm so glad you are here! Come in! How about something to drink?

Asunya: Water sounds good.

Veena: Yes, me too. [Hasanti starts to open a bottle of water.]

Asunya: Tap water is fine for us. [Hasanti gets a pitcher and pours three glasses and places them on the table.]

(Asunya – carrying a small basket containing pennies, Veena- carrying a small basket containing rice, and Hasanti take seats around the table. Hasanti, the youngest, is in the middle.)[Sit at an angle toward the audience so sound projects.]

Hasanti: *(leans forward and looks first at her grandmother, Asunya, and then at her mother, Veena):* I'm so glad you came! I was just talking on the phone about connections and life-changing experiences. I realized that sometimes it just takes one voice or one step to make a big difference.

Asunya: That is so true! We were just at the church. Everyone brought pennies from home. We donated half and took half home because we are a mission field, too. *(Hold some of the pennies in one hand and pour them back into basket so the people can see):* Yes, it was **handfuls** of pennies collected by faithful Methodist women that **connected** them to women and children in India.

Veena: They gave us rice, too. *(Sift some rice between fingers and let it fall back into the basket.)* Remember that **handfuls** of rice were set aside to assist the Bible Women in their ministry. Rice **connects us** to women and children, to bring health and hope.

Hasanti: *(holding up a glass of water)* It's all about God's Living Water! We women in mission are like water. We give life. We are **connected**. With **handfuls** of education and opportunity, we can have peace with justice; we can be whole persons!

Leader: As a sign of our **connection** with one another and our solidarity with our neighbors and sisters throughout the globe, take the piece of yarn you were given when you came in. Have someone sitting close to you tie it around your wrist while we all sing *Bind Us Together (FWS 2226)*.

***Bind us together, Lord, bind us together with cords that cannot be broken.
Bind us together, Lord, bind us together. Bind us together in love.***

[During the singing, Asunya, Veena and Hasanti walk to front of stage with glasses of water.]

Asunya: [Holding up glass.] And now, leave this place, **connected** and whole...

Veena: [Holding up glass] ...offering education and opportunity...

Hasanti: [Holding up glass]... seeking peace with justice.
[All three women drink deeply.]

Leader: We scatter, knowing that making a difference is up to us. We cannot lean on our foremothers or expect our grandchildren to do it for us. It is our time. It is our responsibility.

United Methodist Women, what will we do with our **handful** of pennies? Our **handful** of rice? Our glass of **water**? [Pause]

Goodbye. God speed.

(Immediately a photo taken from space of the planet Earth is flashed on the projection screen and the song, "Imagine" by John Lennon, is played as people exit.)

Resources Used:

United Methodist Hymnal

The Faith We Sing

Sisters and Brother Sing! Second edition, The Wesley Foundation Campus Ministry, 1977

Imagine, written and recorded by John Lennon

Globalization and Its Impact on People's Lives, A Mission Study for 2006 by Elmira Nazombe

Power Point Presentations:

Earth from Space More... **Tsunami** More...

Pre-Assembly Symposium: The Impact of Globalization on Women in Higher Education

by **CHRISTIE R. HOUSE**

Participants in the Pre-Assembly **Symposium on the Impact of Globalization on Women in Higher Education** considered facts presented by the Rev. Patty Meyers of Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer, N.C.

- Women and girls make up 75 percent of the poorest people in the world.
- Two-thirds of the 876 million illiterate adults in the developing world are women.
- Women do about 66 percent of the world's work in return for less than 5 percent of its income.

Ms. Meyer was one of many presenters from seven countries attending the symposium. International Ministries Higher Education Initiative of the Women's Division and the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries were host to the symposium May 2-3.

Participants from Methodist-related universities that were historically founded and supported by United Methodist Women's predecessor organizations came to the

symposium from China, Japan, the Philippines, India, Brazil, Pakistan and the United States. Professors and students shared their thoughts, ideas and experiences, and circulated papers about globalization and its affects on women seeking and teaching higher education in their countries.

Carolyn Johnson, Director of Diversity for Purdue University and former president of Women's Division, encouraged professors to bring their academic perspectives to the discussion on globalization, which is usually approached from a business perspective.

"Teaching is a calling - passion informed by intellectual pursuit," Ms. Johnson said. Professors can present new possibilities and new ways of thinking to students that may lead them to new ways of acting.

Angelita Broncano, director of the Center for Community Development at Harris Memorial College, was inspired by the work of women educators in Brazil who sought to answer the needs of women in marginalized communities: women in prison and women involved in the national grassroots landless movement in Brazil.

"I have learned here that we need to bring the peoples' issues into academia and help the people themselves articulate what they need," Ms. Broncano said.

Genilma Boehler from Centro Universitario Metodista in Porto Alegre, said:

"Women from the Landless Movement came to us seeking out the university to provide them with an extension program. They wanted to be able to express their rights to answer the men who opposed them. They wanted theoretical formation, a wider point of view, and academic knowledge that they have been excluded from for centuries."

Smita Verma of Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow, India; Nikhat Khan of Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore, Pakistan; and Chen Minguang of Fujian Hwa Nan Women's College in Fuzhou, China, described massive and rapid change occurring in their countries. Peasant farmers and producers, still the majority in all three countries, are losing out to an emerging educated, moneyed, urban middle class. In light of this dramatic social transition, centers of higher education face pressure to keep pace with the global changes in technology and communications.

Presenters agreed globalization is offering new educational opportunities for women, but in many universities and colleges, a hierarchy is forming in which men are trained in science and math disciplines while women are encouraged to enter "caring disciplines," such as nursing, education and art, which are lower-paying professions in most countries.

In a three-part presentation, Jan Love, the chief executive of Women's Division, examined how the forces of globalization and localization, though seemingly contradictory, often interact with each other to reinforce and shape each other.

She discussed the positive and negative dynamics in religion and national life in the United States and ways in which United Methodist Women, with its historic tradition as women working for women, strives to capture the best of the globalization and localization.

elmira Nazombe

elmira Nazombe is a Co-Executive Secretary for Racial Justice of the Women's Division, responsible for assisting United Methodist Women through the development of advocacy strategies and biblical and theological reflection materials on racial justice. She has worked in the area of social and economic justice, human rights over four decades.

She served as Director of Leadership Development and Global Education for the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University from 1998-2004 and Director of the Office of International Justice and Human Rights for Church World Service, NCCCUSA between 1994 and 1998. She has worked for several ecumenical agencies including the All Africa Conference of Churches and the National Christian Council of Kenya.

She trained as both an educator and an urban planner. She has been active over the last fifteen years as a popular educator, particularly in workshops and production of materials on the gender impacts of globalization.

elmira is a doctoral candidate in Social and Philosophical Foundations of Education at Rutgers University, focusing on how women use education methodologies to work for social and economic transformation. She lives in Highland Park, New Jersey with her adult son.

Economic Justice

The United Methodist Church and its predecessor bodies have a long history of public witness on matters of economic justice. John Wesley set the example in his famous sermon on "The Use of Money," his public stand against slavery and his witness among England's working class. As globalization quickens the consolidation of wealth and power by fewer individuals and corporations, the United Methodist Church continues to stand for economic justice for those on the margins of society.

United Methodist Women work in this area includes:

- advocacy for debt relief for impoverished nations crippled by efforts to repay loans to international bodies including the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and other nations;

- support for The Campaign for the Abolition of Sweatshops and Child Labor;
 - promotion of Fair-Trade policies and products, including coffees and teas distributed by Equal Exchange;
 - support for farm worker rights;
 - participation in living wage campaigns.
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2006 Schools of Christian Mission

Regional Schools of Christian Mission

This summer, close to 20,000 United Methodists will be attending educational events -- aimed at preparing Christians to lead in social, spiritual, and geographical issues in the world.

The learners will attend Schools of Christian Mission in their United Methodist annual conferences, local churches, and special education events.

Once again, studies – chosen several years in advance by the United Methodist Women’s Division – are timely as they delve into the relations between India and Pakistan, and Peace from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish understandings, and Globalization.

In June, experts in these subjects will train leaders at five Regional Schools of Mission across the United States. When the teachers return home, they will lead studies or help plan and implement conference Schools of Christian Mission, educating United Methodist Women members, clergy, children and youth on these issues.

The spiritual growth study – Shalom, Salaam, Peace – looks at the tradition and history of three faith groups, their histories of violence, and their quests for peace. Author, Alison Stokes, asks questions such as: Why does religion foment such violence? Why is God portrayed as violent in sacred scripture? Do we worship the same God as Abraham? Has God "divided" since then? What is the path to peace? Must we ignore the world and seek inner peace, or does God call us to embody peace on this world? What is the price of peace? Is there peace when there is force?

The issue study – Globalization and Its Impact on People’s Lives -- explores the

places where globalization touches the lives of ordinary people. With U.S. jobs, food, and so much of life becoming interdependent on other nations and people, this study is timely as it examines the impact of economic globalization on communications, human rights, and the social, economic, and political development of various cultures and nations. The second-year mission study on India and Pakistan presents the richness and diversity of the cultures of India and Pakistan. It also explores selected current key issues affecting both countries, including gender issues, poverty, child labor, population, caste, illiteracy, religious extremism, and globalization. The study also examines the complexities of the border conflict over Kashmir between the two countries.

RISE! SHINE! AND GLORIFY GOD!

By Wahu Kaara

Address given May 5, 2006 at United Methodist Women's Assembly 2006, Anaheim California

Webcast video available

Wahu Kaara gives the keynote address at the 2006 United Methodist Women's Assembly. Credit: Mike DuBose/UMNS

My sisters and brothers, justice for all is our only way out, we must Rise, Shine and Glorify God.

I take great pleasure to be a keynote speaker in this wonderful conference. Today is a celebration of God's gift to our lives. Our communion here, draped in our diversity is a testimony to how wonderful and monumental our creator's delights are. I welcome you all to join me in giving thanks and glory for our convergence at this auspicious occasion.

I bring my greetings and love, those of my family and most of all, of our kindred sisters and brothers in Africa and specifically Kenya. Monumental blessings and God's marvelous hand is reaching us, touching us, guiding us and talking to us everyday. And every waking day, a beacon of hope, bears a ray of triumph.

In Africa we are in our own small ways overcoming the exigencies of the dominant human made enclosures. Tremendous transformative initiatives are bringing hope to the down trodden and the almost hopeless. It is this hope an adverse environment that we are radiating to the world. We are globalizing hope!

The Lord says, if he be with you, no one can be against you. We invite him to walk, talk, think, eat, share and radiate our happiness amongst us here now.

I will not seek to dwell on the very abstract, deep and at time confusing realm of intellectual discourse. We all in this assembly come from very diverse and intricate backgrounds. Different fields and professions, monumental careers, complex identities and all too often, very simple and personal persuasions!

My thrust today is simply to initiate a dialogue amongst us. A dialogue that strengthens our bonds, a dialogue that speaks to our hearts and souls. A dialogue that opens our hearts to each other. To appreciate each other, to want each other. To be each other. A dialogue founded on our creation in one image; God's image. Centered on the pursuit that our diversity is the fundamental strength of our civilization. Not its weakness. A dialogue that persuades us to rethink our covenant with our creator. In the same vein and strength, allowing us to make a confession of our omissions and commissions that at this critical juncture threaten to tear our civilization apart. For surely, the fabric of our humanity, a tapestry of the collage and mosaic of what makes us people, humanity, a civilization, is slowly coming off at the seams. And if not atoned for, like the walls of Jericho, it will come down crumbling. We are here to weep and cry for this atonement!!

Contemporary global arena is the age of conflict. Wars of want, wars of livelihoods. Wars on women, wars of globalization. Wars of resources, wars for control. Wars wrought and underwritten by the inequalities of the world and the subjugation, control and domination of whole societies by others. Politically, economically, culturally, ideologically and in extreme and very volatile scenarios, religiously. Today we live the wars of globalization as constructed and underpinned by an extreme imperial neo-liberal project dictated by the whims of a capital infused corporate globalization.

It is neither an age of Muslim wars nor the age of a clash of civilizations. Its wars of trying to assert and reclaim life ground values. Issues of identity, ownership and unconceivable futures. And we all belong to our very close knit societies and communities. The usurping of which, we are prepared to lay even our lives in defense of.

I peg our dialogue on the scriptures as enshrined in the book of Prophet Isaiah 58: 6-12. These words which are a guiding theme of our assembly today bring out a major thrust founded on Justice for all. Justice for all is not an empty rhetoric and we all who read the scriptures can attest to that, but is founded on reclaiming and rebuilding the God given gift of life for all.

The symbol of the broken walls presented in these good words must today resonate with the collapse of our value system hinged on our preoccupation with profit at the expense of life.

Rebuilding the ruins and walls has to be contextualized as our deliberate effort to rethink our world. Revisit the sanctity of our lives and uphold the value of our life ground. From that admission, a new seed that appreciates our livelihoods will sprout.

My brother Bono, leading rock star and campaigner on debt and the poor opines that history will remember us for three things; the internet revolution, the war on terror and how we treated our poor. Such is the concise conceptualization of the maladies afflicting our world today. I hope that our thought process in this assembly needs to capture the essence of Justice and its centrality to human endeavor.

The question of justice is very critical in terms of how we envision the world today. Inherent in Justice are twin fundamentals of fairness and equality. Today I add as a guiding principle - the value of each and every person. These core principles guide the foundation of our covenant with God. These are the values that inform pursuits of Justice and Equity as the base pillars of the survival, integration and future of any or group of societies.

Unfortunately they are also the core values that we have defiled and negated. Today we have to reaffirm our commitment to reclaim these fundamentals. The greatest challenge in our pursuit of justice is to stand up and speak to power. Speaking to power is no mean task but we should be persuaded. The prophets before us did at their time and that needs to be done now.

The reason being that the world we are living in today is poignantly unjust. It is a clear manifestation of the highest defilement of our human spirit. Today people live in anger, hatred, destructive competition and outright oppression. What happened to our assertion that, "all human beings are born equal with certain inalienable and indivisible rights that are God given." The confession we made as we reclaimed our humanity in the wake of the horrors of World War Two. The very spirit that mid-wifed the United Nations. Have we become too comfortable in our abilities, technological advances, wealth, luxury, consumption, capabilities? Today, the values that dictate our pursuits in life are in total negation of our relation with our God.

We have commoditized our lives for sale just like Jesus Christ was sold for 30 pieces of silver. The hallmark of what betrayal is all about. When we let children die of treatable diseases, or made orphans because of inaccessible patented drugs denied to their folks for the sake of PROFIT, we are culpable in this betrayal. And it is sin, sin in the eyes of God!

Life is no longer a manifestation of the Glory of God but a manifestation of Economic might with the safeguards of the military /industrial complex.

Thus instead of propagating the value of life and all its attendant notions, we have become masters of conceit and deception. We have sacrificed ourselves at the alter of money and earthly possessions. We have become the biblical merchants in the temple who Jesus whipped. The kings and queens of an illusory celestial palace of accumulation and more primitive accumulation. A man eat man, man eat nothing society! Our conscience must, and must whip us now!!!!

If we find comfort in Psalms 106: 3, for he say "Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness at all times." We are meeting here; in beautiful and famous California (did you know that this state alone has one of the largest GDPs in the world. Far much higher than many nation states!) to do what is right. To reaffirm our quest for justice, peace and solidarity. To ascribe and propagate the value of life bearing in mind the total sum of our strength is our diversity. We must all proclaim ourselves as defenders of justice! And that justice is our shield and defender!!

Today we the women of the world must arise to the call. We must continue the nurturing and sustenance of life. This is a GIFT and a BLESSING given to us women and it dictates that we seek wisdom from the almighty. We must with unflinching courage voice the concerns of injustice. We must speak on the following;

- The injustices of quantifying life in dollars. Look at the whole Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) framework. The boldest global admission of our failure to safeguard the sanctity of our world. We acknowledge that over half of the world's population lives in abject poverty and extreme penury. And instead of voicing it so, we talk about benchmarks of subsisting on less than half a \$1 a day.

- The injustices of stating human misery in statistics is an anomaly even in the context of our scriptural nourishment. When our Lord and savior Jesus Christ fed five thousand people at the Sea of Galilee, he only asked for the amount of food available. Five loaves and two fish. The numbers only arose when all we fed to their fill. This is the hallmark of compassion and the measure of how selfless we ought to be in our mission and ministry. We neither want a world of hunger for some, nor one of excesses for others. God has provided enough for all us.

- The injustices of subjugating others to economic and military might in the name of peace, the injustices of marketing military hardware in the name of democracy are core in propagating and maintaining our inequality. For God, is our shield and defender. The pursuit for our democratic engagement is inherent in our diversity. Our plurality is the strength of our expression. And like he freed the Israelites in Egypt, he manifested that subjugation, servitude, domination and control is sin and is unacceptable. And that he never created the world to be a homogenous,

singular identity. Respect and dignity for diversity is a hallmark of our commonwealth and communion.

- The injustices of dishonesty and double standards in dividing the world into Haves and Have-nots, North and South, Black and White, Man and Woman, Girl and Boy, Young and Old, Rulers and Ruled, Disabled and Able is a brazen abomination that cannot be defended. This is a manifestation of our total negation of God's wonder of creation and usurping his role and creator by defining the value of a segment of humanity in correlation to another. God forbid and it's clearly enshrined in his commandments to us. A sacred covenant that underpins our relationship with our maker.

I must harken to add that all in our confessions are aware that the wages of sin is death!

The Lord's Prayer in the context of the Millennium Development Goal's is a confession of doing but we have refused to abide to its obligations by seeking ourselves comfort zones whereby we only react to what looks and seems convenient to our desires and egos.

But I bring the message of hope that this is the time and the moment to reclaim and rebuild our world that shall manifest God's wonder of Creation where we can have a balance of our social being that will guide our economic abilities that are compatible with the sustainability of our environment.

The challenge here is to confess to be the voice of this monumental prophecy of our time as we are doing today and speak loudly to the earthly powers of our world today that are taking us to doom and material worship of what God has freely bestowed to us. As the global women citizenship, we must learn and bear witness to those women who came before us.

Mary mother of God, Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James were the women to first witness Christ's resurrection. In their testimony, we must resurrect the dream and hope that the world cherishes. In all our diversity, in all our languages, in all our colors, in all our contexts, we must proclaim this resurrection. The women of the world must take lead once again and loudly proclaim that; we are no longer going to die, but live for our world!! And this clarion call must resonate from Anaheim to Athens, Nairobi to Nebraska, and London to Lagos. Everywhere it must herald the dawn of a new era.

This is not just the Prophetic Voice but also the rebuilding of the broken walls. It is the import of this meeting at this critical juncture as we seek a redefinition of the North/South paradigm. It is the testimony of Joseph of Arithemea embracing Jesus and agreeing to bury him. It is the testimony of Simon of Cyrene, he from Africa agreeing to carry the cross of our savior. It is the testimony of Mary Magdalene tearfully following Christ to his bitter death for the prophecy to be

fulfilled. It is our testimony, meeting here gloriously to chart a course for our world founded on our belief and conviction for the love of God that we exhibit. That is the only reason why I am in this glorious and magnificent assembly. Praise to our living God!

But like Nehemiah, it is a big challenge. We all must be determined because we must rebuild this world. A world of love, a world of partnership. True partnership founded on brotherhood and sisterhood. The gift that our Lord Jesus Christ died for. This is the confession we are making of the renewal of our Covenant with our God! We have to re-think, Confess and seek forgiveness and forever be more resolute and vigilant.

As women, we become fundamental because the struggle for justice is benchmarked under the struggles for Women. I see it everyday in Africa. When we talk of the feminization of poverty, for me it is not abstract. You are talking about my mothers, friends, sisters, aunties and neighbors. Real women with names, homes and addresses and who have no real hope to ascertain their dignity due to the extremes visited on them by conscious decisions, made by conscious people but shrouded in the myth of bureaucracy and technocrats. Designs and decisions made in Rome, Washington, London, and Paris, Austria (mainly by men in pin stripped Armani suits and Gucci shoes) have devastating effects on (mainly women) in the backwater of Nairobi, Soweto, Lagos, Lahore, and Mumbai. I see it all the time and the more the reason why I speak about it with passion. Exposure and experience has a way of vividly opening your eyes to the blatant injustice visited on our world daily.

Like Isaiah beckons us, we must loose the chains of injustice through compassion, communion, selflessness, consistency, persuasion and most of all by love, the greatest commandment.

If we do away with the yoke of oppression by speaking truth to power, we stand absolved by the teachings of the Gospel of Matthew 5: 14 -16, that the essence of our assembly today is to manifest the light. That it is critical that we audit the evil of darkness manifested by the conquest of market fundamentalism by holding aloft and shining our light on the world. We have to hold the light high up on the hill of consciousness so that it illuminates across all the enclosures that have been erected.

And if we can do so, glorifying God as we are doing today, he will be with us.

Women of the world, Arise ye Mighty People!

With mighty hugs and tears of love, many thanks for listening and communing with me. May our almighty God always tender to your accounts.

God bless you all.