

Jan - Feb 2005

**DEAR AFJN MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>SMA Priest<br/>Murdered In Kenya</b>                       | 2 | In the October 2001 issue of <i>Around Africa</i> , I wrote about the 9/11 terrorist attacks: "Senseless violence ... a descent into the abyss of the darkest side of human heart ... it is still hard to think about the unthinkable that has happened.   |
| <b>Meet AFJN's New<br/>Board Members</b>                      | 3 | Many loved ones are gone forever, the vacuum from their passing filled with grieving, words of war and preparations for prolonged conflict.  |
| <b>Cry of the People</b>                                      | 4 | As our minds and hearts go out to the victims of these brutal attacks and their loved ones, we must also reflect on another 'collateral casualty' of these events  |
| <b>Sudan Peace<br/>Moves Ahead</b>                            | 5 | – the desperately-needed resources for debt cancellation and improved policies for the conflict-ridden continent of Africa."   |
| <b>Somalia's<br/>Insecurity</b>                               | 6 | Now we are dealing with the effects of the December 26, 2004 Tsunami that devastated parts of Asia and the East coast of Africa. Around 180,000 lives were lost in addition to immense infrastructure destruction. Once again, as our condolences go out to the victims of this catastrophe, we must reflect on the human condition.                             |
| <b>Will U.S. Trade<br/>Worsen Africa's<br/>Health Crisis?</b> | 7 |  |
| <b>AFJN's New Logo</b>  | 7 | September 11, 2001 and December 26, 2004 have something in common. Both tested our humanity. And the international community responded with overwhelming empathy and solidarity. It appears that in both cases we passed the test, but for how long? The real challenge remains to sustain the course, to stay together and build on our newly found solidarity. |
| <b>Ecumenical<br/>Advocacy Days</b>                           | 8 |  |
| <b>AFJN Annual<br/>Meeting</b>                                | 8 | AFJN's new logo, the <i>Sankofa</i> bird (see explanation inside), conveys the same kind of message – "looking back and moving forward." That is also the message I would like to share with AFJN members and friends in this farewell editorial of <i>Around Africa</i> .   |

I am leaving AFJN to take a position as Faculty Director of Global Humanitarian Action and International Development programs at George Mason University. I enjoyed working with you to improve the lot of the continent of Africa and will remain one with you in deed and spirit.

Marcel Kitissou, PhD  
AFJN Executive Director

**Africa Faith and Justice Network** is a Catholic network of individual and group members focused on Africa and the experience of its people. AFJN is committed in faith to collaborate in the task of transforming United States mentality and policy on Africa. It seeks to be an instrument of education and advocacy on behalf of justice for Africa.

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## **SMA PRIEST MURDERED IN KENYA**

*By Peter Jacxsens*

Fr. John Hannon, a priest of the Society of African Missions (SMA), was killed at his parish house during a church robbery on Wednesday, November 24, 2004 in Ngong, about 25 miles southwest of Nairobi. According to the police statement, ten to twenty men armed with crude weapons broke into the St. Barnabas parish residence at around midnight. The attackers struck Fr. Hannon on the head with a blunt object, killing him instantly. Upon hearing of the tragic event, Fr. Patrick Devine, SMA Regional Superior, and Ngong Bishop Cornelius Schilder, immediately went to the parish.

Fr. Hannon was born in 1939 in Newmarket-on-Fergus, Ireland. Answering God's call to be a missionary, he joined the Society of African Missions in 1961 and was ordained in 1967. The following year he was sent to the Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria, where he worked for the next 25 years. In 1994 he was sent to Kenya, where he served as pastor of St. Joseph's Parish in Jericho, a suburb of Nairobi. In 1996 he went back to Ireland to undergo heart surgery. Returning to Kenya in 1998, he was assigned to the Diocese of Ngong, where he served as pastor of St. Monica's in Kitengela before being assigned to St. Barnabas in 2000.

Fr. Hannon was well-known, in both Nigeria and Kenya, for his achievements in opening new parishes, setting up new Christian communities and building churches, mission houses and schools. He was particularly interested in training people in practical skills to be carpenters, masons, painters and electricians. He was an earnest helper of those in need. In each parish he built centers for practical education and skills training.

A funeral mass was celebrated on December 3 at St. Barnabas church. Fr. Fachtina O'Driscoll represented the SMA. Members of his family traveled to Kenya for the funeral. Two sisters and five brothers survive Fr. Hannon. He was buried next to the church among the people he loved and worked for. A Memorial Mass was celebrated in Newmarket-on-Fergus. It is fitting that St. Barnabas was his last assignment and resting place; the name Barnabas means "son of encouragement."

During the past four years 111 Catholic priests, religious and lay missionaries have been killed throughout the world. Forty-seven of these deaths have occurred in Africa. Fr. Hannon's death is a reminder of the extraordinary commitment and faith of all missionaries. May we continue to support them and keep them always in our prayers.

Peter Jacxsens is a volunteer at AFJN

## MEET AFJN'S NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Six new AFJN board members were approved at the October Annual Meeting.

In alphabetical order they are:

### **David Bohnsack, MCCJ**

Fr. David grew up in WI and joined the Catholic Church in 1982 while in college. He entered the Comboni Missionaries in 1986, finished his theological studies at the Gregoriana in Rome and was ordained in 1994. He spent two years in Egypt studying Arabic before moving to the Sudan, where he was parish priest in Darfur for 8 years. He was sent to Chicago in September 2004 to begin a new assignment with African-American youth on the city's west side.

### **Maria Hornung, MMS**

Sr. Maria, a Medical Mission Sister, is a pharmacist. She went to Africa in 1962 where she served in Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana for the next 25 years. She also served as her society's coordinator in Africa from 1981 to 1987. Later she coordinated the integration of new MMS members, and served as the North America coordinator from 1998-2003. She is presently in a graduate program at Temple University, concentrating on inter-religious dialogue. Sr. Maria previously served two terms on the AFJN Board between 1987 and 1998.

### **Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC**

Sister Elizabeth is the sister of Shirley Kolmer, ASC, and cousin of Joel Kolmer, ASC, who were murdered in Liberia in 1992. She visited them the summer before they died. Until recently she was professor and chair of the American Studies Department at St. Louis University. She has also served on a number of boards related to ministries sponsored by the Adorers of the Blood of Christ: Newman University in Wichita, Kansas, ASC Health System and Southern Illinois Health Enterprises. She is now retired and resides in St. Louis, MO.

### **Michael Moran, SMA**

Father Michael has twenty-one years experience in Africa. He spent three years in Tanzania and eighteen in Liberia, where he was regional superior for twelve years. He was the one called to identify the five American ASC Sisters murdered in Liberia in 1992. Fr. Moran returned to the United States in 2002, where he is presently the assistant

superior and office manager for SMA Missions in Tenafly, New Jersey. Prior to coming to Tenafly he headed the SMA Justice & Peace office in Washington, DC.

### **Christopher Promis, CSSp.**

Father Chris was ordained in 1972 and worked among the Maasai in Tanzania. He served as CSSp Major Superior in Tanzania six years and as Provincial Superior of the U.S. Province East from 1994-2000. He has served on the Executive and Mission Committees of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. He has been a formation director in various programs in Tanzania, Trinidad and the USA. Most recently, he served as Executive Director of Mission and Identity at Duquesne University, and presently is the Chaplain at Catholic Relief Services in Baltimore, MD.

### **Madeline Therese Wilhoit, CSC**

Sister Madeline entered Holy Cross in 1947 and graduated from Saint Mary's College with a BA in Social Sciences and Philosophy. In 1957 she taught high school and was principal of a primary school Sao Paulo, Brazil, as well as guiding pastoral programs in other parts of the country. She returned to the United States in 1973 as her congregation's Mission Coordinator. In 1986, after study in Rome and work with Catholic Relief Services in Thailand, Brazil, Lebanon, Israel and the West Bank, she was assigned to Ghana, where served for the next fourteen years as Director of Religious Education for the Diocese of Sekondi/Takoradi. She currently serves as director of the International Services Office for her congregation.

### AFJN HAS A NEW LOGO

The Board of Directors has approved the traditional African Sankofa Image to be the new AFJN logo. The Akan word "sankofa" literally means "return and pick it up." It is symbolized by the figure of a bird facing forward with its head turned to look over its back. The symbol is interpreted to mean that, as the present generation advances, it should not hesitate to look to the past for values it hopes to retain. AFJN carries out its mandate in the spirit of "Sankofa" – advancing its mission of working for just U.S. policies toward Africa, while staying rooted in the ideals and spirit of its original vision to advocate for human rights, peace and economic justice.

## **CRY OF THE PEOPLE OF DARFUR**

A Statement Bishop Wilton D. Gregory  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

November 17, 2004 – Gathered in our Fall Plenary Assembly, we continue to hear the cry of the people of Darfur. The conflict in this western region of Sudan has claimed the lives of more than 100,000 people and forcibly displaced over 1.5 million others.

For the past several years, as the people of Sudan have suffered and died, our Conference of Bishops has repeatedly called for decisive action by the international community to save human lives and restore peace and security. We have sent a number of delegations of bishops to Sudan and have heard first hand reports of the desolate and deadly situations there. Recent developments that hold both peril and promise move us to raise our voices once again in defense of human life in Darfur and Sudan.

Tragically, human beings are still being killed, raped, starved and driven to desperation. We strongly condemn the action of the Government in Khartoum against thousands of displaced persons in Otash and El-Geer Sureaf camps for displaced persons who were surrounded by military forces on the night of November 2, 2004, and forcibly removed. Credible reports indicate that Government forces have conducted similar raids on camps of displaced persons elsewhere in Darfur and have denied humanitarian workers access to some camps. These actions violate international law, agreements between the Government in Khartoum and the main rebel groups, and international memoranda of understanding which the Government signed. Most importantly they violate the sacred life and dignity of innocent people

At Abuja, Nigeria, the Government in Khartoum and the rebels agreed to a "no-fly" zone prohibiting aerial attacks against civilians and rebels in Darfur, and to security provisions for humanitarian aid workers. These protocols, while important, will only make a difference for the hundreds of thousands of lives at risk if the parties abide by them.

We are particularly discouraged that another raid on the El-Geer Sureaf camp came just one day after the peace agreements were signed in Abuja.

Another disappointing development is a report by the World Food Program that 175,000 people were cut off from food aid in October, with that number expected to increase to 200,000 this month.

The Government in Khartoum must be held accountable by the international community for the violence it continues to perpetrate against its own people, for its failure to implement Security Council resolutions 1556 and 1564, and for promoting insecurity throughout Darfur. Although the Government bears the greatest responsibility, the rebel groups should also be held accountable for violations of ceasefire agreements and the violence perpetrated against civilians and international aid workers. Pressure must be brought to bear on all parties to the conflict to compel them to respect the agreements they have signed and to foster a peaceful and just solution.

We welcome the upcoming Security Council session in Kenya and its focus on the Naivasha Peace Process and securing a comprehensive peace agreement between the Government in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). This meeting could also provide the Security Council with an opportunity to unite its member states in order to act more forcefully in defense of peace. The Security Council should consider imposing targeted sanctions and an arms embargo to ensure compliance on the part of the Government in Khartoum.

In addition, the United States and the international community must immediately provide sufficient financial and logistical support to the African Union monitoring mission so that it can move quickly to protect innocent civilians, ensure safe delivery of humanitarian assistance, monitor ceasefire violations, and improve the security situation throughout Darfur.

The Catholic Church in the United States continues to pray for the peoples of Sudan and will continue to provide assistance to the most vulnerable through the work of Catholic Relief Services. It is past time for the world to act together in effective defense of human life in Darfur.

## SUDAN PEACE MOVES AHEAD

*By Cathy Majtenyi*

Sudan watchers fixed their gaze on Nairobi last November 18th and 19th, as the United Nations Security Council met in the Kenyan capital for a special session on Sudan. Topping the agenda was the continuing war in the Darfur region of western Sudan and the progress of long-running peace talks between the government of Sudan and the south's main rebel group, the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), to end 21 years of war between them.

At the time of the Security Council's meeting, the two sides had been tantalizingly close to signing a final, comprehensive deal. In six protocols created during some two years of intense talks, they had worked out such arrangements as how to share wealth and power, the confinement of sharia (Islamic) law to the north, and the holding of a referendum after six years in which the south could decide to secede from Sudan.

Yet, despite all this progress, the United States and other partners were getting impatient as the two sides seemed to be stalling over details. In an effort to push the process along, the UN, U.S. and others applied subtle and not-so-subtle pressure to quickly sign the deal.

The pressure seemed to have worked. In front of the 15-member council, Sudanese vice-president Ali Osman Taha and SPLM/A chairman John Garang signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) promising to sign a comprehensive peace agreement by December 31st.

"The focus today has been to put the two parties on center stage of the world ... and to have both sides commit themselves to this process and particularly to signing a peace agreement by December 31st," John Danforth, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told reporters after the MOU was signed.

The UN Security Council also welcomed the December 31st deadline, as stated in Resolution 1574 (2004), which was unanimously adopted following the meeting. Also in the resolution, the Norwegian government promised to hold an international donors' conference for the

reconstruction and rehabilitation of Sudan upon the successful completion of the peace agreement.

January 9th was the agreement's formal signing. Euphoria filled Nairobi's Nyayo Stadium. Thousands of northern and southern Sudanese broke into spontaneous song, dance, cheers and prayers as Sudanese Vice-President Ali Osman Taha and Sudan People's Liberation Movement leader John Garang signed the peace deal in front of more than a half-dozen heads of state, senior officials, and representatives of governments from around the world.

Awut Deng, a community and peace worker with the New Sudan Council of Churches, explained to AFJN what the day meant for her and many other Sudanese, particularly those from the south.

"We have lost our children, we have lost our husbands, we have lost our brothers and we are separated from our families and we are displaced and we have been enslaved," she said. "So for us to have this peace agreement, it shows us that we are going to start from the beginning, to rebuild our life, to be able to take care of our children who are left orphans. This is not a peace that has come from nowhere. It is a peace that comes through bloodshed."

But the thorny issue of Darfur would not go away, even at the successful signing of the north-south deal. At the signing ceremony, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said: "These new partners for peace must work together immediately to end the violence and the atrocities that continue to occur in Darfur, not next month or in the interim period, but right away, starting today."

Analysts say, now that the north-south war is over, efforts must be made to continue to pressure all sides in the Darfur conflict to put a stop to their bitter war.

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Cathy Majtenyi is a correspondent for AFJN in East Africa

## SOMALIA'S INSECURITY

*By Cathy Majtenyi*

The Somali government has had its hands full in the first few months of its existence, trying to cope with enormous challenges to a fledgling entity. One of the biggest crises to hit the new administration was the tsunami that affected large parts of Asia. Aid workers and government officials estimate that the waves claimed anywhere from 150 to 300 Somalis and left some 30,000 to 54,000 people in dire need of assistance. The Somali tsunami had received scant media attention, yet the waves' effects were just as devastating in Somalia as they were in Asian countries.

For instance, in the 4,800-population fishing town of Hafun, located near the northeastern coastal tip, the waves killed 19 townspeople. More than 100 people are still missing, the whole business district consisting of 300 shops and businesses are now a mass of twisted rubble, most fishermen have lost all their equipment and supplies, and townspeople are now starting to trickle back into the town from their hiding places in the nearby hills.

"Honestly speaking, when I first got in here, I couldn't believe it," World Food Program officer Maulid Warfa said in an interview. "The whole town was stinking of rotten food, rotten fish, rotten clothes, rotten stuff. And there were flies all over. Many of the houses have been destroyed, walls collapsed; it's a scene of devastation. It was scary."

The Somali government's reaction to the crisis was slow. At a December 28th press conference, Prime Minister Mohammed Ali Gedi vowed that he and a team would tour affected areas within the next few days. A government delegation did not actually go to Somalia until more than two weeks later. In fact, Somali government members are afraid to set foot in Somalia, primarily because the country is still highly insecure after almost 14 years of anarchy, chaos, and clan fighting. The government has been delaying its return to the capital, Mogadishu from its base in Nairobi, Kenya, because of the lack of security.

In the first week of January, the African Union offered to send a peace support mission to Somalia. In an interview, the director of the African

Union's Peace and Security office, Geoffrey Mugumya, described the initiative as initially being an "observer mission." "The mandate generally will be to protect the government institutions as well as the government. And definitely we shall also be doing some capacity building, using Somalis for police training as well as the army," he said. But that has caused problems in some quarters, with a militant Islamic group in Mogadishu vowing to oppose the intervention every step of the way.

The Somali government is finally going ahead with its relocation plans. In mid-January, Prime Minister Gedi announced that three teams are preparing the groundwork for the government's relocation, estimated to be completed by April.

Somalia's lawlessness showed itself forcibly in mid-January. Just days after the government announced its relocation plans, unknown vandals desecrated hundreds of graves in an Italian-owned cemetery in Mogadishu, scattering the remains of Italian missionaries, soldiers, and other expatriates buried there.

Mr. Gedi told reporters he was afraid that the incident might have soured relations between his and the Italian government. State Minister of Parliament and Government Relations Abdurahman Ibbi said in an interview he thinks a group of criminals with no political, clan, or religious affiliations destroyed the graves. "This new government needs help, needs support, needs aid from the Italian government," he said. "So they don't want the Italian government to help the (Somali) government. Maybe some of these opportunists who might not actually want this government to succeed."

Only time will tell if the new government will be able to handle the insecurity and other challenges being thrown at it.

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Cathy Majtenyi is a correspondent for AFJN in East Africa

## WILL U.S. TRADE WORSEN AFRICA'S HEALTH CRISIS?

By Larry J. Goodwin

In November 2001, members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreed that member countries can produce generic medicines without patent holders' agreement in order to protect public health. This extremely important provision from the WTO meeting, held in Doha, Qatar, upheld the fundamental principle that getting medicine to people during a health crisis trumps patent protections for drug companies. Specifically, the public health declaration stated that: "We agree that the TRIPS (Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement does not and should not prevent members from taking measures to protect public health. Accordingly, while reiterating our commitment to the TRIPS Agreement, we affirm that the Agreement can and should be interpreted and implemented in a manner supportive of WTO members' *right to protect public health* and, in particular, *to promote access to medicines for all*" (emphasis added). [Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, 14 Nov 2001, para. 4]

This agreement holds significant ramifications for Africa, the epicenter of the global AIDS pandemic. With high-level poverty rates and limited health resources, and unable to afford the market prices charged by the international drug companies, Africa faces a daunting challenge in providing people with the life-saving medicines they need.

AFJN wants to see the U.S. uphold the 2001 Doha agreement within any trade deals it negotiates with African countries and regions. Our most immediate concern is the free trade agreement (FTA) being discussed between the U.S. and the five countries of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) – Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland. We and our advocacy partners have met with the U.S. Trade Representative's office three times to urge U.S. negotiators not to go beyond the Doha Agreement by insisting on provisions that would favor pharmaceutical companies and make it more difficult for people in SACU countries to get essential medicines.

At our last meeting on 04 November 2004, USTR negotiators told us that the SACU discussions hadn't reached the stage of dealing with essential medicines, but that they understood the critical situation in Africa related to HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and would take Africa's needs fully into account. In a follow-up letter to the meeting, we noted that in other free trade agreements the U.S. had indeed insisted on stricter provisions than Doha's for essential medicines. We wrote: "Given that lack of access to affordable medicines is such a huge crisis in Africa, we strongly urge USTR to uphold the 2001 WTO Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, and not to include provisions in US-SACU FTA that exceed countries' obligations on pharmaceuticals already set out by TRIPS."

We hoped that our views had been heard. Yet shortly afterwards, the November 2004 issue of "Bridges," a publication by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, carried an article by Tenu Avafia, a researcher with the Trade Law Centre of Southern Africa, indicating that the U.S. was, after all, pushing SACU to go beyond the Doha Agreement! Noting that the negotiations are currently stalled, Avafia stated: "The impasse on IP (*Intellectual Property* or *patent rights*) is certainly the most immediate issue given the fact that the SACU countries have the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in the world."

The stakes involved are enormous for the whole of Africa if, as is commonly accepted, the US-SACU FTA is the forerunner of trade agreements with other African regions. Who will gain from these agreements when it comes to urgent health care – sick people or the pharmaceutical companies? Where the U.S. negotiators come down on this issue is a matter of conscience for us all.

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Larry J. Goodwin is Associate Director at AFJN



**PLEASE REGISTER NOW!**

**“Make All Things New”**

**Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice**

11-14 March 2005

Washington, D.C.

The third annual “Ecumenical Advocacy Days for Global Peace with Justice” offers a unique opportunity for AFJN members to lobby Congress on U.S. policy toward Africa.

*AFJN is playing a lead role in organizing this event.*

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**For schedule and program information --  
and to Register on-line today!**

<http://www.advocacydays.org>

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**FOR THIS YEAR’S AFJN ANNUAL MEETING**

16-17 October 2005

AFJN members will hold their annual meeting in Tucson, AZ, following the Mission Congress organized by the U.S. Catholic Mission Association. We will send you important information about both events in the weeks ahead.

Meanwhile, please mark our Annual Meeting dates on your calendar and plan to join us for an exciting, timely and enjoyable program of speakers, workshops and interaction with other AFJN members. Meet our board members and help AFJN chart an effective advocacy course over the years ahead.

*“We received a wealth of information about Africa. The business meeting was the best I’ve experienced in any organization, and the vitality was obvious in the smooth functioning of the conference”*

— Participant at AFJN’s 2004 Annual Meeting in Louisville, KY

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