

Right to Water

Proposal

Recognizing that over a billion people across the planet lack access to clean and potable water and that millions die each year as a result, we, the Loretto Community gathered in Assembly 2009, join our voices with those of our sisters and brothers around the world in calling upon the United Nations to add the following article to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 31: The Right to Water

Everyone has the right to clean and accessible water, adequate for the health and wellbeing of the individual and family, and no one shall be deprived of such access or quality of water due to individual economic circumstance.

Background/rationale

Global warming, the increasing trend to privatize the world's fresh water, and conflicts over water rights will only increase as we become more conscious of the well-documented facts listed below:

- 884 million people (approximately one in eight people) lack access to safe water supplies
- 3.575 million people die each year from water-related disease
- 98% of water related deaths occur in the developing world in children 0-14 years of age
- Poor people living in slums often pay 5-10 times more per liter (quart) of water than wealthy people living in the same city
- 2.5 billion people lack access to improved sanitation, including 1.2 billion people who have no facilities at all

Implementation

- Active engagement by the Loretto Investment Committee with the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) and the Midwest Coalition for Responsible Investments (MCRI) in support of efforts to counter corporate control of water and promote water as a human right.
- Information on Water as a Human Right to be provided to the Loretto Community by the Loretto Earth Network and the Loretto representative to the United Nations.
- Release of this statement to the public by Loretto leadership

In addition Members of the Loretto Community are encouraged to:

- add their individual names to the petition to adopt Article 31: The Right to Water at www.article31.org and to encourage others to do likewise;
- to conserve water in their personal lives;
- continue to educate themselves and others on water related issues;
- protest corporate control of water by supporting local, national, and international legislation that safeguards water as a human right;
- renew our commitment to refrain from purchasing, using and/or promoting the use of bottled water wherever possible as a part of our effort to allow water accessibility to all people.

Submitted by

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June 26, 2009 — Passed unanimously by all members present. Proposal approved.