



## REALIZING RIGHTS THE ETHICAL GLOBALIZATION INITIATIVE

### Realizing Rights: Action Update Spring 2009



I've just returned from a series of remarkable events which reinforced my conviction that the voices and leadership of women can and do make a real difference in countries struggling to overcome conflict and promote human rights and sustainable development.

In Liberia, my colleagues from Realizing Rights and I were honoured to participate in the [International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, Peace and Security](#) co-convened by two remarkable women leaders - President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia and President Tarja Halonen of Finland. Coinciding with International Women's Day on 8 March, the event brought together women from across Africa and around the world to share their experiences and build greater collective commitments on the Colloquium themes: [UN Security Council Resolution \(SCR\) 1325](#) and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace, economic empowerment, climate change and other challenging contemporary issues.

I was proud of the role Realizing Rights played in helping organize the Colloquium's work on economic empowerment and decent work and on the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This topic was of particular relevance as I then [travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo and to Rwanda](#) for meetings and a field visit organized by the Open Society Institute and Oxfam International.

I met with President of DRC Joseph Kabila and Rwandan President Paul Kagame who both committed to taking new steps to protect civilians in the ongoing conflict, most of whom are women and children. I called on all parties involved in the current conflict to unite against gender based violence and to adopt National Action Plans for SCR 1325 that will better enable women to be heard and to participate actively in finding peaceful ways forward for their nations and communities.

The women I met in Liberia and in the DRC want to be agents of change in their countries. It is our task to support them in that effort. I hope you will take some time to read about these and other activities in this newsletter and learn more by visiting [RealizingRights.org](http://RealizingRights.org).

- Mary Robinson  
President, Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative

## Enhancing the effectiveness of Women's Leadership



### [International Colloquium on Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Peace and Security](#)

Over one thousand women from around the world gathered in Monrovia, Liberia for the first International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security. The Colloquium was co-convened by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia and President Tarja Halonen of Finland. Realizing Rights played a key role in supporting the organization of this unique event.

## Promoting Equitable Trade and Decent Work



### [World Day of Social Justice](#)

At its sixty-second session, in November 2007, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 20 February as World Day of Social Justice. The day was observed for the first time in 2009. Mary Robinson and Realizing Rights staff participated in launch events at UN headquarters in New York.

## Influencing the direction of Corporate Responsibility



### [Mary Robinson calls on business schools to take on the human rights challenge](#)

Mary Robinson was among the guest speakers joining CEOs, politicians, business executives and a team of IMD Faculty for a Responsible Leadership Summit in February in Lausanne, Switzerland.

## Shaping more humane Migration Policies



### [Health Worker Migration Initiative meets in Norway](#)

The Health Worker Migration Initiative's (HWMI) Global Policy Advisory Council held its fifth formal meeting in February in Oslo, Norway. The HWMI is a partnership of Realizing Rights, the WHO and the Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA) which seeks to assess, discuss and promote innovative global, regional and national policy action to support the management of health worker migration globally.

## Realizing the Right to Health



### [MLI Meetings in Bamako, Mali](#)

The Ministerial Leadership Initiative for Global Health (MLI), a program of Realizing Rights, held its first meetings in Bamako, Mali in Nov. 2008, and announced a new emphasis on reproductive health policy. The meetings in Bamako featured Ministers of Health from MLI-focus-countries and emphasized MLI's core principle; ministerial owned and ministerial led initiatives to reform health policies have the greatest potential for success.

## Realizing Rights: In the News



### [ICJ: War on Terror Has Eroded Human Rights Worldwide](#)

A special panel set up by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), a Geneva-based group of lawyers and judges, has published a study warning that measures introduced to fight terrorism - such as torture and secret detention - has undermined international law. The ICJ panel, which includes Mary Robinson, studied counterterrorism measures adopted since the Sept. 11, 2001

attacks in the US.