



**61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference
Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

3-5 September 2008 UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

The 61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference titled, “Reaffirming Human Rights For All: The Universal Declaration at 60” is being planned to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is the first time in the Conference’s history that it will be held outside of New York.

The conference provides a forum for diverse actors including:

- More than 2000 international Non-governmental Organization (NGO) representatives
- Human rights activists from all over the world
- Government, academia and UN representatives
- Private sector speakers from business and philanthropy
- Education and information technology experts
- Citizen activists and citizen journalists

The three-day gathering of NGOs is organized by the Department of Public Information (DPI) in partnership with the NGO/DPI Executive Committee as well as NGOs which have consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

As an annual meeting taking place on the eve of the opening of the General Assembly, the Conference has become an established forum for networking and exchange of views, opinions and best practices on relevant issues. Participants will leave the conference with knowledge of measures and goals which can be achieved by working together to counter human rights abuses.

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Co-chairs Media Committee
61st Annual DPI/NGO Conference



Shamina de Gonzaga was chosen to Chair the 61st United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) Non -Governmental Organizations (NGO) Conference: *"Reaffirming Human Right for All: The Universal Declaration at 60."* The first conference in 60 years to be held away from United Nations Headquarters in New York, the event will be held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, 3-5 September 2008, the city where the Declaration was signed in 1948.

In 2005 Ms. de Gonzaga was appointed by the President of the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson of Sweden, to the newly created position of Special Adviser on NGO relations in the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

She has since served in that capacity for the President of the 61st General Assembly, H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa of Bahrain (2006-2007), and for the President of the 62nd Session, H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2007-present), promoting civil society involvement in various General Assembly processes including on HIV/AIDS, International Migration and Development, Least Developed Countries, Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace among other issues.

She is a representative for the Fundación Cultural Baur, a Mexico-based NGO focusing on human rights education, and a Vice-Chair of the NGO/DPI Executive Committee.

Ms. de Gonzaga began her involvement with United Nations at the age of eight, when she was invited to participate in the 1990 UN Children's Summit. She became an NGO representative to the UN in 1996 at the age of 14. For over the last decade she has focused on developing innovative approaches which involve civil society, especially youth, as well as entrepreneurs and others , in the work of the UN, and which bring UN issues to a wide global audience.

In 1997 she assisted in the organization of one of the first UN meetings on female genital mutilation, reaching out to the medical community to raise international awareness on the issue. In 2001 she served as youth liaison for the Annual DPI/NGO Conference, setting a precedent for youth involvement in that Conference. In 2004, she produced the first public outreach event and NGO fair in New York City to introduce the public to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and co-founded "What Moves You?" an organization that creates awareness campaigns aimed at helping people to understand the relevance of global issues in their lives and to inspire action for social change. In 2005, she was the Editor of *"Centerpoint Now"*, a Commemorative journal for the UN's 60th Anniversary.

Ms. de Gonzaga was a University Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania where she received her Bachelors of Arts and Masters of Arts degrees in 2003. She is fluent in English, French and Spanish.