

## **League Day at the United Nations November 13, 2014 Briefings on Water for Life**

Over 100 League members and friends convened at the United Nations on Thursday, Nov. 13, for the annual League's Day at the UN. Attendees toured the newly renovated (and still being renovated) facilities, seeing part of the old Berlin Wall, the Security Council Chambers and Human Rights wall. Lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room was beautiful and delicious as usual. The briefing in the afternoon on the topic of water was presented by two speakers: Dan Thomas, Head of Communications for the UN Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team, and Nicolas Franke, Associate Expert in Water Policy at the Division of Sustainable Development of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs.

Mr. Thomas spoke about the Climate Summit hosted by the Secretary-General in September to engage leaders and advance climate action and ambition. The Summit served as a public platform for leaders at the highest level – all UN Member States, as well as finance, business, civil society and local leaders from public and private sectors – to catalyze ambitious action on the ground to reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience and mobilize political will for an ambitious global agreement by 2015 that limits the world to a less than 2-degree Celsius rise in global temperature. Mr. Thomas presented clips of presentations at the Summit.

- Opening video: Make a World of Difference  
<http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/2014/09/make-world-difference/>
- President Obama delivered remarks at the 2014 Climate Summit at the United Nations in New York, New York.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2014/09/23/president-obama-speaks-2014-climate-summit>
- Statement by Ms. Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, Civil Society Representative from the Marshall Islands at the opening of the Climate Summit 2014. Her speech included a very moving poem she wrote to her infant daughter.  
<http://webtv.un.org/search/kathy-jetnil-kijiner-climate-summit-2014-opening-ceremony/3801325934001?term=Climate%20Summit%202014&sort=date>
- Statement by Mr. Leonardo DiCaprio, UN Messenger of Peace, with a special focus on climate change, at the opening of the Climate Summit 2014.  
<http://webtv.un.org/search/leonardo-dicaprio-un-messenger-of-peace-climate-summit-2014-opening-ceremony/3800968933001?term=Climate%20Summit%202014&sort=date>

Mr. Franke spoke about how unsustainable water resources management leads to water scarcity and poor water quality worldwide and the link to human production and consumption. He presented numerous statistics to emphasize his points on the link between human consumption and water

scarcity. His notes are here (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/un/2014/Frankes-presentation-notes.pdf>).

One of the League's co-sponsors for the day, Grace Communications Foundation, has more information on the topics discussed by Mr. Franke, as well as a link to the water footprint calculator described. The website for Grace is [www.gracelinks.org](http://www.gracelinks.org), and the Water Footprint Calculator can be found at [www.gracelinks.org/calculator](http://www.gracelinks.org/calculator).

Rosalee Keech, LWVUS Observer to the United Nations, also briefly spoke about the League's activities at the United Nations. She suggested that people go to [webuntv.org](http://webuntv.org) for webcasts of many of the UN meetings. Many of the things the League does are in conjunction with coalitions we belong to. The Working Group on Girls is one that also works on violence issues as well as girls' empowerment; their website is [girlsrights.org](http://girlsrights.org).

Also, CSW (Commission on the Status of Women) will be holding its 59th annual meeting on March 9-20, 2015. The Commission will undertake a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The review (Beijing+20) will also include the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly, the first five-year assessment conducted after the adoption of the Platform for Action, which highlighted further actions and initiatives. The session will also address opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda. - See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw59-2015#sthash.xcRDxvW7.dpuf>. The LWV can sign up 15 folks to attend & will be sponsoring a panel discussion on Women in Government: Impact to Economic & Social Change. Also we'll host a reception for LWV attendees. Sign up is on a first come, first served basis. Please let Suzie Maltz ([suzanne.maltz6@gmail.com](mailto:suzanne.maltz6@gmail.com)) know of anyone interested (person does not have to attend for the full 2 weeks).

We'd like to thank our co-sponsors for the day – they provide great support for the League, but also encourage attendance by their own members and friends to enlarge the participation at the UN. Their members add greatly to our discussions at the UN.

- United Nations Department of Public Information
- Zonta International District 4
- GRACE Communications Foundation
- Women's Bar Association of the State of NY
- General Federation of Women's Clubs

