



Giant Leap

The Newsletter of
the IFST Campaign

A SNAPSHOT OF EVOLUTION IN ACTION

by John Teton / Director, IFST Campaign

Publication of this inaugural edition of *Giant Leap* marks an important milestone in the evolution of the International Food Security Treaty (IFST), the proposed global covenant to place the **human right to be free from hunger** under the protection of enforceable international law.

We are titling this newsletter of the IFST Campaign in recollection of the words spoken by the first human to set foot upon the moon, describing that immense accomplishment as “one giant leap for mankind.” Many at the time asked why, if the human race could go to the moon, couldn’t we also end hunger on Earth?

We in the IFST Campaign believe that mankind is now capable of taking that giant leap as well. We believe that the IFST is an essential component of the social and political thrust necessary to terminate the holocaust-scale toll that hunger is still taking around the world, even as you read these words.

Ample expert opinion vouches for the credentials of the IFST as a sound legal measure essential to any serious effort to ending the worldwide plague of malnutrition. The IFST must now be addressed at the United Nations, the venue where global treaties are formally established. [EVOLUTION, cont'd on p.2]

WASHINGTON, DC: CAMPAIGN GATHERS MOMENTUM

by Lynn Kienzel
Assistant Director, IFSTC



Photo: Aileen Carr / Congressional Hunger Center

Dr. Margaret Zeigler, Deputy Director of the Congressional Hunger Center, introduces IFST Campaign Director John Teton (center) at the May 10 IFST briefing in the Longworth House Office Building on Capitol Hill. Dr. Marc Cohen (left), Special Assistant to the Director-General of the International Food Policy Research Institute, moderated the discussion.

On May 10, IFST Campaign Director John Teton gave a presentation on Capitol Hill on the IFST for Congressional staff and others interested in hunger issues. The International Food Policy Research Institute and the Congressional Hunger Center co-sponsored the event. The presentation generated eight additional meetings on Capitol Hill, mostly with legislative aides to US Senators and Representatives. Those meetings have led to a series of [WASHINGTON, cont'd on p.5]

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[**EVOLUTION**, *cont'd from p.1*] One or more governments and/or an intergovernmental organization like the U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization must sponsor the Treaty at the U.N. in order for official debate on it to begin. For this to happen, the all-volunteer corps of the International Food Security Treaty Campaign must continue to grow, and *Giant Leap* will prove an important catalyst to that growth.

Special thanks for making this timely newsletter possible are due our Editorial Designers Bill Kienzel and Audrey Yao. Fortunately for the Campaign, Bill is not only the persona behind *Lettera Mundi* graphic design in Carpinteria, California, but is also married to our campaign's Assistant Director, Lynn Kienzel, and thus has been well-acquainted with the IFST for years. It was he who designed our strongly pictographic logo, and our "Phases of IFST evolution" chart (published by Bread for

the World in *Hunger 2000*, and showcased in our brochure and website).

Audrey Yao was a junior in the International Relations Department of the University of Southern California when she attended a seminar on the IFST co-sponsored by International Relations Undergraduate Association and the Center for International Studies at her school; hearing that the Campaign needed editorial assistance to launch our publication, she jumped in to help make it happen.

The IFST Campaign is an informal organization which owes its achievements to just this kind of inspired action. There are thousands of ways in which individuals and organizations can take part in this historic process, only a few of which are mentioned in this newsletter, and many of which will be devised by its readers. Read on, and let us know your thoughts. ◀◀

A WELL- "ENGINEERED" CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

by Lynn Kienzel, Assistant Director

Last year I received a volunteer form in the mail from Philipina Marcelo. She'd seen our website, read about the campaign, and decided to volunteer to help out. Philipina is an Assistant Professor at the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines, in the Chemical Engineering department. Her focus has been on Food Research, concentrating on the Philippine mango.

Within just a couple of weeks, Philipina had organized a campaign center on her university campus. She set up a central bulletin board to publish news about the International Food Security Treaty Campaign and to invite students to participate. Soon she had attracted more than 30 volunteers to work on the campaign in the Philippines. She had also contacted her senators to ask them to come and listen to the concerns of the students and professors who had volunteered. Periodically she shared news of the progress she was making. Here are some of her accounts:

May 24, 2001

I'm glad to know that I'm welcome in the campaign, especially because more than ever before, I think millions of Filipinos would benefit from it. If you were following the problems in the Philippines lately, it may have occurred to you that the real problem in this country is poverty. The barometer of such a problem is the kind of food you see on the meal table of families throughout the country. Many people in this country, Lynn, are suffering from the lack of affordable food supply. Anyway, I have high hopes that there is a solution to this problem. The Treaty is perhaps the best solution. Last March, just about the time that I sent my volunteer data sheet to you, I gave a 45-minute talk to our graduating Chemical Engineering students about food engineering. Naturally, I mentioned the Treaty. I think it worked, and I'd say that it was "successful" because five people (out of about 85...some success, huh?), including the #1 student in their batch, have opted to pursue a career in this area. They want to help in the campaign... although they don't know how! Like me!

As you can see, Philipina was a little uncertain at first about how to proceed. But she didn't let that stop her, and her persistence paid off:

May 28, 2001

Well, what do you know, I just found a very good and very dynamic ally: my thesis advisee on a food project I'm doing in my university, Mark Anthony Marcelo. He's a student leader and very active in community service activities of my university. Anyway, we have started drawing up a plan. We'll bring this whole matter to our Office of Student Affairs and Community Service, and mobilize our entire university to lead the campaign here in the

[**LAUNCH**, *cont'd on p.3*]

Students at the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines are actively supporting the Treaty campaign.

From left to right: Archibald Gonzales, Nathaniel Antonio, Allan Ronald Samorio, Prof. Philipina Marcelo, Dominador (Japjap) Constantino, Jr.; George Chao, Jr. (the UST campaign coordinator) and Carlo Isidro (the overall coordinator of the Program). Not in the picture are UST women students (who, Philipina wrote, "are on beauty rest today." Camera-shy??).



[LAUNCH, cont'd from p.2]

Philippines. Already, I've spoken to my department chair and our university's Head of Planning and Development regarding the campaign. They're very supportive, and are willing to sit with me and talk about how could we get the campaign going. Our Chemical Engineering Society invited our government's Secretary of Planning and Development, Mar Roxas, to give a talk to our students on June 20. He is an advocate of policies that would make affordable food and medicine available in the Philippines. I will speak with him regarding the campaign. I am also planning to contact two of our senators who are pro-food for all Filipinos.

So her second step was to find other people like herself who would commit to the campaign. Soon the momentum was terrific!

August 27, 2001

Boy, have I got news for you! We have just finished our campaign pre-launch earlier today. Aside from the Chemical Engineering Dept. and Mechanical Engineering Dept. volunteers, there were 33 students (student leaders all) who attended the pre-launch. I think it's a good number considering that there was a downpour this morning. The content of my talk, a sort of introduction of the IFST ideals, was mostly taken from past research on global hunger and malnutrition and specific data on the hunger situation in the Philippines. I, of course, used materials from the IFST campaign brochure, and distributed copies of it to the students who attended. The students are very interested and they pledge their support to the campaign, especially the campaign launch. Some of them volunteered to invite other students from other universities, their former classmates in high school, etc. We also distributed signature drive forms to the students who attended so they could use these to get the support of the people they know. Then we could present these signatures to the senators in the campaign launch to show the wide acceptance of the treaty in the country. We hope to get an initial 10,000 signatures prior to the launch... difficult, but we will do our best. The pre-launch was fun... the ChE and ME volunteers prepared a slide show of the hunger situation in the Philippines, a video of sorts that captured the audience's attention. Then they prepared a format slide show for my talk. It was nice. It ended with a lot of singing and a "think-aloud" forum on how to spread the IFST word.

Philipina is continuing her efforts in the Philippines and having great success. On July 26, 2002, she and her co-workers in the Campaign launched a national initiative to gather even more campaign members. They presented a "Hunger Forum," where officials from the Philippine government and University of Santo Tomas gave talks, followed by a dialog with the audience and IFST Campaign Director John Teton (via the Internet).

I know her story can inspire you, as it has me, to continue to work hard to share our ideas with other people and build the momentum we need to make this campaign a success. Never underestimate the power you have to make a difference. ◀

THE ARMLESS HAND

Foreign Aid & the Call for Anti-Hunger Law

by John Teton

Foreign aid is vital to ending hunger, but it cannot accomplish the task on its own. It lacks the strength to overcome either the lassitude of those who see hunger as inevitable, or the aggression of those who wield hunger as a weapon. To reach the needy, the helping hand requires the long arm of law.

While malnutrition arises from poverty, floods, and various other causes, people don't actually starve now unless someone wants them to starve. According to Nobel Laureate Economist Amartya Sen, all modern-era famines have resulted from socio-political factors.¹ Trying to build a solution to such a global problem without the socio-political tools of international law is like trying to build a wooden house without a hammer or saw. Yet, in the half-century since freedom from hunger became part of the world's first formal vision of universal human rights,² society has failed to employ enforceable law in service of that goal. As a result, hunger continues to affect almost eight hundred million people, and kills more people every eighteen months than were put to death by Nazi genocide during the entire Third Reich.

The history of hunger, like that of oppression of women and minorities, is repeating the lesson that, **without strong laws, efforts to effect major social change are doomed.**

The International Food Security Treaty (IFST) aims to establish enforceable international law guaranteeing the human right of freedom from hunger, and to oblige nations to establish and implement food security laws within their own borders. In past human rights conventions and declarations, freedom from hunger suffocated under a mass of complex issues relating to every conceivable aspect of human rights and the conduct of war. By contrast, the IFST focuses on the elimination of starvation and malnutrition. It specifies actions that must be prohibited, such as the

deliberate use of starvation as a weapon — the cause of the 1992 famines in Bosnia and Somalia, and the 2002 crisis in the Sudan. The IFST also requires pro-active measures to achieve that goal, like the establishment of a world food reserve and resource center, complaint procedures, and regular national reporting to U.N. agencies.

Improving Foreign Aid Systems. Food shortage emergencies mobilize the world community to extend help, but flaws in the food aid system often prevent aid from getting where it's needed. Sometimes the aid offered is inappropriate or misguided, as when arriving food supplies fail to include safe water or a balance of nutrients, or where tools, training, and self-sufficiency loans would have greater long-term effect. Sometimes food aid never reaches the hungry for lack of effective delivery systems. IFST supporter and U.N. Undersecretary-General Maurice Strong reported the extreme frustration he faced orchestrating famine relief in Africa in the 1980s: mountains of food aid languished in port due to logistical problems like inadequate unloading capacity, blocked rail lines, and broken bridges — a scene repeated with sickening similarity in the Ethiopian/Eritrean famine of 2000.

No country facing such a desperate emergency should be reduced to gushing pathetic scattershot appeals through the media and the internet, pleading for help which comes too late for many, if it comes at all. The IFST commits nations to establish and support a comprehensive World Food Reserve and Resource Center system, designed to insure that emergency support tailored to a specific malnutrition crisis is available to any country that needs it. Civilization evolves: just as ancient Rome's innovation of a trained, well-equipped fire department became critical to the life of cities, so too the World Food Reserve and Resource Center system has become essential to the well-being of the world.

The IFST as Preventive Medicine. It didn't take long for towns in the American "Wild West" to recognize that banks were less likely to be robbed and cattle less likely to be rustled if there were laws in place forbidding such actions — laws with teeth that were willing to bite. The very existence of the International Food Security Treaty would go a long way toward inhibiting those who would wield the vicious weapon of starvation. As UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan told the General Assembly at the opening of its 1999 session, the moral and logistical readiness to launch international interventions should cause would-be criminal governments to recognize that they cannot embark on crimes against humanity "in expectation of sovereign impunity." At the same time, the IFST will provide additional moral leverage for nations to pressure treaty-violating states through such measures as withholding trade preferences, consular protocols, visas, and foreign aid. By causing would-be starvers to jettison their plans, these

[**ARMLESS HAND**, *cont'd on p.5*]

[**ARMLESS HAND**, *cont'd from p.4*] preventive and secondary aspects of the IFST could save more lives in the long run than all the aid programs in the world, and cost a great deal less to boot.

What You Can Do:

Citizens of all nations who recognize the tremendous potential of the IFST movement can add to its momentum by **lobbying governments** on its behalf, and urging others to do the same.

For many people, lobbying will simply mean sending post cards or e-mail to their legislators, president, prime minister, or monarch, telling them to use everything in their power to support the IFST in order to end malnutrition by force of law. Inspiring family, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances to join the effort, and organizing campaign events³ are equally important, for it is through such grassroots action that great social movements come to life. The initiative must not be left to political leaders, who often turn out to be merely followers of emerging public consciousness, and must be roused to move the arm of the law lying listlessly at society's side. Their hopeless depictions of the dangerous and humiliating scourge of hunger as inevitable are self-fulfilling, and should no longer be tolerated, now that the means to end it are at hand. ◀

John Teton, Director of the IFST Campaign, may be e-mailed at ifst@cox.net. Valuable consultation for this article was provided by Donald E. Buckingham, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Ottawa, and fellow of the Centre for Studies in Agriculture and the Environment at the University of Saskatchewan. Joanna Berkman, editor of Hunger 2001 (a publication of Bread for the World Institute) provided editorial notes.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, "World Report," *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 15, 1992.
- 2 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 10, 1948.
- 3 The International Food Security Treaty Campaign serves as a resource and network for such activities.

[**WASHINGTON**, *cont'd from p.1*] teleconferences with congressional staffers from various House and Senate offices to plan how to best arrange for a hearing on the IFST in the Congress. Those assisting in this planning effort include



Photo: Aileen Carr / Congressional Hunger Center

John Teton at the May 10 Capitol Hill briefing on the IFST, co-sponsored by the Congressional Hunger Center and the International Food Policy Research Institute.

Dr. Margaret Zeigler, Deputy Director of the Congressional Hunger Center (www.hungercenter.org); Dr. Marc Cohen, Special Assistant to the Director-General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (www.ifpri.org); and Max Finberg, Legislative Assistant to Congressman Tony Hall of Ohio, and US Ambassador-Designate to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome.

The momentum generated by this presentation and subsequent meetings validates our belief that the time for the International Food Security Treaty has come, and that we will not be alone in our efforts to get it ratified by world nations. This is the kind of synergy that will enable us to make dramatic strides as the campaign continues to move forward. ◀

Recommended Reading, re HUNGER AS A WEAPON

For a comprehensive overview of recent uses of hunger in warfare around the world, see **Conflict: A Cause and Effect of Hunger**, by Ellen Messer, Marc J. Cohen and Thomas Marchione, found in the *Environmental Change & Security Report*, Issue 7, published by the Environmental Change and Security Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. It's downloadable as a PDF at <http://ecsp.si.edu/PDF/ECSP7-featurearticles-1.pdf>.

TAKING A FIRST STEP AGAINST HUNGER

Philipina Marcelo Explains Why She Joined the IFSTC

interviewed by Lynn Kienzel



► Philipina, how did you first hear of the International Food Security Treaty?

I learned about the International Food Security Treaty (IFST) through the Internet. I have been very bothered by the growing number of people in the Philippines and around the globe suffering from hunger and malnutrition.

► What made you decide to volunteer to work for the campaign to ratify the Treaty?

First of all, I believe in the primary principle on which the IFST is founded: ending hunger by the force of law. In civil societies like ours, the force of law is one of justice. It is the only way to resolve a problem with equal regard to the rights of all individuals concerned and their accountability. I think this is the only way to provide a truly concrete solution to the hunger problem long-experienced by the world. Also, a ratified IFST would be implemented by the United Nations. This is important for me because I believe in the ideals of the UN. This guarantees that the IFST is not just a political statement. I would rather be a part of a concrete solution to the hunger problem than get involved in politics.

Second, I feel that the success of the IFST requires concerted efforts among all citizens of the world. As the first step, we must join in the campaign, make it known to everyone, and have it ratified by all nations. I believe that whatever little effort we can contribute along this line will lead to the ratification of the Treaty and our eventual victory over global hunger.

Third, the depressing picture of poverty and hunger that I see everyday around Metro Manila in the Philippines has become much too much for me to take. I feel that something should be done about it. I am not rich or influential, but by campaigning for the ratification of the IFST, I can perform my share in this enormous task of freeing these people from hunger.

► A lot of new volunteers feel like they have to be experts on hunger in order to adequately represent the Treaty campaign, and since they are not experts, they hesitate to begin talking about the Treaty to other people. Did you have a similar concern? And if so, how did you overcome it?

In the beginning I felt absolutely inadequate to talk about the Treaty, much less represent it! But then, as I went on talking about the Treaty to a number of people, mostly students and colleagues in the University, it became less and less difficult. I think this is not because I became a “hunger expert,” but because a lot of people are concerned about the growing hunger

problem and many of them are willing to do something about it.

Although I cannot claim to speak expertly about the IFST even now, I feel confident that when I speak about it to a group of people there will always be at least one person concerned enough about global hunger to want to listen to me. This thought encourages me to go on with the campaign.

► You have invited many people to volunteer for the campaign, and many of them have become involved. What did you do to bring in so many people? What tips do you have for us to get other people involved?

In my experience, I think that many people are very concerned about the hunger problem, and a lot of them have been raring to join in the efforts to solve it. Most of them are just waiting for the right “vehicle” with which to combine their efforts. I have been lucky to have found quite a number of them.

► What is your strategy for getting the political leadership of your country to support the treaty?

I don't know if this may be called “strategy,” but I am relying on the “voice of the youth” to get our political leaders' attention. Somebody said that talking to young people is like talking to the future. I want the leaders of my country to know what the future wants. It wants a hunger-free world.

► Have you set any goals for your part in the Treaty campaign this year? If so, can you share your ideas with us?

We decided to launch the campaign here because most of us are from this university and it's easier to coordinate efforts this way. We want to invite people from food security NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and, hopefully, government officials and legislators. Although our past efforts to invite legislators were unsuccessful, we are still hoping for success this time.

We have high hopes in our efforts, but as of now, I'd say we are moving little by little, one step at a time. I hope and pray though that hunger in our country does not outgrow us.

► Tell us about yourself at this point in your life — your profession and future plans.

I am presently involved in Food Research in UST and have been working on projects on the Philippine mango. I plan to pursue a doctorate in Food Engineering in the United States, and I have been very lucky to receive a Fulbright-Philippine Agriculture scholarship to attend the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell, beginning Fall 2002. I intend to finish as soon as possible and come back to my country after my studies to help the agricultural sector of my

[INTERVIEW, cont'd on p.7]

[INTERVIEW, cont'd from p.6]

country through food research in UST. Also, I intend to stay with the IFST Campaign-Philippines for as long as I am needed. But I don't think that is going to be for long now. I feel that with just a little more effort, the IFST will be ratified soon. ◀

What Would It Cost?

“The United Nations Development Program estimates that the basic health and nutrition needs of the world’s poorest people could be met for an additional \$13 billion a year.*

Animal lovers in the United States and Europe spend more than that on pet food each year.”

— Bread for the World, a nonpartisan anti-hunger lobbying and educational organization based in Washington, DC. Learn more at www.bread.org.

* Ed. Note: Until the details of the IFST are fleshed out through international negotiation, the cost to implement the IFST can only be estimated. However, the \$13 billion figure from the UN included a broad array of health needs, and therefore could well be higher than the amount needed to address the sole health focus of the IFST, the elimination of malnutrition.

PRODUCT CONTRIBUTIONS

— Another Way to Help

Businesses can help propel the eradication of hunger in many ways. One creative example comes from importer Giraffia USA, which — thanks to the efforts of co-worker and IFST Campaign volunteer Sascha Sarnoff — is committing a portion of the proceeds from its sale of a new product to the IFST Campaign. By publicizing their contribution on their packaging, Giraffia helps to alert the public to this exciting new development in the too-long history of hunger.

[art below is from Giraffia's packaging]



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GIRAFFIA® USA wants to see a world free from hunger and contributes a portion of each purchase to the International Food Security Treaty Campaign. **Thanks for your purchase.**

CAMPAIGN EVENTS

Within a week of publication of this issue of *Giant Leap*, the IFSTC/Philippines is staging a major presentation of the Treaty at the **University of Santo Tomas** in Manila (see "A Well-'Engineered' Campaign Launch," on pp 2-3 of this issue).

Recent IFST presentations in the USA featuring IFST Campaign Director John Teton and others have been held at **Harvard** Law School, Boalt Hall School of Law at the **University California at Berkeley**, the **University of Southern California** Center for International Studies, the

Global Studies Program at the **University of California at Santa Barbara**, and at the Longworth House Office Building of the **U.S. Congress**, sponsored by the Congressional Hunger Center (an independent non-governmental agency with congressional advisors), and the International Food Policy Research Institute. Plans are underway for an IFST event at **Columbia University's** School of Public and International Affairs in October, 2002. Check the IFST Campaign Website at www.treaty.org for details. Contact the IFST Campaign at ifst@cox.net to inquire about arranging an IFST event near you, or to let the Campaign know about an event you may be planning.



You've Got the Part!

*To read the International Food Security Treaty, or to find out how you can help eradicate hunger by strengthening human rights law, visit the IFST Campaign at **www.treaty.org***

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In 2002 *Giant Leap* will be published bi-annually and distributed to volunteers assisting the IFST Campaign. Contact the Campaign for other subscriptions and additional copies. There is no charge for copies to anyone interested in seeing the end of hunger, though donations to cover costs of printing and mailing are appreciated. This newsletter was made possible in part through support by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

A PDF version of this newsletter is available on IFST's website, and we welcome you who support IFST's goals to print it out (in its entirety, without modification) and distribute copies locally. We thank you for donating the associated printer and paper expenses, and simply ask that you inform us of the quantity and location, so we can maintain accurate records for each issue.

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