



Working Together: Making a Difference.  
Department of Public Information Non-Governmental Organizations

# International Day of Happiness

**20 March 2014**

**Happiness Happening: Impacting Communities Globally**

**Temporary General Assembly Hall - 10:30am - 12:00pm**

The General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 66/281 of 12 July 2012 proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness recognising the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives.

This year's celebration of the International Day of Happiness explores how nations, civil society, private citizens, media and technology are shaping human happiness throughout the world. Communities globally are experiencing results of making choices that focus on positive living through collaboration and sharing to create safe viable growth and economic stability for all. Featuring panel discussions about the impact of happiness on local communities; socially-aware entrepreneurs and their missions to spread happiness and the growing role of technology as a barometer of well-being, with today's sessions, the United Nations is examining happiness through many lenses – cultural, business, civil and governmental.

**Moderator**

**Christina Stevens**, Award Winning Author & Film Director

**Speakers**

**Jeff Brez**, NGO Relations & Advocacy, DPI

**H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen**, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

**H.E. Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati**, Former Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations

**Consolee Nishimwe**, Author & Rwandan Genocide Survivor

**Kaylen Larsen**, South Dakota University

**Dr. Kaiping Peng**, Chair, Department of Psychology, Tsinghua University, China

**H.E. Mr. Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez**,

Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations

**"Become a Thread in the Tapestry of Happiness"**

This Event is Organized in Collaboration with

Global Family

International Council of Women-CIF

National Council of Women—US

FIA Foundation

Project Harmony

Live Happy Media

International Association of Applied Psychology

Economists for Peace & Security

Farleigh Dickenson University



**Jeffrey Brez, NGO Relations and Advocacy, DPI**

In this capacity as Chief of NGO Relations, Advocacy and Special Events in the Department of Public Information, Jeff oversees the relations with non-governmental organizations, the Messengers of Peace Programme, the Creative Community Outreach Initiative and Special Events.

His work in international humanitarian aid and development assistance has spanned more than a decade and covered a range of issues including children's and women's rights, refugee assistance, child soldiers, health, education, sustainable agriculture and food security, environmental sustainability, anticorruption and climate change. His experience includes all aspects of strategic communications and campaign planning, social media, video and photography, development of knowledge products and events as well as global, multi-stakeholder policy consultation processes and relations with civil society. He has worked for four United Nations entities (IFAD, OCHA, UNICEF, and UNDP) and the World Bank Group, and been posted in Albania and Côte d'Ivoire.



**H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations**

H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen is the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations in New York as of 1 August, 2013. Before taking up his new position, Ambassador Petersen served as State Secretary for Development Policy, of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, since 2009. Prior to this, he was State Secretary for Development Cooperation, Middle East, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the United Nations (2007-09). Ib Petersen has held a number of senior management positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He has also served on the boards of Danish International Investment Funds: The Industrialization Funds for Developing Countries and The Investment Fund for Central and Eastern Europe, and The Investment Fund for Emerging Denmark has been named the Happiest Country in the World.



**Consolee Nishimwe, Author**

Consolee Nishimwe is a survivor of the 1994 genocide against Tutsis in Rwanda. Born in Western Province, she lived through the horrors of genocide at age 14. Consolee suffered physical torture during her three months in hiding, and miraculously survived with her mother and younger sister. In 2001 Consolee migrated to the United States where she has taken a progression of steps to overcome the multi-faceted traumatic events she suffered during the genocide and to chart a new course for her life.

In 2012, Consolee released her memoir *Tested to the Limit: A Genocide Survivor's Story of Pain, Resilience and Hope*. In recognition of her courage and accomplishments, Consolee was awarded the 2013 ASALH Living Legacy Award, the NSANGA STEP UP Service Award, and was recently listed in the ISSUU magazine by the Together for Girls Organization as one of 50 Global Heroes who help stop sexual violence against children in the world.



**Dr. Kaiping Peng, Chair, Department of Psychology, Tsinghua University – China**

Professor Kaiping Peng is a tenured faculty member at the Department of Psychology of the University of California at Berkeley. He received his Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1997. Before coming to the US in 1989, he had been a faculty member at the Psychology Department of Peking University of China for five years. He had been the assistant chair of the psychology department of Beijing University, head of the social/personality psychology area in Berkeley, member of the American Psychological Association Leadership Council, executive committee of the Institute of East-Asian Studies, steering committee for the Diversity Research at UC Berkeley, the co-president of the Fifth International Conference of Chinese Psychologists Worldwide, and numerous other national and international professional academic services. As part of the Berkeley-Tsinghua collaborative project, he was appointed as the founding chair of the Psychology Department of Tsinghua University in 2008. He also directs the Culture and Cognition Lab and the Berkeley Program of Psychological Studies in China at UC-Berkeley. He has published eight books and more than 100 articles and essays on cultural and social psychology, as well as methodological issues of psychology.



**Christina Stevens, Award Winning Author & Film Director**

Christina was born in Sydney, Australia, fifth generation in a theatrical family and great granddaughter of Randolph Bedford, M.L.A. member of Parliament, publisher and lauded as one of the most colorful personalities in Australian letters and politics. It was this heritage and her belief that storytelling inspires positive change that impacted Christina's career, first as a Madison Avenue Creative Director and subsequently as an award winning filmmaker and author ~ recipient of the coveted Gold Lion at the Venice Film Festival and Grand Prize Winner of the Hay House Writing Competition for her 2014 book, "LOVE. The Saint and the Seeker."



**H.E. Dr. T. Hamid Al-Bayati, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations**

Dr. T. Hamid Al Bayati is a Professor at the Department of Political Science at Rutgers University. He was the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations from April 2006 to April 2013. He worked as the Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs and Bilateral Relations from 2004 to 2006. During the same period, he headed the Iraqi Center for Strategic Studies. Dr. Al-Bayati was elected as the Chair of the Third Committee, related to Social, Economic, and Human Rights in 2006; the Vice President of the General Assembly in 2007; and the Chair of the Sixth Committee, dealing with legal issues, in 2008. Additionally, Dr. Al-Bayati was elected as the Chairman for the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) in 2011.



**Kaylen Larson, South Dakota State University**

Kaylen is a 19-year old university student majoring in Global Studies and Political Science at South Dakota State University (SDSU) in the United States. She also works as a photographer for the SDSU Athletics Department and has her own photography business. Kaylen served as the National President of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), a non-profit career and technical student organization with over 200,000 members in 53 state associations (50 U.S. States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and DC). Because of her early involvement in FCCLA's youth health and safety programs, in 2010, Kaylen was chosen as a member of the first-ever Teen Distracted Driving Prevention Leadership Team, organized by the National Organizations for Youth Safety (NOYS). Kaylen was active as a volunteer in a Blue Cross Blue Shield initiative (Catalyst) that trained and provided resources for teens to become health activists in their own communities. She continues to be a youth health advocate through her involvement with NOYS. Most recently, as an intern for the Make Roads Safe Campaign for Global Road Safety, Kaylen created a short film to encourage youth to support "Safe Roads for All" as a priority in the United Nations MyWorld Survey for a Better World. Kaylen has been a youth leader for Global Youth Traffic Safety Month and the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety in the United States since the start of these activities in 2011.



**H.E. Mr. Carlos Enrique García González, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations**

H.E. Mr. Carlos Enrique Garcia Gonzalez was appointed as Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations on March 13, 2013. Ambassador Carlos Garcia is currently President of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly (Special Political and Decolonization); Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); Vice-Chairman of the Commission for Social Development 2013-2014; and Vice-Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women in the period 2014-2015 (He also served as Vice-Chairman of the CSW 2012-2013). He holds a Special Course's degree in International Relations from the Diplomatic Academy of Madrid (Spain) and a bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of El Salvador. Ambassador Carlos Garcia is married with Ines Elizabeth Oviedo de Garcia and has a daughter, Melanie Elizabeth Garcia Oviedo.

**Social Media Corner**



Live Webcast at [webtv.un.org](http://webtv.un.org)



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