

# LOCAL ACTION AND GLOBAL NETWORKING: THE NIGHTINGALE INITIATIVE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

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and Wayne Kines |

**H**ow can we help the world become a more beautiful community of happy and healthy people? How can we diminish conflict and build global consensus toward a common future of health and prosperity for all? How can our differences and divisions become less and our cooperation and collaboration become more? How can we work together for a healthy world? And can one single person actually do anything effectively to accomplish this in teamwork with others?

## REMEMBERING THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE'S WORK

These were the kinds of questions asked by the legendary British nurse and global citizen activist—Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)—the renowned “Lady with the Lamp.” She reflected deeply upon these issues, asking herself “What is your calling?” She wondered how to serve the health needs of the world and how to act strategically, with others, to see the world become healthier. In answer, she demonstrated great personal courage and commitment to the sick and wounded of her time. She was guided through nearly seven decades of an active life, sharing her concerns about health, communicating, and networking with others across the world. She shifted public opinion, influencing Queen Victoria and other world leaders, political and military, philanthropists, social scientists, educators, and journalists—as well as nurses—of many countries within and far beyond the British Empire.

Today, people in modern China, India, and Japan, in Africa and the Arab world, in Turkey and the Caribbean, in the South Pacific and all the Americas, revere and commemorate Florence Nightingale as a heroic figure of their own history. As a



nurse, she challenged both nurses and leaders on every continent to raise the standards of care and concern for the home, the hospital, and the community. While improving traditional health care settings, Nightingale also worked for health in the workplace and in the schools, in slums and in prisons, on the battlefield, the farmyard, and the factory, the sewer, and the smokestack. She was multidisciplinary and multilingual, and highly professional—as a nurse and as an educator, administrator, statistician, social activist, and communicator.<sup>1,2</sup>

Her specific accomplishments include being recognized as the philosophical founder of modern, secular nursing that established the model for nursing schools throughout the world; creating a prototype model of care for the sick and wounded soldiers during the Crimean Wars (1854-1856); being an innovator for British Army medical reform that included reorganizing the British Army Medical Department, creating an Army Statistical Department, and collaborating

on the first British Army Medical School, curriculum, and choosing the professors; inventing a statistical wedge diagram equivalent to today's circular histograms or circular statistical representations; being the first woman admitted to the Royal Statistical Society in 1858; developing and writing workhouse and midwifery protocols and papers leading to successful legislation reform; revolutionizing hospital data collection; being a recognized expert on the health of the British Army and soldiers in India for over 40 years; and receiving numerous other recognitions, including the Order of Merit, 1902—the first woman to receive this honor. She wrote over 100 combined books and official Army reports; her 10,000 letters now constitute the largest private collection of letters at the British Library, with 4,000 family letters at the Wellcome Medical Library, London.

## CREATING A CONTEMPORARY NIGHTINGALE TEAM

In the 1990s, Nightingale biographer Barbara M. Dossey, PhD, RN, while writing and researching on the further relevance of Nightingale for today, joined with Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, RN, to build a visionary team ready and able to share Nightingale's phenomenal work with a global audience. While still completing their doctoral programs together in 2002, Dossey and Beck realized there was a need to move beyond simply describing Nightingale's panoramic life in books and articles. They decided to invite nurses and other concerned citizens to join them in building a grassroots-to-global network, able to strategically address the health needs of our time, at home and abroad. They knew that to fully understand how and what Nightingale accomplished in her time, contemporary people would need an

NIGHTINGALE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT  
FOR A HEALTHY WORLD BY 2020

“We, the nurses and concerned citizens of the global community, hereby dedicate ourselves to achieve a healthy world by 2020.

We declare our willingness to unite in a program of action, to share information and solution and to improve health conditions for all humanity—locally, nationally and globally.

We further resolve to adopt personal practices and to implement public policies in our communities and nations—making this goal achievable and inevitable by the year 2020, beginning today in our own lives, in the life of our nations and in the world at large.”

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

(Also available at <http://www.NightingaleDeclaration.net>, launch in January, 2007)

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**Table 1.** Nightingale Declaration of Commitment for a Healthy World by 2020.

experience far beyond reading her personal history. While coauthoring their book *Florence Nightingale Today: Healing, Leadership, Global Action* (2005), Dossey and Beck envisioned an innovative action project to follow in Nightingale’s footsteps, seeking to improve the health of humanity at regional, national, and global, well as local levels.

Beck joined Dossey as International Co-Director and founding board member of the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH). Building upon these experiences, the NIGH has been developed since late 2003 and early 2004 through consultations with nurses, nursing educators, and friends and colleagues from other related disciplines, including educators, communicators, holistic health professionals, global health and sustainable development strategists, and members of the international diplomatic community.

During this time, World Media Institute founder Wayne Kines—with a few decades of global experience mobilizing public awareness, developing effective grassroots initiatives while working abroad with agencies of the United Nations (UN), and organizing grassroots development initiatives in Canada and developing countries—joined with them as architect of the Nightingale Declaration Global Signa-

ture Campaign to adopt two United Nations resolutions explained in the next section.

**ACTIVATING NIGHTINGALE’S VISION FOR THE FUTURE—ON THE INTERNET**

NIGH’s mission is to honor, renew, and work toward Florence Nightingale’s vision for the health of humanity. To accomplish this mission, NIGH is creating several interrelated approaches to work and to network at both local and global levels simultaneously. One key approach is the creation of the web-based Nightingale Global Alliance Campaign for a Healthy World at [www.NightingaleDeclaration.net](http://www.NightingaleDeclaration.net) (slated to be launched online in January, 2007).

The Nightingale Global Alliance has two purposes. The first is to globally unite 10 million nurses through the Internet and through developing regional groups around the world—toward the goal of achieving a healthier world of healthier people by 2020. The second is to demonstrate—to the world—the significance of nursing’s contribution and conviction, the capacity and concern, and the commitment and compassion for achieving a healthy world community.

The Nightingale Global Alliance has two interrelated strategies. The first strategy is to make available, worldwide, the opportunity to personally sign the Nightingale Declaration of Commitment to a Healthy World by 2020 (Table 1). The goal is to attain at least two million signatures, to be gathered throughout 2007 to 2008, from nurses and other committed individuals and organizations from all 192-member states of the UN.

The Nightingale Declaration of Commitment for a Healthy World by 2020 is modeled after the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations (1945) that begins with the words “We the peoples of the United Nations [are] determined” and the subsequent Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948). This new declaration has been created by NIGH for everyone—nurses and other health workers and concerned citizens throughout the world—to personally sign, circulate, and commit individual and collective efforts for healthy people in a healthy world. Based on this global grassroots commitment, the goal is to achieve two United Nations resolutions for adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in New York City in November 2008. To commemorate the centennial of Nightingale’s death (2010) and the bicentennial of her birth (2020), the proposed titles of these resolutions are:

- 2010: International Year of the Nurse, and
- 2010-2020: UN Global Decade for a Healthy World.

The prime method to achieve these signatures will be focused on the Internet at the secure Web site <http://www.NightingaleDeclaration.net>, where individuals can electronically “sign” the Declaration and register their commitment to this cause. There will also be Declaration files freely available for download to copy and circulate to individual networks for submission, in hard copy, to NIGH’s offices. These files will be made available in all six official UN languages—Arabic, English, French, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish. Other languages will be available as interest increases.

Also on this Web site, cosponsoring organizations, schools of nursing, patrons, and all interested “worldwide friends” are being invited to cohost this related Night-

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ingale Global Alliance Campaign. Co-hosting involves an officially posted commitment and financial contribution. These funds are earmarked for the cost of administering the above signature campaign and the work of preparing, networking, and proposing—to as many UN member states as possible—the previously described United Nations resolutions for adoption in November 2008. The preparation of a worldwide team of 200 to 300 nurses to support these strategies will also be funded, in part, through this web-based Nightingale Global Alliance Campaign.

The Web site is being designed for easy participation. As this campaign ramps up in the spring of 2007, NIGH will be requesting the Web site's cohorts to e-mail announcements, featuring a Nightingale Declaration.net link, to all of their members and to related networks. On the Web site, recognition of participating collaborators will be given for three levels of contribution: Platinum, Gold, and Silver. As of November 2006, the first three "platinum" CoSponsors are the American Nurses Association (ANA), Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), and the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN). The first "silver" CoSponsor is the University of Minnesota School of Nursing.

To further establish this web page and campaign, NIGH is currently in discussion with networks of organizations, schools of nursing, and with others around the world, including the International Council of Nurses (ICN), the Office of the Chief Nursing Scientist at the World Health Organization (WHO), the WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery, and the six related WHO regional nursing offices: Africa Regional Office (AFRO) in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo; Americas regional Office (AMRO) in Washington, DC; Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) in Cairo; Europe Regional Office (EURO) in Copenhagen, Southeast Asia Regional Office (SEARO) in Bangkok, and Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) in Manila. Also, NIGH has colleagues affiliated with the international diplomatic community posted in Beijing, Copenhagen, Istanbul, Oslo, Ottawa, Sydney, Tokyo, Vienna, and Washington, DC, and in Geneva and New York City, with colleagues aligned to the UN agencies there.

In addition, two members of NIGH's founding board have networked on behalf of these strategies at a UN conference convened in Doha, Qatar October 29-November 27, 2006.

As more people become involved, [www.NightingaleDeclaration.net](http://www.NightingaleDeclaration.net) will be updated with current news of this campaign. Follow-up e-mails from a larger range of individuals and groups will encourage much wider access to the Web site. As this process grows, support from volunteers and from financial sources will also be needed to ramp up to a full-scale initiative by the November 2008 United Nations General Assembly adoption of the United Nations resolutions. Then, a fuller-scale follow-up is planned toward 2010, the International Year of the Nurse and 2010-2020, the United Nations Global Decade for a Healthy World.

#### **INTEGRATING GLOBAL COMMITMENTS WITH LOCAL ACTION**

Since 2000, the wider UN agenda has included a global commitment to eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals, as detailed in Table 2. Three of these issues, number 4 (child mortality), number 5 (maternal health) and number 6 (HIV/AIDS and other diseases), are specifically related to health. Four more, number 1 (poverty and hunger), number 2 (primary education), number 3 (women's equality and empowerment), and number 7 (environmental sustainability) directly impact upon humanity's health.

More recently, in May 2006, "Working Together for Health" was the featured human resources theme of the 59th World Health Assembly convened in Switzerland by the WHO. At this meeting, it was acknowledged that more than 80% of the worldwide healthcare workforces are nurses and midwives and that the ranks of this nursing community are currently at significant risk across the globe. Thus, a new World Health Assembly Resolution 59.27 calls for a new and more substantial "commitment to strengthen nursing and midwifery."<sup>3</sup>

"Nurses add essential value to health care throughout the world. They are catalysts for health development; conveners of nursing leadership groups; collectors of relevant evidence; planners; [and] imple-

menters . . . While [they have been] often assumed to merely be the 'arms and legs' of health care—nurses are indeed the 'brains and heart' of health care implementation and central to advancing the health of humanity."<sup>4</sup> Further, at the concurrent WHO Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers, it was also acknowledged that United Nations Millennium Development Goals numbers 4, 5 and 6 will never actually be accomplished without nurses taking major roles—at all levels—in the implementation of these goals.<sup>4</sup>

While noting these global strategies and commitments, NIGH has also understood that, as with previously set goals like "Health for All by the Year 2000," global campaigns can only be achieved through related implementation of projects at local and regional levels. Yet, as referenced in the WHO Resolution 59.27, the very people, especially nurses who are working and have been working to support critical health outcomes for decades, have not yet been fully recognized for their active implementation of millions of local health projects already in place worldwide.

Keeping these issues in mind, NIGH has developed its plan of interrelated strategies to encourage innovative local action projects, and at the same time foster networking at the global level. This comprehensive grassroots-to-global approach is supportive, in particular, of nurses and is focused on increased recognition of how nursing contributes to the creation of a healthy world. It is also aimed at fostering, in general, the awareness and value of global citizenship—the increasingly active participation of caring and committed individuals, from all disciplines and between disciplines, working and networking on global issues within their local communities.

As described above and in Table 1, NIGH's global action plan includes the Declaration signature campaign and United Nations resolutions strategy. At regional levels, NIGH is building a network of collaborative regional task forces through a series of in-depth meetings convened around the world throughout 2007 and 2008. These face-to-face meetings are being designed to prepare between 200 and 300 "train the trainers" worldwide. This first group will, in turn, train local groups in their own communities. The content of these meetings will

### UN Millennium Development Goals and Targets

The UN Millennium Development Goals are an ambitious agenda for reducing poverty and improving lives, approved by world leaders at the Millennium Summit in September 2000. For each goal, one or more targets have been set, most for 2015, using 1990 as a benchmark. The following text is referenced from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Target for 2015: Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger.

More than a billion people still live on less than US\$1 a day: sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and parts of Europe and Central Asia are falling short of the poverty target.

2. Achieve universal primary education.

Target for 2015: Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school.

As many as 113 million children do not attend school, but the target is within reach. India, for example, should have 95% of its children in school by 2005.

3. Promote gender equality and empower women.

Targets for 2005 and 2015: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

Two thirds of illiterates are women, and the rate of employment among women is two thirds that of men. The proportion of seats in parliaments held by women is increasing, reaching about one third in Argentina, Mozambique, and South Africa.

4. Reduce child mortality.

Target for 2015: Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five.

Every year nearly 11 million young children die before their fifth birthday, mainly from preventable illnesses, but that number is down from 15 million in 1980.

5. Improve maternal health.

Target for 2015: Reduce by three quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth.

In the developing world, the risk of dying in childbirth is one in 48, but virtually all countries now have safe motherhood programs.

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases.

Target for 2015: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Forty million people are living with HIV, including five million newly infected in 2001. Countries like Brazil, Senegal, Thailand, and Uganda have shown that the spread of HIV can be stemmed.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability.

Targets:

- integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources;
- by 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water;
- by 2020 achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

More than one billion people lack access to safe drinking water and more than two billion lack sanitation. During the 1990s, however, nearly one billion people gained access to safe water and the same number to sanitation.

8. Develop global partnerships for development.

Targets:

- develop further an open trading and financial system that includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally;
- address the special needs of least-developed countries and the special needs of landlocked and small-island developing states;
- deal comprehensively with debt problems of developing countries;
- develop decent and productive work for youth;
- in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries;
- in cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies.

**Table 2.** UN Millennium Development Goals and Targets.

To make a financial contribution to the work described in this article, please mail your check, made out to NIGH (a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization), to the contact address below. If you wish, you may designate your gift to the Nightingale Global Alliance Campaign and be recognized on [www.NightingaleDeclaration.net](http://www.NightingaleDeclaration.net) for your participation. If you have any further questions or suggestions, we would be pleased to communicate with you.

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**Table 3.** Financial contribution information.

include how to advocate for health issues with national health ministries, foreign affairs ministries, and national United Nations General Assembly Representatives, as well as with all levels of nursing and health-promotion colleagues in local regions. In addition, these meetings will acknowledge the profound need for renewal of nurses and provide support for nurse's self-care, as well as encouraging community peer support of nurses. NIGH envisages that each member of this broadening team will feel included, recognized, respected, and known. As well, NIGH seeks to spread this appreciative culture—seeded within the nursing community worldwide and throughout the public at large.

### DEVELOPING NEW COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

In support of NIGH's Declaration and United Nations resolutions strategy, NIGH is planning to develop, in collaboration with the World Media Institute, a new print tabloid for health-related issues, *The Global Citizen*. This publication is to be aimed, in particular, at "information redis-seminators," including national, regional, and community journalists, magazine editors, and television and radio broadcasters. This project will feature stories written by nurses about the worldwide activities being planned and accomplished to create a healthy world. An Internet companion *Global Citizen* is also being prepared.

In keeping with Millennium Development Goal number 8, NIGH is also working to leverage new technology and communication tools to "create a healthy world." NIGH's second Web site, <http://www.NIGHCommunities.org>,

is being further developed to feature "21st-Century Nightingales" who are already planning and implementing their own local projects to create healthy outcomes.

NIGH's future plans include—as funding and resources become available—the creation of a web-based "Healthy World Clearinghouse," where opportunities to serve health projects—especially in the developing world—can be posted and responded to. This forward plan is currently under discussion with service clubs such as Rotary International, who are, for instance, successfully working to globally eradicate polio. Posting worldwide health promotion projects for such service clubs will encourage local-level collaboration. NIGH is also in discussions with the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA), ICA Africa, and ICA Canada, to post details about their HIV/AIDS support projects in Tanzania, Kenya, and elsewhere. NIGH members in Canada are also collaborating with the fledgling WE CAN AID ORPHANS, newly created in Zambia, an organization building schools and encouraging literacy for orphans and for the grandmothers who are requesting reading programs for themselves as they struggle to take care of the orphaned children in their communities. As NIGH's clearinghouse becomes available on the Internet, opportunities to support these projects (Table 3) and others like them will be posted.

### FOLLOWING IN NIGHTINGALE'S FOOTSTEPS

All of these plans are being developed to strengthen a global nursing commitment

to create healthy communities around the world through nursing practices that reflect the principles and practices of Florence Nightingale. She rallied women and men around the world to the cause of health. She expected of everyone she met that the health of others would become their primary concern and commitment.

In Nightingale's footsteps, NIGH is working to create consensus among all communities and nations on this priority of health. NIGH is acknowledging the essential connections between human health and human caring and is working to give nurses and other concerned citizens a stronger collective voice and innovative tools to address key health issues, both locally and globally. NIGH is creating a contemporary series of grassroots-to-global strategies to act upon and to influence—as Nightingale acted and influenced—what is needed to create a healthy world in our time.

Therefore, also in her footsteps, NIGH invites nurses and all global citizens to sign the Nightingale Declaration of Commitment for a Healthy World by 2020—to create a rising tide of concern, commitment, communication and caring worldwide. The NIGH seeks to build a global network of 21st-century Nightingales leading the march toward a healthy world by 2020.

As each person signs the Nightingale Declaration of Commitment for a Healthy World by 2020, each will be joining people from around the world to craft:

- a timeless vision to honor and renew Florence Nightingale's vision for nursing and for health;
- a common ground to acknowledge that health and well-being are desired by every member of humanity;
- a global intention to gather our collective desire into stated shared purpose;
- a network method to build the connections and partnerships between people and their dreams;
- a tool of solidarity to claim the bond between people of like-mind and like-heart;
- an instrument of change to respond relevantly to the needs of our world;
- a personal commitment to participate to understand that health is a responsibility as well as a right;

- a yes answer to a call to discover how each of us can make our own difference in our time; and
- a unified voice to ask all General Assembly representatives, from every member state of the UN, to pass two United Nations resolutions—2010: International Year of the Nurse and 2010-2020: United Nations Global Decade for a Healthy World.

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**Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, RN**, is International Co-Director of the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH) and is involved

with global health issues, including the worldwide nursing shortage crisis. Dr. Beck represented NIGH as official rapporteur for the World Health Organization Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers at the 59th World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland in May 2006. She developed NIGH's media and communications development strategy to support health-related United Nations Millennium Development Goals at local, regional, national, and international levels. As coauthor of *Florence Nightingale Today: Healing, Leadership, Global Action* (2005), Dr. Beck developed the Global Action section from her own primary Nightingale scholarship, looking in particular at Nightingale's extensive international work and recommending how this Nightingale legacy can inform 21st-century nursing practice.

**Barbara M. Dossey, PhD, RN**, is International Co-Director and boardmember of the Nightingale Initiative for Global Health (NIGH) and is internationally recognized as a pioneer in the holistic nursing movement. She is Director of Holistic Nursing Consultants in Santa Fe, New Mexico. She has authored or coauthored 23 books, including *Compassionate Care of the Dying: An Integral Approach* (2006), *Holistic Nursing: A Handbook for Practice* (4th ed., 2005), *Florence Nightingale Today: Healing, Leadership, Global Action* (2005), *Florence Nightingale: Mystic, Visionary, Healer* (2000), and *AHNA Core Curriculum for Holistic Nursing* (editor, 1997). A

major focus of her work currently is holistic and integral nursing, compassionate care of the dying, and virtual education. She is also exploring the impact of Florence Nightingale's life and work on contemporary nursing and human-kind.

**Wayne Kines** is CEO of World Media Institute. He has worked and lived in Calgary, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Winnipeg, Canada, New York City, Geneva, Switzerland, and Nairobi, Kenya during his years working with the UN. He is cofounder of the World Media Institute, a network and fellowship of professional communicators devoted to the emergence of global citizenship. Mr. Kines advised and collaborated with many UN agencies on evolving worldwide communications and mobilizing global public opinion strategies. He has organized seminars and conferences throughout the world, and in 1972, coordinated the nongovernmental component of the milestone United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and subsequent United Nations Environment Programmes Governing Councils in Geneva and Nairobi. Tapping this background, Mr. Kines is the primary architect of NIGH's global grassroots Signature Campaign (now being developed at [NightingaleDeclaration.net](http://NightingaleDeclaration.net)) and the related proposed United Nations General Assembly resolutions—2010: International Year of the Nurse and 2010-2020: UN Decade for a Healthy World.