

Towards a safer, fairer and more sustainable world

National membership policy statement 2011-12

as agreed by the membership at UNA-UK's 65th Policy Conference
Temple of Peace, Cardiff
18 June 2011

1. PEACE AND SECURITY

1A. Responsibility to Protect

Regarding UN Security Council Resolution 1973 as a milestone in the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, adopted at the UN World Summit in 2005;

Accepting the urgent need to protect the civilian population in Libya against threats from their own government;

Noting, however, that:

- *In a world characterised by major imbalances of power such action will inevitably be seen from different perspectives by different actors,*
- *Five major powers abstained from SCR1973, and*
- *The need to implement such resolutions in keeping with the intentions of the framers, in particular to protect civilian populations while not promoting the interests of one or another side in a civil war,*

UNA-UK urges upon the UK government the importance of gaining the widest possible support for, and participation in, any future humanitarian intervention, both at the UN and in the region.

1B. Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect

Noting that in spite of continuing efforts, recent events have shown that there are still no agreed procedures for effective and speedy implementation of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), and that no mechanism exists for establishing a sustainable and peaceful programme for the country concerned after an initial R2P intervention,

UNA-UK urges the UK government and the UN to:

- i. Pursue as a matter of urgency the establishment of robust procedures for, and commit extra resources to, the swift implementation of the Responsibility to Protect when required; and
- ii. Develop procedures to achieve sustainable and peaceful development following such action.

1C. Middle East uprisings

Noting the uprisings in many countries of the Middle East, UNA-UK calls on all parties involved and the international community to take steps to encourage democracy and respect for human rights in each of these states.

1D. Democratic Republic of Congo

Noting that:

- *The ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) brings instability to the entire region;*
- *Foreign intervention frequently involves the exploitation of the DRC's abundant natural resources, both directly and in onward sales to international consumers;*
- *Large numbers of women and girls are subjected to sexual violence as a weapon of war;*
- *One of UN Women's six focus areas is 'ending of violence against women and girls'; and*
- *Child soldiers are frequently used in conflicts in the DRC and elsewhere;*

UNA-UK urges the UK government to:

- i. *Act firmly to stop exploitation by UK companies and small arms traders;*
- ii. *Seek, together with UN Women, coordinated and determined action by the Security Council to protect civilian populations, especially women and children; and,*
- iii. *Encourage the Congolese government to ensure women play a viable role in the reconstruction of the DRC.*

1E. Cyprus reunification talks

Noting that:

- *The positive developments in Cyprus were acknowledged by UNA-UK Conference in 2009;*
- *Talks between Greek and Turkish Cypriots are aimed at setting up a federal government with a single international personality in a bi-zonal, bi-communal country, with Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot constituent states of equal status;*
- *The principal participants are the Cypriot leader, Dimitris Christofias and his Turkish counterpart Dervis Eroglu;*
- *The UN Security Council endorses the negotiations and urges that they are accelerated and made more inclusive of civil society; and*
- *Property rights remain a problematic issue and one that could affect many British families;*

UNA-UK urges the UK government, with its special and historic connections, to take a meaningful interest in these talks, using any suitable diplomatic channels to assist and encourage reunification, which would ultimately result in the withdrawal of the UN peacekeeping force which has been in Cyprus since 1964.

1F. Olympic Truce

Concerned that there are over 30 ongoing armed conflicts in the world;

Welcoming the initiatives being taken by the UN and the Olympic movement to promote a truce in armed conflicts during the 2012 Olympic Games;

Noting that an 'Olympic Truce' resolution is adopted by the UN General Assembly before every Games and largely ignored thereafter;

Welcoming the UK's announcement that it is committed to promoting observation of a truce; and

Aware that the peace-building activities of the UN are severely under-funded;

UNA-UK urges:

i. The UK government to:

- a. Provide a full response to the Foreign Affairs Committee report on the Games on what actions the UK government proposes to take to work towards implementation of the truce as part of its commitment to international peacekeeping, which was absent in the response it has delivered to date;
- b. Include practical ways to improve the UN's capacity for preventing conflict, which would make a real contribution to the broader objectives of the truce concept;
- c. Commit extra resources to peace building and conflict prevention activities, and encourage other UN Member States to do the same; and
- d. Work with relevant actors to promote and support peace talks.

ii. All UN Member States to:

- a. Encourage implementation of an Olympic Truce in 2012; and
- b. Give real consideration to the value of ceasefires throughout the year to facilitate both mediation and humanitarian aid.

iii. Members of the World Federation of UNAs to use whatever resources they have to promote and publicise a genuine and long-lasting Olympic Truce.

1G. Uranium Weapons

Noting that on 8 December 2010 the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 65/55 calling on state users of depleted uranium weapons to reveal the location and amounts used if requested by affected countries;

Further noting that the UK was one of just four countries that voted against the resolution, along with France, Israel and the US;

UNA-UK urges the UK government to implement the above-mentioned UN resolution, and reveal where it has fired depleted uranium weapons if asked to do so by the affected countries, in particular Iraq and Afghanistan.

1H. Israel-Palestine peace process

Recognising:

- That the ‘peace process’ is terminally stalled;
- The negotiating imbalance between occupier and occupied; and
- The inability or unwillingness of current negotiators to reach agreement consistent with UN Security Council resolutions and international law.

Noting the:

- General recognition of final status arrangements (pre-1967 borders, two states, both with Jerusalem as the capital);
- Arab Peace Initiative (2002, 2007), Israeli Peace Initiative (April 2011*) and other formal and informal proposals; and
- Benefits to Israel, Palestine and the region of resolving this issue urgently.

UNA-UK calls on the UN Secretary-General to establish a panel of independent experts with expertise in international and human rights law to:

- i. Consult all interested parties in Israel, Palestine and neighbouring states; and
- ii. Draw up detailed final status arrangements, with Jerusalem as an International City, which should include a timetable and procedure for implementation.

1I. Towards a world without nuclear weapons

Welcoming the outcomes of the May 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and the entry into force of the US-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in February 2011,

UNA-UK:

- i. Urges all nuclear-weapons states to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals and the prominence that nuclear weapons play within their strategic doctrines;
- ii. Urges the UK government to consider setting an example by not renewing the Trident missile system;
- iii. Encourages the swift appointment of a facilitator to prepare for the proposed 2012 Conference on a Middle East Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone;
- iv. Urges the UK government to do all it can to work towards the success of the above-mentioned Conference;
- v. Encourages Iran, and all countries seeking to develop nuclear technology, to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on inspections of their nuclear facilities;
- vi. Urges movement to be made within the Conference on Disarmament on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty;
- vii. Calls for stronger IAEA safeguards and for states using or developing nuclear technology to adhere to the IAEA Additional Protocol*; and
- viii. Urges all states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

1J. Global nuclear zero

Recognising the need to progress towards the fulfilment of Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty,

UNA-UK calls on the World Federation of UNAs and relevant national UNAs to promote:

- i. Lord Hannay's nine-point programme* for progressing towards Global Zero, in particular by observing and lobbying diplomats at all UN disarmament meetings;
- ii. The removal of all tactical nuclear weapons from Europe; and
- iii. The success of the 2012 UN Conference to initiate a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free Middle East.

* See page 20

1K. Arms Trade Treaty

UNA-UK Board of Directors

Appalled by civilian suppression in several Middle Eastern and African states;

Recognising that these developments underline the need for the UK and EU to operate tougher controls on security equipment exports; and

Heartened by progress made at the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) preparatory committees;

UNA-UK urges the UK government to:

- i. Play a lead role before and during the 2012 ATT conference in lobbying for this regulatory framework to:
 - a. Cover import, export and re-export of the widest possible range of conventional arms and 'non-military' components;
 - b. Be based on states' international human rights obligations;
 - c. Explicitly prevent transfers when a substantial risk exists that the arms will be used in serious human rights violations; and
 - d. Have clear guidelines on implementation and reporting;
- ii. Encourage the world's largest arms-exporting states to support the ATT and cease all government promotion of arms exports; and
- iii. Initiate discussions in the EU and other appropriate fora on controls for security-equipment exports.

1L. Small arms trade

Noting that:

- The devastating results of the small arms trade have been evident in this year's Middle East uprisings; and
- Whilst the UK Prime Minister and arms manufacturers under the aegis of the UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) department were attending an international arms trade fair, peaceful and unarmed

demonstrators were being killed and injured with weapons arising from that arms trade.

UNA-UK calls on the:

- i. UN Security Council to urge all governments to restrict their small arms sales and their presence at international arms fairs; and
- ii. UK government to:
 - a. Stop UK Trade & Investment licenses for the sale of arms to repressive regimes;
 - b. Monitor past sales more stringently; and
 - c. Agree an annual reduction in the sale of arms.
 - d. Support efforts towards establishing an Arms Trade Treaty.

2. HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

2A. Sri Lanka

Noting:

- The April 2011 report by the UN Secretary-General's panel of experts recommending an international investigation into allegations of war crimes committed by both sides in the lead-up to the end of the armed conflict in May 2009;
- That this report, though endorsed by the UN Secretary-General and High Commissioner for Human Rights, is yet to be formally discussed by the Security Council and Human Rights Council;
- Disturbing footage broadcast by Channel 4 in June 2011, and verified by a number of independent experts, allegedly showing extrajudicial executions and evidence of rape, sexual abuse, torture and murder of Tamil prisoners including, potentially, civilians;
- Reports by several media and human rights organisations on the ongoing harassment of human rights defenders, aid workers, journalists and civilians, and the continuing violation of ethnic minorities' rights by the government of Sri Lanka (GoSL);
- Ongoing issues surrounding the proper resettlement and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons and reports that over three thousand individuals, suspected but not charged with LTTE involvement, are still being detained in camps inaccessible to the UN and Red Cross; and
- That the GoSL has been resisting UN calls for human rights monitoring since 2006, and that none of its domestic commissions of inquiry have ever led to arrests or prosecutions;

Believing that the above provides sufficient justification for an independent, international investigation into alleged war crimes, and that

Should the international community, which failed to prevent the bloodshed in the final stages of the conflict, again fail to act, this would not only have severe consequences for the people of Sri Lanka but also raise serious questions about the role of the UN and international law in responding to grave human rights abuses,

UNA-UK calls on the:

1) UN Security Council to:

- i. Formally consider the panel of experts' report and Channel 4 footage;
- ii. Request a full international investigation into the war crimes allegations; and
- iii. Refer the situation to the International Criminal Court (ICC) so that those suspected of committing abuses can be indicted.

2) UN Human Rights Council to:

- i. Formally consider the panel of experts' report and Channel 4 footage; and
- ii. Endorse the establishment of an international investigation and referral to the ICC.

3) UN Secretary-General to:

- i. Actively seek approval (including by formally transmitting the panel of experts' report on Sri Lanka)

- from the Security Council and Human Rights Council to establish an international investigation; and
- ii. Implement the recommendation contained in his panel of experts' report to "conduct a comprehensive review of actions by the UN system during the war in Sri Lanka and the aftermath, regarding the implementation of its humanitarian and protection mandates".

4) UK government to:

- i. Strongly support the recommendations contained in the panel of experts' report and push for an international investigation to be carried out as soon as possible;
- ii. Use its influence at the Security Council to secure a referral to the ICC; and
- iii. Press the GoSL to:
 - Engage with this process and, if an ICC investigation is opened, to cooperate fully;
 - Ensure that the rights of ethnic minorities and human rights defenders are respected;
 - Enable humanitarian access to those still in camps (incl. transit camps and 'foster' homes); and
 - Ensure that rehabilitation efforts are sustainable as well as swift.

2B. The rights of street children

Noting that:

- Street children have not been explicitly accorded protection in any legally-binding regional and international documents – including the most widely-ratified international document protecting children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and
- As a result, street children are being deprived of their socio-economic rights under the CRC;

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to press the Committee on the Rights of the Child to:

- i. Appoint a commission to examine the plight of street children by consulting the children and relevant agencies and individuals, so that their socio-economic rights can be addressed under the CRC; and
- ii. Urge all UN Member States, in the meantime, to fulfil their obligations under Article 6(2) of the CRC (to ensure "to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child") towards street children as well.

2C. Freedom of religion or belief

Recalling that 2011 marks the 30th anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion or Belief;

Noting with appreciation the emphasis placed on this right in the 2010 UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office Human Rights report;

Observing that full enjoyment of this right, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), remains to be achieved in many parts of the world; and

Welcoming the resolution adopted at the 16th Session of the UN Human Rights Council as marking a decisive abandonment of the concept of 'defamation of religions'.

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to renew its efforts to secure the full realisation of the freedom of religion or belief through:

1. Continued support for the UN Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Religion or Belief; and
2. By exploring the prospects for reactivating discussions about an international convention on this subject.

2D. UN defamation of religions resolution

Noting:

- That abuses have occurred in the name of 'blasphemy laws', that religious groups have suffered as a result, and that several of those seeking to reform these laws in various countries have been murdered;
- That the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) appears to have flouted Articles 18 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with its resolution of 25 March 2010 condemning "defamation of religions"; and
- With approval recent moves by the HRC to promote religious tolerance;

UNA-UK calls on the:

- i. HRC to strongly reaffirm its commitment to Articles 18 and 19 of the UDHR.
- ii. UN to urge all states to outlaw abuses that have occurred under the cover of blasphemy laws, and to reaffirm their commitment, stated in the UN Charter, "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours".

2E. Business and human rights

Noting that the actions of some multinational corporations harm local environments, damage social structures and disregard human rights;

Noting also the issue of tax avoidance in developing countries, which deprives those countries of the ability to develop the infrastructure and services required to alleviate poverty; and

Endorsing the 'Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the UN's "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework' for corporate accountability put forward by Professor John Ruggie, UN Special Representative on Business and Human Rights;

UNA-UK urges the UK government to support these principles when they are put before the UN Human Rights Council in July 2011, and to work towards their implementation by UK companies.

2F. International convention on trafficking

Noting the Council of Europe's anti-trafficking convention and the protocol on trafficking to the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime; and

Concerned by the possibility of increases in human and sex trafficking during the London 2012 Olympic Games, and about the impacts on trafficked persons already in the city as a result of 'clean up operations' ahead of the Games;

UNA-UK urges the UK government to promote within the UN the establishment of an international convention on trafficking that is at least as comprehensive as the existing Council of Europe convention.

2G. Detention of asylum seekers in the UK

Noting that:

- Despite criticisms by the UN Human Rights Council's Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and various human rights NGOs, the UK still places no time limit on the detention of asylum seekers;
- The UK NGO Detention Action reports that 57% of long-term detainees are released after spending years in prison-like detention centres;
- Habeas corpus does not apply to these detainees, who, as foreign nationals, could theoretically return to their own countries (although many have good reason not to); and
- The difficulties faced by those who have been rejected by their own countries in proving conclusively that they are 'stateless';

UNA-UK urges the UK government to set a time limit to the detention of asylum seekers in the UK in line with the European Union's limit (currently 18 months).

3. UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3A. Renewable energy

In view of the grave risks posed by unchecked manmade climate change, the questions surrounding the safety of nuclear power, and the untapped potential of renewable sources of energy,

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to:

- i. Adopt the more ambitious '30% by 2020' emissions-reduction target, which the EU eventually did not commit to at the 16th UN Framework Convention for Climate Change Conference in Cancun in 2010;
- ii. Implement the recommendation of its Committee on Climate Change to double the UK's target for the proportion of UK energy generation coming from renewable sources to 30% by 2020; and
- iii. Support international financing, technology and capacity-building initiatives to help developing countries increase their renewable-energy capacity, including the Green Fund and technology-transfer mechanism outlined in the Cancún Agreements.

3B. Population

Noting that:

- *The impact of population on climate change, biodiversity loss and poverty is not adequately addressed in an integrated way;*
- *The empowerment of women is essential to reduce births;*
- *Reproductive health and rights are integral to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals; and*
- *In 2007, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Population, Development and Reproductive Health recommended that the UK government commits 10% of aid to population and reproductive health;*

UNA-UK urges the UK government to:

- i. Support the UN Population Fund in its aim to have population included in the agenda of international environmental events, especially Rio+20;
- ii. Press for population policies to be incorporated into climate change and international development funding and initiatives; and
- iii. As an immediate priority, commit a significant amount of UK Aid to population and reproductive health, and encourage other states and international agencies to do the same.

3C. Climate change

Welcoming the Copenhagen and Cancún UNFCCC agreements which:

- *Recognise the reality of climate change;*
- *Endorse the target of preventing a global temperature rise of more than 2°C levels (thought to represent the threshold between 'dangerous' and 'extremely dangerous' climate change);*

- Accept that rich countries need to take the lead in CO₂ reductions; and
- Create funds to finance mitigation and adaptation projects in poor countries.

Noting the suggestions contained in the publication 'Kyoto 2' (www.kyoto2.org)

Deeply concerned to note:

- That despite the Kyoto Protocol, global CO₂ levels have continued to increase at the same rate, showing it has failed in its overall purpose and should be replaced by something more effective when it expires in 2012;
- A Royal Society report in January 2011 that there is now little chance of maintaining mean global temperature increase at or below 2°C;
- The lack of firm commitments by developed countries to increase their emissions-reduction targets; and
- That the promotion of loans to developing countries could lead to increased debt;

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to:

- i. Support the principles of climate justice;
- ii. Adopt a more ambitious emissions-reduction target and encouraging its European partners to do the same;
- iii. Take a lead in negotiations to achieve a binding treaty in 2011;
- iv. Ensure that the contributions it makes to UN climate funds are in the form of grants not loans;
- v. Explore alternative cap-and-trade systems that control greenhouse gas emissions 'upstream', near to their origins, rather than 'downstream' as presently attempted; and
- vi. Promote this initially for the EU Emissions Trading System, which would largely eliminate its present problems and pioneer a global solution under the auspices of the UN.

3D. International development

Noting that just four years remain to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

Welcoming the UK's decision to increase its overseas aid to 0.7% of gross national income by 2013 and the review of its multilateral aid commitments (MAR);*

Welcoming also the decision to protect the budget of the Department for International Development (DFID) at a time when other department budgets are being cut;

Noting that public support for overseas aid is fickle, and that alleged abuses of aid are seized upon by the media, fuelling public suspicion that taxpayers' money is being squandered;

Appalled by the 2010 Human Rights Watch report which stated that international aid, including from the UK, was being used by the Ethiopian regime for state repression and only distributed to its political supporters; and

Cautious of the view expressed in the 2010 UK National Security Council statement that the UK's

official development assistance budget should make the "maximum possible contribution" to (UK) national security;

Welcoming the formation of the Independent Commission for Aid Impact, which will report to the Select Committee on International Development and brings together development and accountancy experts to provide an independent assessment of the effectiveness of UK Aid;

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to:

- i. Continue to support international efforts to achieve full delivery of the MDGs;
- ii. Press other G8 countries to live up to commitments they made at the 2005 Gleneagles summit;
- iii. Orchestrate international dialogue on how to address poverty and inequality in a targeted and strategic manner after 2015;
- iv. Work closely with the four UN agencies* placed under 'special measures' following the MAR to improve their performance in addressing vital development concerns;
- v. Review after a suitable period the decision to end funding to four further agencies**; and
- vi. Ensure that UK aid supports both long- and short-term development initiatives.
- vii. Do all within its power to prevent the misapplication of the ODA budget, and to ensure that DFID exercises the greatest care when choosing partner organisations in recipient countries.

* UNESCO, Food & Agriculture Organization, International Organization for Migration and the Commonwealth Secretariat's development programmes

**International Labour Organization (ILO), UN-HABITAT, UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

3E. UN recognition scheme for sustainable communities

Noting that:

- In light of peak oil* and climate change, global sustainability can be most effectively achieved at local level;
- Rural and urban communities globally are already making efforts towards becoming more sustainable through local organic food production, local renewable energy production and environmental education schemes; and
- A UN recognition scheme for sustainable communities would act as an incentive for communities to make further progress towards becoming more sustainable and that such a scheme would also serve to bring the UN closer to the people and vice versa;

UNA-UK calls on the UN to:

- i. Establish a UN recognition scheme for sustainable communities;
- ii. Appoint an appropriate department to administer the incentive scheme and award 'badges of honour' to qualifying communities accordingly.

3F. FAO and gender equality

Noting the UK government's stated commitment to gender equality and its expressed concern for food security, which led the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to commission the Government Office for Science to produce its report 'The Future of Food and Farming – Challenges and Choices for Global Sustainability'; and

Concerned that following the UK's Multilateral Aid Review, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) – the UN agency tasked with tackling food and security issues, which champions gender equality as part of the solution to increasing food production – has been placed under 'special measures' and could face withdrawal of funding in two years' time;

UNA-UK urges DFID to:

1. Continue to work closely with the FAO, including on increasing its impact;
2. Strongly support the FAO's work on gender and food security; and
3. Work towards a positive review of the FAO's performance and the continuation of UK funding in two years' time.

3G. Global honey-bee colony disorders and other threats to insect pollinators

Noting:

- *The recent UN Environment Programme report: "Global Bee Colony Disorders and other threats to Insect Pollinators";*
- *Appropriate relevant independent research from other worldwide biodiversity projects together with the current UK government-funded related projects;*
- *The implications of not applying the 'precautionary principle' to any substance including neonicotinoid insecticides and any other chemical agent that interferes with the role of insect pollinators; and*
- *The necessity for restrictions on activities that are known to cause pollinator declines pending the outcome of ongoing research;*

UNA UK urges the UK government and the UN to:

- i. Continue research, on the causes, both direct and indirect, of honey-bee and other insect-pollinator population declines, in the UK and worldwide; and
- ii. Initiate action to implement subsequent recommendations to combat the problem as a matter of urgency.

3H. Agroecology

Noting the:

- *Concerns of Dr Hans Herren, the co-ordinating author of "Greening Agriculture" in the UN Environment Programme report on the Green Economy, that agroecology is vitally important in tackling hunger, climate change and environmental degradation;*

- Need to take into account the crucial views and expertise of local women farmers as well as the wider political, economic and trade issues; and
- The report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, which explores how agricultural systems can move towards modes of production that are highly productive, highly sustainable and can contribute to the progressive realisation of the human right to adequate food;

UNA-UK urges the UK government and the UN to support an agroecological approach to food production and land management, in order to avoid the worldwide danger of conflicts over resources, especially water, and food security.

3I. Food security

Noting the June 2011 inter-agency report, coordinated by the FAO and OECD, with contributions from the UN Conference on Trade and Development, World Bank, World Food Programme and others, which highlighted the:

- Recent spike in food prices, which have again reached their 2008 levels, when some 30 countries experienced food riots
- Extent to which financial speculation can cause agricultural price volatility and an amplify short-term food price swings;
- Need for greater regulation of agricultural commodity derivatives markets, including greater transparency about transactions across futures markets and over-the-counter markets, where transactions take place off the regulated commodity exchanges.

UNA-UK calls on the UK government to work with UN agencies and the G20 to address both short- and long-term food security issues, including through UN Comprehensive Framework for Action, and to support initiatives aimed at greater regulation of agricultural commodity markets.

3J. Sustainable economic growth

Noting that:

- The dominant policy response of the UK government to economic recession is to seek to stimulate economic growth;
- Governments and decision-makers elsewhere in the world also place great emphasis on growth as an indicator of economic success;
- The rate of growth in highly-developed economies has a greater impact on carbon emissions and resource use per capita than similar rates in less-developed countries';
- The increasing global population further compounds the impact of the global economy on carbon output and resource depletion; and

Welcoming the:

- 'Rio + 20' summit on sustainable development, due to take place in 2012; and
- UN Environment Programme's 2011 report 'Towards a Green Economy', its key contribution to the Rio + 20 process, which makes a compelling economic and social case for investing two per cent of global GDP in greening ten central sectors* of the

economy in order to stimulate growth whilst moving development and public/private capital flows onto a low-carbon, resource-efficient path'

UNA-UK urges the UK government to give full consideration to the sustainability of economy growth and recommendations of the UNEP report, in particular the need to ensure that growth is matched by resource efficiencies.

* The ten sectors identified in the report as key to greening the global economy are: agriculture, buildings, energy supply, fisheries, forestry, industry including energy efficiency, tourism, transport, waste management and water.

4. UN GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

4A. UN Women – UK support

Welcoming the establishment of UN Women and the appointment of Michelle Bachelet as its Executive Director;

Welcoming also the decision taken at the 2010 UN Millennium Development Goals Summit to commit \$40 billion of private and public funds over the next five years towards accelerating progress on women and children's health;

Recognising that this is a crucial time for UN Women, which has a wide mandate but a small operating budget of \$500 million; and that its success is important to the broader UN reform agenda;

Deeply concerned that pledged funding for UN Women falls far short of this; and that UNIFEM, one of the four agencies subsumed by UN Women, scored poorly in the UK's recent Multilateral Aid Review;

Noting the widespread support amongst UK citizens for UN Women, and the UK's commitment to providing it with some transitional funds for setting up;

Welcoming the UK's decision to be one of UN Women's main donor countries;

UNA-UK urges the UK government to support UN Women fully, politically and financially, at this crucial stage of its development, including by:

- i. Delivering a substantial amount of core annual funding;
- ii. Accepting UN Women's results plan, bearing in mind that not all objectives and outcomes are measurable in financial terms
- iii. Integrating UN Women's six focus areas into the UK's own policies;
- iv. Encouraging other states to do the same; and
- v. Continuing to be a strong advocate of gender equality around the world.

4B. UN Women governance and priorities

Aware that UN Women is primarily concerned with the empowerment of women worldwide,

Dismayed that UN entities' governance arrangements have resulted in the election to its Board of countries with highly unsatisfactory records on gender issues; and

UNA-UK calls on:

- 1) UN Member States and UN Women Board members (of which the UK is one) to ensure that UN Women's mandate enables it to put pressure on governments which permit inequality and oppression of their female citizens, without risking its funding.
- 2) UN Women's Board and staff to:
 - i. Help governments plan infrastructure projects at national and local levels, such as the provision of water and sanitation, necessary to reduce childbirth deaths;

- ii. Consult widely with grassroots women's organisations which know what women need and want locally;
- iii. Be accountable to the international women's movement, which has already been active in the field and in establishing norms, as well as to governments;
- iv. Challenge cultures and attitudes which do not value education and training for women and girls, so they can contribute to progress at every level of life;
- v. Recognise the needs of the elderly and widows;
- vi. Coordinate international work against trafficking, forced labour, prostitution and grooming; and
- vii. Set up projects to enable women to use their education to set up small businesses.

4C. Strengthening the UN Global Compact

Concerned that the UN Global Compact – a voluntary corporate responsibility initiative – cannot sufficiently secure its aims, and mindful that donor countries and corporate sector leaders want to see further progress,

UNA-UK calls for the development of a scheme for sharpening the Compact's effectiveness by:

- i. Giving more direction on actions needed to honour the Compact's ten principles, especially in respect of promoting good practice through members' supply chains;
- ii. Introducing a new stage of implementation in which independent auditors assess the evidence for submission made in annual communication and progress reports;
- iii. Introducing a disciplinary process for serious breaches of the principles made evident through independent audit; and
- iv. Asking national and local UNAs to monitor the outcomes of these changes.

4D. Monitoring state pledges

Noting that many of the pledges and undertakings made by governments at high-profile times of crisis are not honoured, and that this leads to an inability of the UN to fulfil its promises, which in turn leads to a lack of credibility and a large and costly waste of resources,

UNA-UK urges the UK government to campaign within the UN to explore the possibility of ensuring that undertakings and financial pledges given by states for specific purposes are honoured.

4E. UNESCO

Recalling that the:

- Founding conference for UNESCO was convened in London in 1945;
- UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office remains guardian of UNESCO's founding charter;
- Absence of the UK from UNESCO between 1985 and 1997 weakened the UK's influence in international science, education and cultural fora; and

- UK government's decision in 1997 to allocate responsibility for UNESCO to the Department for International Development (DFID) weakened UK input into UNESCO programmes in which DFID has no lead interest.

Regretting:

- DFID's Multilateral Aid Review treated UNESCO solely as an aid agency, which it has never been, and penalised it accordingly; and
- The manner in which the UK National Commission for UNESCO has been cut down, reducing its capacity to fulfil its responsibilities.

Urges DFID to:

- i. Re-examine how departments of state and interested government-linked bodies can best develop and strengthen UNESCO's programmes, and
- ii. Work closely with all interested parties in civil society to raise the UK profile of UNESCO's work.

Annex 1

Lord Hannay's nine-point plan for multilateral nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament

1. Progress made to date needs to be consolidated, i.e. by sustaining the de facto moratorium on nuclear testing and moving as rapidly as possible to the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) following ratification of it by the United States, China and a number of other states.
2. The US and Russia, which have by far the largest nuclear arsenals, need to move beyond the current reductions in their strategic weapons, and the other recognised nuclear-weapons states (China, France and the UK) need to be drawn into those negotiations at some stage.
3. The number of short-range nuclear weapons on European soil (the majority of which are deployed by Russia, the lesser proportion by NATO) need to be reduced or, preferably, removed.
4. All nuclear-weapons states must move further towards de-alerting their nuclear arsenals and reducing the prominent role they still play in their military doctrines. These doctrines should also be more transparent.
5. A Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty must be negotiated on an urgent basis. The five recognised nuclear-weapons states have stated they are ready to do this but procedural obstacles in the UN Conference on Disarmament have so far prevented progress. Therefore, the five states should seek to negotiate a text among themselves as a precursor to wider buy-in, with consultations perhaps moving to the UN General Assembly. A de facto moratorium on fissile material could be a valuable step, as it has been in the context of the CTBT.
6. Preparations for a 2012 conference on a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East, as agreed at the May 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, need to be put in place without delay, with the UN Secretary-General appointing a facilitator to begin this task.
7. The universal application of the IAEA Additional Protocol (see explanatory note to 1K) needs to be pursued with vigour. At some stage, acceptance of the Additional Protocol could become a condition for the supply of civil nuclear materials.
8. Proposals for the multi-nationalisation, under IAEA surveillance, of uranium enrichment and reprocessing services need to be carried forward. So far, only one such scheme (the Russian one) has been approved by the IAEA. If more schemes received approval, then any country wishing to press ahead with a civil nuclear programme should be able to do so without the proliferation risks inherent in building such installations.
9. Research work on the technical requirements needed to verify nuclear disarmament measures should be accelerated. The joint UK-Norwegian project, VERTIC, is a promising start but a major international programme involving the five recognised nuclear-weapons states is now needed if progress at the negotiation table on other aspects of disarmament is not to be impeded by doubts over the effectiveness of verification.

(Adapted from a presentation delivered at UNA Edinburgh's one-day conference on NATO's New Strategic Concept and Global Zero on 1 November 2010)